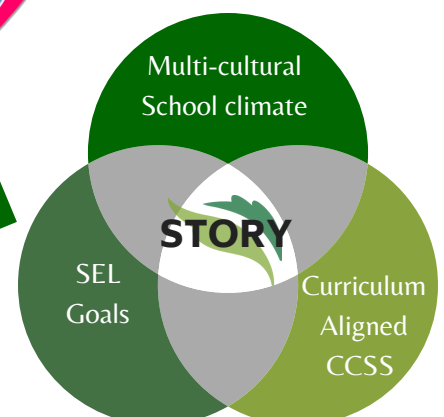
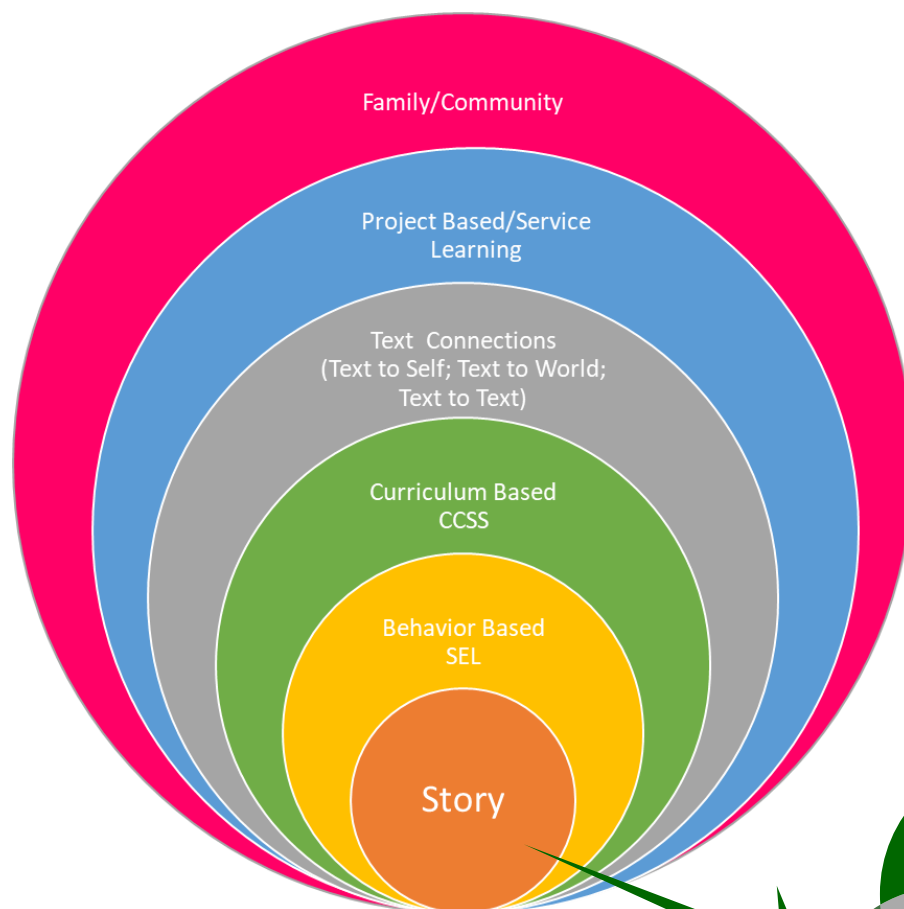


## Combining Academic and Social Emotional Learning Curriculum

- **CREATE** a school climate that **honors diversity, nurtures character**, and **deters bullying**.
- Align your district with New York State **Social Emotional Learning Goals** with our **Multi-Cultural** wisdom stories.
- Seamlessly embed the stories into **Common Core** ELA with cross-curricular reference to math, science, social studies, and includes **Special Needs** and/or ELL accommodations.



**Interested in learning more?**

Call 888.793.7257 or email [info@wisdomthinkers.org](mailto:info@wisdomthinkers.org).



## Ralph Singh Founder and CEO, Wisdom Thinkers

**Ralph Singh, Author, Educator, Story-teller, and Community Builder**, Chairs the Wisdom Thinkers Network and currently consults to develop curricula and resources in poor rural, poor urban, and everywhere in between, to help create a school climate which nurtures character, honors diversity, and deters bullying. Following the post-9-11 arson attack on his spiritual center, Gobind Sadan, USA, he followed the powerful act of forgiveness, by committing to the young arsonists that he would help overcome the hatred and ignorance by helping young people share

each other's stories.

