

“Inspirational, commonsensical, and a whole lot of fun.” —James Patterson

J.J. AND CHRIS GRABENSTEIN

New York Times bestselling author of
Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library



SHINE!

In a school
full of stars,
is there room
for one more?

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EDUCATORS' GUIDE

ABOUT THE BOOK

“Who do you want to be?” asks Mr. Van Deusen. “And not when you grow up. Right here, right now.”

“Shine on, stargazers!” might be the catchphrase of twelve-year-old Piper’s hero—astronaut, astronomer, and television host Nellie Dumont Frissé—but Piper knows the truth: some people are born to shine, and she’s just not one of them. That fact has never been clearer than now, since her dad’s new job has landed them both at Chumley Prep, a posh private school where *everyone* seems to be the best at something and where Piper *definitely* doesn’t fit in.

Bursting with humor, heart, science, possibilities, and big questions, *Shine!* is a story about finding your place in the universe—a story about figuring out who you are and who you want to be.

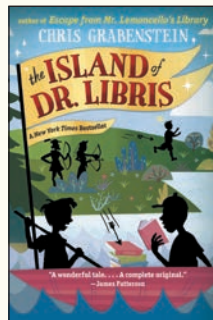


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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

J. J. & CHRIS GRABENSTEIN are a husband-and-wife writing team. J.J. is an award-winning voice-over artist and stage performer. Chris is a *New York Times* bestselling author of many books, including the Mr. Lemoncello’s Library and Welcome to Wonderland series, as well as the coauthor of numerous page-turners with James Patterson, including *Word of Mouse* and the Max Einstein, House of Robots, and Treasure Hunters series. J.J. and Chris live in New York City. Visit them online at ChrisGrabenstein.com and on Twitter at [@CGrabenstein](https://twitter.com/CGrabenstein).



PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Have students write a journal entry answering the question, “Who do I want to be?” If they get stuck, they can use these sentences starters

- I want to . . .
- Today, something good I saw was . . .
- I helped someone by . . .
- I made someone else feel better by . . .
- I was saddened when I saw . . .
- I feel . . .

ACTIVITY ONE: SHINE ON, STARGAZER

“Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you’ll land among the stars.”

—Norman Vincent Peale

In *Shine!*, Piper reminds us that each constellation has a story to tell. Remind students that all the constellations in the sky have a story that connects with the shape the stars make. For this two-part activity, students will write a story about an act of kindness and then create their own constellation to accompany the story.

PART ONE: NARRATIVE STORY

Subject: writing

Materials: board or poster paper, writing materials

There are so many different ways kindness is portrayed in *Shine!* Ask your students to share some examples they remember. For example, the substitute loses her bracelet, and Piper digs in the trash for it; Tim loans his robot to Piper. As students share, write these examples on the board or poster paper.

Brainstorm acts of kindness. For example, helping a sibling make lunch, holding the door for someone, doing chores without being asked, helping a student in class with work or homework. Be sure to include examples from your own life! Students love to hear their teachers’ personal stories!

- Add students’ examples to the board or poster paper.
- Start a discussion with your students by asking them how it feels to do something kind. How do they feel when someone does something kind for them?

This is the part where the students get to put all of this into writing!

CHOOSE IT!

- Which act of kindness resonates? Have students choose one act that is important to them. They will be writing a story about that act.

PLAN IT!

- Students make a quick plan of the beginning, middle, and end of their story to help them get their ideas flowing. This can be done by sharing their ideas verbally with another student or by writing on paper.

WRITE IT!

- The beginning should draw the reader in and include the setting and an introduction to the characters.
- The middle is where the magic happens! Students describe the act of kindness in a memorable way that includes how the characters felt when the act occurred.
- The ending sums up any insight or understanding the characters came to after their experience with the act of kindness.
- Students share their drafts with peers for feedback and revisions.

PUBLISH IT!

- Students create a final draft to be displayed.

