



Extended Literacy Adventure: Building Ideas with Books!

Books Inspire and Help Us Build Our Ideas

Aventura: ¡Construyendo ideas con libros!

Los libros nos inspiran y nos ayudan a experimentar con nuestros ideas

Age Range: K + up

Group Size: flexible

Time Range: 45-90 min



June 2019



Adventure Goals:

The goal of this activity is for children to learn how books can inspire us to create and build cool things! In addition, the activity is an opportunity to introduce growth mindset principles by discussing using various strategies to stay positive and persevere when faced with challenges.



Measurable Objectives and Outcomes:

- **Objective:** Children will be introduced to the idea of and tools for a growth mindset using grit.
- **Outcome:** Participants will be able to use or articulate tools for growth mindset such as taking a deep breath, positive self talk, taking a break, asking for help, etc.

**Note: this adventure is one that can be repeated multiple times by simply changing out the interactive read aloud selection and extension activity.*



Adventure Outline:

Books that explore invention, craft and creation help integrate reading and doing to inspire and motivate striving and reluctant readers. Learning about and applying tools for perseverance help children when they are faced with challenges in creating, inventing, reading and life. In this adventure we will:

1. [Hook: Learning about Grit](#) Through Story, discuss the meanings of “inspire” and “grit” and share our stories to illustrate.
2. [Getting Started: Interactive Read-Aloud](#) Read a text depicting a child building something and using grit to persevere through challenges. Discuss tools children may use when feeling frustrated.
3. [Activity: Making Puff Mobiles](#) Introduce puff mobiles and build them.
4. [Wrap-Up: Share out](#) Discuss how participants used grit.
5. [Book Browsing:](#) Survey books about creating things and/or grit. Allow time for children to browse other books about creating and making cool things and/or books about growth mindset.
6. [Review](#)



Supplies:

- Collection of books about young people building, engineering, making cool things.
- Collection of books with a growth mindset theme. [Inspiration/Grit Book Suggestions](#)
- Index cards with the words Inspire and Grit written on them large enough for participants to see/read.
- Puff mobile supply sets (number of sets depends on your participants)
 - paper
 - 3 non-bendable drinking straws
 - 2 paper clips
 - tape
 - scissors
 - 4 lifesavers
- Collection of “how-to” books for drawing, building, crafting, etc.
- Optional: timer, tape measure, painter tape.



Considerations for Planning:

- You might decide to partner up participants before you begin, to ensure everyone feels included and isn't left out based on where they are sitting. You may also choose to establish who is “partner A” and who is “partner B” and use these labels to organize which partner speaks first. Finally, a very short ice-breaker (favorite food, color, etc.) with partners before launching into the adventure might help all feel more comfortable.
- Group/Pair Variation: You may decide to ask participants if they would enjoy being grouped with family members, friends, or by taking into account languages that they have in common. [Research link here](#).
- For the puff mobile supplies, you will want to think about distribution. Will you lay them all out on a table and have participants take what they need, or place individual sets in containers to ease the hand-out process?



Adventure Plan

1. Hook (10 min)

Say: Welcome everyone! Today we are going to have so much fun! We are going to read a fantastic story about an inventor who dreams up ideas and then makes them! After our book, we all are going to create a bit ourselves! We are going to build something called a Puff Mobile. Curious? Excited? Me too! Let's get started! Before we begin, let's talk about two cool words; Inspire and Grit.

Let's Think About This!: Inspire and Grit. Think, pair, share!

Question: Let's start with the first one, Inspiration. Does anyone know what this word means? What does it mean to be *inspired*? If I said, I was *inspired* to paint a picture, What does *inspired* or *inspire* mean? When you have an idea, place a thumb on your knee to let me know.

Pair Discussion: Now, turn to your partner. Discuss what you think the word *inspire* might mean.

Share: I heard a lot of great thinking. Would anyone like to share their discussion with the group? (Allow participants to share if they would like. No pressure here though) Thank you all for your ideas.

