

A teacher's guide
created by Marcie Colleen
based upon the picture book
written by Nancy Churnin and
illustrated by Izzy Evans

This classroom guide is designed for students in first through third grade. It is assumed that teachers will adapt each activity to fit the needs and abilities of their own students.

It offers activities to help teachers integrate *Rainbow Allies: The True Story of Kids Who Stood Against Hate* into the curricula.

All activities were created in conjunction with the Common Core and other relevant content standards.

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To learn more about Nancy Churnin, visit her at www.nancychurnin.com. To learn more about Izzy Evans visit them at izzytheillustrator.tumblr.com.

Before You Read...

Before reading *Rainbow Allies*...

Look closely at the Front Cover ~

- Read the title aloud.
- Describe what you see.
- Strike a pose like one of the children in the illustration. How does this pose make you feel?
- When do you think this story takes place? Today or a long time ago? What clues on the cover tell you this?
- Can you guess what the story might be about?

The Back Cover~

- Describe what you see.
- Read the text on the back cover.
- Does this text make you want to read the book? Why or why not?

English Language Arts

Reading Comprehension

Now read or listen to the book.

Help students summarize in their own words what the book is about.

- Describe Natick, Massachusetts in your own words based on the way it is portrayed in the book.
- How did the neighbors treat Cari and her new wife when they got married?
- What does the rainbow flag represent? Why do you think Cari and Lauri wanted to display it outside their home?
- What do you think it means that “everyone was welcome” in Cari and Lauri’s neighborhood?
- What happened to Cari and Lauri’s house? Why do you think someone did this?
- Why do you think Lauri is hesitant to just get another flag?
- What do you think “none of their ideas seemed right for a neighborhood where everyone was welcome” means? Explain in your own words, using examples from the book to support your answer.
- How do the kids, along with the rest of the community, help make Cari and Lauri feel welcome again?

Let’s talk about the people who made *Rainbow Allies*.

- Who is the author?
- Who is the illustrator?
- What kind of work did each person do to make the book?

Now, let’s look closely at the illustrations.

- Look closely at the opening illustration of the neighborhood of Natick, Massachusetts.
- What details did Izzy Evans include to show how “all are welcome” here?
- Draw your own neighborhood from a similar bird’s-eye view. Include details that make your neighborhood special.
- Display the finished drawings in the classroom.

Reading Nonfiction

While reading *Rainbow Allies* aloud to the class, have students take notes in two columns:

- Things We Learned
- Questions We Have

Pause before each page turn to add notes to the columns. These columns can either be individual or hung on the board and worked on as a class.

Things We Learned (Facts)	Questions We Have	Answers We Found

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- Once the story is read, discuss the *Questions We Have* column.
 - Were any of these questions answered as the story went along?
 - If so, ask students to find the answer within the text.
 - Record the answer next to the question in a third column labelled *Answers We Found*.
- For all remaining questions in the *Questions We Have* column that have yet to be answered, students will need to take the steps to find answers, either through Internet or book research.
 - Discuss how to find answers to questions through research.
 - Assign students to specific questions to help them focus.
 - Record all answers in the *Answers We Found* column.
- After the answers have been shared with the class, engage in a discussion on research practices.
 - What was the most difficult about finding answers?
 - Was it easier to find answers on the Internet or in a book?
 - Which source is more reliable, the Internet or a printed book? Why?
 - How can you determine whether to trust a source?
 - What tips would you give someone who is about to do research?
- Read the Author’s Note at the back of the book.
 - Create an additional chart to document what information in this section was included in the story and what information was not included.
 - Why do you think Churnin chose to include certain information and leave other information to the back matter?
 - Choose three facts from the back matter that was not included in the story and explain why you think each was excluded.

Extension: Design and illustrate posters representing each Fact, Question, and Researched Answer based on *Rainbow Allies* and display them within the classroom.

New Vocabulary: Ally

Cari and Lauri Ryding returned to their home in Natick, Massachusetts one day in August 2016 to find their rainbow flag stolen and their front porch pelted with eggs. They had always felt so loved and accepted in their community and wondered if they would ever feel that way again. Then friends found a way to show the couple their love and support. The neighborhood’s effort is an exceptional example of how to be an ally.

Lead students in a class discussion on what it means to be an ally.

- What is an ally?
 - “Someone who’s willing to stand up for what is right and has your back if you’re being treated unfairly because you are different.”
- How do you think Lauri and Cori felt when their house was vandalized?
- How did the children act like allies?
- How could you be an ally if you saw someone being treated unfairly because they are different?
- It can be scary to say something or speak up. How can you make it easier?
- Design a poster encouraging everyone to be an ally. Hang the poster in your classroom, or get permission to hang it in the school library, the office, main hall, etc.

Be an Ally Project

With permission from a parent, contact Nancy Churnin here: <https://www.nancychurnin.com/contact> to share a photo or story of how you have been an ally to someone or they have been an ally to you. Feel free to use ideas from the Rainbow Allies Bingo card or come up with your own. We look forward to celebrating your kindness on the Be An Ally page here: <https://www.nancychurnin.com/rainbow-allies>

Social Studies

Finding Commonalities/Uniqueness

We are all different, but that doesn't mean we don't have anything in common. Finding what you have in common with other people is a good way to start a meaningful relationship and create a community where all are welcome. Here is a way to learn what you have in common with your classmates, while also celebrating what makes each of you unique.

Materials: A pen and two pieces of paper.

