

The We Believe



# CURRICULUM SUPPORT MATERIALS:

# FOUNDATIONAL MODULE



Creating caring classrooms by bringing social and emotional learning together  
with service-learning

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## Welcome

Thank you for introducing the We Believe - Curriculum Support Materials, Foundational Module, into your classroom. By doing so, you affirm the power of compassionate, supportive learning spaces — places where every student feels seen, heard, and capable of making a difference.

This module is designed to gently guide educators in creating environments built on connection, trust, and belonging. It offers a thoughtful structure for fostering meaningful relationships, encouraging student voice, and nurturing a sense of purpose. This module helps establish a strong foundation from which students can engage meaningfully in service-learning to explore problems in their school and community. When students feel they truly belong, their engagement deepens, their learning flourishes, and their well-being is strengthened.

Rooted in research and empathy, this module enables students to explore challenges in their school and community, take intentional action, and grow through reflection. We recommend launching this journey at the beginning of the school year to create a strong foundation for lasting impact. We are deeply grateful for your commitment to empowering students and championing positive change.

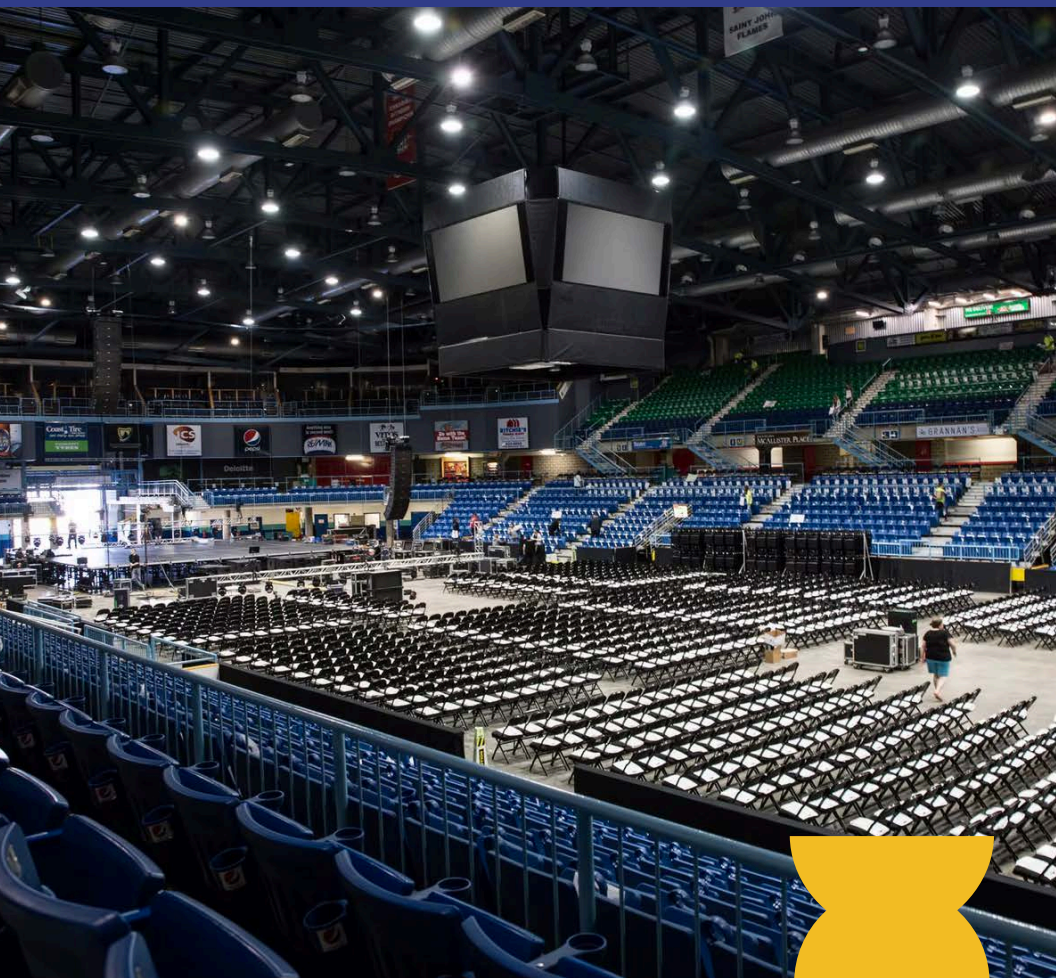
**Warm regards,**

**Daniel and Beverly Foote,**  
CEO & Co-Founders  
*We Believe*



# **What are We Believe Curriculum Support Materials?**

Shaping Bright Futures



## Who We Are

We Believe - Curriculum Support Materials are an innovative series of experimental service-learning programs that engage educators and youth globally, empowering them with the skills, knowledge, and motivation to bring about positive change in themselves and the world.

It's designed to follow four steps that challenge students to dive deeper into critical social issues: Investigate and Learn, Action Plan, Take Action and Report and Celebrate.

### Steps of We Believe - Curriculum Support Materials

- Investigate and Learn: Explore local and global issues, then set your goal.
- Action Plan: Develop an action plan for your initiative.
- Take Action: Please ensure that you implement your plan and assess its impact.
- Report and Celebrate: Present the Results of Your Project!
- Record and Reflect
- Take time to record and reflect on your progress and impact.





## Why Choose We Believe?

- **Foster leadership and confidence** in every student
- **Inspire academic growth** through engaging, real-world learning experiences
- **Promote equity and inclusion**, ensuring all learners feel seen and supported
- **Connect learning to community**, encouraging students to become active, informed citizens

## Our Legacy

Since 2018, We Believe has empowered students through education that inspires purpose, leadership, and community impact. Our legacy is one of equity, growth, and belief in every learner's potential to shape a better world.