Say: When I think of the word *inspire*, I think about really wanting to do or try something new and creative. Does that sound right to you? Like when I said I was *inspired* to paint a picture. I saw this beautiful flower on a walk the other day and I really couldn't wait to get home and try to paint it.

Say: Now, how about *grit*. Have you heard this word before? Thumbs up for yes, or down for no. This is a new word for many of us, right? When I hear the word *grit* I think about not giving up - even when something is hard or I'm frustrated.

Facilitators will now share a story about a time they were inspired to learn something, but it was hard or frustrating. Instead of giving up, they used their grit to persevere.

Say (Example): Come in close, friends. I have a story to share with you. When I was about 8 years old, I still had not learned how to ride a bike. One day all of the kids in the neighborhood rode off on an adventure without me! I felt so left out and sad. I guess you could say that I was finally inspired to learn how to ride, right? I wanted to try something new! Well, my parents both had to go to work, so my older sister tried to teach me. She basically told me to get on and move the pedals. Well, I

Navigation

When beginning an activity, sharing an overview with all participants helps put children and families at ease by knowing what the plan is in advance. When the brain is not anxious, learning can occur. [Research link here](#).



Vocabulary

"Mobile" in Spanish = *el móvil*

"Inspiration" in Spanish = *la inspiración*

"Grit" in Spanish = *la determinación; la tenacidad*



Tip: Allowing children some time to think on their own before discussing their ideas with a partner increases the level of discussion and allows more reluctant speakers time to gather their thoughts. [Research link here](#).

Extended Learning: When learning new vocabulary, children who interact more with the new words will retain better. Check out additional ideas for interacting with new vocabulary.

Oral storytelling: Helps children develop literacy and honors cultures with strong oral storytelling traditions.

spent most of the day doing just that. I would get on the bike, try to move the pedals - but usually I would fall off to the side before I could even get both of my feet on the pedals! I can tell you I was SO frustrated. I'm embarrassed to tell you this, but I actually threw my bike down and cried. Yikes! I finally ended up asking my dad for help. Still, it wasn't easy. I fell off my bike a lot. Skinned my knees and even ripped one of my favorite t-shirts! One time, I told my dad that I thought maybe I wasn't the kind of kid that would ever learn to ride a bike. Maybe I just wasn't good at bike riding. The good news is that I was wrong. I didn't give up and I finally DID learn to ride a bike. You could say, I had grit! Something was hard and frustrating at first, but I didn't give up. That's grit. Now, riding bikes is one of my favorite things to do!

Let's Think About This!: Using Grit. Think, pair, share!

Question: How about all of you? Have you ever tried to do something new and it was really hard at first? Maybe you tried to make something? Let's think about this together for a moment. (Wait for a time.) Again, thumb on your knee when you have an idea.

Partner Discussion: Now, turn to your partner. Discuss with them something that you once learned or tried to make or do - but it was hard at first. Did you give up or did you use your grit? Ok, share!

Share: Short on Time? Would anyone like to share their story with the group?

2. Getting Started: Interactive Read-Aloud (10-15 min)

For this example, we will use the book, [Rosie Revere Engineer](#), by Andrea Betty, 2018. This text was selected as an example of a story that includes both building/engineering and examples of grit. If you choose to use another text, simply read this as an example for interactive read aloud ideas and then share a text that inspires you. [Inspiration/Grit Book Suggestions](#).

Before Reading:

Say: I'm going to start today sharing a text that inspires me. Has anyone seen or read this book before?

Ask: Should we start by looking at the cover? Just looking at the picture, what do you notice? I'm going to give us all some time to think. Put a thumb on your knee when you notice something.



Vocabulary Tip:
When exploring new vocabulary, personalizing the word within a relatable story helps cement new learning.

Background Knowledge: Tapping into childrens prior experiences helps build connections to new learning.



Tip: Sometimes when we ask children to share, we might need to read the room a bit. If only a few participants have ideas, you can either wait longer - or depending on time, choose to change a partner share into having a few kids share their ideas with the whole group instead.

Visual Thinking: These three primary questions in VTS: Visual Thinking Strategies, help support readers of all levels in developing literacy through visual literacy.

