

# ***Stories To Light Our Way***

## **Premium Tool Kit Teacher's Guide**

by  
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**Premium Teacher’s Guide**

**Table of Contents**

**Introduction..... p 3**

**Story Choices..... p 4**

**Accessing Stories and Materials..... p 5**

**-Premium SEL Tool Kit overview..... p 5**

**-Basic Tool Kit Access..... p 6-7**

**-Premium SEL Tool Kit..... p 8**

**-Premium Grade-Specific Folders..... p 9**

**-Story-Specific Folders..... p 9**

**-Weekly Lesson Plans..... p 10**

**Story Resources..... p 11**

**-Story Maps..... p 11**

**-Assessments..... p 12**

**-Meditative Moments..... p 13**

**-EU/EQ Charts..... p 14**

**Highlights From Stories to**

**Light Our Way..... p 15**

**Contact email..... p 15**

**FAQs ..... p 16**



## Premium Teacher's Guide

### Introduction

#### ***Welcome to the Wisdom Thinkers Network***

Thank you for your dedication and wonderful work helping our children find their stories. We're sure our stories will help you engage your students and nurture a spirit of caring and compassion in your classroom, school, and community.

*The Wisdom Thinkers Network's approach to story-telling is an educationally and constitutionally sound way for public schools to build good character and encourage cross-cultural understanding."*

Charles C. Haynes, Senior Scholar,  
First Amendment Center Director, Religious Freedom Education Project



# Premium Teacher’s Guide

## Stories to Light Our Way – Premium Package

The Premium Package provides access to two sets of resources: the Basic Tool Kit and the Premium Tool Kit.

The Basic Tool Kit includes:

- Twelve stories in total (and any future additions)
- Three e-book versions
- Audio versions of each story
- Discussion questions and activities for each story

The Premium Tool Kit expands upon seven of the Basic stories to include materials such as:

- Four grade-specific lessons aligned to ELA standards for each story
- Grade-specific activities
- Meditative Moments
- Check-In questions focused on SEL competencies

### Story Choices

| Stories to Light Our Way                              | Character Strengths                                   | Basic Access | Premium Access |
|---|---|--------------|----------------|
| <b><i>Self-Management</i></b>                         |   |              |                |
| The Turtle Who Couldn’t Keep His Mouth Shut           | Responsibility, self-discipline                       | X            | X              |
| When Children Could Fly                               | Grit, resilience, coping, upstanding                  | X            | X              |
| <b><i>Self-awareness</i></b>                          |   |              |                |
| The Child Who Swallowed the Sun                       | Respect, responsibility, resilience, courage, honesty | X            | X              |
| The Boy Who Saved His World                           | Caring, compassion, courage                           | X            |                |
| <b><i>Social Awareness</i></b>                        |   |              |                |
| The Real Bargain                                      | Empathy, generosity, citizenship                      | X            | X              |
| The Elephant and The Blind Friends                    | Inclusion, acceptance                                 | X            | X              |
| The Wooden Bowl                                       | Respecting elders                                     | X            |                |
| <b><i>Relationship Skills</i></b>                     |   |              |                |
| Shifting Sands  | Acceptance, respect, fairness                         | X            | X              |
| The Elephant and The Stray Dog                        | Critical thinking, open-mindedness                    | X            |                |
| <b><i>Ethical and Responsible Decision Making</i></b> |   |              |                |
| The Little Girl Who Spoke with Trees                  | Concern for environment, citizenship, responsibility  | X            | X              |
| The Kingdom of How to Be Good                         | Contributing to the common good                       | X            |                |
| The Little Girl and The King                          | Honesty, integrity                                    | X            |                |

