

P.S. 131 **December**
2025 Book of the
Month with Activities!

Quote of the Month

“You can always, always give something, even if it is only kindness!”

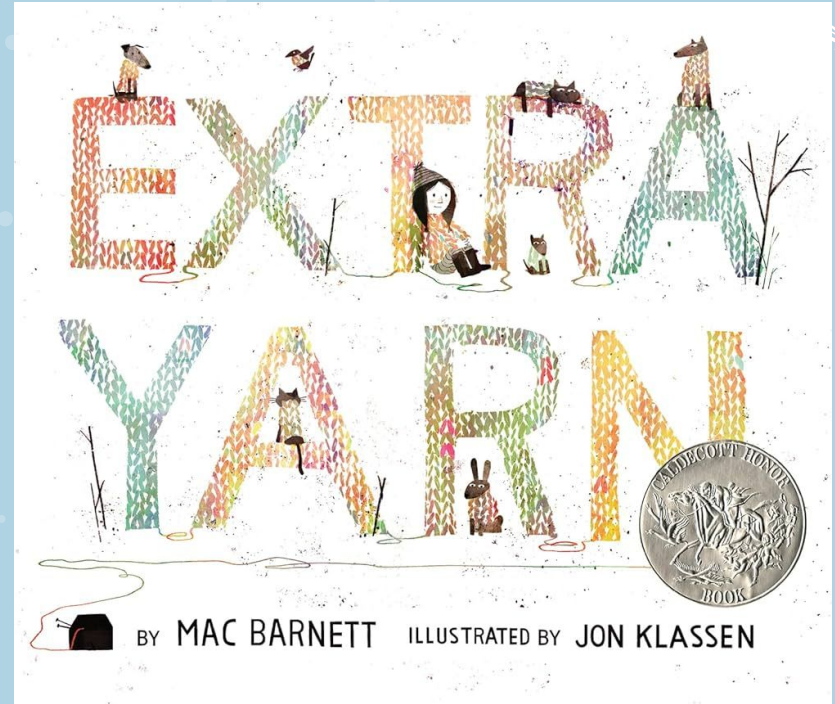
-Anne Frank



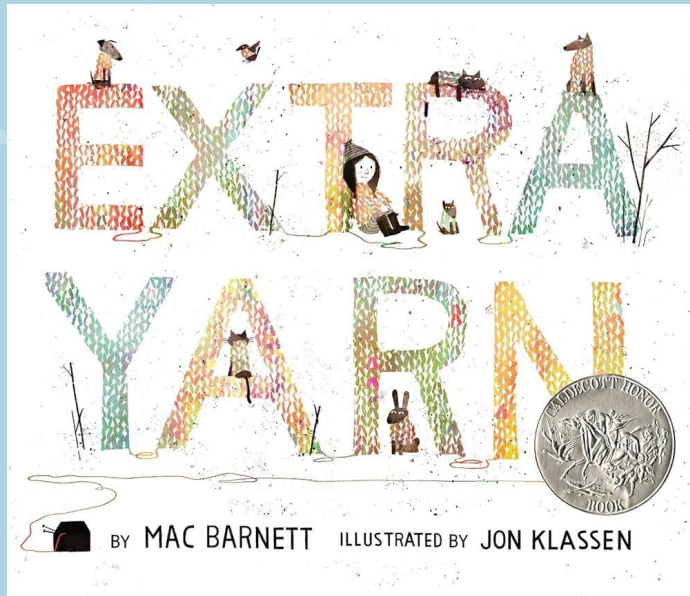
December Book of the Month:

