

Crocodile, You're Beautiful! Confidence: Embracing Our Strengths and Ourselves



TOPIC

Comprehension
SEL - Developing Respect, Empathy & Confidence
Art

GRADE LEVEL

K-2

DURATION

30-45 minutes

SUBJECT AREA

English Language Arts
Social Emotional Learning
Visual Art

DESCRIPTION OF THE LESSON

This is the second lesson of two for the recorded reading of the book, *Crocodile, You're Beautiful! Embracing our Strengths and Ourselves*, written by Dr. Ruth K. Westheimer. The book focuses on the key themes of empathy, respect, self-confidence and helping others. It provides students with interactive activities that give them an opportunity to stretch, draw and dance as they read and learn.

In this activity, students will watch and analyze the testimony of Marion Blumenthal Lazan, a Jewish survivor of the Holocaust, and will draw connections to the key themes of the book. Students will then follow along with Dr. Ruth in the interactive recorded reading and will discover the solutions that she shares to help the animal characters overcome their challenges. By the end of this activity, students will illustrate a drawing of a special talent or skill they are good at while wearing a superhero cape.

The interactive recorded reading is available at <https://iwbetabeta.usc.edu/sites/ruth>.

STANDARDS ADDRESSED

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2

Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1

Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on other's ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CASEL'S Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Framework

Core Competency -Self-Awareness

The abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts. This includes the capacity to recognize one's strengths and limitations with a well-grounded sense of confidence and purpose such as integrating personal and social identities.

National Core Arts Standards

Visual Arts

Connecting Anchor Standard 10

Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

MATERIALS

- Clip of Testimony–Marion Blumenthal Lazan (1:46 min)
- Biography of Marion Blumenthal (included in this PDF)
- Dr. Ruth K. Westheimer's recording of the children's book, *Crocodile, You're Beautiful! Embracing our Strengths and Ourselves* (<https://iwbetabeta.usc.edu/sites/ruth>)
- Sample Anchor Chart (included in this PDF)
- Drawing Paper/Markers/Crayons

LEARNING AIMS

As a result of this lesson, students will...

- Demonstrate the ability to form connections between information from audiovisual testimony, digital media text and their own lives.
- Assess how Dr. Ruth helps each of the animals gain confidence by learning to appreciate their strengths and to stand up for themselves
- Illustrate an artistic representation of a special talent or skill which makes them unique

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Consider

Review of Activity: Begin this activity by having students share key details about what they have learned from Dr. Ruth's testimony and her experiences as a young girl in Germany, featured in the activity **Identity: Developing a Positive Identity - Crocodile, You're Beautiful!**

Audiovisual Testimony: Next, tell students that they will watch another clip of testimony from Marion Blumenthal Lazan, a Jewish survivor of the Holocaust. Begin by reading Marion's brief biography aloud to students. Then, tell students that they will watch her clip of testimony twice.

Clip Description: In her clip, Marion describes how her classmates treated her with respect and were willing to help her, even though she looked different, acted different, and did not speak their language.

- **First Viewing:** Have students watch Marion's clip all the way through. As they watch, pause the clip three times at the stop points below.
- Segment 1 (Start: 00:00 – Stop: 00:20 "...but that did not help me here in America.")
 - In this first segment, students will get a sense of Marion's challenge of moving to a new country.
 - Check for Understanding: Ask students to describe some of the challenges she faced at school.
 - Segment 2 (Start: 00:20 "So not knowing the language..." – Stop: 01:06 min "...I didn't expect them to understand what I went through.")
 - In this second segment, students will get a sense of how different and new everything was for Marion in America.
 - Check for Understanding: Have students share why they think Marion's classmates understood what she was going through? Follow up the discussion by asking why they think Marion was surprised that they helped her.
 - Segment 3 (Start: 01:06 "I didn't speak their language..." – Stop: 01:46 min "... but in my case, it was a wonderful experience.")
 - In this third segment, Marion describes how wonderful her classmates were to her despite her differences.
 - Check for Understanding: Have students share why helping others is important to feel accepted. Ask, if Marion's classmates hadn't helped her, how might things be different. for her.
- **Second Viewing:** Have students watch Marion's clip of testimony a second time all the way through. Instruct students to give a thumbs up every time they hear Marion describing her classmates helping her and showing her respect and kindness.