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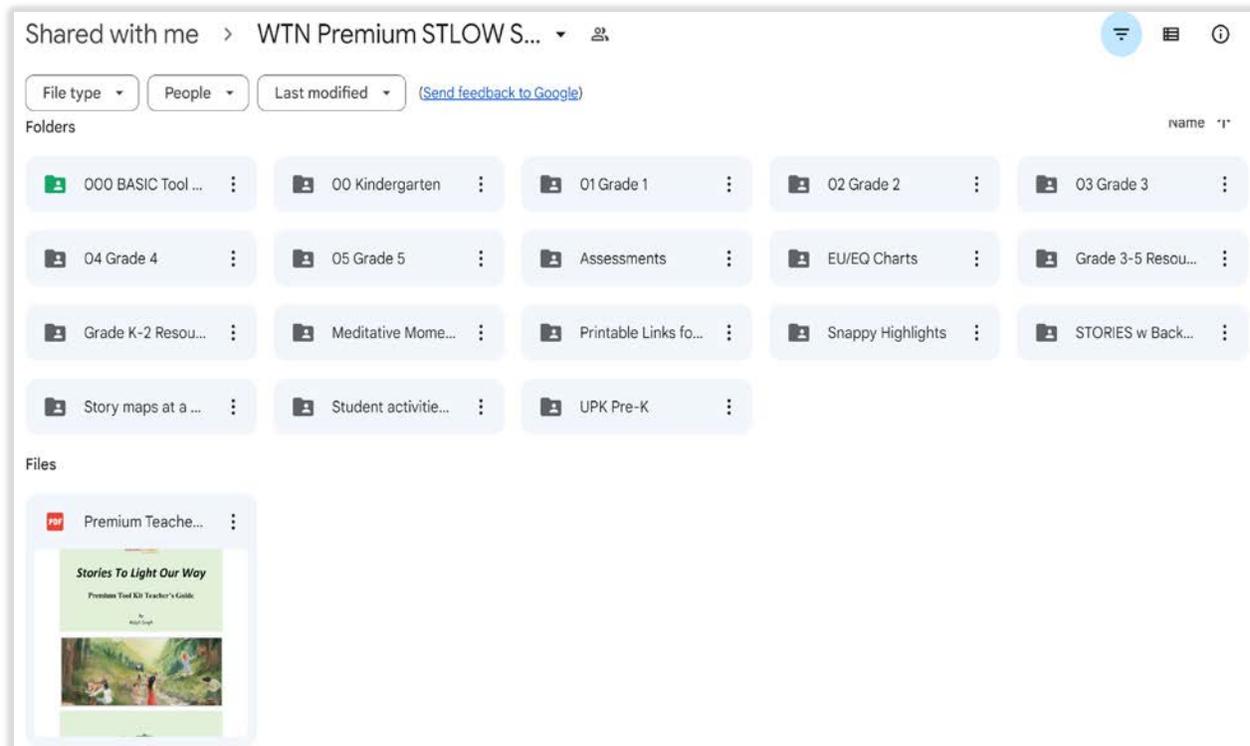
### Accessing Stories & Materials

*This short video provides a quick-start tour of the stories and how to access them (coming soon!).*

Stories and materials are accessed through Google Drive in the WTN Premium Tool Kit link.

- The **Premium SEL Tool Kit** provides access to:
  - Basic Tool Kit resources
  - Grade-specific folders
  - Resources for Meditative Moments
  - Resources for K-2 and 3-5 classrooms
  - Story texts with cultural backgrounds
  - Story Maps
  - Enduring Understanding and Essential Question charts (EU/EQ)
  - Examples of student projects and activity work
  - Story-aligned short-answer assessment questions for grades 3-5

