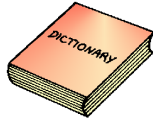


Everyday Hero – by Kathleen Cherry

Chapter One



Vocab:

Accurate, competent, emphasized, observant, squelching

Comprehension Questions:

1. Why does Alice say that looking after her might be harder than looking after a typical kid?
2. What sort of things bother Alice?
3. Why do you think Alice's Dad hasn't given the school more information about Alice?

For discussion:

Sensory issues

Alice and many other people on the autism spectrum have sensory issues. What do we mean by sensory issues?



Many people are bothered by noises, lights, sounds, smells and textures. Can you think of any time when you had a really strong positive or negative reaction to a sensory stimulus?

Author's note:

I once went to a hair salon and there was a flickering fluorescent light. It drove me so crazy I had to leave without my haircut!

Ties to other curriculum:

MindUp Curriculum – Sharpening your senses.

The RAS – Reticular Activating System. The RAS is a mechanism for keeping the brain awake and alert. It is the brain's attention-focusing center. Sensory stimuli (visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, taste) continually arrive via the spinal cord and are sorted and screened by the RAS. The sensory input deemed relevant by the RAS is routed to its appropriate destination in the conscious brain. What's irrelevant is blocked.

Alice says that she is hyper aware of stimuli. She has difficulty blocking out irrelevant stimuli. However, one of her coping strategies is to focus on one specific thing – e.g. counting or dictionary definitions. Discuss this in the context of MindUp.

Zones of Regulation

Chapter 4 – And They're Off. Exploring Tools to Calm and Alert

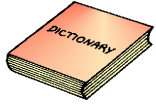
Coping strategies

Author's note:

We all have coping strategies and we can all 'lose it' from time to time.

What are some of your coping strategies? I take deep breaths, I go for walks, and I like to relax with a warm bean bag on my toes and a cup of tea!

Chapter Two



Vocab : idiom, muted, amplified, molten, designation

Author's note:

My Mom came from Sheffield in England and she was the Queen of Idioms. (She also looked like the queen!) If she ever felt like she was wearing way too many clothes in winter, she'd say "I feel like a throttled earwig!"



(an earwig!) - Do you know any idioms that perhaps are unique to your culture?

Comprehension Questions

1. Why do you think Alice tells the teacher who wrote the note?
2. Why do you think Megan stands up for Alice?
3. Why does Alice think Megan has bad hand-eye co-ordination?

Ties to other curriculum:

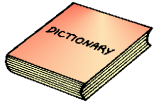
MindUp Curriculum-Perspective Thinking – page 101

The boy who writes the note and Alice would have very different perspective of the incident with the teacher. Discuss or even write the situation from the boy's point of view.

Zones of Regulation

Chapter 3 – Lesson 5 Understanding Different Perspectives

Chapter Three



Vocab : Clarity, intermittent

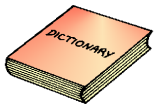
1. Why does Alice like Megan?

For discussion:

What is normal? *The average in type, appearance, function, achievement and development.*

This is the definition Alice finds for 'normal'. Do you think it is a good definition? Do you know any people who are **not** average in type, appearance, function, achievement and development but are still pretty awesome???

Chapter Four



Vocab : carousal, momentum

For Discussion:

"You could ride, you know, when the fair opens," Megan said.

"I shook my head."

"Why not?"

"Because-because- you know..."

"What?"

"Asperger's," I said.

"So? My left foot's bigger than my right. Doesn't mean I can't do stuff."

What does Megan mean by that?

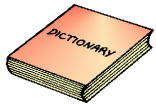
Have you ever overcome your fear and done something that you didn't know if you could do?

Ties to other curriculum:

Friends – Goal setting

Minds-Up – positive self talk.

Chapter Five



Vocab : punctuated, elongated

1. What had Alice enjoyed most about riding the carousel?
2. Why did Megan punch Darren?

For Discussion:

Alice has several strategies for coping when she is overwhelmed. For example, a mask to stop smells and she looks down to cut down on visual stimulation.

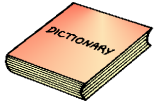
Do you ever feel really bothered by noise? Bright lights? Textures? Crowds? How do you cope?



Author's note:

I have never gone to a really loud rock concert because I find it difficult to cope with really loud noises and, in particular, the vibration of the base.

Chapter Six



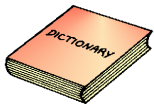
Vocab : rummage, pamphlet

1. Why does Alice says that she likes that Megan doesn't do things for gold stars?
2. Why does Megan say she likes Alice?

For discussion?

Sometimes we can feel different things at the same time. How do you think Alice's Dad feels about Alice wanting to use social media?

Chapter Seven



Vocab : hospitable

1. Why does Alice hit the boy at the locker?
2. Who do you think Alice's Dad might be talking to on the phone when she comes home?
3. What does Megan want Alice to do?

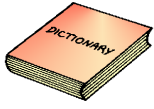
For discussion?

Alice likes rules. She finds it very difficult to break the rules. Do you think there are ever times when it's okay to break the rules? Why or why not?

Ties to other curriculum:

This could tie into a discussion about on-line safety and other issues around personal safety.

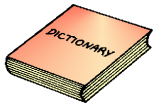
Chapter Eight



Vocab : omission

1. Why is Alice so upset that her Dad had lied to the person on the phone?
2. What else does he think he might have lied about?

Chapter Nine



Vocab : omission

Alice is really upset in the bus station. Write the scene from another perspective. Maybe Megan's or a bystanders.

Ties to other curriculum:

MindUp Curriculum-Perspective Thinking – page 101

Chapter Ten

For Discussion

Alice discusses body language. What is body language? What are all the different ways we communicate to others how we feel?

Chapter Eleven

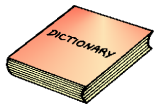
1. What happens in Starbucks? Why does Megan leave?
2. Why do you think Megan came back?
3. What is Megan's Mom's problem?

For discussion?

Megan says she has no friends. Alice is confused because Megan has 'good social skills'. What do we mean by 'social skills'?

Alice says that Megan has 201 friends on Facebook. Is having friends on social media the same as having friends in real life? Why or why not?

Chapter Twelve

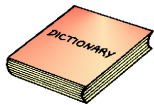


Vocab : staccatto

Comprehension Questions:

1. How does Alice's Mom react to Alice? To Megan?
2. Why does Megan leave?

Chapter Thirteen



Vocab : staccato

1. Why does Grandpa think that Alice should go after Alice?
2. Why won't Alice let Megan get on the bus alone?
3. What does Alice learn about Megan's stepfather?

"You're braver than me. You're the bravest person I know. You're like a hero," Megan spoke the words in a rush.

Why does Megan say this about Alice?

Do you think it is true?

Do you have someone in your life that you think is a hero?