Discussion: Now, ask students what Marion meant when she says, "I know it can be otherwise too." Then, explain that sometimes children and adults are not respectful or helpful to others. Ask students to think about how this makes them feel. Ask them to share what advice they would give to others about treating people with respect.

Crocodile, You're Beautiful! Confidence: Embracing Our Strengths and Ourselves

Collect

Dr. Ruth's Recorded Read Aloud: It is now time to watch and listen to the recorded reading of Dr. Ruth's children's book *Crocodile, You're Beautiful! Embracing our Strengths and Ourselves*. To begin, follow the steps below:

- Display the cover image of the book provided in the teacher resources *Crocodile, You're Beautiful! Embracing our Strengths and Ourselves - Teacher Resource* and read the title to students. Ask them what they predict the story might be about based on its title and illustrations.
- Then, play the digital recording of the book.
- During the recording, as each animal is introduced in the story, ask students to share how Dr. Ruth tried to help each one (e.g., she helped Octopus ask the other animals for more space). Use an anchor chart to record each animal and their experience as they are introduced in the story. A sample anchor chart is provided below in this teacher guide.

Partner/Share/Discuss: After students have watched the whole recording, have them think about how Dr. Ruth helped the animals overcome their challenges and gain confidence by embracing their strengths. Then, have them think about the commonalities and differences between the animals.

Construct

Discussion: Gather student impressions of the Dr. Ruth's book and ask them if they have ever felt like one of the animals in the book. If so, ask them to share which animal they could relate most to and why. (You can have them refer to the anchor chart.)

- › Remind students that in the story we learn that Ant is strong at building and Turtle is strong at swimming. Ask students to take turns in sharing with a partner what they are "strong at doing."
- › Conclude this discussion by asking students what they think Dr. Ruth meant by saying, "we are each in charge of our own body"?

Create a Drawing: Now, provide students with drawing paper and art materials to create a drawing that responds to Dr. Ruth's Try This: "Think of something you're good at and draw yourself doing it while wearing a superhero cape!" (Found in the story after Turtle discovers Turtle's strengths).

Communicate

Share: In small groups, have students share their drawings about what they are good at. You may also have students participate in a gallery walk to find out what their classmates are good at doing wearing unique superhero capes.

Optional: Follow up by having students create a class book with their illustrations, to be placed in the class library. Their artwork can also be displayed virtually or in the physical classroom space.