*The Premium SEL Tool Kit looks like this:*

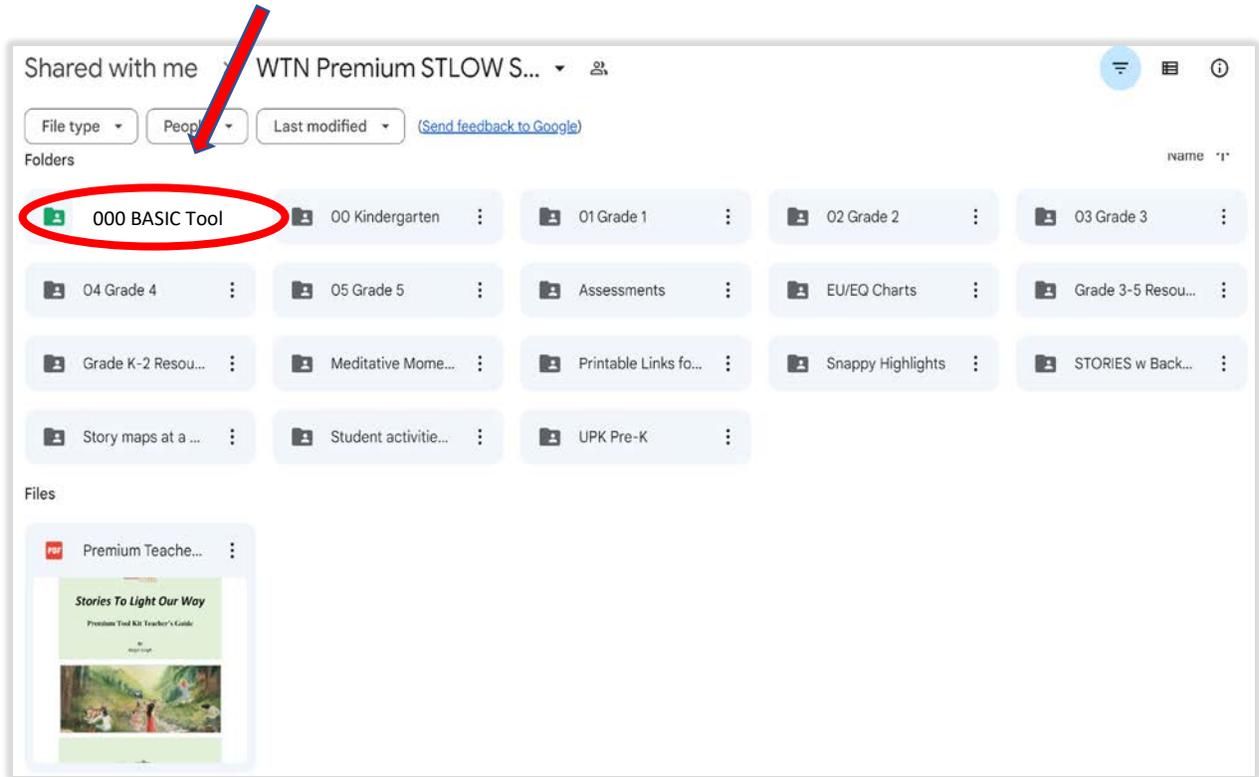


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From the Premium SEL Tool Kit page you have access to all the **Basic Tool Kit** resources.

- The Basic Tool Kit is where you access:
  - All twelve stories currently in the Stories to Light Our Way program
  - Three e-book versions
  - Audio versions of each story
  - Discussion questions and activities for each story

Simply open the **green Basic Tool Kit folder**



# Premium Teacher's Guide

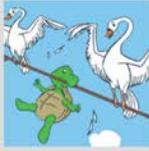
When you open the Basic Tool Kit, here is a snippet of what you will see:

## Basic Tool Kit

Basic, Stories for use in building wide, in classrooms, out of school

12 downloadable award winning multi-cultural stories w audio files, activities and discussion questions (includes cultural background) aligned to both SEL competencies and Character.org character strengths great for ELA and Social Studies.

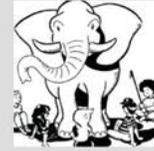
**Three e-books**



**The Turtle Who Just Couldn't Keep His Mouth Shut**



**The Child Who Swallowed the Sun**



**The Elephant and the Blind Friends**

| SELF MANAGEMENT                                  |  |  |       |                                 |
|--|--|--|-------|---------------------------------|
| Story Title                                      | Theme  | Performance Character Strengths          | Audio | Activity & Discussion Questions |
| The Turtle Who Just Couldn't Keep His Mouth Shut | A story of self-control                            | Responsibility, Self-Discipline          |       | <br>                            |
| When Children Could Fly                          | Overcoming hurt/sadness<br>Dealing with injustice. | Grit, Resilience, Coping, and Upstanding |       | <br>                            |

