

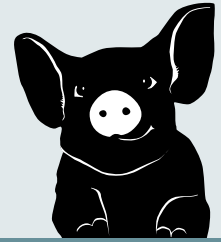
Become a True Friend

A facilitator's guide for youth leaders, educators and families to accompany the book and movie, *Charlotte's Web*.

AGES 8-12

www.charlotteswebmovie.com





CHARLOTTE'S WEB: **Become a True Friend**

Dear Group Facilitator

Set on a small family farm, *Charlotte's Web* tells the story of the devoted friendship between a joyous pig named Wilbur and a caring spider named Charlotte. Born the runt of his litter, Wilbur is adopted by Fern, a young girl who spoils him with love and constant attention. As Wilbur quickly grows and Fern becomes occupied in school, Wilbur is sent to live in the barnyard of the neighboring Zuckerman farm. There, Wilbur finds himself feeling very alone and learns from the other animals that he is destined for the smokehouse.

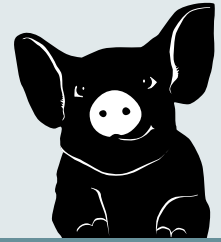
In the midst of his loneliness and fear, Wilbur meets an unlikely friend in a spider who is determined to save him. Charlotte develops a brilliant plan. One morning, the farmer enters the barn house to see the mysterious words "Some Pig" woven into Charlotte's web. The farmer is eventually convinced that this is a miracle and decides that Wilbur is too valuable to kill for meat. Charlotte's loving acts of kindness towards Wilbur are eventually returned, demonstrating the importance of friendship and everyday miracles.

Charlotte's Web, in both book and movie form, touches on the lasting power of love, friendship and generosity, but also the pain and sorrow that come with loss and the passing of time.

This guide, *Charlotte's Web: Become a True Friend*, is structured for use before or after viewing the movie and/or reading the book. It offers group and individual activities for children ages 8 - 12. It is provided by the National Collaboration for Youth, an organization which provides a unified voice for its coalition of more than 50 national, nonprofit, youth development organizations. The 30-year-old organization concentrates on improving the conditions of youth in the United States and enabling youth to realize their full capabilities. As a result, youth empowerment and development play a central role in the activity guide for *Charlotte's Web*.

Prepare your group to experience *Charlotte's Web*.





CHARLOTTE'S WEB: **Become a True Friend**

Steps for Youth to Take with the *Charlotte's Web*: *Become a True Friend* Program

STEP 1) SEE THE FILM AND READ THE BOOK

The Movie: *Charlotte's Web*, a Paramount Pictures, Nickelodeon Movies, Kerner Entertainment and Walden Media live-action/CG animation film, opens in theaters on December 15, 2006. Youth may also see the movie when it becomes available on DVD. Also available for rental or purchase is an older animated version of the story (*Charlotte's Web* 1973).

The Book: *Charlotte's Web* by E.B. White (first published in 1952), is a Newbery Medal Honor winner. It is widely available in libraries and book stores.

STEP 2) PARTICIPATE

Take part in exciting reading, writing and role-play activities that address themes such as:

- * The qualities of true friendship
- * Generosity
- * Appreciating diversity
- * Dealing with change and coping with loss
- * Learning about farm life

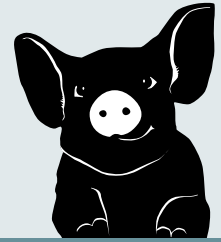
STEP 3) TAKE THE LEAD TO HELP OTHERS

Using examples of the kindness demonstrated by the movie's lead characters, Fern, Wilbur and Charlotte, young people are urged to learn to take on responsibility by designing and conducting a service project that reaches out to people or animals in need of friendship.

Use the free, downloadable service-learning supplement to assist in the planning and managing of *Charlotte's Web* service projects. Please visit www.youthfilmproject.org to download the supplement.

There, you can also find more information on the film and the book.



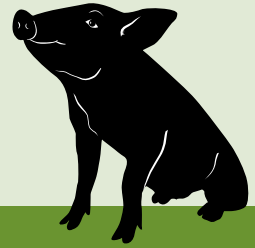


CHARLOTTE'S WEB: **Become a True Friend**

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MODULE 1: **Being a True Friend**

Notes for the Facilitator

The activities in this module are designed to encourage youth to think about the qualities of being a good friend. Friendship is one of the central themes throughout *Charlotte's Web* – Wilbur's relationships with Fern and Charlotte demonstrate the selflessness and generosity that embody true friendship. Through the example of these characters, youth will begin to recognize that friendship is about acts of loving kindness, not the giving and receiving of material things. The focus on unconventional friendships between different creatures in *Charlotte's Web* – a human girl and pig, a pig and spider, etc. – allows children to realize that friendships can develop in unexpected ways between people who are very different from one another.

Importantly, please tailor the activities to the life circumstances of the children and youth in your group. Many of us have relationships that may be different from the positive friendships depicted by characters such as Fern, Wilbur and Charlotte. Yet, many children, like the main characters, will reach into their own hearts and into their close circle of support (parents, grandparents, family, peers, teachers and others) to develop lasting, positive relationships.

Objectives

Youth will gain an understanding of the qualities that enable positive friendships

Youth will recognize the differences between selfishness and generosity

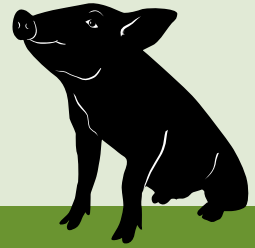
Youth will gain insight into new vocabulary and ways to express friendship





MODULE ONE: BEING A TRUE FRIEND

ACTIVITY 1: **The Qualities of True Friendship**



Activity Type: Group Activity and Discussion

Link to the Film

Note: This may be read aloud by a group member/the facilitator for all to hear, or it may be individual reading before the activity.

When Wilbur is born he is small and scraggly – he cannot feed from his mother pig and Mr. Arable watches him struggle. Mr. Arable’s daughter, Fern, a young 8-year-old girl, bravely steps in to save Wilbur from being killed by her dad. Not only does she save Wilbur, but she becomes his care-provider and dearest friend. Fern’s parents worry that she spends too much time with this small pig and not enough time with other children her age. They do not understand her close connection with Wilbur, even though he is an animal.

As Wilbur grows in size, Fern realizes that she cannot keep Wilbur forever. However, her uncle who lives next door, Homer Zuckerman, agrees to buy Wilbur and keep him in the family barn with the other farm animals. Fern promises to visit Wilbur everyday, but Wilbur is overcome with loneliness, sadness and fear. The other animals, which include cows, a horse, sheep, geese and a rat are not friendly towards Wilbur and refuse to play with him. Wilbur wonders why the animals do not play with one another.

