

## Teacher Guide

# Standing Up for Yourself

What does it mean to stand up  
for yourself?

*Mean kids and bullies are a part of life. But that doesn't mean they always have to "win." These stories will show how several characters learned to stand up for themselves, and for others.*

**GENRE**  
Fiction

**GRADES 3–5**

**LEXILE 330L–910L**

**STRAND**  
Exploring Genres:  
Fiction

# Unit Overview

## Essential Question(s)

### What does it mean to stand up for yourself?

## Objectives

Students will know and be able to

- identify the conflict in a story.
- describe different types of bullying.
- analyze characters and motivation.
- explain how to deal with difficult situations.
- demonstrate the qualities of an effective participant in a group discussion.
- write about the stories they read, responding to thoughtful questions and supporting ideas with concrete details, quotations, and other text evidence.
- determine the meaning of unknown words by using context clues and other vocabulary strategies, as appropriate.

## Content Standards

### CCSS Anchor Standards for Reading

#### Key Ideas and Details

- Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence ... to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
- Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
- Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text ...

#### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

#### Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

- Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

### Anchor Standards for Writing

#### Text Types and Purposes

- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately ...

#### Production and Distribution of Writing

- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

- Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
- Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

#### Research to Build and Present Knowledge

- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

#### Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening

##### Comprehension and Collaboration

- Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners ...

##### Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

- Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

### Target Vocabulary

The following words are drawn from this unit and can be useful in writing about or discussing the stories in this Collection:

- **awkward:** a feeling of being uncomfortable or uneasy  
*Adam felt **awkward** when he realized everyone was staring at him.*
- **compassion:** caring about other people and their feelings  
*My parents taught all of us to show **compassion** for people who are sad or facing problems.*
- **confidence:** belief in yourself or others  
*If you had more **confidence**, you wouldn't worry about what others think.*
- **insecure:** feeling uncertain or unsure of yourself  
*The thought of having to meet so many new people made Marie feel **insecure**.*
- **jealous:** wanting something that someone else has  
*Karen was **jealous** of her sister's talent.*
- **unfazed:** not bothered  
*The new boy seemed **unfazed** by the bully's threats.*

## Writing

Through a writing exchange with their Pen Pals, students will respond to thought-provoking questions about different ways people can stand up for themselves. They will also share their own questions about the theme, communicate evidence-based ideas, reflect on their learning, and build a personal relationship with their Pen Pals.

## Speaking and Listening

Over the course of the unit, students will participate in group discussions, using the selections they have read and their communications with their Pen Pals to support their statements and opinions.

## Unit Resources

Teacher Guide, Vocabulary Strategies, Printable Writing Guides, Writing Mini-Lessons, Checklist for Pen Pal Letters

# Standing Up for Yourself Collection



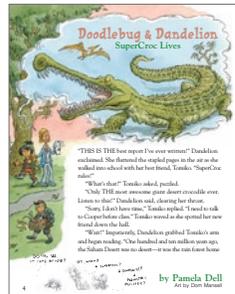
**They Made Me Do It (330L)**  
*Every few weeks, someone at school gets the silent treatment. Cici hates taking part in this “game,” but she doesn’t really have a choice. Or does she?*



**Beetle Juice to the Rescue (510L)**  
*Lou is about to start at a new school. There’s just one problem. Her right hand is covered with disgusting warts, and a girl named Josie wants to make sure everyone else knows about them!*



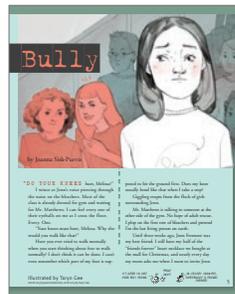
**The Tanner Mystery (600L)**  
*Josh is sure it’s only a matter of time before Tanner beats him up at school. But what can Josh do to stop him? Find out how Josh’s love of detective stories helps him figure out the “mystery” of Tanner the bully.*



**SuperCroc Lives! (630L)**  
*Sometimes only a good friend will be brave enough to tell you when you’re acting like a creep. Luckily, Dandelion has a friend who’s willing to do just that!*