1. What's going on in this picture?"
¿Qué está pasando en esta imagen?
2. What do you see that makes you say that?
¿Qué ves que te hace decir eso?
3. What else can you find?
¿Qué más puedes encontrar?

Invite discussion using these open-ended VTS questions:

1. What's going on in this picture?"
¿Qué está pasando en esta imagen?
2. What do you see that makes you say that?
¿Qué ves que te hace decir eso?
3. What else can you find?
¿Qué más puedes encontrar?



Vocabulary Tip:
When learning new vocabulary, it's important to repeat the word and use it in context as much as possible. Continue using *inspire* and *grit* throughout the lesson and when talking directly with children during the activity. Even better, encourage the children to try using the word too!

Partner Talk or Whole Group Share Opportunity

Say: *What about the title? Do you know what an engineer is? An engineer is someone who designs and builds new things using their creativity and grit.*

During Reading

While reading the text aloud to participants, be sure to:

- Point out situations when Rosie is *inspired*.
- Discuss moments when Rosie has to use *grit* to keep going.
- Ask participants to share their thinking (questions, ideas, connections, etc.)



Vocabulary
“Engineer” in Spanish
= *el ingeniero /la ingeniera*

After Reading

After reading, there are three main goals:

1. Eliciting the children’s reactions to what was read.
2. Circling back to the idea of *inspiration* and *grit*.
3. Encouraging the children to share connections to their own life, other texts (songs, movies, books), or anything else in the world.

Extended Learning: Sharing your own thinking and encouraging participants to do so as well enhances children’s comprehension of this book and all future reading opportunities. [Research link here.](#)

Possible Follow-up Questions

- *I’m curious to know what you are thinking about this book! What are you thinking about right now?*
- *Did you notice Rosie being inspired at all?*
- *Do you think Rosie had grit? Why or why not?*
- *Did this book remind you of anything in your own life? How about another book, song or movie? Anything else?*

Extended Learning: Practice using the word *inspired* with the support of sentence frames.

Transition (1 min)

Say: *I don’t know about you, but I’m feeling really inspired today. I feel the need or urge to make something! How about you? Let’s be engineers today, just like Rosie!*

3. Activity: Making Puff Mobiles (30-40 min)

Say: It's time to get started! Has anyone noticed what is on the table behind me? We have straws, paper, paper clips, tape, life savers and scissors. What do you say we design and build puff mobiles?! So, the word puff means blowing air with your mouth. Let's all try (everyone puff air with your mouth). A mobile just means being able to move. We are going to get into groups and try to build a car, with only the materials you see here on the table. A car that moves by only using your breath - by blowing on it! Any questions?

Pull out one set of materials and lay them out in front of you. Take some time to model your own thinking just enough to get the children started. The trick here is to make sure they understand the task, but not lead their ideas too much with your own.

Say: (Example): Ok friends! So it looks like I have 3 straws, 4 Life Savers, tape, scissors, 2 paper clips and a piece of paper. How will I make a car out of this? What will I blow on to make it go? Hmm...

Say: Let's begin by spending some time thinking first. Some of you may do your best thinking by drawing, if so please raise your hand and I'll pass out some paper for you to get your ideas down.

Allow the children time to think in any way that feels best. Some children may want to walk around the table looking at the supplies. Others may want to draw. Some participants might like the option of talking it out with the provider or a small group.

Discuss: Place the children in their groups. You may choose to keep them in the partnerships you established at the beginning. Allow some time for the groups to share their ideas before beginning the activity.

Say: Before we begin building, let's revisit the word **grit** really quickly.

Let's Think About This!: Strategies for Perseverance: Think, Pair, Share!

Question: Ok, this challenge will be tons of fun, but it might not be that easy...that's why it is a challenge. Before we begin, let's think about some strategies that will help us with our **grit**. When this challenge gets tough, what will we do to stay positive? If it helps, think back to either my bike riding story or your own story about when you tried something challenging. Also, you might think about what Rosie taught us today. When you have at least 2 ideas, put that thumb on your knee again to show me that you are ready to share (whole group or discuss with your partner).