**Activities**

**Audio access**

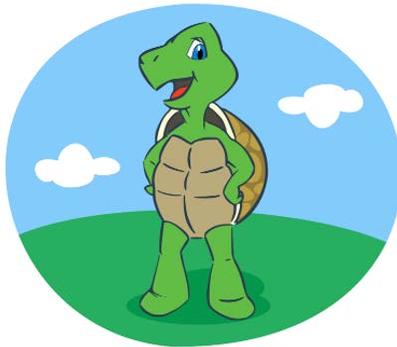
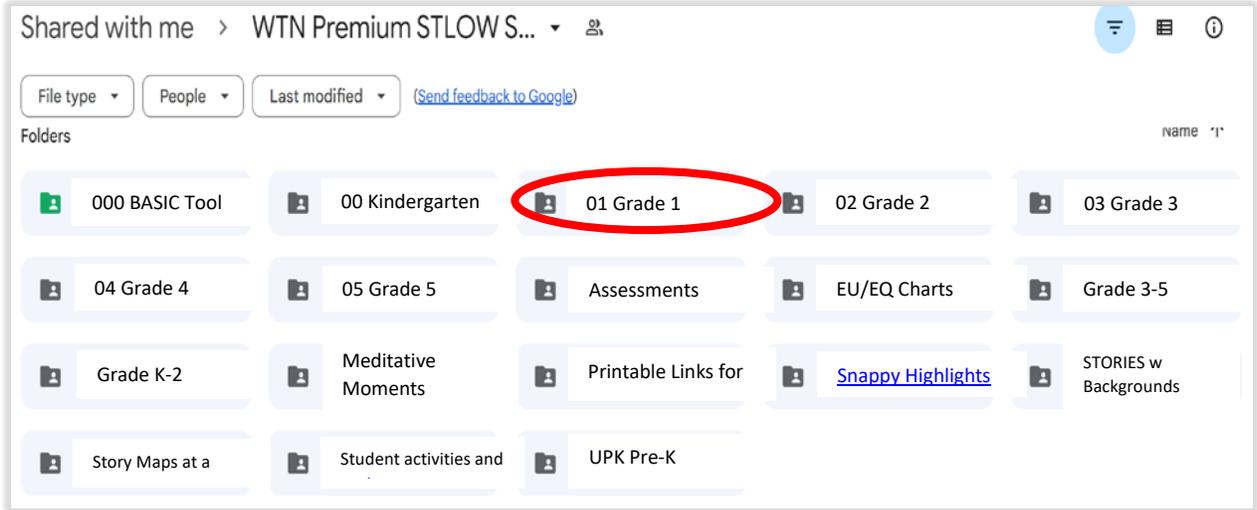
**Discussion questions**

# Premium Teacher's Guide

The **black** folders in the Premium SEL Tool Kit are home to all the Premium resources.

- A. **The Premium SEL Tool Kit** provides grade-specific access to:
- expanded lessons for seven stories