**The Bully and the Shrimp (680L)**  
*How do you stand up to a bully who’s twice your size and charges a playground tax? Trust Adam to figure out the answer with a little help from his little Uncle Mo—a former professional wrestler.*



**Bully (910L)**  
*Melissa’s best friend, Jenn, has found new friends. Now she treats Melissa like she has some awful disease. Find out how the class “weirdo” teaches Melissa that what others think of you doesn’t matter.*

# Teaching the Lesson

## Introduce the Collection

1. **Engage.** Break students into small groups and hand each group one of the following scenarios to discuss:
  - *There’s a kid in school who teases you every chance he gets. He makes fun of what you’re wearing, how you speak, and even how you walk. But what can you do? He’s a lot bigger—and meaner—than you.*
  - *You and your friends eat in the school lunchroom. Every day, you wait patiently in line to buy your milk or fruit juice. But each day, just when you’re almost at the front of the line, a few of the older kids shove in front of you and say, “Thanks for saving my place, dork.” This has gone on for weeks. What can you do?*
  - *You’re sitting near some very popular kids. They ask you to join them and you’re excited: everyone wants to be a part of that group! But then they start making fun of some kids they don’t know are your friends. What do you do?*
  - *You’re a guy, and you love to do crafts. Your friends are all into sports and they’re always telling you you’re weird. What do you say?*
  - *You hear that someone is spreading an untrue rumor about you. Worse yet, people seem to be believing it. What do you do?*

Bring the class together and ask representatives from each group to share how their group responded. As students discuss the scenarios, however, make sure they are aware that most of these situations are forms of bullying—hurting someone else with either words or actions. Also explain that bullying can take on many forms: physical, emotional, and social. Ask students if they can describe bullying they have seen or had to deal with themselves. (Be sensitive, though, to situations that might exist in your own classroom, and don’t insist that anyone share.)

2. **Present the Essential Question: *What does it mean to stand up for yourself?*** Continue the Engage activity by telling students that in this unit, they will be reading the ways characters respond to difficult situations. Present the Essential Question, and ask students what they think “standing up for yourself” means. (Possible answers: not letting anyone bully you or take advantage of you, being proud of who you are, not being afraid to state your own beliefs and opinions.) Tell students that as they read, they will be collecting ideas for a “Standing Up Handbook.” Encourage them to be looking and listening for ideas about how they can stand up for themselves in the kinds of situations you have been talking about.

3. **Build Background.** Introduce or review the terms “motivation” and “conflict.” Explain that a conflict can be a struggle between people or groups of people, or between people and nature or their surroundings. It can also be a struggle someone has with himself or herself. (For example, when you can’t decide the right way to act in a situation.) Ask students for examples of each type of conflict.

Next, talk about motivation. Explain that motivation is the reason a person or character does something, or acts the way he or she does. Tell students that as they read these stories, they should be looking not only for the conflicts, but also for the reasons behind each character’s actions.

## Present the Read-Aloud

1. **Preview the Selection.** Introduce the Read-Aloud story, “SuperCroc Lives!” Explain that in this story, they should listen to find out why one character decided it was time to stand up to her best friend.
  - Remind them to begin preparing for their Pen Pal communication. To set the stage, consider saying: *Remember that your Pen Pal is reading this article too. As you listen, jot down details you didn’t know about money, and think about which of those details you might want to share with your Pen Pal.*
  - Encourage students to listen for details that build understanding around the Essential Question, and to write down any questions they have about the story. Tell them to think especially about the conflicts, and about the characters’ motivations.
2. **Reading Strategy: Making Inferences.** Remind students that sometimes writers don’t explain everything that happens in a story. It’s up to the readers to figure things out based on what they read or observe, and what they already know. For example, if a character in a story rushes into class each day with his head down, and quickly takes his seat without talking to anyone, readers can infer that the character is shy or insecure, or perhaps even afraid of something. Challenge students to make inferences as you read “SuperCroc Lives!”
3. **Introduce Vocabulary.** Before reading the story, introduce the following two words, which will help students understand the main character’s actions:
  - **annoyed:** slightly angry or irritated
  - **guilty:** feeling ashamed of something you have done or said

To help students internalize the meanings of the words, brainstorm with them things that make them feel annoyed, and actions that make them feel guilty. (For the word “guilty,” you may wish to point out that some words have multiple meanings, and that “guilty” can also mean “responsible for doing something wrong.” For example, someone can be guilty of a crime.)