Tip: You may also want to share this [Puff Mobile handout from PBS Kids](#) with the group. The picture on the front is a bit leading, but depending on the groups' needs, this might be a helpful support.

Think Time: Structuring think time before discussion increases the depth and sophistication of thinking and language.



Vocabulary
“Perseverance”
in Spanish = *la perseverancia*



Tip: You may need to shorten this section as the participants will most likely be eager to get started. Rather than brainstorming ideas for perseverance, you may choose just to share some of your own strategies.

Possibilities might include:

- Taking a deep breath/*Respirar profundamente*
- Positive self talk, “I know I can do this.” or “I can do hard things!”/*“Yo sé que lo puedo lograr” o “Puedo hacer cosas difíciles!”*
- Asking others for a little help/*Pedir ayuda a alguien más*
- Talking about your ideas with others/*Conversar sobre tus ideas*
- Taking a break/*Tomar un descanso*
- Trying out a new idea/*Experimentar con una idea nueva*

Say: Let's be sure to remember to use these great strategies when we are building our puff mobiles today! Let's get started!!

Pass out the materials to each group. Optional: Set a time for 5 min. Pause the groups and have them share some of their ideas so far. Then, send them all off to design and build again.

As participants are building, walk around and ask them questions that will help them extend their thinking and language.

Examples:

- *I see you are using (refer to one of the materials), tell me about your thinking?*
- *What has been a challenge so far? How did you solve it?*
- *Oooh, this is interesting! Tell me more about your car.*

It's Okay to Play: Don't worry if the participants begin by playing a bit with the materials. Children learn best through play. After a few minutes, you might gently encourage a few groups to think about how they will put the materials together. Or, highlight the initial attempts of a group that is on track.

4. Adventure Wrap-up (5-10 min.)

Say: Okay! It's time to come back to the meeting place to discuss what we have learned today.

Share Time: Bring the group back to the meeting place on the floor. Ask for volunteers to share their puff mobile with the group. You may choose to use the questions above to extend their thinking. Or, if time allows, other participants may have questions for the designers as well.

Say: Such interesting designs today! I know I have learned a ton and have a few new design ideas I might want to try out at home! Let's also think about what we learned today about *my*. Did anyone have to use their *grit* today when making the puff mobile?

Extended Learning: If time allows, you may build in a redesign component.

If children are feeling shy, facilitators may choose to share quotes from some of the participants that they worked with during the activity.



5. Book Browsing (5-10 min)

Say: I hope that you felt a bit inspired today and that you used your *grit* when things got tough. I have taken some time to gather several books that will inspire you to build more things and be creative. There are books about drawing, making crafts, building robots, etc. There are also books about using your imagination and *grit*, like the one we read today. If you like Rosie Revere, you might like some of these too. I want to give us all some time to browse some of the books I've found for you!

Depending on time, providers may want to “book talk” some of the selections they have pulled before allowing participants to browse.

Say: I have some really great news for you all! All of the books at our stations are available for you all to borrow today!! Did anyone find a book or two, or three, or four that they would like to borrow? Let's do it!!



Tip: You might choose to set up a few stations of books around the room to help disperse the participants.

Access + Choice = Growth!

Tip: Book browsing time is an easy piece to skip when short on time, however, it might just be the most effective strategy for supporting reading development. More research here.

6. Review:

Say: I hope you all had fun today learning about different types of books that may inspire you. We love to end our time together by asking you three very important questions. Remember, you won't need any *grit* to figure out the answers. The answer to these questions is always...¡Que sí! Or Yes!

1. Are we happy to help you find good books to read? (Yes!)
¿Nos gusta ayudarte a encontrar buenos libros para leer? (¡Que sí!)
2. Do we love to talk about books with you? (Yes!)
¿Nos gusta conversar sobre los libros contigo? (¡Que sí!)
3. Is all reading good reading? (Yes!)
¿Toda lectura es buena lectura? (¡Que sí!)

Reader's Advisory: It is essential that all participants know that the providers in the room are happy and eager to help them find books that they will love.