*Within the Tool Kit, click on your **grade level***

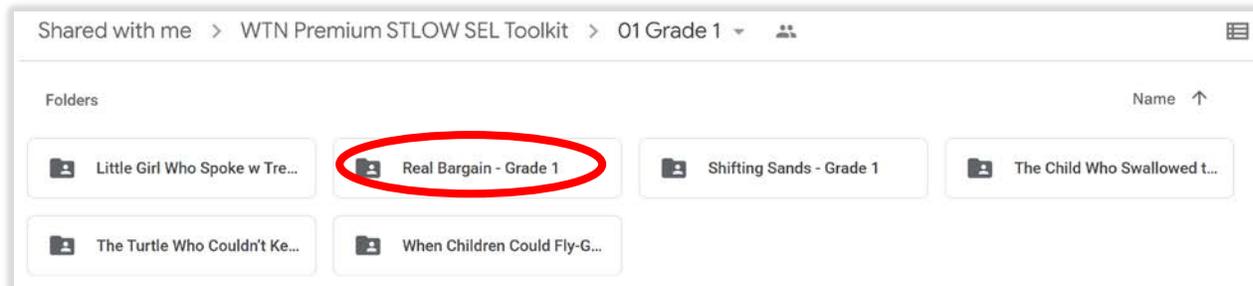


## Premium Teacher's Guide

### B. Premium grade-specific folders include:

- Folders for each expanded story

Within your grade-level, click on **a story**

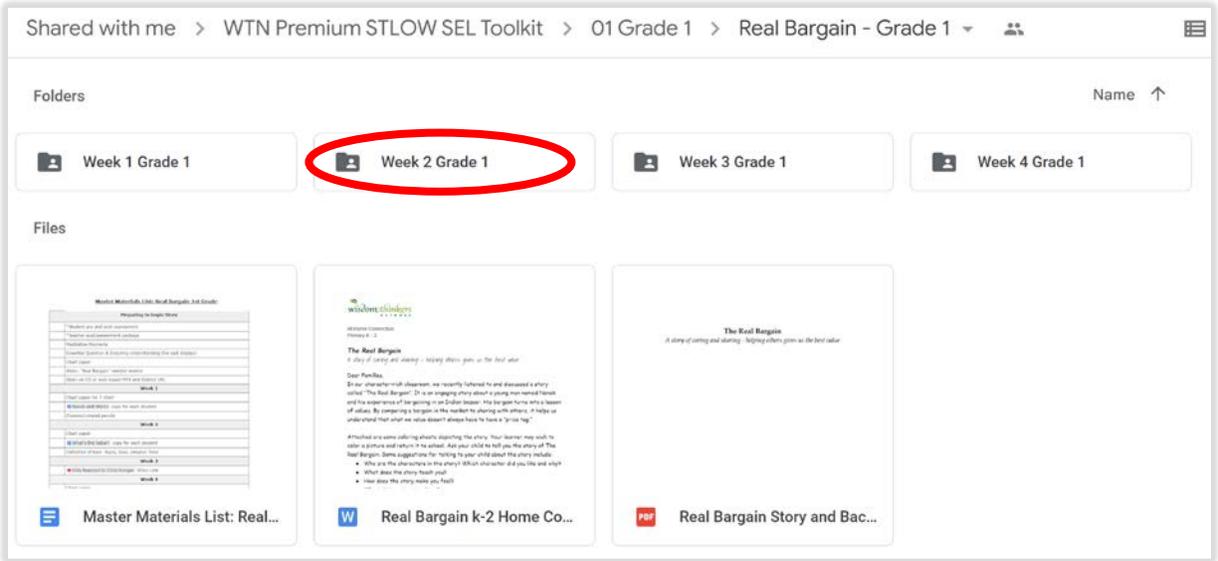


### C. Story-specific folders include:

- Story text and background
- Master Materials List (activities for each lesson and materials needed)
- Home Connection letter (introduces parents to the story)
- Four folders, each containing a weekly lesson plan and templates/worksheets needed for the activities

Within the story, click on a Week's **lesson**

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## D. Weekly lesson plans include:

- Essential Questions (EQ) and Enduring Understandings (EU)
- Character Traits and SEL competencies
- Lesson Objectives
- Meditative Moments
- Check-In questions
- Vocabulary
- Material lists
- Discussion questions
- Story activities/projects
- ELA standards

# Premium Teacher's Guide

Shared with me > ... > Real Bargain - Grade 1 > Week 2 Grade 1 ▾

Files

How Valuable is it to You?

Below you will find a list of items. Rank the items from 1 -5. 1 being the most valuable to you and 5 being the least valuable to you.

\_\_\_\_\_ Toys 

\_\_\_\_\_ Food 

\_\_\_\_\_ Family 

\_\_\_\_\_ TV 

 Grade 1 - Real Bargain - W...