Wilbur

But – you’re all friends, right?

Gussy

Of course we are! Been here together our whole lives.

Wilbur

I’m not sure being in the same place is the same as being friends... Which is too bad, really, ‘cause I could sure use a friend right now.

Adapted from *Charlotte’s Web* screenplay by Susannah Grant, The Kerner Entertainment Company, 07-16-04 pp. 19-20

The excerpt to the left shows that friendship requires more than simply sharing the same physical space with others. Although Wilbur shares the same barn with a variety of animals, they do not reach out to him with kindness.

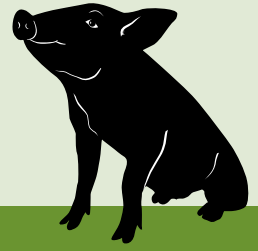
Wilbur is lucky to meet Charlotte, the barnyard spider, just when he needs a friend the most. Despite her frightening exterior appearance, Wilbur learns that Charlotte has a heart of gold. The friendship that develops between Wilbur and Charlotte is one that reveals true devotion. Wilbur and Charlotte help one another when they need it most, not because they expect something in return, but because they deeply care for one another as friends. Charlotte’s ability to weave words into her cobwebs helps turn Wilbur from an ordinary pig into a miraculous, extraordinary pig. This saves him from going to the smokehouse. Unknowingly, Wilbur returns her kindness by saving Charlotte’s egg nest and securing a future for her children.





MODULE ONE: BEING A TRUE FRIEND

ACTIVITY 1: **The Qualities of True Friendship**



Group Discussion Questions

Think about and discuss the following questions that relate to friendship

- 🕸 What are the 5 qualities of friendship that you think are most important? List them below and then share them as a group. They can be descriptive words or sentences.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

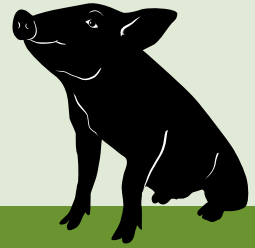
- 🕸 Is it more important to have a lot of friends or a few good ones? Why?
- 🕸 Does a good friend have to be similar to you? (e.g., same age, gender, likes and dislikes, etc.) Why or why not?
- 🕸 What do you expect from your friends? How should they treat you?
- 🕸 What do you do for your friends? How do you treat them?
- 🕸 What are some of the difficulties of making new friends?





MODULE ONE: BEING A TRUE FRIEND

ACTIVITY 2: **Selfishness and Generosity**



Activity Type: Individual Activity

Link to the Film

Note: This may be read aloud by a group member/the facilitator for all to hear, or it may be individual reading before the activity.

Each animal in *Charlotte's Web* has different personality traits, just like human beings. Charlotte the spider and Templeton the rat have especially different personalities. Charlotte is very **generous** and **selfless**. The kindness she displays towards Wilbur comes from her desire to help others, especially a friend in need. She bravely sacrifices her personal time and energy to spin miraculous webs of words. Despite her tremendous effort, Charlotte's webs do not provide her with personal fame and glory. The attention purposively goes to her friend Wilbur, who needs to stand-out as being extraordinary in order to be spared from the smokehouse. But, Charlotte's selflessness puts her in danger, too – because of her focus on Wilbur she nearly loses her egg nest in the county fair.

Templeton the rat represents another personality extreme. He is very **selfish** and self-centered. Charlotte is willing to do anything for a friend without a returned favor. Templeton, however, will only put forth effort for another if it results in a material gain for himself. He has to be convinced by the barnyard animals that a favor for Charlotte or Wilbur will result in food or junk for himself. As a result of his selfish behaviors, Templeton does not have close, dependable friends.

Key Words & Ideas

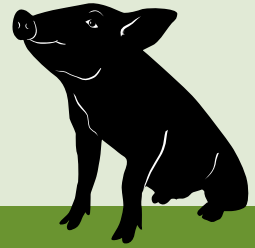
Generous (willing to give and share)

Selfish (concerned chiefly or only with yourself)

Selfless (having little or no concern for oneself; opposite of selfish)



ACTIVITY 2: **Selfishness and Generosity**



EXAMPLE OF GENEROSITY FROM THE SCRIPT

Wilbur

Are you okay, Charlotte?

She looks down at him – momentarily taken aback that someone is asking about her well being.

Charlotte

The world is a brighter place with you in it. And I will not let them kill you.

Wilbur

Pardon?

Charlotte

I'm going to save your life, Wilbur

Wilbur

You are?! That's fantastic! How?

Charlotte

I don't know. But I've made a promise and promises are something I never break. I'll hang upside down in my web and let all the blood rush to my head – that's usually how the good ideas come to me. And then I'll think of something. You just go to sleep and let me worry about it.

Adapted from *Charlotte's Web* screenplay by Susannah Grant, The Kerner Entertainment Company, 07-16-04 p.45

EXAMPLE OF SELFISHNESS FROM THE SCRIPT

Templeton

And here's a few more. I ain't breakin' my back to try and save "some pig" – no matter how "terrific" you think the little porker is.

He ducks into his hole. They watch the string pulling the yo-yo as Templeton descends further into his lair.

Charlotte

You'll sing a different tune when he's gone and nobody comes to fill that trough!

The yo-yo stops moving. That got his attention.

Ike

(turning to Betsy)

Half my oats says he's lazier than he is selfish.

Betsy

Oooh, I'll take that action.

Bitsy

Me, too.

Templeton backs out of the hole, looks around, sees the animals staring at him.

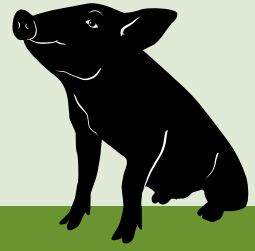
Templeton

Alright, let's get one thing straight. I don't care about the pig. What I care about is the slop. And as it just so happens, I'm going to the dump today and since it won't take any extra effort... Maybe – MAYBE – if I see something, I'll pick it up.

Adapted from *Charlotte's Web* screenplay by Susannah Grant, The Kerner Entertainment Company, 07-16-04 p.62



ACTIVITY 2: **Selfishness and Generosity**



Key Questions

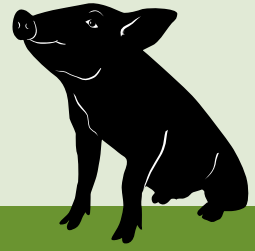
- 🕷️ How does Charlotte demonstrate generosity in the first example from the script? Why does she offer to help Wilbur?
- 🕷️ How does Templeton display selfishness in the second example from the script? Why do you think he cares so much about himself?
- 🕷️ Is it possible for someone to be too generous and selfless? What can this result in?
- 🕷️ Are there instances when it is important to be a little selfish and think about your own needs? Give some examples.
- 🕷️ Why do you think it's easier to make friends when you are generous?
- 🕷️ Do you think Templeton might actually care a little about Wilbur and Charlotte? Why or why not?