PART TWO: CONSTELLATION ART

Subject: art

Materials: glue, scissors, black construction paper, white or yellow chalk or white construction paper

The students are not quite done with this narrative activity! This is where their story turns into something out of this world—they will be creating their own constellation. Piper told us, “Finding our way under the night sky is a galaxy-sized version of a connect-the-dots game!” (p. 173) The students will create their own constellation for others to gaze at!

- Review with students some of the shapes the constellations make. (For example, Pegasus—horse; Ursa Major—big bear; Ursa Minor—little bear; Cancer—crab.)
- Research the story of a constellation. Below are some websites to help you share examples of constellations and their stories.
 - Constellations for Kids: dkfindout.com/us/space/constellations
 - Constellation Names: constellation-guide.com/constellation-names
 - Star Constellations: solarsystemquick.com/universe/star-constellations.htm
- Using a projector or smart screen, show students the shapes the stars create.
- As students observe the constellations, have them discuss the following questions with a partner:
 - For each constellation, what do you notice about the pattern of stars?
 - How can you use this knowledge to create your own constellation?
- As a whole group, have the students brainstorm a constellation that could match an act of kindness from *Shine!* For example, the substitute’s lost bracelet could be a group of stars that form a bracelet; Tim loaning Piper his robot might be a group of stars in the shape of a robot.
- Ask the students to turn to a partner and discuss what type of constellation they could make that connects with the kindness story they wrote.
- When they have an idea, they can begin putting their artistic skills to work! Show the students the available materials:
 - Black construction paper: outer space
 - Chalk or white construction paper: stars

Encourage them to go beyond their constellation. Challenge students to add planets or other stars that represent other parts of their story or make their constellation POP OUT with three-dimensional stars and planets.

- Hang up the stories and constellations around the school for others to see!
- This is a great opportunity to invite parents and the community to read the stories about the impact acts of kindness have on others. Sharing stories about kindness often spreads kindness.

Common Core Anchor Standards Correlations:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.3 • CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.4 • CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.7 • 1-ESS1-1 Earth’s Place in the Universe




ACTIVITY TWO: SHOOT FOR THE MOON

“I believe that every person is born with talent.”

—Maya Angelou

Subject: English language arts

Materials: poster board or computers,
pens or markers, printer, personal pictures



Shine! encourages readers to acknowledge all the positive contributions each person makes at school. Every student has a skill or talent—whether it’s doing gymnastics, playing an instrument, performing magic tricks, or studying the stars. For this activity, your students are going to share their talent with the rest of the class. Students will create a presentation to showcase their talent. Consider including this activity at the beginning of the school year to build your classroom community!

Give students time to think about the talents they have. Encourage them to go beyond performance-based talents and think outside of the box (for example: tech wiz, artist, stargazer, skateboarder, reader, great advice-giver). Tell students they will be creating a presentation or poster board to showcase their skill or talent. The presentation will include the following parts:

- Student name
- Description of talent and why it’s important
- Pictures of the student performing this skill or talent and/or student-drawn pictures of their talent
 - Digital option: students may add a video to their presentation of them performing the talent.

Set up a day for students to show their talent presentations. Invite others from around the school to see and hear all about the many talents each student possesses to build a strong school community. Imagine the confidence students will have showing off their talents and skills! Students can get to know each other on a deeper level as they learn more about their classmates.

Don’t stop there! Bring students back together to have them share and reflect. Use these questions to help guide the discussion:

- What did you notice and learn about your fellow classmates?
- How can these talents and skills enrich our school community? How about the outside community?

🕒 Common Core Anchor Standards Correlations:
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.5 • CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.4



ACTIVITY THREE: TWO FACTS AND AN OPINION

“Science knows no country, because knowledge belongs to humanity, and is the torch which illuminates the world.”

—Louis Pasteur

Subject: reading

Materials: paper, pencil

What is fact? What is opinion? Sometimes it’s difficult to tell. This next activity has students dive into the book to find two facts and an opinion about a character.