**The Real Bargain**

Grade level 1

Suggested story duration: 4 weeks (November - December)

Date Pre-assessment (SA): links to forms if available

Lesson 2

Approximate length of lesson: 1 hour

**Essential Question (EQ)**

- Why is it important to show concern for others, and share with those in need?
- How can we understand that "value" doesn't depend on \$ signs?
- What does empathy sound and feel like?

**Enduring Understanding (EU)**

- When I practice social awareness over time, I will be able to consider and understand others' perspectives and opinions, show empathy, and have a greater appreciation for people from diverse cultures.

**Character Trait**

- Empathy
- Generosity
- Citizenship

**SEL**

- Social Awareness

 Week 2 Lesson - Grade 1 - ...

How Valuable is it to You?

Below you will find a list of items. Rank the items from 1 -5. 1 being the most valuable to you and 5 being the least valuable to you.

\_\_\_\_\_ Toys 

\_\_\_\_\_ Food 

\_\_\_\_\_ Family 

## Story Resources

### Story Maps

An at-a-glance overview of every story. It lists Essential Questions, Enduring Understandings, Character Traits, SEL competencies, Alignment to Standards, Vocabulary, Lesson Activities, Check-In questions, Meditative Moments and Discussion Questions.

*\*This image depicts part of the whole Story Map.*

# Premium Teacher's Guide

| Grade 1 Story Maps At-A-Glance     |  |   |  |   |   |   |  |
|------------------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|---|--|
|                                    | Snappy   | Real Bargain  | The Child Who Swallowed the Sun  | Shifting Sands  | The Little Girl Who Spoke With Trees  | When Children Could Fly   | The Elephant and the Blind Friends   |
| <b>Essential Question (EQ)</b>     | Why is it important that we control our emotions, feelings and actions?  | Why is it important to show concern for others, and share with those in need? How can we understand that "value" doesn't depend on money signs? What does empathy sound and feel like?                  | Everyone has special gifts and talents. What are your special gifts/talents?   | Why is it important to forgive? What does forgiveness look, sound and feel like?  | Why is it important to take care of nature/environment? What can we learn from nature? What can you do to help make your class, family, community and world a better place?   | How can we overcome sadness? What makes you happy? How and why do your feelings change? How can I develop a strategy to react/cope/problem solve in difficult moments? (like being yelled at) | Why is it important to respect each other's opinions?  |
| <b>Enduring Understanding (EU)</b> | When I practice self-management skills, I will be able to manage and express emotions, relationships, respect for diverse viewpoints, seek help when needed, and set and work on academic goals. | When I practice social awareness over time, I will be able to consider and understand others perspectives and opinions, show empathy, and have a greater appreciation for people from diverse cultures. | When I practice self-awareness, I will be able to recognize and name my own and others' emotions, build on my strengths, and develop a growth mindset. | When I practice establishing and building relationship skills, I will be able to communicate effectively, exhibit cooperative learning and work toward group goals, and work to prevent interpersonal conflict, but manage and resolve it when it occurs. | When I practice responsible and ethical decision making, I will be able to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions using ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms. Most importantly, I will consider my actions in consideration of the well-being of myself, others, the community, and the world. | I can develop a way to react/cope/problem solve difficult moments (like being yelled at) that is "safe" emotionally and physically and leads to healing.                                      | When I practice social awareness over time, I will be able to consider and understand others' perspectives and opinions, show empathy, and have a greater appreciation for people from diverse cultures. |
| <b>Character Trait/s</b>           | Responsibility<br>Self-discipline  | Empathy<br>Generosity<br>Citizenship  | Respect<br>Responsibility<br>Resilience  | Acceptance<br>Respect<br>Fairness   | Concern for the environment<br>Citizenship<br>Responsibility  | Grit<br>Resilience<br>Coping<br>Upstanding  | Empathy<br>Inclusion<br>Acceptance   |