His award winning "Stories to Light our Way, Journey to the World of Good" draws from wisdom stories from 11 different traditions, with common core aligned lesson plans, Pre-K through 8, easily implemented by teachers and internalized by students and have proved especially effective in reaching special needs and non-verbal students, the hard to teach, and others who tend to slip through the cracks. The approach brings an understanding of shared values into schools and community, using the teachings and wisdom stories from the world's traditions and cultures. Together with his middle and high school inquiry model service learning game, "Change the Story, a game to Alter Reality," endorsed by Harvard's Dr. Richard Weissbourd and Dr. David Streight, and their turn-key Oral history project help foster more compassionate, engaged, pluralistic citizens and lead to a more dedicated, ethical workforce.

Ralph is a veteran of character education and has spent his life promoting spirituality and values in education and public life. Over 20 years ago he was part of the CNY Education Consortium's taskforce on Values in Public Education where he helped develop and name their Schools of Character project which was administered throughout the state by Syracuse University.

Ralph has presented at Character.org (CEP), Association for Moral Education, most recently at their joint conference with Harvard and Tisch School at Tufts on "Civic engagement: A cultural revolution?," internationally in China, and India. and with the Club of Rome's task force on the "Quest for Values." His blogs and articles have been featured in Character.org, CSEE.org, Huffington Post, The Interfaith Observer, and is collaborating with William James book award winner Dr. Darcia Narvaez, and Dr. Tonia Bock, on a book chapter entitled, "Ecology for Raising a Virtuous Human Being."

He can be contacted at [ralph@wisdomthinkers.org](mailto:ralph@wisdomthinkers.org) or for more information [www.wisdomthinkers.org](http://www.wisdomthinkers.org)

## About Stories to Light Our Way

*Infusing and aligning culturally responsive read aloud stories to create positive classroom culture and school climate with NYS Social Emotional Learning Core Competencies and ELA Common Core State Standards*

**Honor Diversity ∞**

**Nurture Character ∞**

**Discourage Bullying ∞**

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The *Stories to Light Our Way* curriculum teaches children life lessons using a traditional oral language format. The stories are universal and expose children to diverse cultures around the world. The modern world has lost its stories, and with it the ability to connect shared values between home, school, and society to create a positive norm for our children. Wisdom stories provide a simple vehicle to impact both character and social emotional development, while creating a safe, welcoming class culture, while easily extending a common vocabulary to home and society.

The Stories come with a Parents Choice award winning audio CD, ideal for listening stations or just playing for children who need to improve listening skills, and cover behavior traits from self-control, forgiveness, respect, courage, caring and kindness, citizenship, to name a few. The lessons are valuable and worthy of class time to read aloud and discuss connections to self, text, and the world. They produce quality conversations in short periods of time. To accommodate district/school needs, focus has been on embedding Stories with English Language Arts instruction aligning to language and literacy skills. They seamlessly integrate Character Ed and Social Emotional Learning with Academics.

With the formation of New York State Safe Schools Task Force, deliberations concluded the need for a focus on social emotional learning and a promotion of school climate. New York State's Every Student Succeeds Act includes a goal to ensure all students have access to support for social-emotional well-being. The task force conclusions are based on research that students benefit in many areas with direct instruction in social emotional skills.

To accommodate district/school needs, we have updated Stories to Light Our Way to align with Social Emotional Learning Competencies/Benchmarks. Equally important, Stories to Light Our Way 2.0 will provide school districts with a preventative approach that addresses social emotional learning within a culturally diverse curriculum.