- Start this activity by sharing three pieces of information about yourself with the students: two facts and one opinion. For example, “I am a teacher. I have three kids. I am good at soccer.”
- Ask the students to turn to a partner and determine which two are facts and which is an opinion.
- Have a few students share and explain their answers. During the discussion, remind students that facts are something that can be proven while opinions are a view or judgment.
- Ask students to list some facts about Piper with a partner and then share them out loud. Write these on the board. Some examples might include:
 - Piper is an only child.
 - Piper attends Chumley Prep.
- Now have them list some opinions about Piper. Examples:
 - Piper thinks Ainsley is rude.
 - Mrs. Zamick hates Piper because of her mom.
- For this next part, students will dive deeper into *Shine!* on their own.
 - Each student will choose a character to analyze.
 - Each student will state two facts and an opinion about that character.
 - Direct students to copy the chart below onto a piece of paper to help them organize their information.
 - Next they will cut out each column (without the heading!).
 - Students should mix them up and trade with another student who will need to figure out the facts and the opinion for that specific character.
 - Have the original student check to see if their partner guessed correctly!

Possible Character Choices: Piper, Ainsley, Tim, Mr. Milly, Hannah, Nellie Dumont Frissé, Mrs. Zamick, Mrs. Milly, Ms. Oliverio, Siraj, Dr. Throckmorton, Mr. Van Deusen, Kwame, Carter, Mr. Chumley, Emily, Brooke

Character	Fact 1	Fact 2	Opinion

- Extend your students’ learning! Ask them to find an article about something that interests them (newspaper or magazine, digital or traditional). After reading the article, students should highlight two facts and one opinion. Have the students bring these to class and discuss their findings with the group.

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CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1 • CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.6

ACTIVITY FOUR: EXCELSIOR AWARD AT YOUR SCHOOL

“We must educate and inspire their hearts as well as their heads.”

—Mr. Chumley

Subjects: science and English language arts

Materials: Excelsior Award Certificate and nomination form

NOTE:
This activity
should be done
when you are
finished reading
Shine!

The characters in *Shine!* have many different ideas about what the requirements are for the Excelsior Award. They soon learn it is about demonstrating character and integrity at all times. This activity will introduce the Excelsior Award to your classroom and, hopefully, your school. Students will have a chance to celebrate each other and acknowledge positive behavior they see around the school.

- **Recruit help!** Talk with the custodian, principal, administrative staff, parent volunteers, and other teachers who are familiar with your students. Describe the book *Shine!*, and explain that you want to bring the Excelsior Award into your classroom. Invite them to keep an eye out for students acting with integrity in everyday situations. Here are some examples:
 - A student helps someone who has dropped their belongings in the hall
 - A student helps clean a mess in the lunchroom
 - A student helps out a younger student
 - A student helps an adult
 - A student does any good deed without self-interest
- Ask the adults to email you or send you a note about any positive behavior they witness. Continue to observe your students and collect data. **Do not tell your students what you are doing. Shhhh!**
- While you are secretly gathering information on your students' behavior, have students gather information on each other!
 - Check in with them each day, asking how they have demonstrated character and integrity. Encourage them to give specific examples of what they did.
 - Encourage students to share what *other* classmates have done.
 - Keep notes to refer back to.
- Use the data you have collected to find one or two students who consistently demonstrated character and integrity. Photocopy the certificate on the back page of this guide.
- Celebrate the big reveal!
 - Ask the principal and your other helpers to come into the classroom on this day.
 - Present the Excelsior Awards, sharing the examples of how these students earned the award with their acts of kindness and demonstrations of character.
 - If possible, share the news of the award with the whole school by announcing it!

To keep the *shine* going and to help create more positive behaviors in your school community, encourage students to search for ways their peers are helping each other in their everyday lives. Make forms available for students to nominate each other for the award throughout the year.

This guide was written by Room 228 LLC with public school teacher Michelle Assaad as lead teacher.
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EXCELSIOR AWARD



This award is presented to



*for demonstrating character and integrity
throughout the school.*

Teacher

Principal

Date



TEACHERS: Reproduce this certificate for your deserving students.