

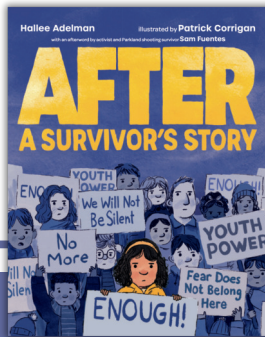
After: A Survivor's Story

Library Lesson Plan

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Pre-Reading Ideas

Big Feelings Follow the Leader: We have many big feelings. Can you name some? Walk around the room in the same direction, calling out different feelings and walk in a way that reflects each one. Which walks feel best? Worst?

Discuss: How does your body feel when you're scared? Can you describe this feeling? What do you think about when you're scared? Do you remember the last time you felt scared? Is it hard or easy to stop feeling scared?

Connect: In *After: A Survivor's Story*, the main character experiences a big, scary thing. It's hard for her to stop feeling scared. Has someone ever tried to make you feel better when you were scared, and it didn't work? When? Can you share a time when someone helped you feel better?

Pre-Reading Questions: We talked about ways we feel better after something bad or scary happens. What do you think might help the main character in this book? What helps you feel better when you're scared? What do you do to try to help friends and family feel better when something bad happens? Does it always help right away, or does it sometimes take a while?

Action Item: As we read, notice how the main character looks. What is her body and her expression showing?

Post-Reading Ideas

Respond: What are some ways the main character showed she was still fearful, even after the scary day was over? How do you know she had trouble stopping being scared?
(Possible ideas: didn't want the teddy bear, loud noises made her want to run, blocking her door, the news)

Discuss: There are a lot of signs in this book. What do they say? Are they connected to the Horrible Day? What do you think they mean? (Possible ideas: be safe, enough sadness, kid power)

What made the main character start to feel better?

(Possible ideas: connecting with old friends, meeting new ones, joining a group of people who share the same values or interests)

Wrap Up: From Scared to Powerful! Practice sitting like the main character when she was sad and scared then stand like her at the end of the book. Which feels better?

Extension Activities:

1. Follow the leader once more, calling out only powerful feelings: strong, resilient, powerful, proud, brave, mighty. Discuss how that felt afterwards.
2. Write a note to a friend who might feel sad. Brainstorm a word bank.
3. Make a sign: What do you feel strongly about that you would like to tell everyone?
Act out the sign-holding at the end of the story with our own signs.

Special thanks to Abbey Clements, Executive Director and Co-Founder of Teachers Unify to End Gun Violence, for developing this lesson plan. Learn more at [TeachersUnify.org](https://www.teachersunify.org)

