

# Letter to the Reader from Nancy Wilcox Richards



Dear Boys and Girls,

When I first came up with the idea for *How to Be a Friend* it was actually a nonfiction book. I wanted to write about real kids who had done kind things for others for the sheer joy of it — kids who took that extra minute to say a kind word or do a thoughtful gesture. But like most books, this evolved over time until eventually it became a work of fiction, complete with the main character, Lexie.

In the beginning of the book, Lexie is a shy worrywart.

Throughout the school year, she gains confidence, makes new friends and she learns a lesson about true friendship. I thought it was important for Lexie to have good friends. That's because my friends are very important to me. I hang out with them, share my worries with them, and celebrate the good times with them. I hope you have at least one very good friend who is absolutely trustworthy.

I enjoyed writing *How to Be a Friend*. One of the best things about that process was coming up with exciting ideas that Lexie and her classmates could do for their Random Acts of Kindness. When I read the book to my grade two class, they wanted to try doing acts of kindness, too. They had so much fun—especially trying to keep them a secret! Who knows, maybe you'll want to make someone's day a little better by doing a random act of kindness. I truly believe the kinder you are to others, the more kindness you get back. It's kind of contagious!

Here's hoping you spread a little kindness today!

**Nancy Wilcox Richards**



Art from *How to Be a Friend* © 2011 by Nancy Wilcox Richards.

# How to Be a Friend

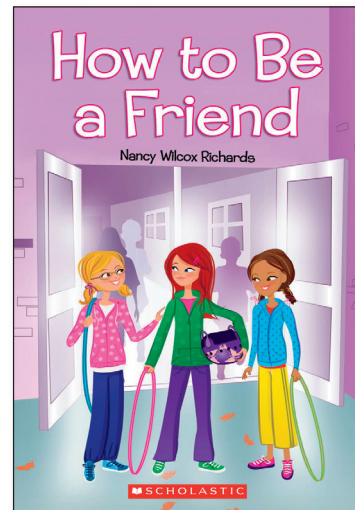
## Curriculum Links

- Language Arts
- Friendship
- Character Education: empathy, respect, acceptance, kindness

### Language Arts:

#### Activity 1: Class Book

Encourage students to do a Random Act of Kindness like the students in *How to Be a Friend*. Create a class book, (one page per student), of words and illustrations showing these acts of helping others.



### Friendship Activities:

#### Activity 1: Friendship Snacks

Ask each student to bring in one ingredient to make trail mix. (If your school is nut-free, avoid any nut products such as peanuts.) Suggest items such as M&Ms, raisins, chocolate chips, sunflower seeds, dried cranberries, Cheerios, mini pretzels, etc. Mix all the ingredients in a large bowl. Use a measuring cup to scoop the trail mix and put it in plastic baggies. Enjoy!

#### Activity 2: Friendship Survival Kits

Brainstorm items that might go in a friendship kit. The following are a few suggestions:

- An eraser: Everyone makes mistakes. Forgive a friend's mistake.
- A heart sticker: Have the courage to do the right thing.
- Gum: Friends stick together.
- Band-Aid: Friends help each other to not get hurt.
- A rock: Friends are a strong and rock-solid support

On recipe cards, students write an explanation about each item. The Friendship Kits can be used to greet new students who join your school partway throughout the year, or shared in another manner that your class decides.

## Character Education:

- Discuss the expression “to walk in someone else’s shoes.” Introduce the word empathy. Explain that when we learn to understand and share someone else’s feelings, it results in better relationships and helps to create a stronger class community.
- Brainstorm ways students can be more empathetic and accepting of each other. Have students work in small groups to create posters about accepting others. Display the posters throughout the school.

## Literature Connections:

*Haley and Bix: Best Friends, No Matter What* by Scott Higgs

*Fox and Squirrel* by Ruth Ohi

*How Full is Your Bucket? For Kids* by Tom Rath and Mary Reckmeyer

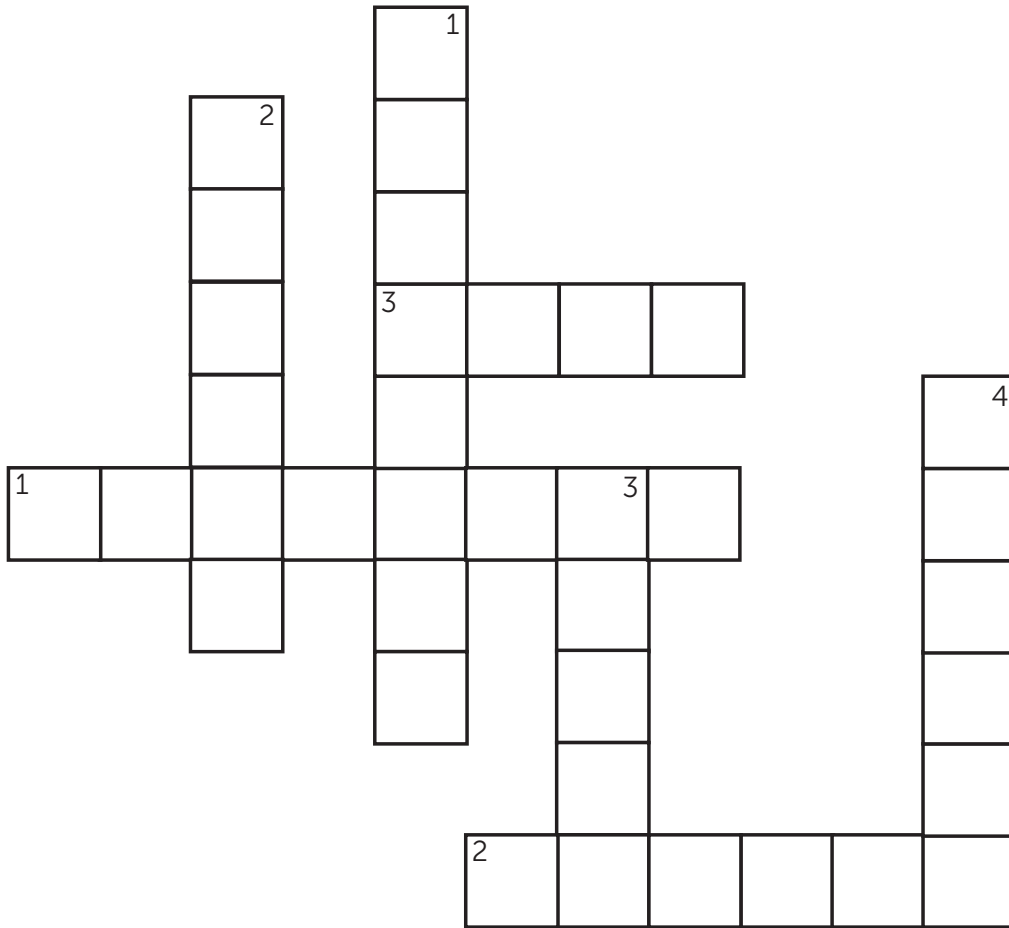
*Willow Finds a Way* by Lana Button, illus. by Tania Howells