MODULE ONE: BEING A TRUE FRIEND

ACTIVITY 2: **Selfishness and Generosity**



Generous vs. Selfish Scenarios

Fill out the scenario chart below with two alternative reactions that you could use – a generous reaction (thinking of others) and a selfish reaction (thinking of yourself).

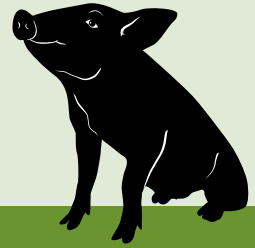
SCENARIO	GENEROUS REACTION	SELFISH REACTION
You are Templeton in <i>Charlotte's Web</i> . You just ate a huge amount of slop. You're tired, lazy and hungry. Charlotte asks for your help in finding a new, special word for her web.		
You are walking out of school. You watch as a bully punches a kid in the face. The bully threatens to beat you up, too, if you report the fight to an adult.		
You are late to basketball practice. It is snowy and icy outside. On your way inside you watch as a woman slips on some ice and falls on her back.		
You find a wallet on the sidewalk. There is \$20 cash in it. What do you do?		
Think of your own scenario!		





MODULE ONE: BEING A TRUE FRIEND

ACTIVITY 3: **Friendship Proverbs**



Activity Type: Individual Activity

Link to the Film

Note: This may be read aloud by a group member/the facilitator for all to hear, or it may be individual reading before the activity.

Charlotte is an exceptional thinker and writer. She is able to beautifully express how she feels about Wilbur through sophisticated words and phrases. In her dying hours Charlotte and Wilbur have a final conversation about their friendship. Read the following excerpt from the book:

“Why did you do all this for me? he [Wilbur] asked. “I don’t deserve it. I’ve never done anything for you.”

“You have been my friend,” replied Charlotte. “That in itself is a tremendous thing. I wove my webs for you because I liked you. After all, what’s a life, anyway? We’re born, we live a little while, we die. A spider’s life can’t help being something of a mess, with all this trapping and eating flies. By helping you, perhaps I was trying to lift up my life a trifle. Heaven knows anyone’s life can stand a little of that.”

“Well,” said Wilbur. “I’m not so good at making speeches. I haven’t got your gift for words. But you have saved me, Charlotte, and I would gladly give my life for you – I really would.”

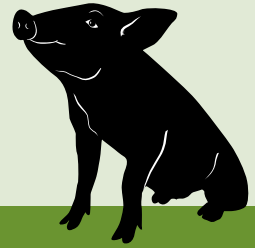
Charlotte’s Web by E.B. White; Harper Collins. 1952. p. 164





MODULE ONE: BEING A TRUE FRIEND

ACTIVITY 3: **Friendship Proverbs**



Friendship is a powerful gift, far more precious than any material item you would receive on a holiday or birthday. Many writers and famous philosophers have tried to express the feeling of friendship through words, just as Charlotte does. There are many famous and meaningful quotes and proverbs (wise sayings) about friendship. Here are a few:

The road to a friend's house is never long.

Danish proverb

A friend is a present you give yourself.

Robert Louis Stevenson

The only way to have a friend is to be one.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

True friendship is like sound health, the value of it is seldom known until it be lost.

Charles Caleb Colton

A friend can tell you things you don't want to tell yourself.

Frances Ward Weller

Oh, the comfort, the inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with a person; having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure words, but to pour them all out, just as they are, chaff and grain together, knowing that a faithful hand will take and sift them, keep what is worth keeping, and then, with a breath of kindness, blow the rest away.

George Eliot

CREATE YOUR OWN FRIENDSHIP PROVERBS

Can you come up with your own poetic sayings to express the value or importance of friendship? Think of positive relationships in your own life and try to express them through words. Sometimes it's difficult to express a lot of emotions in one or two sentences. Feel free to write a paragraph or more about friendship in general or a special friend that you want to honor.

1.

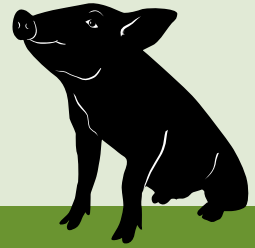
2.





MODULE ONE: BEING A TRUE FRIEND

ACTIVITY 4: **Charlotte's Web Word Search**



Activity Type: Individual Activity

Link to the Film

Note: This may be read aloud by a group member/the facilitator for all to hear, or it may be individual reading before the activity.

Charlotte is a great master of vocabulary. With the help of her barnyard friends, she finds the perfect words to describe Wilbur to the world. The humans in the story do not understand how a spider can possibly know how to spell words! Charlotte's brilliance and hard-work results in words such as "Terrific," "Radiant," and "Humble."

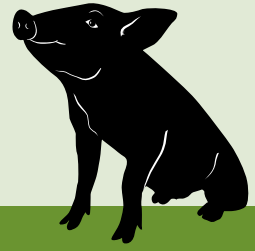
"Humble", the last word that Charlotte ever uses to describe Wilbur, is probably the most fitting of all the words. It means that Wilbur is modest and not prideful. Each time Wilbur receives public attention from the spider webs, he blushes and worries that he does not deserve it – he thinks of himself as an average pig. Charlotte, however, teaches Wilbur that he is indeed terrific, radiant and extraordinary. He helps transform Charlotte from a scary-looking spider that everyone fears into the most beautiful thing imaginable.





MODULE ONE: BEING A TRUE FRIEND

ACTIVITY 1: **The Qualities of True Friendship**



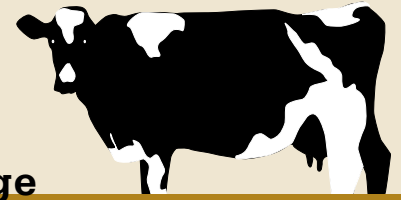
The word search below includes some of Charlotte's famous words and expressions, in addition to other words that relate to friendship. Maybe Charlotte would have woven some of these words into her web, too! Have fun and good luck!

