

CATCH a spark!

Using children's literature to SPARK CREATIVITY

Sticks and Stones

Written and Illustrated by Patricia Polacco

48 pages / Grades 1-5



A cherished author doesn't disappoint in this book celebrating friendship and the power of the arts for building confidence in children. As many of her books are, this one is autobiographical and timeless, reminding readers that it is our differences that define us and make us who we are, no matter the challenges we face along the way.

C Context

Growing up, new schools, real friends.

Bullying and the ways it can be dealt with positively rather than negatively.

Story structure. The book takes place over the course of a year. Identify ways in which the author advances the story and let s the readers know that. Follow the story arc.

Narratives as a genre. How do we know it is real? Be sure to read the final page that tells you what happened in life to the characters.

Dealing with challenge in positive ways.

A Arts

Authors as illustrators. Why is this likely important to some authors? What would be hard about having someone else be your illustrator?

View the **illustration style** of Patricia Polacco and discuss how she might work. [Read about her process.](#)

Choose an illustration before reading the story, and have students tell the story that goes with it.

Note how **informative illustrations** can be and detailed, even though the artistic style might not feel detailed.

T Themes

Friendship

Pursuing talent

Achieving dreams

Dealing with bullying

Celebrating individuality

Staying true to yourself

Power of positive thinking

Overcoming challenges

C Create

Identify an artist (of any form of the arts) and research their backstory. How did they overcome their challenges? How did their art form inspire them?

Research the lives of the characters in the story as they grew up.

Identify which of the arts motivates you. Why? How can you use the art form to express yourself during a hard time?

Write a song, create a play or a dance, or write a script which highlights overcoming a challenge by way of positive action rather than negative reaction.

H Heart Words

"We watched that ship sail across the sky, through our glorious kites with their streamers moving like jellyfish in the sea."

"I don't think I had ever seen pure rapture in someone's eyes until then."

"We didn't say anything. There was no need to."