*Howard B. Wigglebottom Learns to Listen* by Howard Binkow

*A Bad Case of Stripes* by David Shannon

*Frog and Toad* by Arnold Lobel

# How to Be a Friend Crossword Puzzle



## Across

1. Lexie has this condition
2. It protects your head
3. Everyone tried to do a good \_\_\_\_\_

## Down

1. Random Acts of \_\_\_\_\_
2. Lexie helped this blind character
3. Rock
4. Kept hidden from others



# How to Be a Friend Crossword Puzzle

## Answers

### Across

1. epilepsy
2. helmet
3. deed

### Down

1. kindness
2. Robbie
3. stone
4. secret



# *How to Be a Friend*

## WORD SEARCH

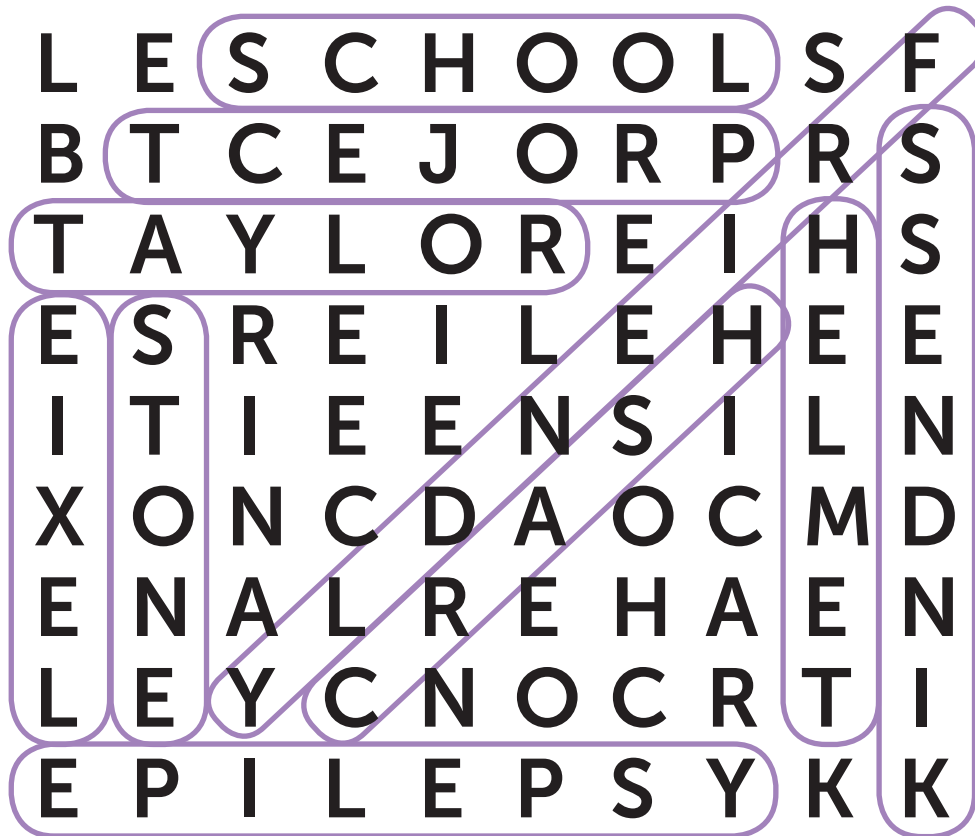
L E S C H O O L S F  
B T C E J O R P R S  
T A Y L O R E I H S  
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L E Y C N O C R T I  
E P I L E P S Y K K

Lexie  
Taylor  
epilepsy  
friendly  
helmet

school  
project  
stone  
kindness  
crash

# *How to Be a Friend*

## WORD SEARCH SOLUTION



Lexie

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# My Feelings

**Draw how you feel in these situations.**

<p>You are invited to your best friend's birthday party.</p>	<p>You scraped your knee.</p>	<p>Your sister took your game without asking.</p>
<p>After practising for months, you can finally ride a two-wheeler.</p>	<p>You just had a nightmare.</p>	<p>You can't find anyone to play with.</p>

Activity based on *How to Be a Friend* © 2011 by Nancy Wilcox Richards.