



*To start your day  
firmly planted*

## A SIMPLE SEED

It all starts with a simple seed planted in the ground. With time, nourishment, water, and sun, roots start to form. As the roots grow, they dig deep into the ground and anchor the plant so it can bloom and flourish above ground. The roots are the foundation of the plant. YOUR roots are the foundation of you. This journal is full of beautiful little seeds meant to strengthen your roots. With time, you, too, will sprout into your amazing self!

## LETTER TO TEACHERS

Dear Teachers,

Life is ANYTHING but simple. Our role as educators can be incredibly challenging yet so rewarding. The goal of this book is to help your students become grounded in their authentic selves. It was created to make your school days more positive and meaningful. As a former teacher, I understand there are days you feel you can barely stay afloat. Mornings in the classroom can be hectic and rushed, but this book is intended to help turn chaos into connection. Each entry is quick yet powerful. And when done repeatedly, the entries create a great life habit of setting the tone for each day. It is proven that priming your brain in the morning can boost your mood, energy and cognitive function.

The first hour of your day sets the tone for the entire day that follows. This journal is here to teach students various life lessons and how to practice gratitude, encourage positive self-talk, challenge their minds and, of course, make them giggle. By completing this journal, they'll develop strong roots, and you'll make deeper connections. And that creates mindful learners.

This journal is intended to help you invest in your students with the little time you have. It's five minutes a day to connect, to empower, to ground yourself in what is most important in life, and to plant positive seeds in the minds of your students.

Kids are born into the world with an open mind, and teachers can be important mentors. The best thing you can do is plant seeds in their beautiful brains, then nourish them

and watch them grow tall and strong. Just think of all the seeds you'll plant in your students' beautiful minds after completing all 100 entries! It's also a beautiful keepsake to send home with the students at the end of the school year.

The goal is to help each student improve 1% each day. That's all! How you start your day determines how the day flows, so it's crucial to be mindful in the morning and check your heart, attitude, and mind. The key is to be consistent in the journey; with time, you'll see a difference. Save their journals as a keepsake for the end of the year to look back on and see how far they've come!

"Children must be taught how to think,  
not what to think." ~ Margaret Mead

## LETTER TO STUDENTS

Dear Students,

Did you know your brain is like a muscle and that you need to GROW it to make it strong?

This journal will give you the strongest, most amazing brain around! It will help you start the day right so you can walk around with your head held high.

Now listen up. This ISN'T extra homework; that would be the WORST!

This journal is FUN!

It's going to make you smarter, more confident, more grateful, and it will also make you laugh.

I mean, who doesn't want all of that goodness?

Does that mean every day will be perfect? No. Life doesn't work that way. But you're going to learn all about that, too!

OK, enough chatting. Are you ready to be EMPOWERED? I bet you'll even teach your teacher a thing or two!

## GRATITUDE, THE SECRET INGREDIENT



Gratitude turns what we have into enough. We tend to focus on what we DON'T have, and that causes us to always want more. When we focus on what we're grateful for, it makes us happier. Gratitude also improves your health, emotional well-being, and resilience. It increases self-esteem and decreases anxiety and stress. It allows us to realize we are not the center of the world, and it humbles us.

Here's the trick: The dividends are in the details! Be grateful for the SMALL things in life, the things we most likely take for granted. Sometimes we don't realize all we have until we actually focus on it. Try it! After you realize what you're grateful for, imagine your life without it. It brings it to a whole different level, right? Gratitude IS the secret ingredient!

Here is a list to get you started:

- ☑ The warm sun on your face
  - ☑ Airplanes
  - ☑ Cold watermelon on a hot day
  - ☑ Puppies
  - ☑ Trees that help us breathe
  - ☑ The smell of pancakes and bacon
- ☑ Running water
  - ☑ Clean laundry
  - ☑ Puffy clouds
  - ☑ Soap to wash our hands
  - ☑ Hot showers
  - ☑ Finding a dollar in your pocket from last summer
  - ☑ Handwritten letters

- ✔ A toilet that flushes
- ✔ The Internet
- ✔ Firemen
- ✔ Matching socks
- ✔ A rainy day
- ✔ Fingers that let you pick up your toys
- ✔ A delicious bowl of spaghetti and meatballs
- ✔ Fresh fruit smoothies
- ✔ A good joke
- ✔ Teachers
- ✔ The custodian at school
- ✔ Sports
- ✔ Grocery stores
- ✔ When a friend says, "I'm sorry"
- ✔ A great pair of sneakers
- ✔ Lunch at school
- ✔ A good night's sleep
- ✔ Chocolate
- ✔ The stars at night
- ✔ The ocean
- ✔ Music that makes you want to dance
- ✔ Gummy bears
- ✔ A long hug
- ✔ Your brain
- ✔ The smell of popcorn
- ✔ Your heart for beating on its own without you asking it to
- ✔ Mail
- ✔ Rainbows
- ✔ Good hair days
- ✔ A lazy Sunday
- ✔ Vacation
- ✔ A warm fire
- ✔ The ability to walk
- ✔ Birds chirping
- ✔ A home-cooked meal
- ✔ Medicine
- ✔ Electricity

## THE POWER OF I AM



I AM statements are powerful. They remind us who we are and who we want to be. Our brains continuously generate thousands of thoughts every day. Unfortunately, most are negative.

If we are intentional about what follows our I AM statements, we will feel better about ourselves. Not overnight, but with time. Our I AM statements are like boomerangs: Whatever follows them will come back to us! The goal is to become more aware of our self-talk and how we define ourselves.