a	t	v	x	s	n	n	g	e	a	v	u	a	r	t	h	m	u	i	s
l	s	u	g	e	r	t	l	o	y	a	l	u	n	e	y	a	s	c	h
y	t	a	w	z	b	r	u	h	a	n	e	u	i	r	n	m	k	i	o
e	d	i	l	r	g	s	a	m	o	t	o	l	e	r	a	n	t	u	g
a	s	c	k	u	q	w	m	n	a	d	r	u	t	i	p	m	f	g	x
q	c	p	i	t	t	s	s	a	m	n	o	f	c	f	u	b	d	e	u
t	u	r	n	r	s	a	h	c	s	f	g	h	t	i	e	l	j	n	s
o	i	s	d	p	i	s	t	d	c	r	u	y	o	c	c	u	u	e	n
l	a	t	g	a	u	j	n	i	e	i	q	d	p	l	d	n	m	r	t
l	e	b	d	t	p	c	a	l	o	e	r	b	t	t	i	r	w	o	g
m	l	n	r	i	m	u	i	r	h	n	d	r	d	v	g	y	e	u	c
c	b	t	s	e	b	o	d	w	i	d	s	e	i	n	s	l	f	s	x
s	c	m	a	n	n	r	a	a	l	l	o	p	i	i	a	k	p	h	a
r	u	y	z	t	u	g	r	c	m	y	r	v	m	o	c	d	r	z	o
u	d	p	l	t	s	u	o	t	t	f	o	t	u	t	e	a	g	c	o
p	s	u	e	d	f	b	p	b	m	l	n	u	j	s	s	n	s	b	m
e	s	o	n	r	t	n	r	u	u	m	e	h	v	e	r	w	q	t	j
w	g	h	u	m	b	l	e	d	h	g	q	p	m	n	j	i	e	i	t
b	a	g	a	s	r	w	e	c	h	t	i	b	m	o	t	e	r	e	g
r	h	y	i	l	m	g	t	e	u	c	y	h	h	h	a	v	e	t	t

WORDS TO FIND

- salutations
- friendly
- kind
- superb
- radiant
- generous
- patient
- sweet
- terrific
- loyal
- tolerant
- humble
- honest
- loving





MODULE TWO: **Appreciating Diversity and Embracing Change**

Notes for the Facilitator

This module will allow youth to recognize and embrace diversity and change. *Charlotte's Web* portrays friendships and interactions between a broad variety of animals and people, too. Through the exercises in this module, youth will realize the importance of reaching out to others who may have different appearances, cultural backgrounds or customs. At the ages of 8 -12, it is important for youth to overcome their fear and uncertainty about interacting with peers and community members that may be different from themselves. With the onset of the teenage years, the segregation of social groups becomes more apparent. Therefore it is important for youth to be exposed to and educated about diversity at this pivotal age. The example of the friendship between the young pig Wilbur and the old spider Charlotte teaches children the value of inter-generational and cross-cultural relationships.

Another significant component of this module revolves around the changes that come with the passing of time and the stinging pain of loss. Although *Charlotte's Web* is mostly a story of love and friendship, it is also a tale of the passing of time and life and death. The story develops over the course of a year, with four distinct seasons on the farm. Death is also an underlying theme throughout the story – Wilbur fears his death in the smokehouse and eventually must face the loss of his dearest friend Charlotte. Youth will be given the opportunity to reflect upon changes and loss as they relate to the book and movie.

Objectives

Youth will realize the importance of diversity among animals and people

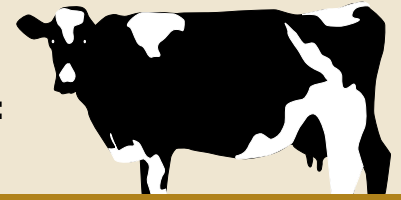
Youth will gain an understanding of the passing of time and the changing of seasons

Youth will converse about loss and death as they relate to *Charlotte's Web*





MODULE TWO: APPRECIATING DIVERSITY AND EMBRACING CHANGE





ACTIVITY 1: **Appreciating Diversity**

Activity Type: Group Activity

Notes for the Facilitator

This activity requires a few materials. They are:

-  a brown egg (preferably hard boiled)
-  a white egg (preferably hard boiled)

Link to the Film




Note: This may be read aloud by a group member/the facilitator for all to hear, or it may be individual reading before the activity.

Inside Zuckerman’s barn are a variety of animals – there are cows, sheep, geese, a horse, and even a rat. When Wilbur moves into the barn, he is overcome with loneliness because the other animals refuse to talk or play with him. In the book, Wilbur asks one of the lambs to play with him. The lamb replies, “Certainly not... In the first place, I cannot get into your pen, as I am not old enough to jump over the fence. In the second place, I am not interested in pigs. Pigs mean less than nothing to me.” (p. 28).

Even though they share the same space in the barn, the animals do not have any interest in becoming friends with one another. They do not trust what is different from their own kind. They are especially fearful of the horrific, blood-thirsty spider that spins her web in the doorway of the barn.

Wilbur is a kind, simple pig who sees past the exterior appearances of the animals, including the spider. He looks at Charlotte as a beautiful creature who makes incredible webs and keeps flies out of the barn. When he gets to know her, he realizes that she has a kind heart beneath her harsh exterior. The friendship that develops between this pig and spider serves as an example for the rest of the animals. All of the animals work together as a team towards the end of the story to help Wilbur and Charlotte.





COMPARE THE TWO EGGS IN THEIR SHELLS

-  How are the eggs similar?
-  How are they different?
-  Which egg do you like more? Why?

Notes for the Facilitator

If the eggs are hard-boiled, carefully peel off the shells. If they are raw, crack both eggs into a bowl. Discard the shells

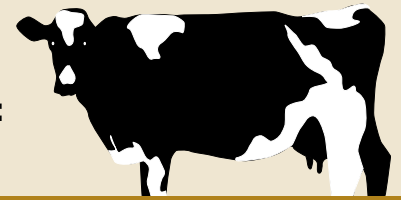
COMPARE THE TWO EGGS WITHOUT THEIR SHELLS

-  Which egg is the brown egg and which is the white? Can you tell?
-  Are there any major differences between the two eggs?
-  How can you relate the eggs to differences and similarities in people?
-  What does this exercise teach you about **diversity**?





MODULE TWO: APPRECIATING DIVERSITY AND EMBRACING CHANGE

































ACTIVITY 1: **Appreciating Diversity**

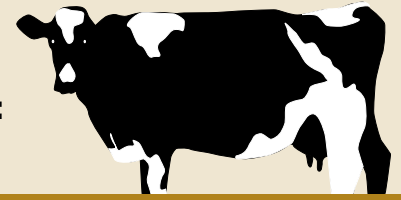
Follow-up Activity

Do you know the saying: “Don’t judge a book by its cover.”? It means that you should not judge something or someone based on their outside appearance. **Stereotypes** should be avoided. Wilbur sees Charlotte for her kindness, not her appearance or spider-like habits. Every animal and person has something valuable to offer.