ICON KEY



Key Element



A Tip



Time



Spanish word



Choice



Variations/
More ideas



Variations and Extended Learning

Consider some of these tips for engaging participants of various ages, cultures, languages and abilities.

Hook

Short on Time? Consider skipping the “share with the whole group” for any of the Think, Pair, Share formats. The essential piece to this strategy is increasing dialogue with peers. Sharing out with the whole group is a bonus that allows for more opportunities to practice speaking to a group as well as affording providers an option for extending language and vocabulary through reframing and rephrasing what the participants share.

Extended Learning: When introducing new vocabulary, there are always opportunities for extensions. Here are a few extended options when introducing vocabulary:

- Write the word on an index card or small poster so children see the word as well as hear the word.
- Say and use the word as many times as possible and reasonable during your introduction to the word and throughout the activity.
- Ask the children to say the word aloud. Turn to a partner and say the word. It’s important that they get used to pronouncing the word.
- Playful interactions with the word help reinforce comprehension. Ask children to make a face that looks like the word, act it out, draw it in the air, etc. If there is a antonym (word with opposite meaning) ask the children to act/draw this out as well.
- Using the word in context is the single best way for new word learning to solidify. Try to use the word throughout your activity. Encourage the participants to try out using the word as well. Celebrate student’s attempts as a whole group.



Getting Started: Interactive Read Aloud (10-15 min.)

Short on Time? Choose a shorter text or read only a portion of the text.

Extended Learning: Interactive read-aloud is a perfect opportunity to expand or extend a learning opportunity. Here are some possibilities to enhance and lengthen the interactive read-aloud:

- Review the book ahead of time and look for any vocabulary that the participants may be unfamiliar with and mark these pages. Before reading, discuss these words and their meanings.
- Throughout the reading of the text, find locations where you can stop and model thinking about your questions, predictions, inferences, pictures in your mind, etc. Invite the children to share their

own thinking as well. Example: “I have to stop right now and tell you all something. I’m making a connection in my mind to something in my own life! This part reminded me about _____.” Do you ever have connections when you are reading? Do you have any connections right now?”

Transition

Extended Learning: Write this sentence frame on a poster or piece of paper:

I feel *inspired* to _____.

Allow participants to take a few moments to think about what the book you have just read has inspired them to do, make or try. First, model your own thinking, and then use the sentence frame to share your idea. Then allow the children time to think and share using the sentence frame for support.

Adventure: Making Puff Mobiles (30-40 min)

Short on Time? Make one puff mobile as a group. Ask for ideas and volunteers to help with the building of the mobile.

Extended Learning: If time allows, you may want to include an opportunity for re-design. Mark the floor with two lines of painter’s tape about two feet apart. Participants can see how many puffs it takes to get their car from one line to the next. After this, allow the teams time to revise their cars. Are they able to redesign their cars so that it takes fewer puffs of air to get the car across the line?

Online Resources:

- [PBS Kids Puff Mobile handout](#)
- [More info on the engineering process and re-design](#)

Passive Program Idea

- Display books about positive mindset, grit, engineering and how-to (draw, craft, build, create). Display the [Puff Mobile handout for PBS Kids](#) and individual bags of supplies for children to take home and try on their own.
- Define *grit* and *inspiration* on a poster and ask children to write or draw sticky notes that show when they have been inspired or how they used grit.
- Encourage participants to return to your program site with their puff mobile designs to share and/or display.
- When a strong visualizing opportunity presents itself, ask the children to stop and make a picture/movie in their mind. What do they see?

Beginning Readers Storytime Integration:

Using the book suggestions and the interactive read aloud (Getting Started) guide would be a great way to introduce the words *inspiration* and *grit*. If time allows, you could do a group build of a Puff Mobile taking participants, suggestions and asking for volunteers to help with the construction process.



Adventure Supports



Vocabulary

Affective Filter: is the term Stephen Krashen has used to refer to the complex negative emotional and motivational factors that may interfere with the reception and processing of comprehensible input. Such factors include: anxiety, self-consciousness, boredom, annoyance, alienation, and so forth.

