

Welcome to the world of Gnat & Corky

where every child has a voice, a story,
and the power to change the world.



A teenager who will go blind and lives life to the fullest. A big sister who is a light catcher for her brother with special needs. An animal advocate who started a shelter called the Happy Animals Club. A little girl who brings love and color to the world. This is the award-winning Gnat & Corky Children's Book Series that delivers messages that teach social and emotional awareness, the power of the human spirit, and the beauty of our differences.

The Gnat & Corky Series is based on the spirit of real children. Each book delivers a message to young readers through the voice of their peers. Readers see and hear themselves through the bravery, kindness, compassion, and advocacy that is found within each of the unique stories.

You can purchase the Gnat & Corky series [here](#).

Have your students answer Gnat & Corky's questions. Each book is based on [answers from real kids!](#)

Here is a synopsis of each of the four books in the Gnat & Corky series and a discussion guide with therapeutic activities for your students to explore the feelings and emotions from each of the stories.



Addison the **L**ight Catcher

Love, Light, Advocacy, Uniqueness

Listen to Addison tell the story of her super-duper light catcher. She made it when her brother with special needs was born to catch his light and share it with the world. This story about love, and the special bond between siblings, sheds light on the power of advocacy and the unique magic and light inside of everyone.

Discussion Points

- What is the message of this story?
- How are you like Addison?
- What does your light look like?
- What does the word advocate mean?
- How do you advocate for others?
- If your light were up in the sky, what would it look like?
- Who is your biggest advocate?
- How can you help other people share their special light?

Activity: Light Catchers

Materials Needed:

- Small clear bottles or containers with lid
- Any tiny embellishments (buttons, feathers, beads, glitter, shells, sequins, colored sand, etc.)
- Ribbon, yarn or small tag

Directions:

Have the students take a few minutes to focus on themselves. Ask them to think about their personality, their strengths, something that is unique to them. Tell the students, “this is YOUR light”. Next, have the students think of one word that best describes their light. From here, students can begin filling their containers with any items they feel best depicts their word/light. Once finished, close your container and add ribbon, yarn or tag to the top. Remind the students to carry their light, share it with someone, or place it in a special place where they can see it and always be reminded of their unique light.



Ken the Keeper

Caring, Kindness, Charity, Empowerment

Ken cares for all things great and small until they are ready to be set free. He started a real shelter, The Happy Animals Club, that rescues thousands of animals each year. This story celebrates the spirit of “Keepers” everywhere and the impact that genuine care, kindness, and selflessness can have on the helpless and the world.

Discussion Points

What is the message of this story?

How are you like Ken?

What things can you do to help people or animals who need help?

What does being a “Keeper” mean?

How are you a “Keeper” in this world?

If you could bring one great thing to the world, what would it be?

Who is a “Keeper” in your life?

How can you make a difference in the world?

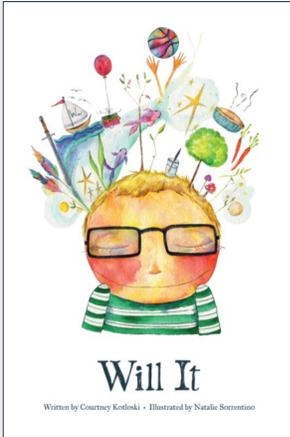
Activity: Mended Hearts

Materials Needed:

- Construction paper or cardstock (A4, Letter size or 9 x 12)
- Ribbon or string
- Scissors
- Pencil
- Hole punch
- Tissue paper
- Colored pencils or markers

Directions:

Have the students draw a heart (almost the size of the paper). Have them cut the heart out and then in half. Next, ask the students to reflect on their heart’s journey so far; friends made/lost, family, animals, happy times, hard times, dreams they have, etc. While reflecting, begin to write on, decorate and “mend” their hearts with these memories/hopes. Once complete, have the students share their heart’s journey. During the discussion, remind the students that the heart is the center of our emotions, it holds many stories, memories, experiences. There are times when our hearts break and need to be mended. Although brokenness changes us, it makes us who we are.



Will It

Bravery, Silliness, Dreams, Courage

Sometimes fear can get in the way of dreams; that's not what Will thinks. He knows that the worst thing that could happen is that it's too late to do the things you dream. Will is blind, but that doesn't stop him. This story encourages readers to "Get going. Surprise yourself. Be brave." It's a fun and daring tale that shows all you need is what's inside you to overcome fear and live your dreams.

Discussion Points

What is the message of this story?

How are you like Will?

Is there a time when you had to show courage and be brave?

What does it mean to be brave?

How do you encourage others around you to have courage?

If you could try one thing that takes courage, what would it be?

Who do you know that is super brave?

How can you help other people overcome their fears?

Activity: Wish Sticks

Materials Needed:

- Sticks found in nature (around 12 inches)
- String or Yarn
- Beads
- Feathers
- Any other items found in nature (dried flowers, shells, acorns, etc)
- Glue

Directions:

Have the student think of a "wish/dream" they have for themselves. Instruct the students to keep that thought in mind as they begin to decorate their sticks. Feel free to wrap with yarn, glue on any embellishments; beads, feathers, glitter, etc. Once completed, have the students (if they are comfortable) share their wish with the class.



From Malena with Love

Comfort, Giving, Selflessness, Inspiration

Love has gone, and it took the color from the world. Can Malena bring it back? This story shows readers to love and care for the lonely and forgotten. When Malena realizes she has the power to bring color back, she gives love out to everyone she knows. Will it be enough?

Discussion Points

What is the message of this story?

How are you like Malena?

What does your color look like?

How do you add color to the world?

What is your favorite color and why?

If you could send a message to the whole world, what would it say?

Did someone ever send you something to cheer you up? How did it make you feel?

How can you help to add more color to the world?

Activity: Loving Hands

Materials Needed:

- Sheets of paper (11 x 14)
- Markers, colored pencils, crayons
- Scissors

Directions:

Have students trace both of their hands on a sheet of paper. Students will then fill one hand with messages and images of love to themselves. The other hand will be filled with messages and images of love to “give” to someone else (either another student in the classroom, a family member, or someone in the community).

They will cut each hand out of the paper. From here, they will be instructed to keep their personal message of love and then give the other away.