Think of the following groups of people/ insects below. Often individuals that fall into these categories are ignored, feared or disliked because of negative stereotypes. Next to each person/ insect, write a few of their positive qualities. You may have to do a little research, especially for the insects!

PERSON/ANIMAL	NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES	POSITIVES THEY CAN OFFER
Senior Citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  old and sick  boring and old-fashioned  grumpy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  e.g., tell great stories  
Teenagers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  get into trouble  rebel against adults  irresponsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">   
Spiders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  scary to look at  suck the blood from flies  can bite people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">   
Bees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  annoying buzzing noise  sting people  frightening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">   
Think of another insect, animal or type of person that can have a negative reputation: _____	<ul style="list-style-type: none">    	<ul style="list-style-type: none">   





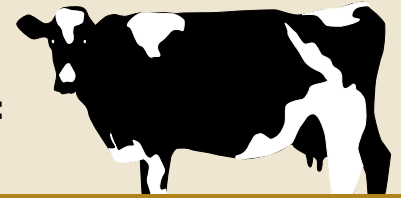
ACTIVITY 1: **Appreciating Diversity**

Key Words & Ideas

Diversity (the presence of a wide range of variation in the qualities or attributes under discussion)

Stereotype (a negative or mistaken belief about a certain type of person that is applied to everyone in that group)





ACTIVITY 2: **Changing Seasons**

Activity Type: Individual or Group Activity

Link to the Film

Note: This may be read aloud by a group member/the facilitator for all to hear, or it may be individual reading before the activity.

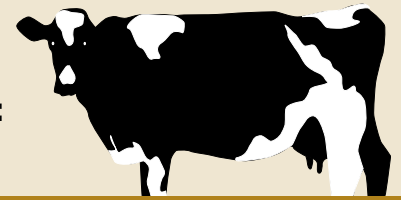
The events throughout *Charlotte's Web* are marked by the changing seasons and the passing of time. Whether it is the songs of the crickets, the falling of the snow, or the changing colors of the trees, each season has distinct traits that the people and animals on Zuckerman's farm come to recognize. Because most animals have much shorter lives than people, each season is especially important to them.

Charlotte's Web takes place in New England, a part of the country that experiences four distinct seasons: Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. Each season brings with it a set of environmental changes that all animals and people experience, but also emotions and life events that are unique to each creature.





MODULE TWO: APPRECIATING DIVERSITY AND EMBRACING CHANGE



ACTIVITY 2: **Changing Seasons**

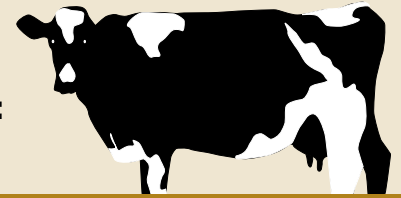
Below is a chart of the four seasons through the eyes of Wilbur. Here are some of the sights and sounds Wilbur experiences and emotions he feels with each passing season.

<p>SPRING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * buds on trees * a lot of rain and mud * croaking frogs and singing crickets * new life everywhere * Gussy, the goose, sits on her eggs * Wilbur is born during springtime and happily spends most of his days with Fern * During his second spring, Wilbur is joyful with the birth of Charlotte's spiders 	<p>SUMMER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * trees full of green leaves * plenty of warmth and sunshine * 4th of July fireworks * Fern and Avery are out of school * corn fields with tall green stalks * a lot of bugs for Charlotte to eat * Gussy's babies are born * berries for sale at the farm * Wilbur is relieved and happy to know that Charlotte is helping him survive with her web * Wilbur watches groups of people arrive to see him and Charlotte's webs
<p>AUTUMN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * leaves begin to change to red, orange and yellow * leaves eventually fall from the trees * cranberries and apples are picked * crisp autumn air * the County Fair takes place * Wilbur is excited and nervous about being judged at the fair * Wilbur's happiness from winning a medal turns into sadness when he realizes that Charlotte is about to die. 	<p>WINTER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * snow flakes * cold air * quiet, still nights * Fern and Avery go sledding * Christmas on the farm * Wilbur dreads the thought of winter because he thinks he will be killed in the smokehouse * Wilbur is thrilled when he is spared from the smokehouse and lives to experience the first snows of winter





MODULE TWO: APPRECIATING DIVERSITY AND EMBRACING CHANGE



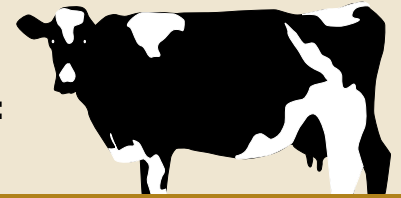
ACTIVITY 2: **Changing Seasons**

The seasons vary depending on where you live in the United States. Some parts of the country, such as the states that make up New England, experience these four distinct seasons. However, other parts of the country may experience only one or two seasons. For example, in southern Florida it is very green, sunny and warm throughout the greater part of the year.

Think about the seasons you have experienced so far in your life. What are some of the things you see, hear, smell or feel with each passing season? Are there holidays, birthdays or memories that fall into certain seasons? Using the example of Wilbur's chart, create your own chart of seasons. If you only experience one or two seasons, fill-in your thoughts on the remaining season(s) based on what you have learned in books or viewed on television and in movies. Have fun!

SPRING	SUMMER
AUTUMN	WINTER





ACTIVITY 3: Coping with Loss

Activity Type: Group Discussion

Link to the Film

Note: This may be read aloud by a group member/the facilitator for all to hear, or it may be individual reading before the activity.

In addition to being a positive story about friendship, love and everyday miracles, *Charlotte's Web* is also a story that deals with loss and death. In a simple way, *Charlotte's Web* is built around the circle of life. Each year new buds form on the trees of Zuckerman's farm and eventually the same buds become dead leaves on the ground; animals are born and eventually die. Charlotte saves young Wilbur's life, while at the very end of her own.

Although Charlotte dies, she leaves a legacy of love and friendship that Wilbur is determined to continue. He goes to great efforts to protect her egg nest and ensure that her children enter the world with his friendship.

Read the following conversation between Wilbur and Charlotte. Wilbur just won his medal at the County Fair and he is very excited.

Wilbur

Won't it be great to be back home again?

(no response)

Charlotte?

Charlotte

I won't be going back to the barn, Wilbur.

Wilbur

What? What are you talking about?

Charlotte

I'm languishing.

Wilbur

But – I thought you just said you were pleased.

Charlotte

No – languishing. It means I'm dying.

Wilbur

What?

Charlotte

I don't even have the strength to climb into the crate.

He knows she's telling the truth.

Tears collect in his eyes.

Wilbur

No! You can't die!

