

Characters who change — six books, before and after

Fear, conflict, attention, identity, and new skills produce different kinds of character change.

six in sequence

Grades 1–2

TL06–TL08 where levelled

18 min listening

8 books in the collection

You are the teacher.

You know your students and what they need today.

Use what works. Change what doesn't. Make it yours.

Students compare changes in understanding, behaviour, confidence, and relationship. Every core title has metadata that explicitly describes a beginning state and a meaningful later change, so the set does not infer growth from the existence of a problem alone.

The question that runs through all six

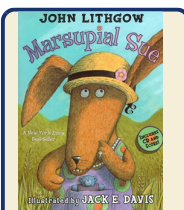
What makes a character change?

Standards status

This curated reading sequence is not itself a region-specific standards claim. Review the documentary status on any linked lesson plan.

The sequence

1



Start here.

Marsupial Sue

Book ID 4206

John Lithgow

Gr K-3

Humor

TL07

5 min

Sue tries to be other animals before valuing her own identity as a kangaroo. It provides a clear before-and-after change in self-understanding.

Ask What new experience changes Sue's judgment about being a kangaroo?

2



Now build the idea.

Stinky

Book ID 7878

Eleanor Davis

Gr K-2

Humor

TL06

GN300L

A monster who fears people changes his behaviour after efforts to scare a child away do not work as expected. It links changed action to contact with someone previously treated as a threat.

Ask Which failed plan creates room for Stinky to see the newcomer differently?

3

Now let the relationship change.

Best Friend Trouble

Book ID 6598

Frances Itani

Gr K-3

Realistic Fiction

TL08

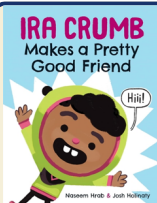
AD500L

8 min

A friend talks through conflict, recognizes that both children were hurt, and chooses repair. It shows change happening through conversation and reciprocal understanding.

Ask What does Hannah learn that she could not learn while telling only her own complaint?

4



Now make it harder.

Ira Crumb Makes a Pretty Good Friend

Book ID 7430

Naseem Hrab

Gr K-2

Humor

TL08

AD490L

5 min

A new student's elaborate friend-making strategies fail before he learns to connect more honestly. It distinguishes changing oneself to perform for others from becoming more authentically connected.

Ask Which part of Ira's plan changes, and which part of Ira should not have to change?

5

Now change what matters.

Flop to the Top!

Book ID 8279

Eleanor Davis and Drew Weing

Gr K-2

Humor

TL06

290L

A fame-focused child learns that family and friendship matter more than attention. It adds a change in what the character values, not only what the character does.

Ask What evidence makes Wanda revise her idea of who or what counts as the star?

6

End by putting it together.

Shark bait!

Book ID 8250

Jeff Szpirglas and Danielle Saint-Onge

Gr 1-3

Informational / Non-Fiction

TL06

540L

A shark-focused student resists sailing instruction, then learns that boat skills and ocean science can work together. It offers a more gradual change in judgment driven by skill, evidence, and responsibility.

Ask Does Orly give up her original interest, or change how she can act on it?

Also in the collection

Bee & Flea and the Puddle Problem

Book ID 8349 Anna Humphrey

Bee's fear, rigid rule focus, and later confidence provide a strong longer-text extension, but the chapter-book range reaches Grade 4.

After Peaches

Book ID 5912 Michelle Mulder

Rosario's change in voice and identity is powerful for Grades 4-6, well above the core band and best taught as an older-reader extension.

Name what changes and what stays stable.

Use a three-part chart: before, turning pressure, after. Explain that a character may change an idea, an action, a relationship, or a view of self, and those are not interchangeable. Read the six in order: Start here. Now build the idea. Now let the relationship change. Now make it harder. Now change what matters. End by putting it together. Which force most often produces meaningful change across the set - failure, evidence, relationship, responsibility, or self-understanding? Defend a pattern and an exception.

Titles, authors, grade bands, levels, run times and covers are drawn from the TumbleBookLibrary catalogue. Book-title links open the catalogue title. Where supplied lessons exist, lesson links open directly online.