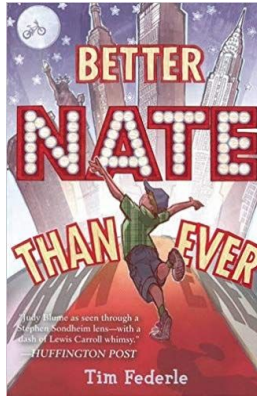


Expanding Character Traits through Better Nate Than Ever



“Achieving gender equality requires the engagement of women and men, girls and boys. It is everyone’s responsibility.” -Ban Ki-Moon

Grade Level: 6th-8th Grade English/Language Arts

Unit/Lesson New Jersey Student Learning Standards

(<https://www.nj.gov/education/cccs/>):

NJSLSA.R3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text

Brief Summary of Cultural Competencies Related to the Unit/Lesson:

What makes this lesson culturally relevant?

Typical lessons in characterization ask students to consider the way a character looks, acts, and feels. Terms like “glamorous,” “sad,” and “helpful” may expand one’s vocabulary, but limit students’ understanding of the dynamic features of identity that contribute to building empathy. This lesson creates a platform for the examination of a more comprehensive and inclusive vocabulary for discussing characters and gender diversity.

This chart shows some of the standard language offered to students for discussing character traits:

<https://betterlesson.com/community/document/100261/character-traits-list>

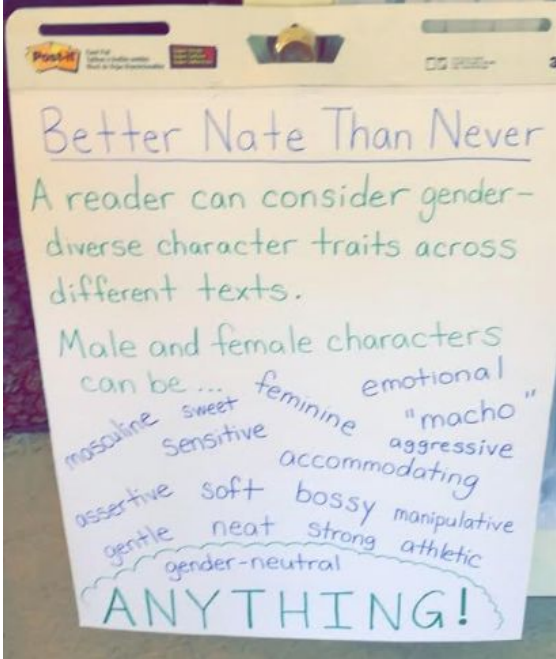
Lesson Overview:

Essential Question(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why should readers consider an LGBTQ perspective?• What does it mean to “read and write the rainbow?”
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Enduring Understanding(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reader can gain a better understanding of a text as a whole by considering multiple diverse perspectives, including marginalized groups (i.e. LGBTQ) • Inclusive language creates cultural awareness, compassion, and opportunities for transformational learning in a classroom community.
Potential Misconceptions	Students may have a preconceived notion that there are “fixed” character traits based on gender (i.e. boys vs. girls).

Learning Plan, Experiences, Instruction and Learning Activities:

	The Teacher will...
<p>W</p> <p>What is expected?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List the intentional learning objectives on the board 	<p>Students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify gender-diverse character traits • Use gender-diverse character traits to describe the main character in <u>Better Nate Than Never</u> <p><i>Today we will be working on...</i> <i>Becoming better readers through the lens of expanding our vocabulary around character traits. We're going to revisit our main character in <u>Better Nate Than Never</u>.</i></p>
<p>H</p> <p>How will we hook (Introduce this to) the students?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activate thinking • Consider the language you will use to introduce the lesson (See example in the table) 	<p>Link to Engagement</p> <p><i>Recently, we read Chapter 1 and became familiar with the main character.</i></p> <p><i>Turn and talk to a partner about...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who does the main character in the story remind you of? • How is Nate developing as an individual in the story? <p><i>You are really beginning to understand what makes Nate unique as a character. Many of you are recognizing Nate's eclectic personality and love for the performing arts. Unlike many boys his age, Nate does not appear interested in sports. One character trait we might use to describe Nate is: talented.</i></p> <p><i>Today, we're going to dig deeper with a new focus. This focus is on</i></p>

	<i>gender-diverse character traits.</i>
<p>E What equipment, resources, or materials are needed?</p>	Recommended Text: <i>Better Nate Than Never</i> by Tim Federle
<p>R How will we rethink or revise our thinking throughout the lesson?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What learning is confirmed? • What misconceptions are uncovered? • What is your new thinking? 	At the end of the lesson, students will be given an opportunity to reflect on their new thinking around the main character.
<p>E How will students self-evaluate and reflect on their learning?</p>	Refer to the exit ticket as a check for understanding.
<p>T How will we tailor learning to varied needs, interests, and learning styles?</p>	<p>Sample Anchor Chart</p>  <p>The anchor chart is a hand-drawn note on a Post-it. At the top, it is titled "Better Nate Than Never" in blue ink. Below the title, it says "A reader can consider gender-diverse character traits across different texts." in green. The next line reads "Male and female characters can be ..." in green. Below this, there are several adjectives arranged in a cloud-like shape: "masculine", "sweet", "feminine", "emotional", "sensitive", "gentle", "neat", "bossy", "manipulative", "aggressive", "accommodating", "strong", and "athletic". At the bottom, the word "gender-neutral" is written in blue, and below that, the word "ANYTHING!" is written in large, bold, blue capital letters.</p>

<p>O How will we organize the sequence of learning during the lesson?</p>	<p>Scaffold the Instruction</p> <p>(1) Model Chapter: A Quick but Notable Conversation with Mom, a Week Ago The teacher will use pg. 27 to model that there is more to Nate than what meets the eye.</p> <p><i>I'm thinking about how Nate brought up his sexuality as "way off-topic and unrelated," but if the author chose to bring that up it might have something to do with his character. Moving beyond "talented," I'm thinking of some gender-diverse character traits that can be used to describe Nate.</i></p> <p>(2) Guided Practice</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. The teacher will continue to read the passage(s) in which Nate's sexuality is brought up. B. Ask students to define gender-diverse terms that are more appropriate and less hurtful than the ways in which his peers make fun of him. C. Ask students to work with a partner to develop a list of three descriptions of Nate.. For each trait, the students should also be able to provide an example from the chapter. <p>(2) Independent Practice <i>When you go off to read your choice novels on your own, be sure to think about your characters in new and evolving ways. Ask yourself: What are some gender-diverse character traits that can be used to describe the main character in your books?</i></p>
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Check for Understanding

<p>(Formative evidence such as conferencing, group Q/A, teacher observation, exit-slip, etc.)</p>	<p>Exit Ticket: Students will respond to the prompt below. How do gender-diverse character traits allow you to better get to know the character when reading?</p>
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Quiz/Test (optional): (attach copy of assessment)	N/A
Performance Task/Project: (attach rubric)	N/A
Other:	

Supplemental Resources:

There are many companion texts that can be used to introduce students to prominent LGBTQ actors and performers who have made lasting social contributions historically. An incomplete list of suggestions follow:

- IMBD’s List of LGBT Actors and Actresses
 - <https://www.imdb.com/list/ls056609117/>
(Choices can be reviewed based on teacher discretion)
- Who is Elton John?
 - <http://www.whowasbookseries.com/books/who-is-elton-john/> (Who Is/Who Was Biography Series)