## Crosswalk Aligning Academic to Social Emotional Learning Benchmarks (Grade 3 Sample)

NYS SEL Benchmarks



Academic Learning Standards

Grade 3 Sample Crosswalk	Social Emotional Learning Benchmark			CCSS ELA Anchor Standards (Reading)									CCSS Anchor Standards (Writing)									CCSS Anchor Standards (Speaking and Listening)						CCSS Anchor Standards (Language)						Activities to Demonstrate Understanding			
				Key Ideas & Details			Craft & Structure			Integration of Knowledge & Ideas			Text Type & Purposes			Production of Distribution of Writing			Research to Build and Present Knowledge			Comprehension and Collaboration			Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas			Conventions of Standard English			Knowledge of Language				Vocabulary Acquisition and Use		
The Turtle Who Just Couldn't Keep His Mouth Shut				.1	.2	.3	.4	.5	.6	.7	.8	.9	.1	.2	.3	.4	.5	.6	7	.8	.9	.1	.2	.3	.4	.5	.6	.1	.2	.3	.4	.5	.6		anchor chart		

### NEW YORK'S GOALS TO GUIDE SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING BENCHMARKS

1. Develop **self-awareness** and **self-management** skills essential to success in school and in life.
2. Use **social-awareness** and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain **positive relationships**.
3. Demonstrate **ethical decision-making skills** and responsible behaviors in personal, school, and community contexts.

## SAMPLE STORY MATRIX

### Introduction:

We are all fellow travelers, young and old alike, on the path of how to be good. Each story is like a journey. They can carry us to far away places, places where special people live and special things happen. But the most special place is in our hearts. And when we connect with the light in our hearts we can learn how to brighten our whole world and make our world the most special place.

## Social Emotional Learning Competencies

### SELF AWARENESS

#### Story Title

#### Character Trait

The Child Who Swallowed the Sun

A story to nurture your hidden gifts

The Boy Who Wasn't Afraid

A story of Courage and self-confidence

### SELF-MANAGEMENT

#### Story Title

#### Character Trait

The Turtle Who Just Couldn't Keep His Mouth Shut

A Story of Self-Control

### SOCIAL AWARENESS

#### Story Title

#### Character Trait

The Real Bargain

A story of caring and sharing

Shifting Sands

A story of forgiveness

The Child Who Loved His Neighbor

A story of compassion and inclusiveness

The Elephant and the Stray Dog

A story of true friendship

### RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

#### Story Title

#### Character Trait

The Little Girl Who Spoke with Tree

A story of stewardship

The Elephant and the Blind Friends

A story of respect for other's opinions

### ETHICAL DECISION MAKING, RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIORS

#### Story Title

#### Character Trait

The Kingdom of How to Be Good

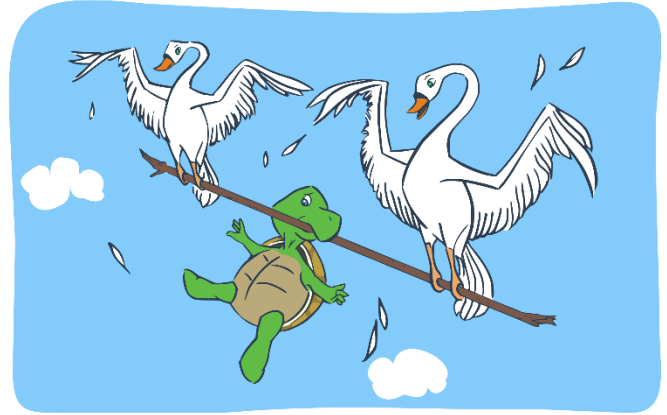
A story of changing yourself & the world

# "The Turtle Who Just Couldn't Keep His Mouth Shut"

## *A Story of Self Control*

The focus of "The Turtle Who Just Couldn't Keep His Mouth Shut" is the importance of self-control. Self-Control is the skill that helps children learn to control their feelings and behaviors in order to make good decisions, while aiding in reducing impulsive actions and dealing effectively with frustration. Gaining self-control over our own actions frees us to develop good self-esteem and self-respect.

They will also learn who their real friends are, and who just keeps them down. Through the turtle they can explore what it means to get "stuck in the mud" and who and how they can get out of the troubles that bog them down.



### STORY EXCERPT:

Snappy the Snapping Turtle was always snapping at anything or anyone who came near him. Even those who just happened to say, "Good morning," nearly got their heads bitten off. He was so angry that soon there was no one in the pond who would go near him. You might be grumpy, too, if you were always stuck in the mud.