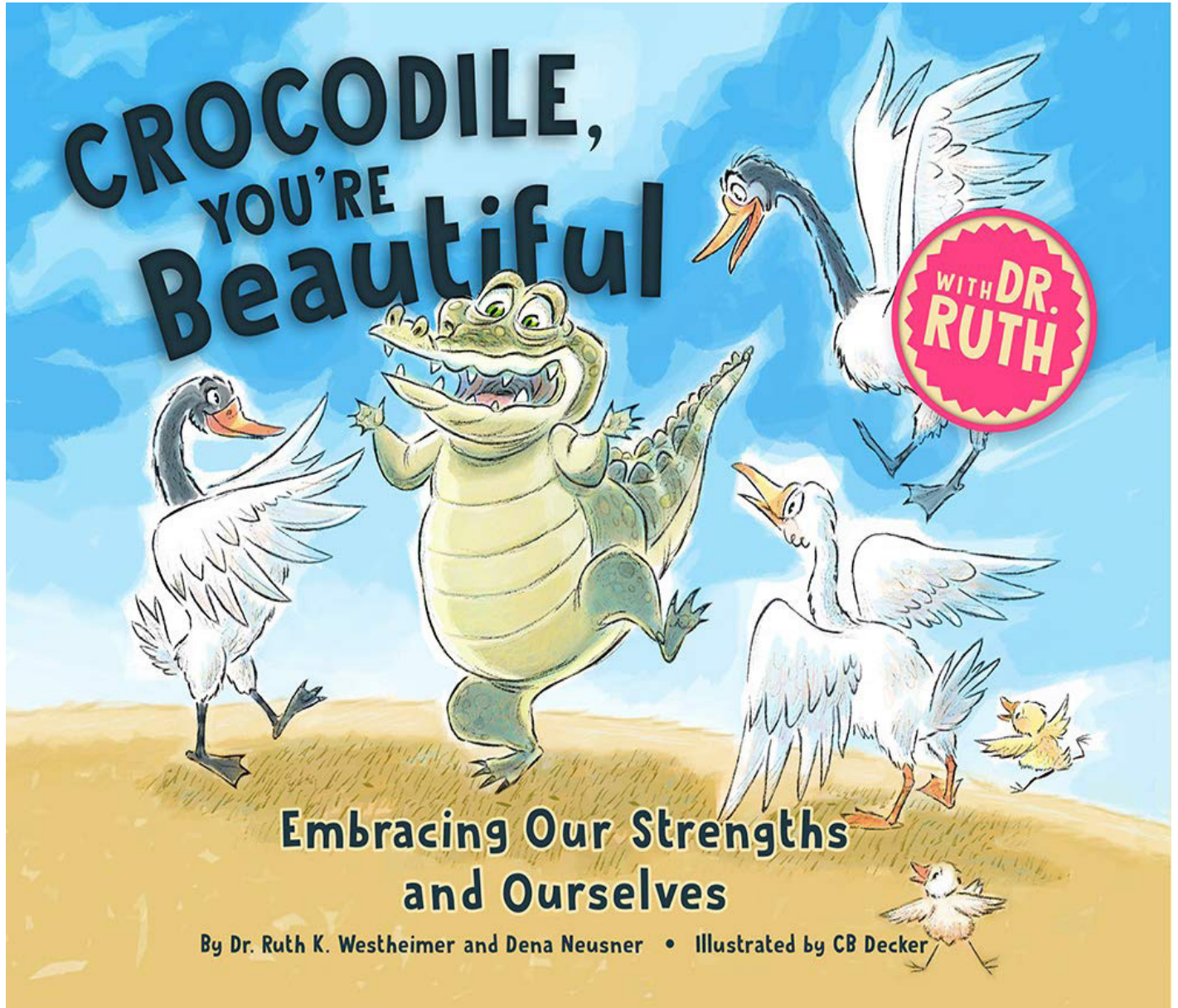
Lesson

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Crocodile, You're Beautiful! **Confidence: Embracing Our Strengths and Ourselves**

Cover Illustration for *Crocodile, You're Beautiful! Embracing Our Strengths and Ourselves*



Crocodile, You're Beautiful! Confidence: Embracing Our Strengths and Ourselves

Sample Anchor Chart for *Crocodile, You're Beautiful! Embracing Our Strengths and Ourselves*

Character	Challenge	Solution
Octopus 	“Sometimes I feel small and crowded”	
Crocodile 	“Sometimes I feel too bumpy and lumpy and rough”	
Cat 	“Sometimes I want to be by myself”	
Rabbit 	“Sometimes I don’t want what my friends want”	
Turtle 	“Sometimes I don’t think I’m good at anything”	
Ant 	“Sometimes I feel so small”	
Human 	“Sometimes I...”	

Crocodile, You're Beautiful!

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Biography

Marion Blumenthal Lazan

Marion Blumenthal Lazan was born on December 20, 1934 in Bremen, Germany. After moving to the United States, Marion was placed in a 4th grade class despite that she was 13 years of age, all because she did not speak English. Although she was very good in European geography and arithmetic, she said it did not help her in America because she couldn't understand any of the instructions in school. Marion shares that the school she attended was racially diverse, and this was a very new experience for her since she had only seen white people before. She remembers how well her classmates treated her despite how much younger they were than her, and her inability to speak their language. Marion was interviewed in Hewlett, New York on February 6, 1995.

