

Affirmations

Text: 'I Affirm Me: The ABCs of Inspiration for Black Kids' by Nyasha Williams

Core Content Objectives

- State two things that make them special or unique (e.g., their name, things they like to do, language they speak, etc.)
- State an affirmation about themselves.

Language Arts Objectives

- Carry on a dialogue or conversation with an adult or same-aged peer, initiating comments or responding to partner's comments
- Recognize and call classmates and teacher by name
- Ask or answer questions beginning with who, what, where, when, or why
- Adapt the volume of one's voice to different settings and different purposes
- Understand and use intonation and emphasis to ask a question, express surprise, agreement, displeasure, and/or urgency
- Wait turns to speak in a group
- Attend and listen while others speak during a group activity

Listening & Learning

- With prompting and support, actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding
- Communicate with individuals from different cultural backgrounds
- Carry on a dialogue or conversation with an adult or same-aged peer, initiating comments or responding to partner's comments
- Describe an illustration and how it relates to the text
- With prompting and support, ask and answer who, what, where, when, why, and how questions about 'I Affirm Me: The ABCs of Inspiration for Black Kids'.
- With prompting and support, retell important facts and information from 'I Affirm Me: The ABCs of Inspiration for Black Kids'.
- With prompting and support, use the word 'affirmation' acquired through: conversation, reading and being read to, and responding to 'I Affirm Me: The ABCs of Inspiration for Black Kids'.
- With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about the word 'affirmation'.

- Point to the front and back cover, and the spine of the book.

Core Vocabulary

Kind

helpful; friendly; good.

Unkind

not kind or sympathetic; mean, harsh.
Her unkind remark about my new haircut hurt my feelings.

Instruct

to teach; educate; tell.
My teacher instructed me on how to write the number eight.

Support

to help during a time of trouble or stress.
My teacher supported me when I was feeling sad.

Joy

something that causes good feelings or happiness.
Playing outside in the sunshine brings me so much joy.

Harm

wrong or hurt
Words just like actions can cause harm.

Negative

damaging or undesirable; bad. not helpful or constructive; critical; pessimistic.
I felt discouraged because of my classmate's negative comments about my drawing.

Positive

bringing something good, or giving some kind of advantage. approving or optimistic.
The teacher said positive things to the class about how well they were expressing their needs.

Affirmation

to state or declare as true.
I affirmed that I had washed my hands before sitting down to eat.

Advance Preparation

Lesson 1 Part 1: Get two of the same pot plant and over two weeks speak kindly to the one plant and unkindly to the other plant.

[Each part is a mini lesson and can be spread out over days or groups' age and needs.]

Lesson 1:

Part 1: Power of Words

Bring in two of the same plants (one plant should be flourishing and the other not doing well) into the classroom.

Introduce the plants to the class and explain that we are going to learn about the powers of words.

What we say carries energy that can:

Instruct (Make sure to wash your hands before you eat),

Support (Keep up the hard work!),

Bring Joy (Everyone coming to school warms my heart.)

and Harm (You are not worth listening to).

🗣️ Ask students what they notice about the two plants.

Explain to the students that one of the plants you have been whispering supportive and kind things to and the other you have been whispering mean and hurtful things to.

🗣️ Have students guess which plant they think you have whispering and kind things to. Ask students why they think this is the plant that you have whispering and kind things to.

🗣️ Have students guess which plant they think you have been whispering mean and hurtful things to. Ask students why they think this is the plant that you have been whispering mean and hurtful things to.

Just like our plants, the words we say can affect people. The plant that has had unkind things said to it is unwell and has been torn down. It will take a lot of work to try and get the plant happy and flourishing again. Sometimes it is not possible to get the plant back to health. This is why we have to be conscious and careful of the words we use and how we talk to others.

Part 2: Affirm Yourself

Expand the lesson by explaining that just as it is important to speak kindly to others, it is equally important to speak lovingly to yourself. We talk to ourselves out loud and in our heads all day and what we say affects how we feel.

Share examples of things we might say to ourselves in our heads:

Negative self-talk sounds like - When working on a project, 'I can't do this! I am never going to figure this out.'

Positive self-talk sounds like - When working on a project, 'I am going to figure this out. It isn't easy but I won't give up.'

What we think we become. Have students say the word affirmation. Affirmations are positive thinking and self-empowerment. They teach us positive self-talk, training us to speak to ourselves and others with kindness. The word affirmation comes from the Latin word affirmare, meaning 'to make steady, confirm, and strengthen.' Affirmations strengthen us, allowing us to build healthy minds.

Affirmations help build our self-confidence and empower us to handle anything that comes our way.

Q Have students share things that they love about themselves and things that make them special.

Share some examples of affirmations with the class:

I am getting better and better every day.

I am enough.

I love and accept myself for who I am.

I am grateful for the people I have in my life.

I am brave.

I am kind.

I try my best.

I welcome challenges.

Write a list of affirmations as a class.

Q Have each student share an affirmation that calls to them.

Explain to students that one of the best ways to recite affirmations to ourselves is in the mirror.

Have students use hand mirrors or stand in front of mirrors and echo affirmations you state outloud for them to recite to themselves.

I stand up for what I believe in.
I believe in my goals and dreams.
It's okay not to know everything.
Today I choose to think positive.
I can get through anything.
I can do tough things.
I give myself permission to make choices.
I can do better next time.
I have everything I need right now.
I am capable of so much.
Everything will be okay.
I believe in myself.
I am proud of myself.
I deserve to be happy.
I am free to make my own choices.
I deserve to be loved.
I can make a difference.
Today I choose to be confident.
I am in charge of my life.

Part 3: Read 'I Affirm Me: The ABCs of Inspiration for Black Kids'

Model the different parts of a book to the class:

Front Cover

Spine

Back Cover

Title

Names of the Author & Illustrator

🗨️ Ask students what an author does.

🗨️ Ask students what an illustrator does.

Reflect on the front cover with the class. Have students take a moment and think about what they see on the cover and what they think the book might be about.

🗨️ Have students share their thoughts about what they see on the cover and what they think the book might be about.

Explain to the kids that this book is about the alphabet and each letter of the alphabet has an affirmation.

Sing the ABCs with the class.

Start reading the book

On each page have students tell you what letter of the alphabet is on the page. Recite the affirmation line by line, allowing students to echo your reading of the affirmations.

After you are done reading the page, have students take a moment and think about what they see in each illustration. Things to reflect on: hair, skin color, action in the image, things that are similar to themselves, things that are different to themselves, objects/items in the images.

Wrap up the book by reading the affirmations on the back cover of the book. Recite the affirmations line by line, allowing students to echo your reading of the affirmations.

Part 4: Extension Activities

Class Mantra/Affirmation

- 1 Think of inspirations/adjectives/descriptions that feel powerful to you as a class.
- 2 Write Your Brainstormed Inspirations on the lines starting with WE ARE.

Alphabet Affirmation

- 1 Pick a letter of the alphabet
- 2 Think of inspirations/adjectives/descriptions that feel powerful to you.
- 3 Write Your Brainstormed Inspirations on the lines starting with I AM.

Acrostic Affirmations

Let students know you are going to create acrostic poems. Acrostic poems are poems where the first letter of each line starts off a word or sentence in the poem. We are going to make Acrostic Affirmations using our names. This means, each letter in your name will kick off an affirmation!

1 Write Your Name Down Vertically.

2 Think of inspirations that start with the letters in your name.

Inspirations can be words that make you feel powerful. Inspirations can be things you want to be. Inspiration can be anything!

3 Write Your Brainstormed Inspirations on the lines that begin with the same letters.

4 Write I AM at the front of each word.