But everything changed the day a pair of swans on their way home spotted the little pond where Snappy lived and decided to drop in for a rest. Snappy had never seen anything so beautiful.

It was hard for the pond residents to believe but Snappy actually made friends with the swans.

Then one year it didn't rain at all. The pond began to dry up under the heat of the burning sun. Everyone in the area, both the people and animals, were starving. The birds were leaving to find a better home.

Snappy came up with an idea. He told the swans to get a long stick. "My snappy jaws are strong enough so that if you fly slowly you could hold the two ends and carry me along. Once I clamp down on something, nothing escapes my grip."

But the swans were worried. What if Snappy couldn't control himself and opened his mouth? He would lose his grip and fall down. They made him promise not to open his mouth, no matter what.

So off the three friends flew. Higher and higher, over hills, valleys, fields and plains they went. But no matter what new things he saw he still kept his promise and held on tight.

But then, they flew over a city. The people of the city were amazed to see such a strange sight. They laughed and clapped their hands. Snappy tried his best to ignore them. But then someone shouted, "Look at the swans carrying that silly turtle." That made Snappy angry. "Why are you foolish people making such a racket?" he snapped. He had forgotten his promise. He lost his grip on the stick. Down, down, down he fell and crashed to the ground, because he just couldn't keep his mouth shut.

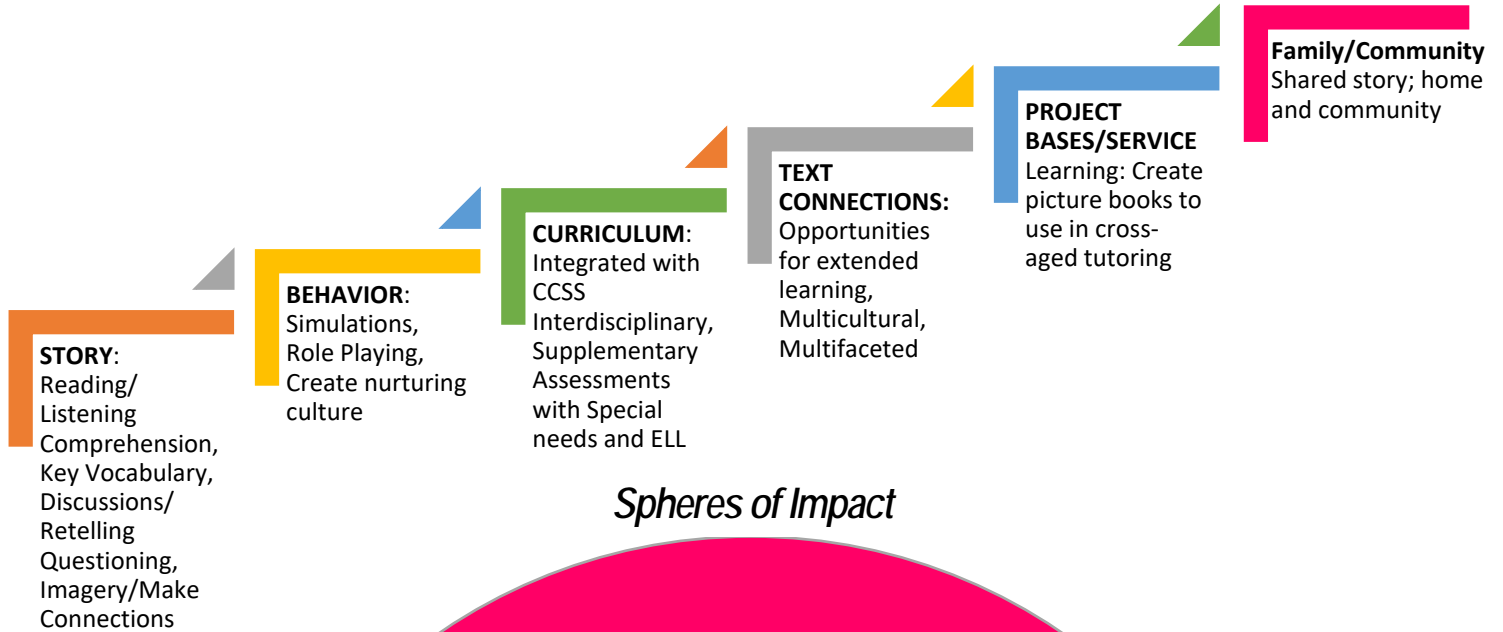
### Testimonials

"Over the past 5 years I have used Snappy to set my class expectations at the beginning of the year. I have found that these stories are really the essential missing piece to creating the learning environment and the motivation that is missing in today's society. I had no behavior referrals this year because we were able to reference and use the themes of the stories and characters to deal with any issues that arose. By using them to build this environment, the academic and social development went way beyond my expectations and allowed all my learners to flourish!"