- This activity can be done as a whole class or in pairs.
- On one sheet of paper, you will have ten minutes to come up with a list of things in common. Completely obvious answers such as "we both have hair" or "we are both in _____ class" are not allowed!
- After ten minutes, switch to the other paper. You now have ten minutes to come up with a list of things that are unique to only one person.
- Share both lists with the class when finished.

What Makes a Good Friend?

It is quite clear that Cari and Lauri had a lot of friends in their neighborhood in Natick, Massachusetts. Discuss what makes a good friend. Draw upon examples from your own friendships and create a list describing what makes a good friend.

Example: Good friends...

- Are reliable.
- Do kind things for one another and use kind language.
- Help out when a friend is sad or has a problem.
- Like to spend time together.
- Have fun with one another.

Look closely at *Rainbow Allies* to find moments that look like friendship.

As a class, create an action plan on how to be a good friend.

Acts of Kindness

What do other people do that make you feel happy? What are some kind things we can do to make others feel happy? Here are some suggestions; can you come up with more?

- Open the door for someone
- Stack a chair for a classmate
- Pick up trash
- Give someone a compliment

- Smile/wave/hug someone
- Make a thank you card
- Play a game of their choice with a sibling
- Fold the laundry
- Set the table

Who is a person that you could do one kind thing for today? Can you think of someone who is in your class? Someone who is not in your class?

Pick one kind thing you'd like to do for someone and draw a picture of it.

Who are the Heroes in Your Neighborhood?

Every day we are surrounded by people who quietly fight for the common good or stand up for what they believe is right, just like Brendan and Landon and Sommer did when Cari and Lauri were treated unfairly.

They showed us what we can accomplish in our neighborhoods and communities if we work together.

Who are the unsung heroes in your neighborhood?

Interview and write a report about someone in your own community who you think makes a positive impact. Topics to include:

- Why you believe this person to be a hero to the neighborhood and community.
- Describe the person activity/activities that significantly benefitted their neighborhood.
- How long has the hero contributed to the neighborhood? What was their most recent activity?
- Describe the creative and innovative methods used by the hero to benefit their neighborhood.
- Include any other interesting information relevant to the hero's activities.
- What is this hero's impact to the neighborhood and/or community at large?

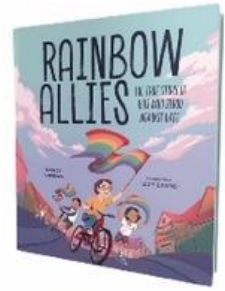
Include documentation such as pamphlets, articles, presentations, photographs, news clippings, letters of support, etc. if applicable.

Present these reports to the class. Invite the heroes for a "Neighborhood Hero" celebration.

RAINBOW ALLIES BINGO

Dory Lerner, M.A., K-12 Educator at the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tennessee, suggests these ways to show allyship or pride:

- **Make a rainbow PRIDE pin.** Wear it everywhere to let people know they are safe to be themselves with you.
- **Display PRIDE flags or signs in your window or on your lawn** (if weatherproofed) to make your neighborhood more colorful and welcoming to all.
- **Play *Rainbow Allies* Bingo.** Remember, every time you try different ways to be accepting, open and respectful of everyone's identity and gender expression, everybody wins!



Rainbow Allies
by Nancy Churnin
Illustrated by Izzy Evans

P R I D E

Thank and buy from businesses that show support for LGBTQ+ communities.	Join (or start) a Gay/Straight Alliance at your school.	Find ways to include LGBTQ+ folks in events/activities.	Make a PRIDE flag for your window or get one for your lawn.	It can be hard for people to know/accept/love themselves. Celebrate people that do!
Respect people by calling them the name and pronouns they use.	Make friends with people of all genders, no matter who they love or how they identify.	Stand up for people who are being made fun of or treated unfairly.	Support people's clothing choices. Compliment unique styles! And wear what makes you feel comfortable!	Try new activities and see if you like them instead of thinking of them as "boys only" or "girls only."
Add your preferred pronouns to your name tag (he/him, she/her, or they/them) to encourage others to use theirs!	Make a playlist of songs about PRIDE, Freedom, Love and Equality.	BE YOURSELF!	Ask friends to make a playlist of songs about PRIDE, Freedom and Love and swap playlists! Talk about why you picked your songs.	Read books or watch movies or TV shows with LGBTQ+ characters. YES, <i>Rainbow Allies</i> counts—put a marker on it! Keep going.
Talk to your family and friends about the importance of inclusion.	Discover some amazing LGBTQ+ heroes and tell others about them!	Go to a local PRIDE Parade, Drag show, or LGBTQ+ friendly event! If there isn't one, create one!	Learn about LGBTQ+ history (from podcasts, books, or documentaries). Look up "Queer History."	Listen to or read work by LGBTQ+ artists, musicians, authors.
Learn about organizations that help LGBTQ+ youth, like The Trevor Project.	With permission from your guardians, paint your fence or mailbox rainbow!	Write a card or a letter to tell someone "YOU ARE AWESOME, exactly as you are!"	Raise money and donate funds to organizations that support the LGBTQ+ community!	Create an artwork (like a painting, a sketch, a poem or a song) about inclusion, love and respect for all identities and gender expressions!
Create a card or artwork for a friend that shows them, that you think they're great, just as they are.	Express and share what LOVE and inclusion means to you in words or pictures.	Host a party where you tell everyone to come wearing whatever they like!	Try to be a good listener when someone is telling you about their identity. Let them know they are safe with you.	When someone is new to your school or neighborhood, say hello and welcome them, or offer to show them around.