## What Sets Us Apart



### 01 Student-Centered Approach

We Believe focuses on empowering students as leaders, learners, and changemakers — placing their voices and experiences at the heart of every program.



### 02 Integration of Social-Emotional Learning

Our programs go beyond academics, helping students build confidence, empathy, and resilience — skills essential for success in school and life.



### 03 Community Engagement

By connecting classroom learning with real-world service, We Believe fosters a strong sense of civic responsibility and community impact.



### 04 Equity and Inclusion

Since 2018, they've prioritized creating safe, inclusive spaces where every student feels seen, heard, and valued.



# **Vision & Missions**





*Reynolds Union Photography By Andrew Berry*

## Vision

*We Believe envisions a world where every young person recognizes their power to create positive change. By uniting thousands of youth across borders, we ignite a movement of compassion, courage, and community action. Through education, service, and storytelling, we empower the next generation to rise above challenges, embrace their worth, and become catalysts for a kinder, more inclusive world.*

## Missions

- 1. Empowered to lead with empathy and purpose**  
The program nurtures leadership by encouraging students to take initiative and act on issues that matter to them, both locally and globally.
- 2. Equipped with the skills to thrive academically and socially**  
Cultivate an environment where students develop critical thinking, creativity, and resilience.
- 3. Engaged in their communities as active, responsible citizens**  
Service-learning helps students apply classroom knowledge to meaningful service, deepening their understanding and sense of responsibility.
- 4. Confident in their ability to create meaningful, lasting change**  
We Believe emphasizes inclusive, supportive classrooms where students feel a sense of belonging — this is the foundation for engagement and growth.
- 5. Rooted in values of respect, inclusion, and compassion**  
By guiding students through the process of investigating, planning, and taking action, We Believe helps them become confident changemakers.



## ❖ Integrating social-emotional learning

- Recognize and manage emotions
- Build healthy relationships
- Make responsible decisions
- Develop empathy and self-awareness

## ❖ Embedding service-learning

- Connect classroom learning with real-world action
- Encourage civic engagement and community involvement
- Foster critical thinking and problem-solving
- Empower students to investigate, plan, act, and reflect



## ❖ Supporting educators

- Create inclusive, caring classroom environments
- Promote student voice and agency
- Guide students through meaningful, student-led projects



## ❖ Building a foundation

- Encouraging collaboration and teamwork
- Celebrating diversity and equity
- Providing opportunities for reflection and growth





# **Tips for Nurturing a Supportive Space**



## 01 Create a Collaborative Environment

Reconsider the physical setup of the room

Grouping desks promotes teamwork and a sense of community.

Set up a buddy class

Pairing with another class gives students leadership and mentoring opportunities.



## 02 Build Daily Connections

Greet students at the beginning and end of the day

Simple gestures like saying hello and goodbye help students feel acknowledged and valued.



## 03 Foster Voice and Choice

**Offer students choices in their learning activities**

Letting students choose how they learn or present their work increases engagement and ownership.

**Provide opportunities for student voice**

Encourage students to share opinions and participate in classroom decisions to build confidence and trust.



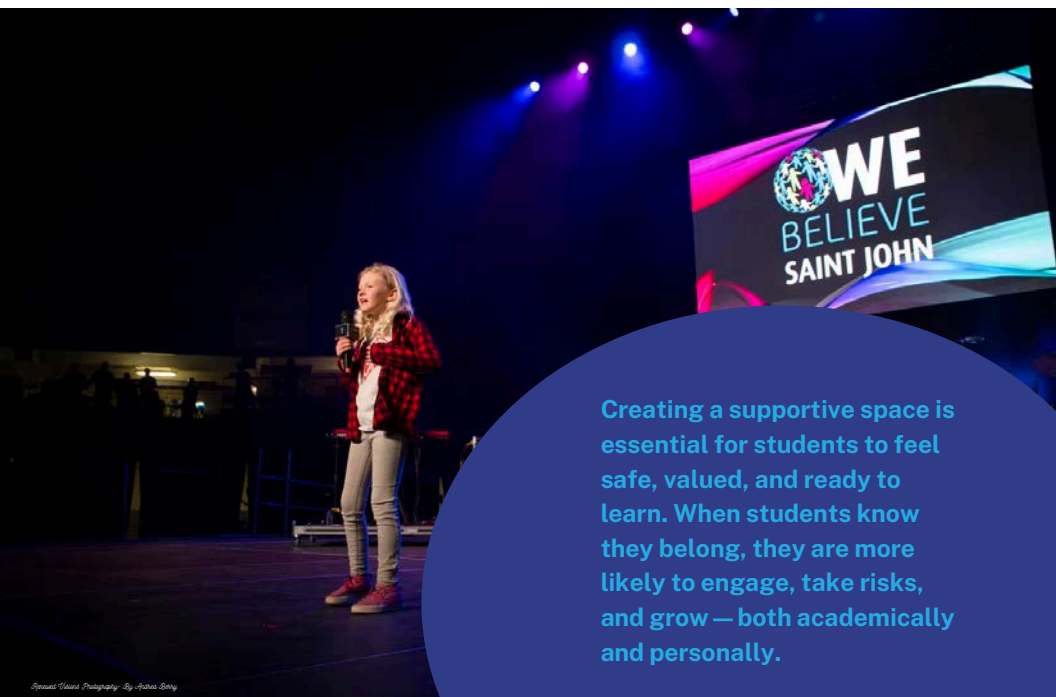
## 04 Support Positive Behavior

**Use restorative practices for discipline**

Focus on repairing relationships rather than punishment.

**Example:**

Use a restorative circle to help students involved in a conflict share their perspectives and agree on a resolution.