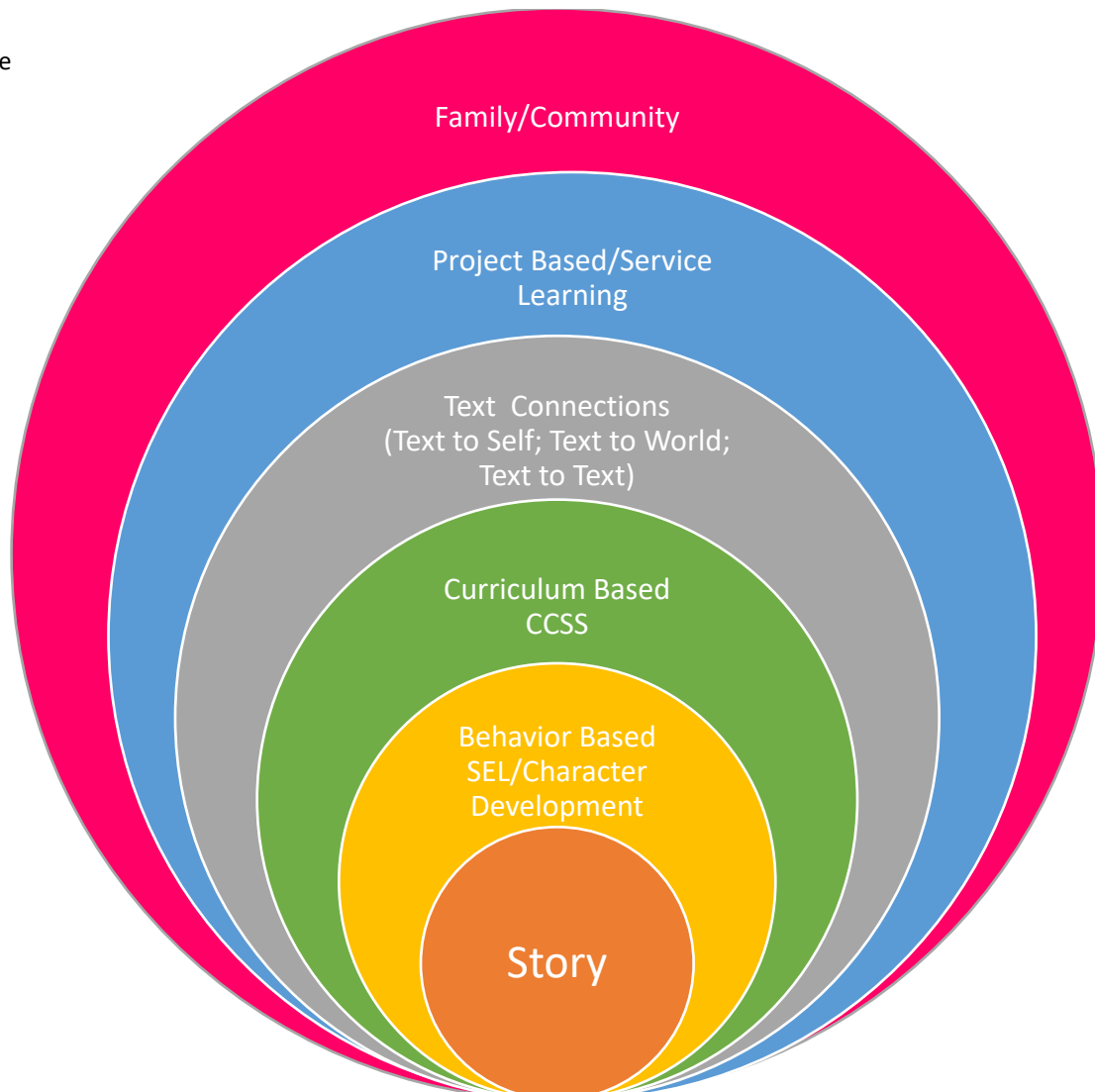
"The stories have helped the children quickly internalize behavioral messages that have otherwise been difficult to teach. They will carry these stories with them for the rest of their lives."