| Grade 1 Story Maps At-A-Glance |  |   |  |  |  |  |  |
|--------------------------------|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|
|                                | Self-Management  | Social Awareness  | Self-awareness   | Relationship Skills  | Responsible and ethical decision making  | Self-management  | Social awareness   |
| <b>SEL</b>                     | Self-Management  | Social Awareness  | Self-awareness   | Relationship Skills  | Responsible and ethical decision making  | Self-management  | Social awareness   |
| <b>Alignment to Standards</b>  | ELA: 1R1, 1R2, 1R3, 1R7<br>SS: 1.1, 1.3  | ELA: 1R1, 1R2, 1R3, 1R4<br>SS: 1.1, 1.3, 1.9  | ELA: 1R1, 1R2, 1R3, 1R4, 1S12, 1S15, 1S16, 1RF1, 1W4<br>SS: 1.1, 1.3 | ELA: 1R1, 1R2, 1R3, 1R4, 1R5, 1S11, 1S15, 1W4<br>SS: 1.1, 1.3, 1.4 | ELA: 1R2, 1R3, 1R7, 1R5, 1W3, 1W4, 1W7, 1S15, 1S16<br>SS: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.6<br>So: 1LS1-1, 1LS1-2, 1LS3-1 | ELA: 1R1, 1R2, 1R3, 1R4, 1R5<br>SS: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.8 | ELA: 1R1, 1R2, 1R8<br>SS: 1.1, 1.3   |
| <b>Vocab</b>                   | Self-control<br>longing  | Bazaar<br>Market<br>Bargain<br>Merchant<br>Value<br>empathy<br><i>*definitions provided</i> | Talents<br>insult  | Pride<br>Caravan<br>Oasis<br>Engrave<br>Forgiveness<br>Conflict    | Prosper<br>Selfish   | Slavery  | Respect<br>Perspective<br>Blind<br>Trumpet<br>Brave<br>Pillar<br>Tusk<br>Trunk<br>Opinion<br>Point of view |
| <b>Lesson Activities</b>       | <b>1</b><br>Sticks to Hold on to Your Self-Control ( <i>not in most updated lesson</i> ) | Needs vs Wants chart: whole class   | Feelings chart: whole class  | Sand and Stone chart: whole class, use scenario cards and          | KWL chart (fill in K)<br>What do you know about how to take care   | Raindrop and Cloud activity: things that make you      | Chart descriptions of each friend<br>Agree/Disagree  |

## Assessments

Each story is provided with a series of questions based upon New York State learning standards for ELA. Questions were developed by NYS Certified teachers.

*\*Below is a screenshot of the assessment questions for Gr 5 "The Real Bargain".*

## Premium Teacher's Guide

### *The Real Bargain*

#### Assessment

- (1) What word best describes Guru Nanak from the story *The Real Bargain*? Use **two details** from the text to support/explain your response.
  
- (2) From *The Real Bargain*, how did Nanak's father's point of view about bargains change? Use **two details** from the story to support/explain your response.
  
- (3) What is the theme of *The Real Bargain*? Explain how this theme developed in the story. Use details from the story to support your response.

# Premium Teacher's Guide

## Meditative Moments

A collection of short, centering moments to use with your students. Meditative Moments are provided in text form as well as audio form.

*\*Below is a sample of one Meditative Moment. Click here for the full library*



**Meditative Moments – Lights On!**

Speaking of light, I've called my collection, "Stories to Light Our Way."  
As long as civilizations have existed, our stories and lives have been touched by darkness and light. Children are used to imagery and metaphors of light and darkness in their popular culture, from "Light Sabers" to the "Dark Side," in Star Wars (one popular allegory that I am familiar with) let alone in sacred and secular historic texts.

Meditative exercises have become a "standard" part of everything from SEL, trauma informed, mental health practices. So while you are welcome to use any ways to bring quiet moments into your classrooms – quieting, centering, mindfulness, I would like to share a few of my favorites – some of which align with the stories, or just with our lives.