Creating a supportive space is essential for students to feel safe, valued, and ready to learn. When students know they belong, they are more likely to engage, take risks, and grow — both academically and personally.

## 🍿 Popcorn Strategy: A Quick Overview

Student-led discussion technique where participants take turns speaking by “passing the popcorn” to a peer, promoting active listening, engagement, and respectful communication.



### Purpose

To foster student engagement, active listening, and respectful communication during group discussions.



### How it works

One student shares a thought, answer, or reflection. They “pass the popcorn” by naming the next student to speak. The process continues until all or most students have participated.



### Key Benefits

Encourages active listening – students stay alert, not knowing when they’ll be called.  
Builds classroom community and promotes student voice



### Best uses

1. Quick reflections
2. Exit tickets
3. Sharing ideas in a circle
4. Warm-up or wrap-up discussions

# Creating a Caring Classroom

*Five lessons in this module reflect the four steps of We Believe - Curriculum Support Materials, with a concluding reflection lesson to help students recap what they've learned.*





1

## **Get started**

What does “communnity” mean and how to create a caring, supportive learning environment



2

## **Investigate and Learn**

Students explore the ideas that contribute to a caring classroom environment



3

## **Action Plan**

Help students plan initiatives to create their caring classroom structure



4

## **Take Action**

Support students as they put their plans into action



5

## **Reflect**

Guide students in reflecting on their work

# ❧ Lesson 1: Learning about community

## Objective:

Students will explore the meaning of community and reflect on what a caring classroom looks like, hearing each other's perspectives to help create a supportive learning environment.

## 01 Class Discussion

Ask:

- What does community mean to you?
- What makes you feel safe and supported in a classroom?

## 02 Individual Reflection

Students write or draw:

- One thing that helps them feel included.
- One thing that makes a classroom caring.

## 03 Group Share & Build

In small groups, students:

- Share their responses.
- Identify common themes (e.g. kindness, respect, listening).

## 04 Class Agreement

Together, create a short class "Caring Community Agreement" based on shared ideas.



Estimated Time	Skills Learned	Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 30 to 40 minutes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Critical Thinking</li><li>• Communication skills</li><li>• Reflection skills</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dice (one per pair of students)</li><li>• Chart paper</li><li>• Markers</li><li>• SMARTboard and or white/chalkboard</li><li>• Cue Cards</li></ul>



## Introduction to We Believe - Curriculum Support Materials



You'll get the chance to share your own ideas about what makes a caring classroom. Together, we'll use those ideas to shape the kind of environment we all want to learn in — one where everyone can feel comfortable, be themselves, and succeed!



In our class, we will work together to create a space where everyone feels like they belong. That means making sure everyone feels safe, respected, included, and valued.

# Ice-breaker Activity

Activity: Pleased to Meet you!

## 01



**Pair up students** (if possible, pair students who do not usually work together).

**Write six get-to-know-you questions** on the board.

Here are some examples, but feel free to come up with your own questions:

## 02




- What's your favourite\_\_\_\_\_ (eg. food, game, book, etc.)?
- What's something that makes you laugh?
- What's something you like to do outside of school?
- What's something that makes you frustrated?
- Who lives in your house (fur babies included)?
- What school subject is the easiest/hardest for you?

## 03



Ask students to **introduce themselves** and take turns rolling a die. Then, students will answer the question that corresponds to the number they rolled, answering two to three questions in total.

Bring the **class back together** and have each student introduce their partner by sharing one interesting fact about each of them.



# Activity: Would You Rather?

## Instructions

Ask students a “**would you rather**” question (either read aloud or written on the board) and designate **two sides of the room** for each answer.

Once students have chosen their answer, they will move to the **designated side** of the room and discuss with their peers who have chosen the same option.

After a **brief** discussion, invite students to share their opinion with the class and **facilitate a friendly debate** between the two sides.

## Questions

- Would you rather be able to **fly or be invisible**?
- Would you rather **only eat your two favourite foods** for the rest of your life or **never eat** them again?
- Would you rather have to **sing every time you speak** or dance every time you **walk**?
- Would you rather be **the teacher** or **the student**?
- Would you rather **eat only food of one colour** for a week or **listen to only one song** on repeat for a week?
- Would you rather **make lots of money** or **love your job**?
- Would you rather live in a **cave** or a **treehouse**?



## What is a Community Discussion?

01



### Reflect & Share

- **Ask:** “What is a community?”
- Students **reflect** by **writing** or **drawing** their ideas.
- Then, **share with a partner** (or pass if they prefer).

02



### Define & Connect

- Write “**Community**” on the board.
- Gather student ideas and group them into **themes**.
- Offer this definition (or co-create one together):

03



### Discuss Our Purpose

- *Use the Popcorn Strategy to explore:*
- How does this definition relate to **our class**?
- What do we **share**?
- What is our **purpose** as a community?

“A community is a group of people connected by something they share. In a strong community, we support, listen, and help one another feel safe and valued.”





## ❖ Creating a Caring Classroom

**Class Brainstorm:** Ask, “What does a caring classroom look and sound like?” Use the **Popcorn Strategy** for sharing, and **record ideas on chart paper**.

**Define Caring:** Ask students what “**caring**” means, then offer this: “Caring means showing kindness and concern for others.” Have them share examples such as **helping, listening, including others, or resolving conflicts respectfully**.

## ❖ Community Think-Pair-Share

**Reflect:** “Think about the kind of classroom you want. Write down a few words or traits that matter to you — like kindness, respect, fun, or teamwork.”

**Partner Share:** “Turn to a partner. Each person gets one minute to share while the other listens quietly — then switch!”