4. **Read and Model.** Complete the following activities as you read the selection.

- **Making Inferences.** As you read this story, make inferences throughout concerning why Dandelion is acting the way she does. For example, pause after reading “‘Fine, just leave,’ Dandelion shot back, annoyed.” Say: *Hmmm. I know that Dandelion is really proud of her report, but her friend Tomiko didn’t seem to want to take time to listen. When she leaves, Dandelion is annoyed. I can infer that she is hurt by Tomiko’s actions.* Stop again after “... she just couldn’t help herself” in the next column. Say: *Dandelion says she can’t help how mean she just acted toward the little kid. I can probably infer that she’s acting mean because she’s still angry about what just happened with Tomiko, and she’s taking it out on others.* Point out that the next paragraph tells you that your inference is correct: Dandelion is hurt that her best friend didn’t care to listen to the report.
- **Making Connections.** These stories are particularly good for making “text-to-self” connections. Look for opportunities to share times when you felt or acted the way Dandelion did, or when you had to stand up to a friend who was behaving badly, just as Tomiko did.

5. **Discuss.** After you read, discuss with students the main points of the story and something they learned. You may want to use the following questions:

- Dandelion suddenly began acting like a bully in school. Do you think she usually acted like that? Support your answer with evidence from the story.
- What happened that made Dandelion think Tomiko and Cooper were best friends?
- Do you think Tomiko meant to hurt Dandelion’s feelings? Is there anything she could have done to avoid the misunderstanding?
- What do you think of what Tomiko did in class after Dandelion’s report? What was her motivation, or reason, for saying what she did?
- How did Dandelion and Tomiko work out their problem?

## Explore the Collection

1. **Preview the Selections.** Explain to students that they will now be exploring stories from the Collection on their own! Direct them to go online and preview the stories in the Standing Up for Yourself Collection. Encourage them to read the summaries and to skim each story to decide which one interests them the most. Explain that while they are encouraged to read several articles in this Collection, they will be choosing one as a “focus story” that they will read deeply and use as the focus of their first letter with their Pen Pal.
2. **Select a Focus Article.** After students have had time to preview the stories, tell them to pick one that they’d like to spend more time on and discuss with their classmates and Pen Pal. Tell them that they can and should think about the difficulty level, but encourage them to “stretch” their reading skills a little if they think they might like the story. Once students make their selection, use the Teacher Tool to approve or redirect their choice.
3. **Read and Take Notes.** Suggest that students keep a Character Motivation Chart as they read and discuss the stories. Tell them that it will help them understand why different characters act the way they do. Suggest that they use the following format, and point out they may have to infer the reasons behind some of the actions based on details in the story.

Character	Action	Motivation/Reason	Text Evidence

4. **Prepare for the Pen Pal Exchange.** As students continue to read, check to see how many Pen Pal letters have arrived. Send reminders to the Pen Pals as necessary. Then use the guidelines on the next page to facilitate the first exchange. (Handouts of the Writing Guides are available at the end of the lesson, if you wish to print them out for your students to use.) When the Exchange is complete, continue teaching the lesson on page 11.

# Pen Pal Exchange 1

**Read and Share.** Give students time to read and enjoy their letters. Consider having them form small groups to share interesting details they've learned about their Pen Pals.

**Read Closely.** Encourage students to do a close reading of the Pen Pal letter. Explain that this will help them prepare a thoughtful response. Consider printing the letters and having students

- underline all their Pen Pal's personal questions.
- highlight questions that are related to the conflict of the story.
- draw a check mark next to anything that helps them better understand the story.

**Plan the Response.** Prepare students to write the letter. Provide the following Writing Guide, and walk them through the steps to make sure they understand each one. You may also wish to review some of the sample letters on the site, asking students to explain what makes each letter a good one.