Charlotte

I can. And I will. It is the natural cycle of life.

Wilbur

Not now, though. Not here!
(thinks:)

I know. I'll take you home. All you have to do is climb down; just climb down and I'll carry you the rest of the way –

Charlotte

I can't climb down.

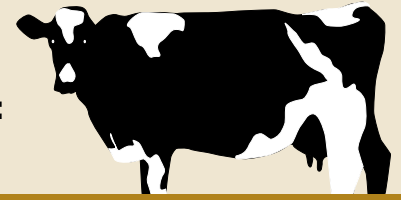
Wilbur

-- or Templeton will –

Charlotte





This is where I shall stay and this is where I shall die. But you, Wilbur – you will live. Life and death happen, as surely as the seasons, and there is nothing to be done about it.





ACTIVITY 3: **Coping with Loss**

Group Discussion Questions

-  Describe the change in Wilbur's emotions during this conversation. How does he feel when he first begins speaking with Charlotte? How does he feel towards the end?
-  What does sadness feel like?
-  Why do you think Charlotte appears so straight-forward and brave about facing her own death? Do you think she is really scared or sad?
-  Why does Charlotte compare life and death to the seasons?

WRITE A LETTER

Write a letter to Wilbur, expressing your sadness over the loss of Charlotte. Try to cheer him up and give him advice for dealing with the pain of losing a close friend.





MODULE THREE: **Farm Life**

Notes for the Facilitator:

The setting of *Charlotte's Web* provides youth with a glimpse into everyday life on a small American farm. As the seasons change on Zuckerman's farm, so do the daily rituals and activities of the farm workers and animals. Whether it's the apples ripening on the orchard trees, the arrival of the annual County Fair, or the harvesting of field crops, each season is beautifully depicted through rich description in the book and vivid images on the screen.

For youth who do not come from small farming communities like the one depicted in *Charlotte's Web*, this module opens the door to learning about agriculture and the animals that live on farms. It is important for youth to gain an understanding of ways of life that may be different from the one they are accustomed to. The activities in this module will allow youth to see the connection between everyday consumer and grocery items and the farms from which they derive.

Objectives

Youth will gain an understanding of how farms sustain all people

Youth will learn about real life connections to *Charlotte's Web*

Youth will write a short story from the perspective of a farm animal





ACTIVITY 1: **Where Does Your Food Come From?**

Activity Type: Individual Activity

Link to the Film

Note: This may be read aloud by a group member/the facilitator for all to hear, or it may be individual reading before the activity.

Charlotte's Web displays a farming way of life that many people in the United States are not directly exposed to on a regular basis. Farming is typically done in locations where there is enough open land to plant fields of crops and where there is space for farm animals. Most people in the United States live in or near cities where houses, apartments, shopping centers, offices, factories and other buildings crowd most of the available land. However, farming or **agriculture** is necessary for the **economy** and well-being of all people, whether they live near farms or not. All people rely on the vegetables, fruits, grains, dairy, meats and other materials that are produced by farmers.

TYPES OF FARMING

Nowadays there are many options for people who want to buy foods that come from farms. People no longer have to rely on the seasonal fruits and vegetables that come from the closest farm or local market. In fact, with today's technology and transportation, meats, **produce** and materials from farms can be transported all over the world!

Local Farming

The Zuckerman farm is a local family-owned farm. The Zuckerman family sells their produce to people that live in or near their town. People who are in favor of local farming think that local farming is better for the environment, people's health and the economy. Buying foods directly from local farms, cuts down on the costs and fuel that it would take for a truck or plane to transport food from further away. Also, food that does not have to be transported far distances usually tastes fresher and is better for you. Lastly, buying from local farmers helps support the local economy.

Organic Farming

Organic food is produced according to regulated legal standards. For crops, it means they were grown without the use of chemicals that help ward away insects and crop diseases. It also means that the crops are not grown with artificial fertilizers or processed with food additives. For meat, it means that the animals were raised without the routine use of antibiotics and without the use of growth hormones. Also, at all levels, organic food is produced without the use of genetically modified organisms. Historically, organic farms have been small, local family-run farms - which is why organic food was once only available in small stores or farmers' markets. Now, organic foods are becoming much more widely available. Many people who choose to buy organic foods want to support local farmers and believe that the food is healthier without all the chemicals.





ACTIVITY 1: **Where Does Your Food Come From?**

Global Farming

Because of trucks, boats and planes, in addition to technology used to maintain freshness, farm produce can be transported all over the world through global trade. People who support global trade believe that third world countries, poorer countries, are helped through the sale of their crops to other countries. Also, being able to trade food between countries, allows for a greater variety of produce in supermarkets at all times during the year. For example, tropical fruits such as bananas and mangos can be available in the winter, too.

Information adapted from a number of sources including *Wikipedia*, www.wikipedia.org

Key Words & Ideas

Agriculture (the work of raising crops or livestock)

Economy (everything related to the production and consumption of goods and services in an area)

Produce (farm-produced goods, generally limited to fruits and vegetables)

WHERE DO YOUR FRUITS, VEGETABLES, DAIRY OR MEAT COME FROM?


Do you ever think about where the apple you had for snack-time or the eggs you had for breakfast came from?

For a day try to keep track of all the fruit, vegetables, dairy products (milk, yogurt, cheese, ice-cream, etc.), eggs and meat that you eat. This includes canned and packaged foods, too. See if you can trace back where these items came from –country, state, or local farm. Are any of these items organic or from your local farmer's market?

Hints

- look for stickers on fruits or vegetables
- look for contact information on the backs of milk containers and other dairy and meat products
- ask questions of the people who handle the food (school cafeteria workers, restaurant owners, grocery store workers, your parents or guardians who do the grocery shopping, etc.).





MODULE THREE: FARM LIFE

ACTIVITY 2: **Real-Life Connections to Charlotte's Web**



Activity Type: Individual or Group Reading

LINK TO THE FILM:

Note: This may be read aloud by a group member/the facilitator for all to hear, or it may be individual reading before the activity.

Charlotte's Web, the book, carefully describes every aspect of the Zuckerman farm – from the animals, to the changing seasons, to the old barn. When you read the descriptions you almost feel like you are there. Read the following excerpt from the book to get a sense of the old barn:

The Barn was very large. It was very old. It smelled of hay and it smelled of manure. It smelled of the perspiration of tired horses and the wonderful sweet breath of patient cows. It often had a sort of peaceful smell – as though nothing bad could happen ever again in the world. It smelled of grain and of harness dressing and of axle grease and of rubber boots and of new rope. And whenever the cat was given fish-head to eat, the barn would smell of fish. But mostly it smelled of hay, for there was always hay in the great loft up overhead. And there was always hay being pitched down to the cows and the horses and the sheep.