**Distribute cue cards** and instruct students to reflect on and write or draw about one new connection they made or a similarity they discovered, for which they are grateful. **Collect, review and share** with the class at the start of the next class.

**Next steps:** “Today, we imagined what a caring classroom could be. Next time, we’ll take our ideas and begin creating a plan to make it real — so everyone feels like they truly belong.”

### Reflect Together:

How do we speak to one another?

How do we solve problems?

How do we want to feel in our classroom (e.g., safe, included, calm)?

# Optional

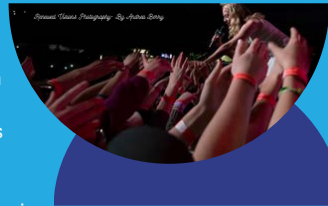


## Calibrations

- These optional ideas may help you adjust this lesson to your particular group of students.

## General Suggestions

- **Partner Work:** Pair confident students with those needing more support.
- **Independent Work:** Check that all students understand the task — have them repeat directions back to you.
- **Flexible Spaces:** Let students sensitive to noise or stimulation move to a quieter area during partner work.



## Simplifications

- Add **symbols** or **images** to any written directions to **help developing readers**.
- Instead of having **students write down their ideas** about what they **would like their community to be like**, have them discuss with a partner.



## Challengers

- When introducing the concept of “community,” **explore the various levels** of community and where the school community fits within those layers. Placing the **idea of community within a broader context** may help students better understand its impact.
- **E.g.**, Home as a **nuclear community**, extended **family as a community**, your neighbourhood/town/province/state/ country as a community.



## Lesson 2: Investigate and Learn

**Objective:** Students will reflect and share ideas about building a caring classroom community.

### 01 Set the Purpose

Introduce the idea: “Today we’ll explore what a caring classroom looks like and how we can create it together.”

### 02 Reflect & Define

Ask students what “caring” means. Guide them toward: “Showing kindness and concern for others.” They brainstorm what a caring community includes.

### 03 Share & Listen

Students discuss their ideas in groups or pairs, sharing examples of caring words, actions, and feelings.

### 04 Connect & Build

Bring the class together to reflect on the kind of community they want, and chart ideas for future steps toward creating it.



Estimated Time	Skill Learned	Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>30 to 40 minutes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Critical Thinking</li><li>Creative Thinking</li><li>Communication Skills</li><li>Collaboration skills</li><li>Reflection skills</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Sticky Notes</li><li>Chart paper</li><li>Markers</li><li>SMARTboard and or white/chalkboard</li></ul>

## Introduction



Invite students to **revisit and reflect** on any comments they wrote on their **cue cards** from the previous lesson, if appropriate.

Please encourage them to share thoughts that highlight **common ideas**, as well as any differences.



Use this as an opportunity to reinforce **shared values** and prompt discussion about how we can **respect and honour the differences** in our community.

You may also choose to revisit a **community-building activity** from the previous lesson to help strengthen these connections.

## Review



### Reconnect with Past Ideas

Begin by revisiting the “**Caring Classroom**” brainstorm from the last lesson.

**Say:** “Let’s look back at what we said makes a caring classroom.”

What stands out?  
What do you still agree with?”



### Reflect & Expand

Invite students to review their initial ideas silently.

Then **ask:**

Would you add anything new?  
Are there other values or conditions that matter to you now?

**Encourage them to consider:**

How we speak to each other  
How do we solve disagreements?  
How do we want to feel in class?

**Record new or repeated ideas on the board.**



### Identify Key Themes

As a class, look for **common threads:**

What values keep coming up?  
Are there gaps in our vision for our community? Use this moment to reinforce shared goals and respectful discussion.

The purpose of the following activity is to collect students' ideas about what a **caring classroom looks, sounds and feels like.**

*Place three large pieces of chart paper around the room with the following headers:*

## ⌘ Looks Like, Sounds Like, Feels like



01

What does a caring classroom look like?

- How is the room organized? With desks, chairs, wall decor, etc

---



02

What does a caring classroom sound like?

- What do the voices, languages and communication sound like?

---



03

What does a caring classroom feel like?

- How do you want to feel in our classroom: Calm, happy, engaged, interested?

---



Brainstorm

For each of the three categories, invite the class to brainstorm ideas to build a caring classroom (or school) community.

---

# ❖ Example of a Charter

## Optional

Invite students to move around the room in small groups to add their ideas to each of the three pieces of chart paper. This could look like three groups rotating together with three to five minutes at each poster.

## Looks like:

Desks are organized in working groups rather than rows.

Welcoming student art is displayed.



## Sounds like:

A list of friendly, solution-oriented language is posted.

Create communication agreements.



## Feels like

A class charter is created to ensure inclusion and peaceful problem-solving.

Students regularly move desks to have an opportunity to work with each member of the classroom.





## ❖ Reflecting on Community

You can choose to have either a class discussion or a small group reflection to help students reflect on the three categories.

---

### Class Discussion

#### **Identify Key Themes:**

**Silent Scan:** Invite students to take a moment to review the completed “Looks Like, Sounds Like, Feels Like” charts in silence.

**Class Discussion Prompts:** Lead a whole-class reflection using guiding questions like:

- What stands out in our lists?
- Are there patterns or repeated ideas?
- Is anything missing or surprising?

**Synthesize Together:** As a class, identify 3–5 core themes or values that consistently appear, such as kindness, cooperation, respect, or inclusion.

**Document the Themes:** Record the shared themes for use in future lessons, especially as you begin planning actions or creating class agreements.

---

### Small Group Reflection

**Group Assignment:** Reorganize students into small groups and assign each to one of the completed charts.

**Group Review & Discussion:** Groups review the chart and discuss using these guiding questions:

- What stands out?
- Are there common themes?
- Is anything missing?