**Instructions**  
Have the children sit or lie down in a comfortable position  
You could have them take some deep breaths to relax  
Clear their minds - try to make it an empty slate  
Play or read the meditation  
At the end ask them how they feel and what they saw (if they want to share)

**A Safe Place**  
Let's Close our eyes –  
Find a nice place where we can sit without being disturbed  
A safe place  
Be totally at ease  
Breathe in light  
Let go anger  
Breathe in light  
Let go pain  
Allow the light to circulate and brighten each corner  
So you become brighter and brighter with every breath  
Let the light within you brighten the room  
Everywhere you go



## Premium Teacher’s Guide

### EU/EQ Charts

Each story is accompanied by an EU/EQ Chart (Enduring Understanding/Essential Question Chart). This chart provides the theme of the story, the SEL skill the story is aligned to, foundational questions that support the theme and SEL skill, and an anticipated understanding that stretches beyond the classroom.

*\*This image depicts the EU/EQ chart for the story “The Real Bargain”*

|  <span style="float: right; text-align: right; font-size: small;">           Stories to Light Our Way<br/>           Honor Diversity ▪ Nurture Character ▪ Deter Bullying<br/> <i>"Stories have the power to change the world"</i> </span> |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Story title/SEL skill</b>  | <b>Essential Question</b>   | <b>Enduring Understanding</b>  |
| <p><b>THE REAL BARGAIN</b> – <i>a story about caring and sharing; helping others gives us the best value.</i></p> <p><b>SEL skill:</b> Social Awareness</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Why is it important to show concern for others, and share with those in need?</li> <li>● How can we understand that “value” doesn’t depend on \$ signs?</li> <li>● What does empathy sound and feel like?</li> </ul> | <p><b>When I practice</b> social-awareness over time, I will be able to consider and understand others’ perspectives and opinions, show empathy, and have a greater appreciation for people from diverse cultures.</p> |

# Premium Teacher's Guide

## Highlights From Stories to Light Our Way

### Snappy Highlights

View the impact of the stories – in the classroom, in the building, at home, and even in the community! Examples from teachers currently using the stories with their students.

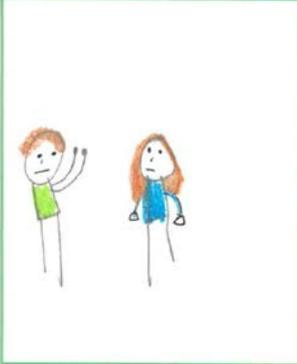
[Snappy Highlights](#)

**The Turtle That Couldn't Keep His Mouth Shut**

**Cartoon Activity**

Directions: In today's activity you will be retelling a time in your life when, like Snappy, you needed to "hang onto your stick" or control your behaviors. This is called a *text to self* connection and will help you see how self control can be a positive thing in your life.

THE TURTLE WHO JUST LIQUID? Keep His Mouth Shut  
A story of self-control

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|  |  |  |
| Angry y!!!   | OUT side   | Sorry   |

**Thank You!**

Please email Wisdom Thinkers with any questions or thoughts...

[hello@wisdomthinkers.org](mailto:hello@wisdomthinkers.org)

## Premium Teacher's Guide

### FAQs

#### **E. How much time is needed for each lesson?**

- The suggested time is 30-60 minutes, though teachers are encouraged to take their grade level and lesson activity choices into consideration

#### **F. Where do the lessons fit into the day?**

- The lessons are appropriate for integration during a variety of times during the day. Some suggestions are:
  - Morning Meeting/Class Meetings
  - Designated SEL times
  - ELA lessons
  - Social Studies lessons
  - Read-Aloud times
  - Extended day classes
  - As half-day activities
  - And even teachable moments!

#### **G. How long have schools been using STLOW?**

- STLOW have been used in schools since 2012

#### **H. Is there a specific story sequence to follow?**

- The stories and lesson plans are aligned with the progression of CASEL's 5 SEL competencies and the 4 Character Strengths of Character.org
- Some stories lend themselves to certain times of the year based upon their theme, e.g. 'The Little Girl Who Spoke w Trees,' and Earth Day.
- The Character Strength and Theme can also be aligned with any building or district pillar words for assemblies or building wide activities.
- Always remember, that the stories can be an "instant" resource to address almost any critical issue that pops up during the day or year!