Charlotte's Web by E.B. White; Harper Collins. 1952. p. 13

This description is so vivid because the author does not just focus on what's visual. He emphasizes the smells and feel of the old barn more than anything else. Why do you think E.B. White, the author of this famous book, was so successful at capturing the sights, sounds, smells and feel of the Zuckerman farm?





ACTIVITY 2: **Real-Life Connections to Charlotte's Web**

Readings That Takes You Behind the Scenes of *Charlotte's Web*

READING 1

***Charlotte's Web*: Spotlight on the popular children's book**

By Holly Hartman (www.infoplease.com)

Charlotte's Web—the best-selling children's paperback of all time—was described by its author as “a story of friendship and salvation on a farm.” If you've already read the book, you know about the friendship that grows between Wilbur, a runt pig, and Charlotte, a heroic spider. But you may not know that the book's author, E. B. White, was himself a friend to animals.

Barnyard Smells

White researched every detail that went into his three books for children: *Stuart Little* (1945), *Charlotte's Web* (1952), and *The Trumpet of the Swan* (1970). For *Charlotte's Web* the research was close to home—at White's own farm in Maine. As a result, the barnyard of *Charlotte's Web* seems real in every detail, and so do the habits of its animals. Despite Charlotte's sophisticated vocabulary, she is still a spider who traps flies in her web and sucks their blood. Likewise, though Wilbur expresses deep emotions, he is still a pig who likes to lie in the mud and breathe in the warm smell of manure.

Saving a Pig's Life

In *Charlotte's Web*, a spider saves a pig from slaughter. In real life, the author had tried to save a pig—and failed. A few years before *Charlotte's Web*, White wrote an essay about caring for a dying pig at his farm. Even though White had raised the pig to make bacon, at the end he found himself desperately trying to save the pig's life, “cast suddenly in the role of pig's friend and physician.”

Although farm pigs are, in a sense, born to die—being destined for the butcher—White had always had mixed feelings about this fact of farm life. “One day when I was on my way to feed the pig, I began to feel sorry for the pig because, like most pigs, he was doomed,” he recalled. “This made me sad. So I started thinking of ways to save a pig's life.” Soon the story of Wilbur was born.

Inspired by Spiders

Charlotte A. Cavatica, the heroine of the book, was also born of observations in White's barn. “I had been watching a big, gray spider at work and was impressed by how clever she was at weaving,” he remembered. But what would happen if a clever spider could weave not only webs, but words? *Charlotte's Web* explores this possibility.





ACTIVITY 2: **Real-Life Connections to Charlotte's Web**

A Change of Scene

During the 1920s, White was a successful essayist and poet in New York City. In 1939, however, he moved with his family to a farm in quiet North Brooklin, Maine. “I can’t claim to be a real farmer,” White said, “but we do farm and I like to work outside.” The Whites had sheep, chickens, and pigs, as well as rambling gardens. Surrounded by mountains and sea, White lived on his farm until he died in 1985. He wrote his children’s novels at an old typewriter in his boathouse. When not writing or doing farm chores, White would ride his bike long distances, even in bad weather.

The Life of the Imagination

In a letter to a young reader, White wrote:

“In real life, a spider doesn’t spin words in her web . . . But real life is only one kind of life—there is also the life of the imagination. And although my stories are imaginary, I like to think that there is some truth in them, too—truth about the way people and animals feel and think and act.”

READING 2

Wilbur Spared a Trip to the Butcher

By Doug Davis

The Daily News Journal, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

July 7, 2006

It’s a case of life imitating fiction.

In E.B. White’s children’s book, “Charlotte’s Web,” Wilbur the pig was saved from the butcher. Now, a real Rutherford County piglet has been similarly spared.

The real-life piglet, now seven or eight weeks old, posed last week for a photo shoot for the cover of a new edition by HarperCollins Children’s Books of the children’s classic.

“Wilbur may never know when he becomes a star,” said John L. Batey, in a story after the pictures were taken by a Nashville photographer. “Within a year, he’ll head to market.”

The fame of Wilbur — or the interest in his fate — exceeded expectations.

“John never knew when he said that he would start the discussion that has been generated,” said Melissa Batey, John’s wife of more than 29 years.

Calls from Canada, Boston and New York came to the Batey’s home.





ACTIVITY 2: **Real-Life Connections to Charlotte's Web**

"A Saskatchewan radio station thought our famous pigs would be of interest to their listeners," Melissa Batey said.

A woman from Boston (a vegetarian) called to see what was going to happen to Wilbur. Even the publishing company called to offer a pig sanctuary for Wilbur. Calls came in from Kingsport and Chattanooga.

"I've had people call that I haven't heard from in 30 years," said John Batey.

One Murfreesboro animal lover's e-mail written to the Daily News Journal editor pled for Batey to spare Wilbur's life.

"I am married to a lovely man and anyone who knows John knows he would be honest and fair to everyone," said Melissa Batey. "But he didn't read the book. I had to point out that the farmer was not the good guy until the end of the book."

The long-time Blackman community swine farmer admits he didn't remember the story.

"I wasn't going to be the bad old farmer in the book," John L. Batey said. "I'm going to be keeping him myself. (Wilbur) is going to be a farm animal."

John L. Batey is afraid his pig would get fat and have a short life span in a zoo or animal sanctuary.

"We are going to build a little Wilbur house for him," the 63-year-old said.

The pig will be in a field near the Batey's house, where they can keep an eye on him.

The farmer has even contacted a nutritionist with the Tennessee Farmer's Co-op to work on a special diet for the pig, so that Wilbur will lead a long life.

"I have no idea what a pig's life span is, but we will try to do the best we can by Wilbur," said Melissa Batey. "Wilbur will have a good life."

John L. Batey admits Wilbur has taken a whole new pig path from the others on his farm. They normally are fed corn and soybeans and head to market after about six months.

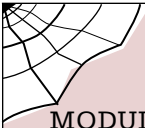
Wilbur even went to church on Sunday.

"All the preschoolers knew about 'Charlotte's Web' and Wilbur," John L. Batey explained.

The Blackman United Methodist Church children hugged and petted Wilbur — one little pig who won't be going to market.

"I just didn't know he was going to be so famous," John Batey said. "He's become a hall of famer real fast."





MODULE THREE: FARM LIFE



ACTIVITY 3: Write a Short Story from a Farm Animal's Perspective

Activity Type: Individual or Partner Activity

Link to the Film

Note: This may be read aloud by a group member/the facilitator for all to hear, or it may be individual reading before the activity.