**Class Share-Out:** Each group shares the key conditions or values they noticed.

**Synthesize Core Themes:** As a class, identify 3–5 shared values or themes. Record these—they’ll guide your next step: building an action plan for your caring classroom.

# Culminating Activity

*Show the following quote and give students time to reflect based on the work they have done to build class community. Depending on the needs of the class, you could choose to have a class discussion, partner talk or encourage a quiet write or draw activity.*



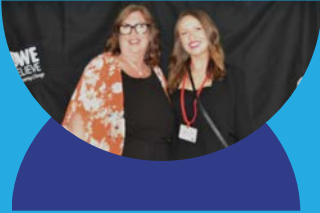
**Be here.**  
**Be you.**  
**Belong.**

**This classroom belongs to all of us.**

**– Brené Brown**



# Optional

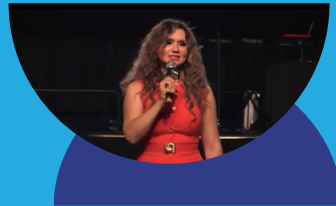


## Calibrations

- These optional ideas may help you adjust this lesson to your particular group of students.

## General Suggestions

- Be mindful of groups; try to diversify (this includes gender, ethnicity, skills, ability, etc).
- For students who struggle with writing, a voice recorder can be helpful for revisiting and re-listening to planning sessions.



## Simplifications

- For students who struggle to organize their thoughts, provide copies of the chart lists or themes from Lesson 1 for them to write on directly. Offer clear examples they can expand on (e.g., class meetings, charters, relationship-building games).
- Split the lesson into three parts: How does our classroom look? How does it sound? How does it feel?



## Challengers

- When reflecting on the themes developed in the chart paper, specifically guide them toward the concepts of safety, trust, engagement and support. Why are these four qualities necessary in a classroom? What may happen if they're missing?



# Lesson 3: Action Plan

## Planning Our Caring Classroom Community

**Objective:** Students will engage in collaborative learning, create a plan of action to foster a caring classroom community, and consider how to support actions that increase inclusion and belonging in their classroom.

### 01 Set the Purpose

Encourage collaborative learning to develop a caring, inclusive classroom.

### 02 Focus

Support student-led planning and actions that promote kindness and belonging.

### 03 Skills Developed

Teamwork, problem-solving, inclusive thinking, and classroom leadership.

### 04 Student Outcomes

Create actionable plans to strengthen community and increase inclusion in daily classroom life.



Estimated Time	Skill Learned	Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 40 minutes</li><li>• It may take more than one session</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Critical Thinking</li><li>• Creative Thinking</li><li>• Communication Skills</li><li>• Collaboration skills</li><li>• Reflection skills</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chart paper</li><li>• Markers</li><li>• Sticky Notes</li><li>• SMARTboard or white/chalkboard</li></ul>

# ⌘ Planning Session

Divide students into **three groups**: *Looks Like, Sounds Like, and Feels Like*. Each group uses previous brainstorming notes to **design realistic, actionable ways to foster a caring classroom**. **Encourage** creative yet doable ideas rooted in **kindness, inclusion, and respect**.

## 1. Group Planning by Theme

Groups **record their plans on chart paper**:

**Examples:** “Bring Your Own Snack” day, classroom charters, greeting routines.

Present ideas to the class for **feedback and discussion**.

## 2. Develop & Present Ideas

During the process and celebration phase (Lesson 5), capture student **ideas** and **reflections** using:

- *Journals*
- *Photos*
- *Quotes or classroom artifacts*

## 3. Document Growth & Contributions

Offer **prompts** or **examples** if groups need help getting started.

Ensure that **all students** can contribute meaningfully with **tools** such as visual supports, sentence starters, or group roles.

## 4. Provide Support & Scaffolding

# ⌘ Inquiry-Based Learning



**Use prompting questions:**

- Can you think of any challenges or boundaries that would make completing this activity difficult or not possible?



**Encourage students to use their prior knowledge:**

- “What have you done in previous classrooms or years that you found useful?”



**Provide the opportunity for exploration**

- Offer a chance for students to do web searches for ideas (encourage them to come up with their own appropriate or helpful search terms).



**Support disagreements by providing resolution-centred language:**

- Offer communication repair prompts such as, “I hear you saying \_\_\_\_\_. Is that correct?”



**"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."**  
— Helen Keller



Let's take a look at the **ideas we came up** with earlier.

Do you think our classroom already **looks, sounds, and feels** this way?

***What could we do better?***

## ⚙️ How to Apply



### 01

#### Part 1: Reflect & Prepare for Action Planning

- Think about when we met our **caring classroom goals**.
- Gently identify areas we can improve.
- Discuss small **daily actions** to make our community even better.



### 02

#### Part 2: Identify Core Values

- Revisit **shared values** like kindness, inclusion, and respect.
- Use reflection questions to spark **deeper thinking**:
- “When did the class feel most caring?”
- “What helped create that feeling?”



### 03

#### Part 3: Build Collaboration Skills

- Introduce the idea of working together to shape our classroom.
- **Define collaboration:**
- “Working together to create something.”
- Brainstorm what skills help us **collaborate successfully**.



### 04

#### Sample Student Responses Might Include:

- Listening to one another's **ideas** and **perspectives**
- Being willing to **compromise**
- Making sure everyone gets a **chance to speak**
- Solving problems together respectfully
- Supporting **each other's efforts**



# Sharing

Invite each group to present their ideas and action plans to the class

## 01

### Group Presentations

Each group presents their action plan clearly, sharing specific ideas for building a caring classroom.