# "The Turtle Who Just Couldn't Keep His Mouth Shut"

*A Story of Self Control*



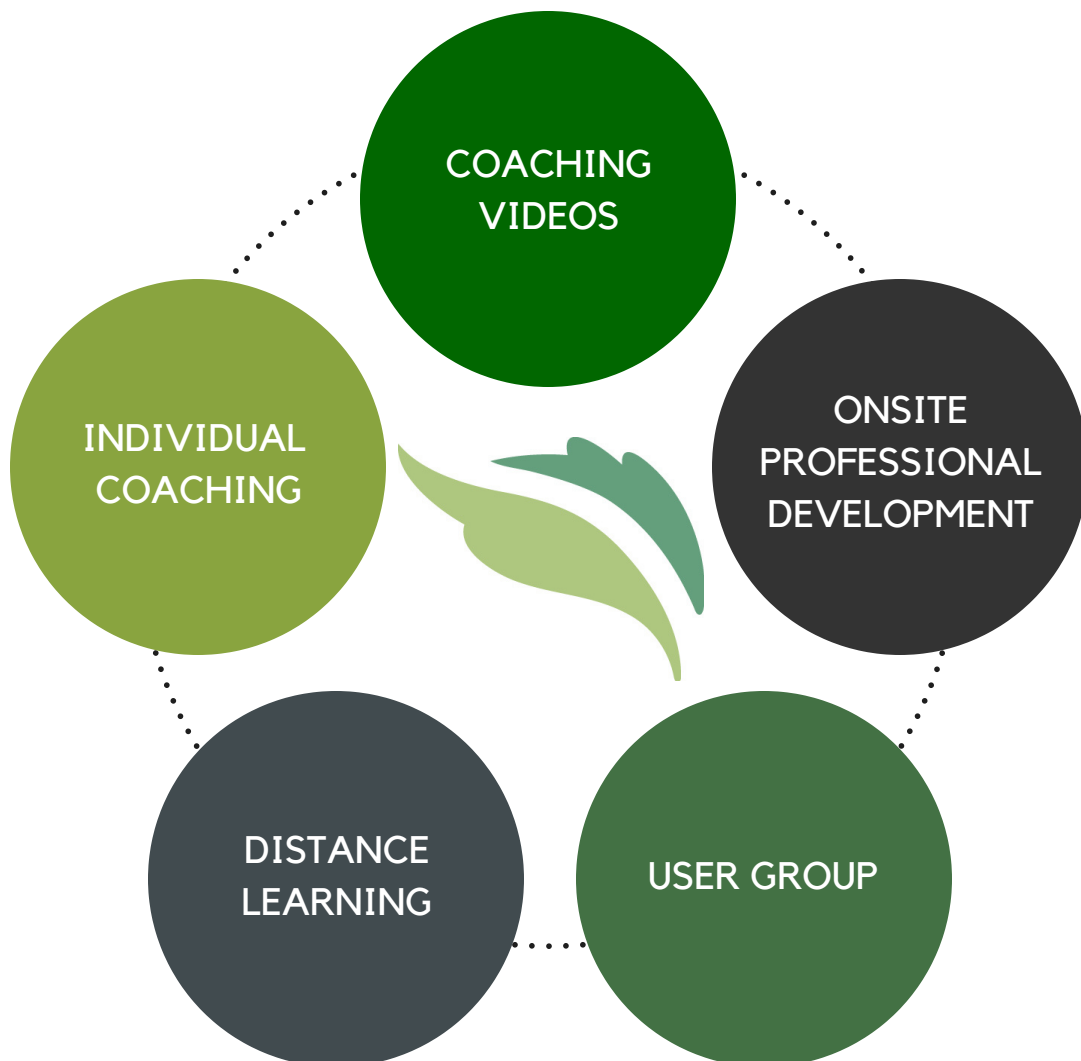
## *Spheres of Impact*





## *Professional Development*

# Wisdom Thinkers Network Circle of Support





## ***BENEFITS OF STORIES TO LIGHT OUR WAY***

1. Wisdom Thinkers can quickly become the catalyst that creates a classroom and school wide climate and culture that is less susceptible to student based bullying and harassment.
2. The "Stories" are focused upon the development of a learning environment that prides itself upon the reduction of classroom violence and disruption, within a district's diverse socioeconomic school settings.
3. The Stories are curriculum based programs, designed and created by educators and easily integrated into current SEL bench marks and classroom based curriculum standards.
4. Through EVI, a CTLE provider, Wisdom Thinkers will offer your professionals (classroom teachers, OT's, PT's, Speech Therapist, Special Education teachers) the opportunity to address inappropriate classroom behaviors, within existing instructional plans. Imagine a reduction in disciplinary occurrences based upon the integration of the stories within existing instructional and IEP plans!
5. The Stories have been specifically designed to address and enhance community based engagement and an integrated dialogue. Our goal is to inspire children to become more aware of their surroundings and to begin making positive and permanent changes that will positively enhance their classroom academic experience and outcomes.
6. The Stories directly address our children's interactive learning and behavioral skills. Being curriculum based and easily integrated into existing classroom curriculum, the stories can be easily integrates into existing classroom instruction. No need for addition instructional time to be assigned to the Wisdom Thinkers program rollout.
7. Enhance the local community culture and climate. Skills learned through the Wisdom Thinkers stories are practiced within the home, the community and the classroom, as the transition from a school based initiative to everyday behavioral norms. Communities change one person at a time
8. Our Wisdom Thinker Stories simulate real time life situations that are relevant to today's K-12 students. Consequently, we have seen very enthusiastic student participation and expansion of the program throughout the K-12 grade levels.
9. The adoption of the positive character norms of the stories will help develop and maintain a safer and more successful classroom learning environments.

### **JOIN THE WISDOM THINKERS MOVEMENT!**

Equip all children with a character-rich foundation needed for a meaningful life in school, community, and the workplace.