Extra Yarn

By Mac Barnett

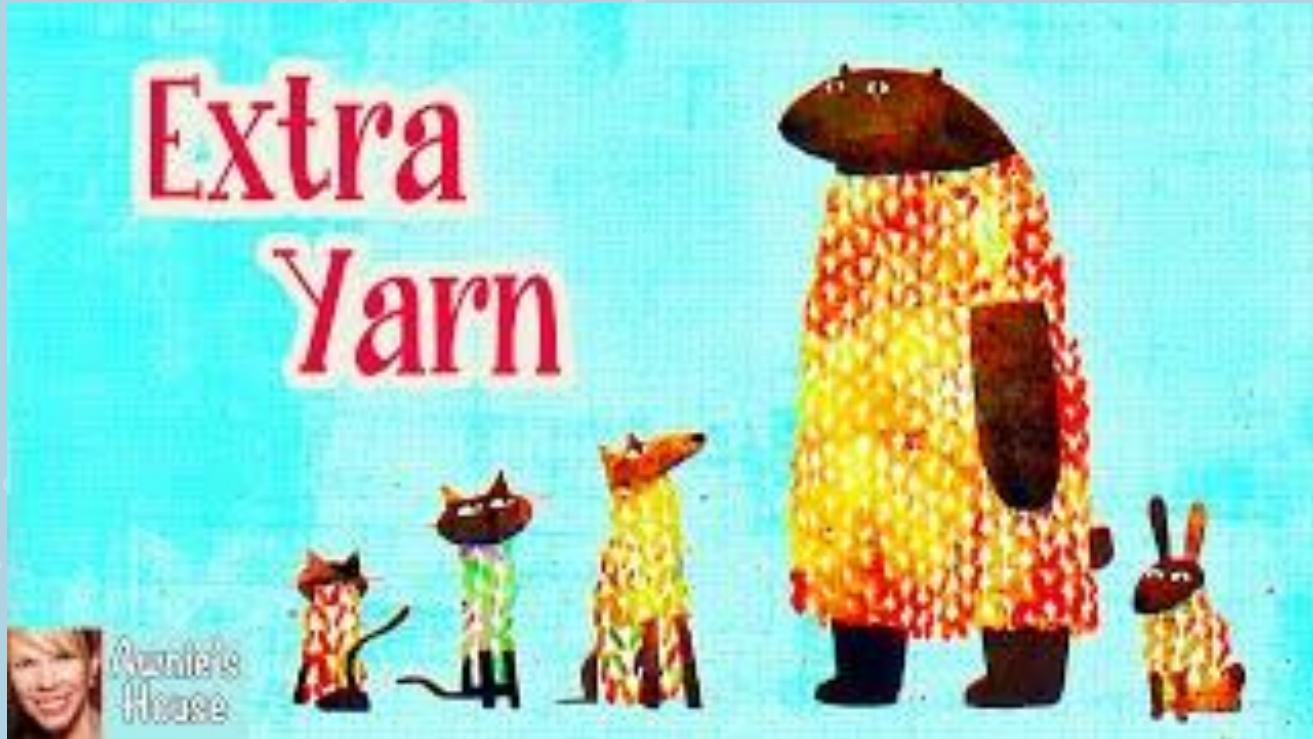


Book Summary:



In honor of the holiday season of giving this December, *Extra Yarn* tells a story of generosity triumphing over greed, and of setting your heart on a goal to give to and help others. The story starts with Annabelle and her dog stumbling upon “a box filled with yarn of every color.” What happens next is truly magical! When used for good, the box of yarn becomes ever-full, always producing more yarn for good- and when the magic box falls into the wrong hands, the magic can disappear! *Extra Yarn* shows how, when we give to others, the gift keeps on giving.

Read-Aloud Video



Click for Related Book Activities!

LESSON I

HELPING OTHERS: SPECIAL SKILLS

Extra Yarn by Mac Barnett

Book Synopsis: It's a typical cold and dreary day in young Annabelle's village when she discovers a small box of variegated yarn resting on the ground. Using her knitting skills, she makes herself a sweater. There is yarn leftover, so she knits a sweater for her dog. At first she is teased about her colorful garment. She responds by volunteering to make sweaters, scarfs, and hats for the village naysayers, the box continues to supply Annabelle with an endless supply of yarn, and she keeps on knitting, coloring the world around her with delight and warm friendliness. An evil archduke tries to take the box of yarn. However his plot is foiled, proving that helping others and making a difference is more important than personal gain.

Introduction: Annabelle used her skills to help make her village a better place to live. Just like Annabelle, students will discover that they have abilities that can benefit others.

Grade Level: K-2

Time Allocation: 20-30 minutes

Objectives:

- The student will listen to and determine the theme of a story.
- The student will participate in an activity, following agreed-upon rules, taking turns, and speaking of appropriate times.
- The student will demonstrate an understanding of the meaning of the literary term metaphor.