Grit: courage and resolve; strength of character.

Puff Mobile: a vehicle that has the ability to move from the force of air blowing.

Spanish Vocabulary

“Mobile” in Spanish = *el móvil*

“Inspiration” in Spanish = *inspiración*

“Grit” in Spanish = *determinación; tenacidad*

“Engineer” in Spanish = *el ingeniero*

“Perseverance” in Spanish = *la perseverancia*



Family Engagement

Messages for Caregivers

Choice builds engagement: Kids read more and develop lifelong reading habits and strategies when they are allowed to choose their own books.

Genre expansion: This activity helps expand children’s ideas about the possibilities for reading. Many kids love to do or make things. Exposing children to the “do-it-yourself”, cooking, drawing or “how-to” sections of the library may be just the hook for some reluctant readers.

Open-ended questions: Asking kids open-ended questions helps them develop critical thinking and communication skills. Open-ended questions have multiple possible answers rather than one correct answer.

Be a reading role model: I’m sure you’ve observed that a lot of the time, your kids do and say what they see you do and say. Make sure they see you reading and writing! Make sure they hear you talking about what you read and write.

Useful daily reading: Reading for everyday tasks is a great way to incorporate more reading into a child’s life. Reading labels, recipes, instructions and other informational texts helps kids develop necessary skills for becoming a self-sufficient adult. This kind of reading is just as important as reading books!

Adventure Supports

Additional Resources:

Inspiration/Grit Book Suggestions:

1. [Rosie Revere Engineer](#), by Andrea Betty. 2018
2. [The Most Magnificent Thing](#), by Ashley Spires & Yasemin Ucar, 2017
3. [Emmanuel's dream the true story of Emmanuel Ofosu Yeboah](#) by Laure Ann Thompson & Sean Qualls, 2015
4. [Flight School](#) by Lita Judge, 2014
5. [A Chair For My Mother](#), by LeWar Burton & Vera B. Williams, 2008
6. [Brave Irene](#), by William Steig, 1986
7. [Amazing Grace](#), by Mary Hoffman & Caroline Binch, 2016
8. [Henry's Freedom Box](#), by Ellen Levine & Kadir Nelson, 2013
9. [The Boy and the Airplane](#), by Mark Pett, 2014
10. [The Girl and the Bicycle](#), by Mark Pett, 2014

Supporting Research

- **Best Practices in Reading and Writing: Key Finding 3:** In order to foster comprehension, strategies must be taught explicitly and include discussion with engaging text.
- **Best Practices in Reading and Writing: Key Finding 5:** Access, choice and time reading and discussing engaging text increase reading achievement.
- **Best Practices in Reading and Writing: Key Finding 7:** Ensuring children are immersed in language and reading aloud helps develop reading readiness.
- **Best Practices in Reading and Writing: Key Finding 12:** Opportunities for oral language are essential for reading development in the second Language.
- **Best Practices in Reading and Writing: Key Finding 19:** Building and incorporating background knowledge aids in engagement.
- **Library Program Models: Key Finding 2:** Just-right books: libraries are experts at reader's advisory.
- **Library Program Models Key Finding 3:** Centering books and reading in programming improves children's attitudes toward reading and books.
- **Library Program Models Key Finding 12:** Opportunities for oral language are essential for reading development in the second Language.
- **Library & Afterschool Program Models Key Finding 18:** The Whole Book Approach (WBA) Uses Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) in storytime to support participants of all reading levels in developing verbal literacy through visual literacy.
- **Child Social Emotional Development: Key Finding 3:** Children learn through play and libraries are apt spaces for children to learn through play.
- **Child Social Emotional Development Key Finding 7:** Latino families from a range of backgrounds have a preference for activities that build and maintain cohesion within the family.
- **Equity Key Finding 10:** STEM programming is more effective with Latino participants when programs help learners identify with science in personally meaningful ways.

Credits



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Fostering Readers is supported by the Institute of Museum and Library Services through the Library Services and Technology Act, administered by the State Library of Oregon.