## 02

### Class Dialogue

Invite questions, feedback, and clarifications from peers to deepen understanding and spark collaboration.

## 03

### Implementation Focus

Ensure each idea includes how it can be carried out — move from general themes to concrete actions.

## 04

### Critical Thinking Prompts

Guide students to consider:

- Is this realistic?
- What do we need to make it happen?
- How will we follow through?

## 05

### Preparation for Action

Confirm that all plans are clear and specific — ready for class voting on what to put into practice next.

## Classroom Voting on Caring Community Ideas

- **Introduction:** “Fantastic work, everyone! You’ve shared thoughtful, creative ideas. Now it’s time to decide which ones we’ll bring to life!”
- **Reminders for Students:**
- We can’t do everything at once, but we can choose the most meaningful ideas.
- Your votes help shape our next steps as a class.
- **Voting Instructions:**
- Each student gets 3 small stickers.
- **You may either:**
- Place 1 sticker on 3 different ideas, or
- Place up to 3 stickers on one idea you feel strongly about.



## Once everyone has voted:

- Count the stickers to identify the most popular ideas.
- Mark those ideas clearly — they’ll become part of your **Caring Classroom Action Plan**.

# Culminating Activity or Reflection



## Post-Voting Reflection & Community Check-In

### Observe Voting Results

Guide students to notice trends: “What ideas got the most support? Any surprises?”

### Acknowledge Emotions

- Encourage students to express feelings respectfully
- Remind everyone that all ideas and voices are valued

### Reinforce Community Values

Highlight your shared goal: a classroom where everyone feels safe, respected, and included

### Celebrate Contributions

- Thank students for their input
- Invite them to recognize classmates who made them feel heard or supported

### Prepare for Action

Wrap up by saying it’s time to bring these ideas to life “Now let’s work together to put our plans into action!”

### Lesson Wrap-Up Without Voting

**Shared Responsibility** Remind students this classroom is something you’re building together.

**Student Appreciation** Optionally, invite students to give a shout-out to someone who made them feel heard, supported, or included during the session.

**Gratitude** Thank them sincerely: “I’m really proud of how you all have listened and shared with care. Thank you.”

**Look Ahead** Build momentum: “Now comes the fun part — putting these awesome ideas into action and watching our class community grow.”

# Optional



## Calibrations

- These optional ideas may help you adjust this lesson to your particular group of students.

## General Suggestions

- Keep the three pieces of chart paper (Looks Like, Sounds Like, Feels Like) visible for the entire implementation of the Foundational Module.



## Simplifications

- Provide a visual organizer that helps students identify what information they need to create, such as the attached example of a Caring Community Action Plan Organizer.
- Offer concrete examples for them to build out (e.g., class meetings, a class charter).



## Challengers

- Have students provide a written rationale for their action plan.
- Have students consider how their plan could be applied to the other rings of the community (assuming they completed the challenge in Lesson 2).





# **Caring Community Action Plan Organizer:**

# Caring Community Action Plan Organizer

**Person(s) Responsible:**

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**Material Needed:**

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**Time It Will Take:**

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**Potential Challenges:**

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# Lesson 4: Take Action

*Taking Action to Create a Caring Classroom Community*

**Objective:** Students will engage in active learning and work together to take action to create a caring classroom community.

## 01 Lesson Goal

Empower students to take action toward building the caring classroom they envisioned.

## 02 Collaborative Focus

Students will work together in teams to begin putting their shared ideas into practice.

## 03 Implementation Stage

This lesson marks the shift from planning to doing — turning values and strategies into real routines and experience

## 04 Student Ownership

Learners take the lead in shaping the classroom environment they want to be part of — fostering agency, inclusion, and community spirit.



Estimated Time	Skill Learned	Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 30 to 40 minutes</li><li>• It may take more than one session</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Critical Thinking</li><li>• Creative Thinking</li><li>• Communication Skills</li><li>• Collaboration skills</li><li>• Reflection skills</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chart paper</li><li>• Markers</li><li>• Sticky Notes</li><li>• SMARTboard or white/chalkboard</li></ul>



# Activation or Community Builder

Reflection on Building a Caring Classroom

## Invite students to pause and look inward:

*“We’ve spent time working together to imagine and plan a classroom where everyone feels safe, seen, and supported. Now let’s take a moment to reflect — how has this process felt for you?”*

Prompt them to consider:

- Have you felt a sense of connection to others during this journey?
- Have you had opportunities to be yourself and share your ideas?
- What has helped you feel part of this caring environment? What’s been challenging?

Choose a Reflection Strategy That Fits Your Group:

Think-Pair-Share



Students reflect individually, share with a partner, then contribute to a class discussion

Inside/Outside Circles



Rotate partners to discuss questions in a dynamic, inclusive way

Quiet Write



Students journal their thoughts in writing or draw responses

Partner Talk



Paired students reflect and then optionally share highlights with the group

Visual Representation



Students express their reflections through drawing, sculpting, or building





## ❖ Preparing to Take Action

### Reflection on Building a Caring Classroom

#### 1. Revisit Key Ideas: "Looks Like, Sounds Like, Feels Like"

- Display the **three anchor charts prominently**.
- Lead a **short whole-class** discussion to revisit themes and decisions made in Lessons **2 and 3**.
- If a classroom vote took place in a previous lesson, summarize the results and use them to identify the primary focus for action.

#### 3. Reconnect with Action Plan Groups

- Have students **reunite in their existing Lesson 3 groups**.
- Encourage them to review their group's action plan and prep for execution.

#### 5. Facilitate and Monitor

- Be available to answer questions and **resolve any challenges that may arise**.
- Gently prompt groups where **engagement is low and celebrate small progress wins** to maintain momentum.