Materials:

- Extra Yarn by Mac Barnett. Illustrated by Jon Klassen
- Skills Placards
- Ball of yarn

Procedure:

1. Prepare the Skills Placards prior to class. Make sure to make one for yourself, as you need to model the activity for the students.
2. Introduce the lesson by showing the students the cover of Extra Yarn and drawing their attention to the letters that create the title. Point out that these letters are made of yarn and that if you look carefully you can see that all the letters are connected by a continuous piece of yarn. Inform the students that they will be participating in an activity using a ball of yarn after completing the story.
3. Read Extra Yarn to the students. This takes five minutes. Note: A dramatic reading of the book can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/gwagad3c>.
4. Explain that in the book Extra Yarn, Annabelle was a skilled knitter. She could make sweaters, scarfs, and caps for people, as well as pullovers for pets and covers for mailboxes. She used her skill, or ability, to help others. Because of her generosity, the village became a nicer and more attractive place to live.
5. Instruct students to sit in a circle on the floor.

More Extra Yarn Activities

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL STORY HOUR



Extra Yarn

Extra Yarn is a story about a little girl named Annabelle who finds a magical box of yarn.

First, she knits herself a sweater, then she knits one for her dog, Mars, then for her entire town. She knits sweaters for trees and buildings and bird houses, and even a pick-up truck! She never runs out of the colorful yarn. One day an archduke offers to buy her box of colorful yarn for ten million dollars, but Annabelle refuses to sell it. At night, the archduke steals the box of yarn, but when he opens the box, he finds it empty.



By: Mac Barnett
Illustrator: Jon Klassen
Publisher: Blazer + Bray

Things to talk about

Why do you think the yarn came to Annabelle?

Why do you think Annabelle decided not to sell the yarn? Would you have sold it?

How did the yarn change the town?

Questions for Philosophical Discussion

Magic

1. Could the events in this story have really taken place?
2. Could Annabelle's box of yarn really exist? Why or why not?
3. Can we say that the box of yarn was magical? Why?
4. Does magic exist? Why do you think so?
5. What makes something magical?
6. When a magician makes a rabbit come out of a hat, is that magic? (Or is it a trick?)
7. If we agree that the box was magical, why was it only magical for Annabelle?

Money and Happiness

"Ten million!" shouted the archduke. "Take it or leave it!"

"Leave it," said Annabelle. "I won't sell the yarn."

1. Why didn't Annabelle want to sell the yarn?
2. Would you have sold the yarn? Why or why not?
3. Ten million is a lot of money. Do you think Annabelle should have sold the yarn?
4. Why do you think the archduke was willing to pay so much for the box of yarn?
5. Would the archduke really be happy if Annabelle had sold him the yarn?
6. Would Annabelle have been happy if he had given the archduke the yarn?
7. Can money buy happiness?

Discussion Questions

Extra Yarn Generosity Activities



"Special Skills" Activity

Theme of the Month

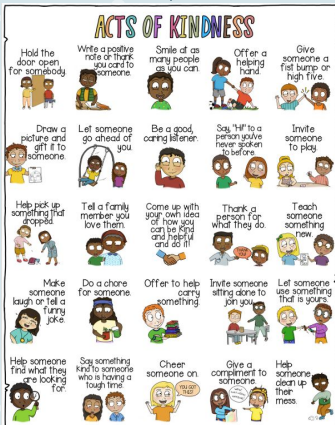
Kindness

Kindness means being caring, helpful, and friendly towards other people. It's about doing something to make someone else feel happy, safe, or included, and treating others the way you would want to be treated.