## WRITING GUIDE

1. **Be Friendly.** Tell your Pen Pal how you felt when you received another letter! Respond to what your Pen Pal has written to you. Ask questions about your Pen Pal. Share what's important in your life.
2. **First Thoughts.** Now it's time to share ideas about what you read. Be sure to start by giving the title using quotation marks. How did you feel after you finished reading the story? Did you like it or dislike it? Give your Pen Pal clear reasons for your answer.
3. **Share Some More.** What parts of the story did you like most or least? The characters? The descriptions? The plot? Be sure to give reasons and examples for your choices. Try to use any new vocabulary words you've learned.
4. **Answer and Ask Questions.** Answer your Pen Pal's questions about the story. Include details to support your answer. Then ask your Pen Pal any questions you still have about the story or characters.
5. **End with a Friendly Goodbye.** Share personal connections you felt with the story. Ask if the story had any special meaning for your Pen Pal. Say what you're looking forward to in the next letter.

Remind students to share their ideas about the conflict of the story and reasons characters act the way they do.

Consider teaching a writing mini-lesson on improving sentences to help students express ideas clearly and simply.

Suggest that students share personal connections to the story.

**Draft.** Give students time to compose their letters offline or online. Some students are more comfortable writing their ideas down first on paper.

**Revise and Edit.** Support letter revision through peer-editing, use of the Self-Checklist, or student/teacher writing conferences. Once they have completed their revisions, remind students to check their letters for correct spelling and punctuation. Model how to use online tools such as spellcheck to help catch errors.

**Design and Send.** Remind students that their letters will come to you for approval before they are sent to Pen Pals. Also decide at this point whether you want to request that Pen Pals respond to the letters students send. If so, be sure to set clear deadlines.

## Explore the Collection *(cont.)*

5. **Discuss the Story.** Have students form small groups based on the focus story they read. Provide the following questions for them to use as discussion prompts. Tell students that they will be sharing what they learned with the rest of the class, and suggest that one or more students record the answers they come up with. Also, encourage them to write a brief summary of the story that will tell their classmates what it was about.

### Discussion Prompts

- What is the main problem faced by the main character or characters in the story?
- How did each character feel about what was happening?
- Why do you think the different characters acted the way they did?
- How did the main character deal with the situation? Do you think the solution was a good one?
- What can you learn from the story about how to stand up to others?

For ideas on how to set up discussion groups and help facilitate the conversations, see the Discussion Strategies Guide on the Teacher Resources page @ [crickettogether.com](http://crickettogether.com).

## Reflect and Discuss

1. **Share Ideas.** Bring the small groups together for a whole-class discussion. Ask students to share what they discussed in their groups with the rest of the class. Move from group to group, asking volunteers to share the summary of the story and then important ideas from their discussion.
2. **Synthesize.** After small groups have shared their ideas, discuss the following questions as a class. Encourage students to support their answers with details and evidence from the selection they read.
  - Why do some people treat others badly?
  - Are all bullies bad people?
  - Why is it important to stand up for yourself?
  - What are some ways you can stand up for yourself in a difficult situation?
  - Are there times when you shouldn't try to stand up for yourself? What can you do in those situations?

Suggest that students add to their “Standing Up Handbook” as they listen to the discussions. If students have received a second letter from their Pen Pal, they can also read it at this time.

3. **Revisit the Essential Question.** Bring the class together to allow students to share what they have learned. Then bring the conversation back to the Essential Question: *What does it mean to stand up for yourself?* Allow students to share how their understanding around this question has grown based on their reading, discussions, and letter exchanges.
4. **Continue the Pen Pal Exchange.** In each CricketTogether Unit, students and Pen Pals are expected to exchange at least one set of letters. However, most Pen Pal pairs are eager to share more! When and how to encourage these additional Exchanges is up to you. Feel free to choose one or both options below, or to develop your own ideas for continuing the dialogue. For all options, students can use the Letter Center to draft their letters.
  - **Informal Exchanges.** Allow students and Pen Pals to continue discussing what they've learned, or to share more details about themselves or what they've been doing in any way they wish.
  - **Formal Exchange.** Use the guidelines on the next page to help students share more about the insights they've gained from the unit, and to wrap up their thinking about the Essential Question.