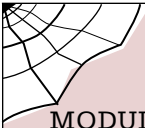
Charlotte's Web is a special story that gives human emotion to barnyard animals. Even though the animals do not have super-powers or the physical capabilities of human beings, they have very human emotions such as love, loneliness, sadness, happiness, and fright. We do not usually think of different types of animals being able to communicate with one another and develop friendships. However, through the imagination of E.B. White, these connections happen in *Charlotte's Web*. Wilbur is over-joyed when he realizes he will be spared from the smokehouse and overcome with grief when his best friend Charlotte dies.

Key Questions

In real life do you think animals can have such strong, human-like emotions?

In real life do you think different types of animals can be friends with one another?





MODULE THREE: FARM LIFE

ACTIVITY 3: Write a Short Story from a Farm Animal's Perspective

Write a Story

Either on your own or with a partner, write a short story from the perspective of a farm animal. Examples of farm animals include:

- * pigs
- * geese
- * llamas
- * sheep
- * chickens
- * donkeys
- * horses
- * goats
- * cows
- * turkeys

Pick your animal and do a little research on their real life characteristics and lifestyle. For example: What does the animal look like? What does the animal eat?

To learn more about your farm animal, visit the farm animals web page of the Humane Society at www.hsus.org/farm/resources/animals/

Next, give the animal a human name and personality traits, just like the kindness of Wilbur or the intelligence and generosity of Charlotte. This is where you can get creative! You can also create barnyard friends for your animal.

Use the chart below to help you get started:

My farm animal is a _____

His/her name is _____

Three words to describe the personality of him/her are:
 _____, _____, and _____.

Once you have written your short story, share it with others. See if you can act-out your stories as well. Have fun!



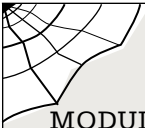


MODULE FOUR: **Reach Out to Others**

This module allows youth to explore actions they can take as individuals and in groups to reach out to people and animals in need of companionship. The activity is designed to heighten youth awareness of how they can have immediate as well as lasting positive impact on the recipients of their generosity.

As young people develop throughout the preteen years of 8 -12, they benefit greatly from experiencing their own personal power, capabilities and talents. Parents, educators, youth leaders and child development specialists know that the best way for youth to learn responsibility is to take on responsibility. This process is captured in both the book and the movie, *Charlotte's Web*, in the character of Fern. She takes on the responsibility of saving and caring for her beloved pig, Wilbur. The following activity will encourage youth to act on their beliefs and to communicate effectively with adults.





MODULE FOUR: REACH OUT TO OTHERS






ACTIVITY 1: Service Project Designed to Provide Companionship to People or Animals in Need



Dear Young People

Think about a service project that your group would like to do to reach out to people or animals in need of companionship. Fern adopts Wilbur and provides him with her love and protection. Charlotte bravely reaches out to Wilbur when he is lonely and fearful. Think about ways that you can reach out to a group of people or animals that would appreciate your kindness and generosity.




LOOK FOR WAYS TO WORK IN COOPERATION WITH ADULTS.

-  Plan and conduct your project with the guidance and support of an adult partner.
-  Read some of the tips for working well with adults below.
-  Have your adult partner(s) read the tips for adults.
-  Brainstorm your project ideas and plan the steps to carry it out. Use the F.I.L.M. service-learning supplement, available at www.youthfilmproject.org
-  Then, get to work!!

3 TIPS FOR KIDS WORKING WITH ADULTS:

- 1) Most adults have good intentions. Remember, they are simply not used to working in partnership with young people.
- 2) When adults criticize you, it doesn't necessarily mean they are putting you down or don't value your contribution; it may mean the adult is treating you the same way he/she would another adult.
- 3) Adults may not be aware of the capabilities of young people. Show them what you know.

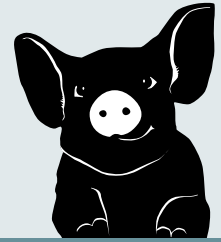
HERE ARE A FEW IDEAS—BUT, IT IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO ORGANIZE YOUR OWN WAYS TO TAKE THE LEAD!

-  Does your community have a hospital or nursing home? Consider visiting hospital patients or nursing home residents, particularly those that do not have a lot of friends or family members who regularly visit. Make "spider webs" out of art supplies with positive words in the center. Decorate the patients' rooms with the webs.
-  Write letters of encouragement and friendship to soldiers that are serving in other countries. Tell them about Charlotte's bravery in *Charlotte's Web*.
-  Visit your local animal shelter and learn about the animals there in need of a home. Make flyers advertising the strengths of each animal – include stories and photos. Hang the flyers around town, encouraging residents to visit with or adopt animals from the shelter.

3 TIPS FOR ADULTS WORKING WITH KIDS:

- 1) Share the responsibility of leadership. Provide guidance, but avoid total control. Be sure to share decision-making.
- 2) Listen carefully to youth and try to understand their perspectives, without interrupting or reinterpreting.
- 3) Share all work activities, even the tedious ones.





CHARLOTTE'S WEB: **Post Program Evaluation**

FACILITATORS OF THE CHARLOTTE'S WEB: BECOME A TRUE FRIEND PROGRAM

Please take a few moments to answer the questions below. It should only take about 5 minutes. Once you have submitted the survey you will be entered to win a copy of the DVD, book and an activity guide. Good Luck!

Organization _____ City/State: _____

Contact Name: _____ Contact Email: _____

Organization Website: _____

Approximately how many youth does your organization serve? _____

How do you classify your organization?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Based | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Based |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Library or Museum | <input type="checkbox"/> Out of School |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faith Based | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Parks and Recreation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> After School | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |

Approximately how many youth completed one or more steps in the *Charlotte's Web* program?
Steps include: See the Movie and Read the Book, Participate in Activities from the Activity Guide,
Complete a Service Project _____

What age range participated in the program? _____

Please rate your overall impression of the activity guide.

<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: inline-block; text-align: center; line-height: 30px; margin: 0 auto;">5</div> Useful and appropriate for my organization	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: inline-block; text-align: center; line-height: 30px; margin: 0 auto;">4</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: inline-block; text-align: center; line-height: 30px; margin: 0 auto;">3</div> Moderately useful	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: inline-block; text-align: center; line-height: 30px; margin: 0 auto;">2</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: inline-block; text-align: center; line-height: 30px; margin: 0 auto;">1</div> Not at all useful or appropriate for my organization
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Comments:

Please give us any additional feedback and/or suggestions you have to help us improve our future F.I.L.M. programs.

May we contact you for additional information? Yes No

If yes, what is the best way to contact you? _____



Return to F.I.L.M. Evaluation 1319 F Street NW Suite 402, Washington, DC 20004 or fax to (202) 393-4517