

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
How to Use This Book	3
Community Investigation	5
Vocabulary List	7
Vocabulary Graphic Organizer	9
Taking Action	10
Unit 1: Christian Bucks	12
Unit 2: Aiden Wang	18
Unit 3: Garrett Lowry	24
Unit 4: A'Layah Robinson	30
Unit 5: Hailey Scheinman	36
Unit 6: Hana Fatima	42
Unit 7: Jane Velkovski	48
Unit 8: Jahkil Naeem Jackson	54
Unit 9: Samaira Mehta	60
Unit 10: Milo Cress	66
Unit 11: Gitanjali Rao	72
Motto Bookmarks	78
Bibliography	79

Introduction

Kids of all ages are eager to help build a better world. They see problems, in school and out. Many are concerned about both their immediate situations and their futures. They want to know what they can do to help.

Research shows that helping others relieves anxiety, reduces stress, improves mood, boosts self-esteem, and instills a sense of purpose and satisfaction. Taking positive actions can help kids cope with their fears and become informed, active citizens in their communities.

The informational texts in this book present examples of positive activism initiated by young people. The kids in these texts are “everyday people” making a difference in their communities through positive activism related to their environments, their education, and their desire to help people in need. They put their imaginations and optimism to work and truly make a difference. Their examples encourage students to find positive solutions and show them that their age is not a barrier to becoming forces for positive change.

“Young people, when they understand a problem, are empowered to take action. When we listen to their voices (they) actually are changing the world and making it better for people, for animals, and for the environment because everything is interconnected.”—Jane Goodall

How to Use This Book

Community Investigation

Start by discussing the concept of community. Use the *Community Investigation* pages (5–6) to have students research and learn more about the communities they are a part of. Depending on how deeply students delve into their communities, this activity could take days or even weeks. Once students have an established sense of their own communities, it is time to share units about students in other communities and explore what they have accomplished. You may wish to choose a unit based on student interest, or just start at the beginning and do them all!

Informational Text Units

Each six-page unit for informational text learning is set up in the same manner to provide consistency for students. Each unit includes the following components:

- ☞ **Nonfiction Passage.** Each two-page nonfiction passage features a young person who spots a need in their community and decides to do something about it. These nonfiction texts include a variety of text features to enhance students’ understanding and draw attention to important facts. They include subheads, quotes, boldfaced words, sidebars and insets, and vocabulary callouts. Students can read the texts individually or in groups, and they are perfect for repeated readings.

How to Use This Book *(cont.)*

⌘ **Text Questions.** The three pages of text questions each focus on different nonfiction reading skills:

- *Key Ideas and Details* questions ask students to identify what the text says, including the main idea and key details.
- *Craft and Structure* questions focus on the author's craft and organizational patterns, including vocabulary.
- *Integration of Knowledge and Meaning* questions focus on analyzing what the text means, and they also integrate new information with students' own knowledge and experiences.

⌘ **Culminating Unit Activities.** The final page of each unit helps students consolidate the knowledge they have accumulated and consider ways they might put it to use.

- *Group Discussion* questions help students connect the ideas in the text to their own lives and communities. These can be used for either small-group or whole-group discussion.
- *Taking Action* asks students to apply the ideas in the text to a problem in their own communities. These activities help students understand how collaborating in their communities can help them to be part of solutions.

Vocabulary

Some vocabulary words are defined in callouts within the texts. A more extensive vocabulary list is included on pages 7–8, along with a graphic organizer on page 9 that allows students to think about word meanings from multiple angles.

Part of Speech <input type="checkbox"/> noun <input type="checkbox"/> verb <input type="checkbox"/> adjective <input type="checkbox"/> adverb	Word _____ Definition (in your own words): _____ _____ _____	Picture Clue _____ _____ _____
Use the word meaningfully in a sentence. _____ _____ _____		Similar word or idea. _____ _____

Take Action in Your Community

As a culminating activity, have students use the *Taking Action* activity (pages 10–11) to plan and carry out positive actions in their communities.

- In Part 1, students choose a community and define a problem through research and dialogue with community members.
- In Part 2, they make a plan for action and put it into practice. Students may want to take action individually, in small groups, or even as a project for the entire class.
- In Part 3, students reflect on what they have learned and consider what they might do next.

Note to Teacher: As students plan their projects, consider any safety issues and work with them to create a workable plan.

Garrett Lowry

Giving to Others

Garrett Lowry has always enjoyed helping others. When he was just seven years old, he donated all his birthday toys to a local **charity**. He wanted to give toys to kids who had none.

At the age of ten, he participated in a giving project at school. All of the kids had to do something to help others. Garrett's grandmother had taught him to knit when he was young. It helped him keep calm and learn to focus. Garrett decided to knit hats for kids who have cancer. They get **chemotherapy** to make them better. Many people who get chemotherapy lose their hair. The knit hats keep them warm and cozy.

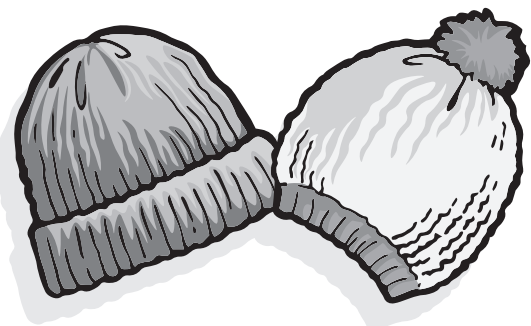


Garrett's goal was to knit and donate ten hats. With help from his mother and grandmother, he kept going. He knitted 50 hats! He donated them to a local children's hospital. But he didn't stop there. Garrett kept on **knitting**. He has now donated over 100 hats to cancer patients.

Personal Experience

Why does Garrett want to help cancer patients? It is because of his personal experiences.

- ⌘ His grandfather died from cancer.
- ⌘ His cat died from cancer.
- ⌘ He has a younger friend who is fighting cancer. Garrett says she is a hero for fighting through pain and fear.
- ⌘ He hopes that his **donations** will help cancer patients feel just a little bit better. He wants them to know that someone cares about them.



"Going through that kind of thing might scare people, and I just want to make something that can make them more comfortable while they are in the hospital."

Garrett Lowry (cont.)

What Will They Think?

Garrett loves sports. He runs track and plays basketball, football, and baseball. His baseball team calls him “Bam Bam” because he is such a powerful hitter. He worried what his teammates would think when they found out he also liked to knit.

But Garrett thinks it is important to help others. He spread his message of kindness to his baseball team. He helped them donate gifts to families in need.

Garrett continues to give to others. He plans to **volunteer** at the children’s hospital when he is old enough.

Men Who Knit

What do you think of when you hear the word *knitting*? Many people think of their grandmother making scarves and sweaters. But knitting is not just for women!

Gender bias is when people think boys or girls have to be a certain way. But boys can enjoy knitting just as much as girls like playing baseball. Men enjoy knitting for many different reasons. It is an activity that helps people feel calm. It allows them to be creative. And they enjoy making gifts for others.

➡ **volunteer**—a helper who does not get paid



Name: _____

Date: _____

Craft and Structure

Directions: Answer the questions below. Use complete sentences.

1. What does the word *charity* mean?

2. Why does the author use a bulleted list in the “Personal Experiences” section?

3. Why do you think the author included the “Men Who Knit” sidebar?

4. What does the quote from Garrett tell you about him?