# Pen Pal Exchange 2

Tell students that they've now seen and discussed several ways that people can stand up for themselves. Now they'll have the opportunity to share what they've learned in a final letter to their Pen Pals! If your students have not previously read additional stories from the Standing Up for Yourself Collection, encourage them to do so at this time.

Prepare students to write their concluding letter. Provide the following Writing Guide, and walk them through the steps to make sure they understand each one.

## WRITING GUIDE

1. **Continue the Reading Discussion.** Respond to any new questions sent by your Pen Pal. Then ask any final questions of your own about what you've read, or ideas your Pen Pal has shared with you.
2. **Share Your Thoughts.** Tell your Pen Pal your reactions to what you've read. Also share your thoughts about the Essential Question: *What does it mean to stand up for yourself?* And what are some ways you can do that? Support your ideas with details from the stories, your notes, and the discussions you had. Tell your Pen Pal what kinds of stories you would like to read next.
3. **Thank Your Pen Pal.** Thank your Pen Pal for exploring this Collection with you! Mention some of the things he or she wrote about that were especially helpful.

## Wrap Up

1. **Check Understanding.** Do a "whip-around," with each student sharing one item from his or her "Standing Up Handbook." Challenge each student to come up with a new solution until there are no more possibilities. Students are free to say "pass" if all their own entries have been covered.
2. **Extension: Stand Up to Bullies.** Many of the stories in this unit had to do with bullies. Suggest that students put together a presentation for "Dealing with Bullies" that they can share with younger students, or even kids their own age. Tell them they may have to do additional research, and direct them to sites such as [pacerkidsagainstabullying.org/kab/](http://pacerkidsagainstabullying.org/kab/). You can also play the information found at [kidshealth.org/en/kids/bullies.html](http://kidshealth.org/en/kids/bullies.html). Suggest that they cover such topics/questions as
  - What is a bully?
  - What are different kinds of bullying?
  - What causes bullying?
  - How can you stand up to bullies?
  - Other solutions.

# Writing Guide: Pen Pal Exchange 1

1. **Be Friendly.** Tell your Pen Pal how you felt when you received another letter! Respond to what your Pen Pal has written to you. Ask questions about your Pen Pal. Share what's important in your life.
2. **First Thoughts.** Now it's time to share ideas about what you read. Be sure to start by giving the title using quotation marks. How did you feel after you finished reading the story? Did you like it or dislike it? Give your Pen Pal clear reasons for your answer.
3. **Be Friendly.** What parts of the story did you like most or least? The characters? The descriptions? The plot? Be sure to give reasons and examples for your choices. Try to use any new vocabulary words you've learned.
4. **Answer and Ask Questions.** Answer your Pen Pal's questions about the story. Include details to support your answer. Then ask your Pen Pal any questions you still have about the story or characters.
5. **End with a Friendly Goodbye.** Share personal connections you felt with the story. Ask if the story had any special meaning for your Pen Pal. Say what you're looking forward to in the next letter.

## Tip 1

Share your ideas about why characters in the story act the way they do.

## Tip 2

Tell whether you agree with the solutions the characters came up with.

## Tip 3

Share personal connections to the story.

# Writing Guide: Pen Pal Exchange 2

1. **Continue the Reading Discussion.** Respond to any new questions sent by your Pen Pal. Then ask any final questions of your own about what you've read, or ideas your Pen Pal has shared with you.
2. **Share Your Thoughts.** Tell your Pen Pal your reactions to what you've read. Also share your thoughts about the Essential Question: *What does it mean to stand up for yourself?* And what are some ways you can do that? Support your ideas with details from the stories, your notes, and the discussions you had. Tell your Pen Pal what kinds of stories you would like to read next.
3. **Thank Your Pen Pal.** Thank your Pen Pal for exploring this Collection with you! Mention some of the things he or she wrote about that were especially helpful.