

# *Our Book of* **Awesome**

## Teacher's Guide

By Leslie Richardson

[leslie@globalhappiness.org](mailto:leslie@globalhappiness.org)

This Teachers Guide is meant to be an inspirational spring board to support teachers in planning a unit based on *Our Book of Awesome*. It is suggested for Grades 4-9 but could easily be adapted for younger or older students. It includes opportunities for working on curriculum expectations in reading, writing, oral language, media literacy, drama and visual art.

### **Suggested Materials**

- access to computers
- projector and display screen
- a journal for each student
- hard copies of *Our Book of Awesome*
- poster making supplies

## **Lesson 1: Introduce Awesome**

Together as a class explore [1000awesomethings.com](http://1000awesomethings.com) or hard copies of *Our Book of Awesome* to introduce students to Awesome Things. Read aloud, have students read out titles that jump out, generate excitement and as students identify favourites make a class list to post on the wall.

Grade 6 and up classes may like to show students [Neil's Ted Talk - The 3 A's of Awesome](#). Please pre-watch to ensure it is age appropriate for your class as suicide is mentioned.

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## **Lesson 2: Create a Journal of Awesome**

Have students start their own "Journal of Awesome" by asking each student to make a title page. You may like to co-create success criteria for this to be a media literacy or visual art assignment.

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## **Lesson 3: Individual Exploration**

Have students spend time reading Awesome Things online or in books and write down a list of favourites and any others that come to mind in their journal. Teach students to follow Neil's advice and read the book anyway that works for them, front to back, flipping all over the place, skip, skim, dive deep - whatever works!

Have students write a page journal entry about what they notice when reading Awesome Things. What does Neil do to make each entry captivating? What happens inside of their body when they read them? Do they like the short ones, the long ones, the funny ones, the informative ones? What works? What doesn't?

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## **Lesson 4: Imagery**

Neil's Awesome Things come to life. One way he does this is by using imagery. Ask students to pick one Awesome Thing from *Our Book of Awesome* that creates a vivid picture in their mind and have students draw its illustration.

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## **Lesson 5: The Power of Gratitude**

Teach student's Neil's Two Minute Morning Practice. Explained [here](#). Have students do this practice every day for a week in their Journal of Awesome.

## **Lesson 6: Write First Draft**

Have students come up with something that is truly awesome to them and invite them to write a first draft in their journal.

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## **Lesson 7: Reflect on Community**

Pick one of the community elements of the book and discuss as a class why the original *Book of Awesome* created such incredible community. The subtitle of *Our Book of Awesome* is “A celebration of the simple joys that bring us together.” What happens when we come together over Awesome Things? Why should we? Brainstorm ways to celebrate simple joys in your class, school or community.

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## **Lesson 8: Peer Conferencing**

Have students work in partners to read each other’s first drafts and give feedback. Suggest that they make notes in the margins of suggested edits and then offer a “star” (something they did really well) and a “wish” (something they could improve) to their partner.

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## **Lesson 9: Good Copy**

Have students rewrite their Awesome Thing with their own edits and that of their classmate.

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## **Lesson 10: Grow Awesome and Develop Community**

Challenge students to integrate all that they have learned in this unit by working in small groups to develop community. Students may choose to share their Awesome Things in an assembly, create a poster campaign, share Awesome Things on the announcement, make a school newspaper of awesome, build a wall of awesome etc. etc. The possibilities are endless!