Theme of the Month: Kindness

Acts of Kindness Challenge



Kindergarten to Grade 3 	 Kindness
Teacher's Guide This guide includes: • Overview • Related Links • Discussion Questions • Activities for Students	Overview: Social and emotional skills are founded on self-awareness, emotions, and the connection between emotions, thoughts, and actions that we see in children. The ability for children to manage their emotions, thoughts, and actions (or behaviors) rests in perspective, impulse control, and self-awareness. As children develop, they begin to have empathy for others, and can build relationships. Most children have a natural tendency to develop empathy for others and want to help. When they develop empathy, they can learn ways to show kindness and build relationships with others. Adults can guide these natural instincts and encourage children to practice kindness in their everyday lives. Fostering a culture of kindness at school and in the classroom enhances the relationships students make with each other and their teachers. Taking time to promote kindness cultivates a more loving environment at school that will be carried to the student's home life and their community. People show acts of kindness in many ways. You can show kindness through empathy, acceptance, kind gestures, and thoughtfulness. Teachers should model kindness in their classroom and recognize the student's acts of kindness to encourage a kindness culture to continue.
Learning Objectives • Students will be able to describe empathy and kindness. • Students will be able to discuss the importance of empathy and kindness. • Students will be able to describe a variety of kind actions and gestures.	
SEL Competencies Self-Awareness Social Awareness	



Kindness Lesson Plan

What are some ways we can be kind during the holidays?



8 Activities for Teaching Kindness in Your Classroom

Habit of Mind: Responding with Wonderment and Awe

Responding with wonderment and awe means noticing amazing things in the world, and being curious and excited about them! In *Extra Yarn*, Annabelle discovers a magical box of yarn that never runs out, and she uses her excitement to create beautiful things for her whole town. Annabelle's sense of wonder helps her see possibilities, not limits.

How can you find magic in everyday, ordinary things this month, just like Annabelle?

Related Resources



STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Cultivating Wonder and Awe in the Classroom

Exposing students to amazing things creates a classroom environment where they feel creative, engaged, and primed to learn.

By [Stephanie Farley](#)

May 16, 2023



Responding with Wonderment and Awe

What does it mean?

Recognise and celebrate the beauty and wonder of the world you live in. Allow the amazing intrigued by the mystery of the things you cannot yet understand. Responding with Wonderment and Awe questions, that inspires us to achieve great things.

Executive Functioning Focus: Task Initiation

Interventions for Students who Struggle with Task Initiation

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www.thepathway2success.com

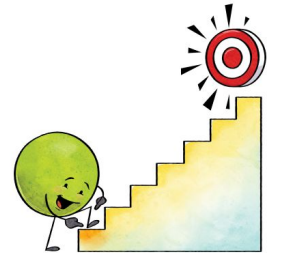


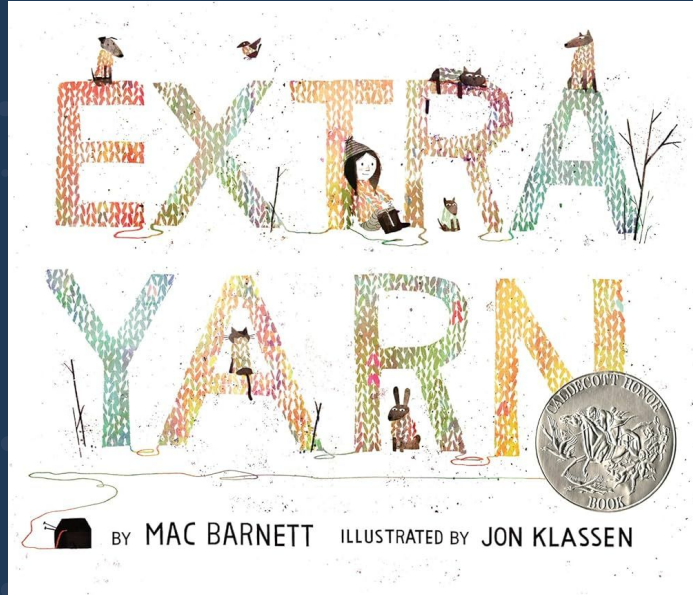
In "Extra Yarn", Annabelle starts making things out of yarn as soon as she finds the mysterious box, and she stays focused on her tasks as she knits for everyone in her community!

Task initiation is about the ability to get started on tasks without delays or hesitation. Can you overcome procrastination to begin working on assignments quickly this month?

Executive Functioning Lesson & Resources:

Task Initiation





Limited print copies of “Extra Yarn” are available to borrow from the school library (Room 212). Please reach out to Ms. Keiser (dkeiser@schools.nyc.gov) if you would like to borrow a copy.