#### 2. Review Collaboration Skills & Guidelines

- Briefly go over **expectations** for teamwork, respectful listening, and shared responsibility.
- **Reestablish** the goal: Creating a caring and *safe classroom environment*.

#### 4. Self-Check Readiness

Invite **groups** to reflect on:

- What their **plan entails**.
- What **materials or support** will they need?
- Who will **lead or carry out** each step?

#### 6. Whole-Class Share-Out

- Have **one student from each group present their plan**.
- Highlight **common themes across group plans**.
- If there are significant overlaps, propose that similar groups **merge and refine** their ideas collaboratively to enhance their effectiveness.
- Encourage **flexible** thinking, respectful **dialogue**, and compromise as they consolidate **efforts**.



Provide time for students to put their plan into action. Make sure to document students' actions by taking pictures or video to show the class during their reflection and celebration in Lesson 5.

If students are struggling to complete the assignment, here are suggestions for ways to scaffold their thinking to reach the goal:

## ⚙️ Taking Action



**01**

**Use prompting questions:**

- “What should you do, first, next, last?”
- “It looks like you’re stuck. Can you identify the problem? Is it an issue of time or material?”
- “It sounds like you’ve identified the problem. What element can you change to try and find a solution?”



**02**

**Encourage students to use their prior knowledge:**

- “Have you done an activity like this before? Can you remember any issues that came up that could be avoided by doing something differently?”



**03**

**Support disagreements by providing resolution-centred language:**

- Offer communication repair prompts such as, “I hear you saying \_\_\_\_\_. Is that correct?”
- Encourage children to identify how they’re feeling so they can name it and move on.



**04**

**Guide students to manage their resources**

- Time reminders
- Flexibility about materials
- Task assignment reminders

# Lesson 5: Reflect

*Reflecting on Our Community*

**Objective:** Students will engage in self-reflection and listen to one another's reflections on their shared experiences, fostering a sense of community.

## 01 Purpose

Students reflect on their efforts to build a caring classroom community.

## 02 Skills Practiced

Emphasis on critical thinking and communication during reflection.

## 03 Looking Back

Opportunity to assess achievements and collaborative growth.

## 04 Looking Forward

Preparation for future lessons and continued classroom development.



Estimated Time	Skill Learned	Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 30 to 40 minutes</li><li>• It may take more than one session</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Critical Thinking</li><li>• Communication Skills</li><li>• Reflection skills</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Photos or videos from the planning and action steps of this module</li><li>• SMARTboard or white/chalkboard</li><li>• Note cards with envelopes</li></ul>



## 01 A Walk Down Memory Lane

Transform the classroom into a visual storytelling space. Use a slideshow, video montage, or a photo gallery on the walls to showcase snapshots from throughout the community-building lessons.

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***Invite students to walk through and take it all in:***

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*“As you look at these moments, pay attention to how they make you feel. What memories come back? What are you proud of?”*

---

This allows them to see their growth—individually and as a group—and reinforces a sense of shared achievement.

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## 02 Reflect

Provide time and a calm space for reflection. You might play soft music or dim the lights to support a more mindful tone.

---

***Prompt students to capture their thoughts in writing, drawing, or another expressive form. You could say:***

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*“Think about the journey we’ve taken together. What was it like to work with your classmates? How do you feel now? And what else would you like to bring to our community moving forward?”*

---

## 03 Reflection Prompts

*How did it feel to work together?*

*How are you feeling now, after our work together?*

*What more would you like to contribute to our community?*

---

***Optional: Create a “Memory Lane Reflection Wall” where students can post their insights anonymously or with their names, giving everyone a chance to see the emotional and social impact of their collective efforts.***

## ⌘ Connect (Think-Pair-Share)

### Instructions for Students:



Begin with a quiet reflection, then move into partner conversations.

#### Let them know:

This is a time for honesty and care

Everyone's experience is valid

Listening is just as essential as sharing

Give 3–5 minutes for this step, depending on your class dynamics.



*With your partner, take turns sharing reflections about our work in building our classroom community. You might share something you noticed, something you'd like to do more of, or a feeling you had during our time together."*

## ⌘ Shared Reflection & Community Dialogue



**Record ideas** on the board to preserve group thinking and establish a tone of collective responsibility.

Bring the class back together and begin a community-wide reflection using the Popcorn Share strategy, where students share their thoughts freely in any order.



### Instructions for Students:

"Now, we'll share as a community. If you feel comfortable, tell us something from your reflection about our classroom connections."

Write the students' thoughts on the board as they share. Group them by theme (e.g., "communication," "inclusion," "growth") to visually capture the essence of their insights.



### Transition to Forward Thinking

**Next Steps:** What actions can we take to strengthen our classroom community?

**Accountability:** How do we stay true to the commitments we've made?

**Repairing Missteps:** If We Drift from Our Class Values, How Should We Respond?

**Action Plan Check-ins:** Should we review and revise our plan on a regular basis? When?

**Inclusivity:** What can we do if someone feels left out or disconnected?

# ❖ Making Connections

## Simple Actions to Strengthen Community

### 01 *Finding the Threads:* *Reflecting on Shared Experiences*



#### Prompt for Students:

"Think back on what you and your classmates shared. Can you spot any connections?"

#### Encourage students to:

- Notice shared feelings, hopes, or concerns
- Highlight moments when someone voiced what they were feeling, too
- Reflect on how hearing others changed or deepened their own thoughts.

#### Guiding Questions:

- What did you hear that sounded like something you felt?
- What surprised you?
- How did this make you feel more connected?

### 02 *Personal Growth & Collective Care*



#### Focus:

Transform reflection into personal goals and classroom care.

Invite students to name one small step they can take to nurture connection in the classroom.

