

Name: _____

Dusted Off and Ready
Opening thoughts BEFORE reading the book

1. Circle which things below you think could be (or are) challenges in middle school.

Keeping up with homework	Grades
Friendships	Popularity
Bullying	Physical changes
Lifestyle changes	Physical or other challenges
Balancing personal time / hobbies	Balancing after-school activities / sports / music
Balancing family time	Balancing electronic media time
Being in a new class / having new teachers	Having more responsibilities
Other _____	

2. Let's take a minute to think about this list. That's a lot of stuff that could be going on for somebody... and it's a huge reason why middle school can be so challenging. You and everyone around you are changing, growing, learning and dealing with many different topics all at once. It gets messy. The book we're about to read is about diving into all of that life-stuff and working on our perspective. (No need to write an answer for this one. It's just for getting ready to read.)

3. I feel that my choices and actions can play a part in making life better for myself. (Circle one)

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

4. I feel that my choices and actions can play a part in making life better for those around me. (Circle one)

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

Dusted Off and Ready
Questions for AFTER reading first section (pages 1 – 15)

1. Sometimes I get frustrated when people don't listen to me, and then I get short tempered and might not say the nicest things. My "best self" would be more careful but I don't always make it. The trick for me is to apologize, forgive myself, and try to do better next time. - Can you think of a time in your life when you were blocked from being your best self? Maybe you got upset or sad or jealous or scared, and it led to you acting in a way that wasn't the best?

2. Have you ever caught yourself starting to get upset, and been able to stop yourself before it affected you and the people around you too much? Can you describe what happened and how it felt?

3. Do you think that seeing life from another person's point of view can help you? Why or why not?

(For me, doing this helps me see that the other person has a story that led up to the way they see things. It helps me relate to their humanness and leads to more understanding... which often teaches me something new AND helps me feel better.)

4. Have you ever lost a friend because of a fight or misunderstanding, or because of changing interests, or simply because you grew apart? How did you feel about losing your friend and how did you move on? How do you think they felt?

(Recognizing that life is changing in a ridiculous amount of ways for you and for those around you may help to soften the blow of losing a friend. Remember the list of middle school challenges we went through? It's not an easy thing when friendships change, but please try to keep in mind that you and those around you are all just working on figuring life out. Sometimes friends get lost in the confusion.)

5. Do you think that once you lose a friend, there is no chance for recovery?

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Dusted Off and Ready
Questions for AFTER reading second section (pages 16 – 27)

1. Has anyone ever said “who cares” to you when you felt that something was important? Have you ever told someone else “who cares” before?

2. Have you ever felt the relief of having someone forgive you for something? Can you tell about it?

3. Have you ever forgiven someone for something? How did they feel? How did you feel?

4. Have you ever blown up on somebody out of anger? How did you feel afterward? How did they feel?

5. Have you ever gotten really angry and stopped yourself before you reacted? (SO HARD TO DO!) If so, how did you feel?

6. Have you ever been wrong? :)

7. Have you ever been wrong and not admitted it? How did you feel?

8. Have you ever been wrong and just admitted it right away? How did you feel?

9. Do you think that being okay with being wrong can help you at all? How?

(Maybe being less hard on yourself or less defensive makes you feel lighter, leaving space to learn, let go, and move forward)

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Dusted Off and Ready
Questions for AFTER reading third section (pages 28 - 39)

1. Have you ever been jealous of someone? Why? (Please don't include the person's name on this sheet.)

2. Did being jealous make you forget about your own gifts?

3. Name something you enjoy doing or are good at. (Some people have trouble with this one because we live in a culture of always comparing ourselves to others. We look at what others have and sometimes forget to look at how we shine. Looking inward might take some time and a little retraining. You have gifts. Ask teachers, friends and family to help you think.)

4. Have you ever been judgmental of someone else? (stupid, mean, ugly, rich, poor, dorky, skinny, fat)

5. Have you ever been judgmental of yourself?

6. Name something else you enjoy doing or are good at.

7. Before reading this book, had you ever thought about trying to love (or show kindness to) someone you didn't like or didn't understand?

8. After reading this book, does anyone come to mind as someone you could show more kindness or understanding to? (Maybe even yourself?) In what way can you show them kindness or understanding? (Please don't include the person's name on this sheet.)

9. I feel that my choices and actions can play a part in making life better for myself. (Circle one)

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

10. I feel that my choices and actions can play a part in making life better for those around me. (Circle one)

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5