## USER SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS | OCTOBER 2017

On-line survey conducted with the support of a masters student in the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University.

- 100% said they plan to **continue to use** Wisdom Thinker Network stories regularly in their work over the next three to five years.
- 81% said **"Stories to Light Our Way" is most useful** in their work, and 25% said "Change the Story-A Game to Alter Reality" is most useful.
- 20% reported that the stories **significantly improved the listening skills** of students, and 80% said they somewhat improved these skills.
- 36% said the stories **significantly connected students with their communities**, and 64% said they somewhat connected students.
- 40% said the stories **significantly reduced disciplinary actions** and 60% said they somewhat reduced disciplinary actions due to problem behaviors.
- 51% had **used the stories for over two years**, of which 25% had used them for **four or more years**.

## TESTIMONIALS

"The stories have helped the children quickly internalize behavioral messages that have otherwise been difficult to teach. They will carry these stories with them for the rest of their lives."

- They **cultivate a strong sense of pride** that they will share in the school setting, the community and at home.
- The stories can be used **for multi-cultural character education** as they are diverse and multifaceted.
- The stories seem to have **countless potential in the classroom and community** with involvement from staff, community members and students.
- The stories can help junior high students **deal with feelings**.
- The stories can **empower students to be involved and make changes** in themselves, their home and their communities.
- Love the idea of having High School students share the stories and **discuss the characters with younger**, elementary school students.
- The stories can be incorporated into **Social Emotional Learning and Project Based Learning programs**.
- The stories **create connectedness to others** in the school and community through active learning.
- It is so important to allow students to tell their story, and not **fall into the trap of defining students** by, and teaching a single story.

## STUDENT RESPONSE

- "When we listen to the stories and really try to understand them, we can become better citizens and better friends." Here are some of the thoughts kids had when asked about wisdom thinkers:
- The stories make people think more about what they say before they speak the lessons make me want to try harder
- Wisdom Thinkers teaches us to think about the feelings of others
- We can all live in a better community if we care about others.