#### This could be:

- Reaching out to someone new
- Being a more active listener
- Offering support or encouragement

#### Reflection Prompt:

"What's one way you can bring more care into our classroom community?"

#### Optional Visual:

A classroom bulletin board where students anonymously post their next-step commitments under the title: "Our Growing Community"

### 03 *From Vision to Action:* *Building Everyday Community*



**Teacher Prompt:** "We've explored what care and connection mean to us. Now we'll put those ideas into action—at school, at home, in our community, and within ourselves."

Over the next few weeks, **your class** can explore four core areas of connection:

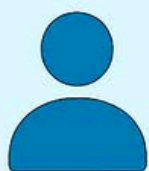
 <b>Self</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Practice self-kindness</li><li>• Set goals</li><li>• Express feelings</li></ul>	 <b>School</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Take care of shared spaces</li><li>• Support others</li></ul>
 <b>Community</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Help neighbors</li><li>• Join local efforts</li></ul>	 <b>Home</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Show gratitude and care at home</li></ul>

*After exploring each area, students will write brief reflections on how they applied the idea, its impact, and their feelings.*

*This creates lasting learning and reinforces the idea that kindness, connection, and care are not one-time lessons — they're ways of living.*



# Simple Actions to Build Community



## Self

Encourage students to reflect on what community means to them through personal expressions like writing or art that highlight connections and values.



## School

Foster school-wide belonging by pairing older and younger students in buddy activities that nurture leadership, empathy, and connection.



## Community

Use the We Believe framework—Investigate, Action Plan, Take Action, Record & Celebrate—to guide students in organizing initiatives that bridge schools and broader communities.



## Home

Bridge classroom and home by inviting students to lead initiatives (like a school newspaper) that involve families and strengthen home-school relationships.



# Write a letter to your future self

Imagine it's the last day of the school year. You're looking back on all the time we've spent building our classroom community. Think about the experiences we've shared — what you felt, what you learned about yourself and your classmates, what you enjoyed, and what challenges you faced.

On your cue card, write a letter to your future self. Celebrate something you personally did well and share what this journey has meant to you.

Dear Future Me,  
I'm so proud of how I worked  
in class this year! I will remember  
working well with my group and  
becoming more confident. I had  
fun and learned a lot. I'll never  
forget this journey.

From,  
Me

Myself

# Optional



## Calibrations

- Use the following ideas to help you calibrate the lesson to your particular group of students.

## General Suggestions

- During partnered activities, try to pair stronger students with students who have more difficulties.
- For independent activities (e.g., writing tasks), please check in with students and make sure they have processed and understood the directions by having them recite them back to you.
- Allow students who struggle with overstimulation to go to different parts of the room during partnered activities to achieve calmer or quieter working spaces.



## Simplifications

- For writing reflections, offer the option to list adjectives or a single sentence for each adjective.
- Remove the writing components and reflect as a class or in small groups through a discussion with the prompts written out and read aloud.
- In Part 4: Future Reflections, offer an alternative drawing activity or spoken word recorded reflections.

## Challengers

- Have students write their projections for how their action plan will make a positive difference in the classroom
- Have students reflect on ways to extrapolate their action plans to the greater communities initially outlined in Lesson 1. What may work? What wouldn't work when scaled? Why?
- Have students find examples of other students' "creating a caring environment plans" and compare and contrast.



## ❖❖ *Next Steps: Dive into the We Believe – Curriculum Support Materials*

*Now that you and your students have completed the Foundational Module of the We Believe – Curriculum Support Materials and built a caring, respectful classroom community, you're ready to move forward on the next stage of your journey.*

*This next phase is an opportunity to deepen your collective understanding of equity, inclusion, and student voice. As you explore the upcoming modules, continue to nurture the environment you've established—one where students feel safe to take risks, share openly, and support one another.*

*We know that students thrive in spaces where they are seen, heard, and valued. By fostering a culture rooted in empathy and belonging, you're not only supporting their academic success, you're also contributing to their growth as compassionate, critically thinking individuals.*

*As you dive into the next modules, here are a few ways to stay grounded in the spirit of We Believe.*

- *Revisit your classroom agreements and reflect on how they're working.*
- *Create time and space for regular community check-ins.*
- *Encourage student-led dialogue and initiatives when possible.*
- *Reflect often—both individually and as a class—on what it means to co-create a just, inclusive learning space.*







*We're excited to see how your students continue to grow and lead as you move forward. Thank you for your commitment to this work—it matters deeply.*

# Acknowledgements

## We Believe Curriculum Overview

The We Believe curriculum is a dynamic, student-centered program designed to cultivate leadership, emotional intelligence, and healthy lifestyle habits. Through inclusive and adaptable resources, it empowers educators to foster personal growth and community connection.

### Core Pillars:

-  Leadership Curriculum: Builds confidence, self-awareness, and purpose-driven action.
-  Support Materials: Equips educators with tools for impactful facilitation.
-  Empower to Ride: Promotes wellness through movement and biking challenges.
-  Healthy Eating Cookbook: Encourages nutritious choices with youth-friendly recipes.
-  Reading & Reflection: Sparks empathy, collaboration, and self-discovery.
-  SEL Integration: Strengthens emotional regulation and positive relationships.

Thank you to all the volunteers and support staff for your dedication to youth development and creating positive learning environments.

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Deep gratitude to Daniel and Beverly Foote for all they do for youth across the world and the incredible difference they continue to make.

To the photographers, performers, speakers, and creatives—thank you for bringing energy, inspiration, and storytelling to life. Your contributions help make every experience unforgettable.

And to every educator bringing We Believe into your classroom—thank you for making a lasting impact. Your commitment empowers the next generation.

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