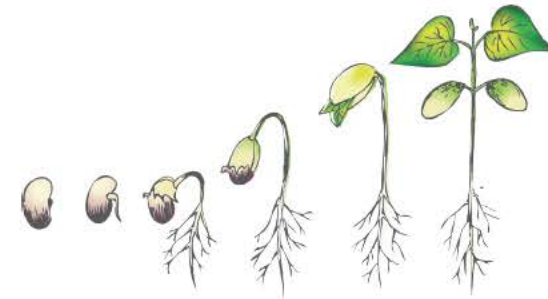
"I AM. Two of the most powerful words, for what you put after them shapes your reality." ~ Bevan Lee

Here is a list to get you started:

- ✔ A LEADER
- ✔ ME
- ✔ EXCITING
- ✔ CALM
- ✔ WORTHY
- ✔ BRIGHT
- ✔ TALENTED
- ✔ BRAVE
- ✔ GIFTED
- ✔ POSITIVE
- ✔ HAPPY
- ✔ BEAUTIFUL
- ✔ MOTIVATED
- ✔ STRONG
- ✔ DISCIPLINED
- ✔ HUGGABLE

- ✔ HONEST
- ✔ THOUGHTFUL
- ✔ CHEERFUL
- ✔ KIND
- ✔ OPTIMISTIC
- ✔ A GOOD LISTENER
- ✔ POWERFUL
- ✔ LIMITLESS
- ✔ ENOUGH
- ✔ UNIQUE
- ✔ AWESOME
- ✔ CREATIVE
- ✔ FUNNY
- ✔ FREE
- ✔ GENEROUS
- ✔ INSPIRATIONAL
- ✔ LOVABLE

LET'S GROW



## Your oh, so MAGICAL BRAIN

Ready to hear why your brain is magical? Your brain is really powerful and complex! It can take in BILLIONS of bits of information at any given time—not hundreds, not thousands, not millions, but BILLIONS! This is overwhelming to imagine! Thank goodness for the RAS superhero. “What is RAS?,” you ask. RAS stands for this fancy term: *reticular activating system*. The RAS is responsible for getting you the MOST important information.



Have you ever learned a new word and then suddenly you started seeing it everywhere? Or your family is looking to buy a van, and then all of a sudden every car on the road seems to be a van! That is the RAS at work! It helps you choose what to focus on! This is why we fill our brains with all this goodness first thing in the morning: so we’ll start seeing it everywhere in our lives, just like that van or new word. The more you focus on positivity, the more positivity you’ll see! The more you practice gratitude, the more things in life you have to be grateful for! Poof, magic! Let’s start priming our brains!

### Gratitude



- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

### I AM



### Daily Challenge



- Do something kind.
- Do something brave.
- Do the right thing.

### Morning Giggles



Where do baseball players get lemonade?

*The pitcher!*

### Who can I make SMILE today?



### Teacher perspective

Give an example of something you’ve focused on and then it suddenly showed up in your life! Show the power of the RAS at work!

## Two very powerful words: I AM

The words I AM are power words. What follows them will come back to you like a boomerang. Every time you think or say "I am" or "I am not," you're actually defining yourself. This is why it's super important to pick your words wisely. The troubling part is that we are often unaware of how many negative words we say after I AM. More than 90% of our brain activity is subconscious, meaning we are not aware of what we're saying to ourselves! For example, you might say, "I am not good at this," "I am not strong," "I am not athletic," "I am not smart," or "I am not worthy." Instead, say, "I am strong," "I am smart," "I am worthy," "I am inspired," "I am kind," "I am blessed." I AM statements shape your life, so remember this next time you catch yourself speaking and even thinking all that negative talk. Every day, make the conscious effort to say a powerful I AM statement. Write it down. Write it on your mirror (with a dry-erase marker, of course!), post it near your bed, write it in your school bag, write it in this journal! I AM certain that what you think of yourself, you become.



### Gratitude



- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

### I AM



### Daily Challenge



- Do something kind.
- Do something brave.
- Do the right thing.

### Morning Giggles



Would February  
March?

*No, but  
April May!*

### Who can I make SMILE today?



### Teacher perspective

Give an example of an I AM statement you say (or create one) and then say it out loud in front of your students.

“Failure is not the outcome; failure is not trying.” ~ Sara Blakely

Failing is never fun, but did you know it’s actually a GOOD thing? Did you know losing is just as important as winning?



Failure is when we learn; it’s when we grow! Next time you “fail,” take a moment to find the lesson. Failing is simply figuring out over and over how to get good at something. Whether you like it or not, it’s the only way to get better. The sooner you accept that, the better off you’ll be! Fail away my friend, and with your head held high.

Sometimes people won’t even try new things because they’re so afraid to fail. Not trying is failure in itself! Failure is the best way to gain important information.

Next time you fail, tell yourself, “Welp, this didn’t work, but I’m a problem solver, so I’ll try a different way next time.” After all, you really only fail when you give up!

### Gratitude



- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

I AM



### Daily Challenge



- ☑ Do something kind.
- ☑ Do something brave.
- ☑ Do the right thing.

### Morning Giggles



What kind of nut doesn’t like money?

*A CASHW!*

Who can I make SMILE today?



### Teacher perspective

Sara Blakely is a brilliant business woman who learned about growth mindset as a child. Every night at the dinner table, her dad would ask, “How did you fail today?” At a young age, she realized that failure is a positive thing, and that took her very far in life! Remind your students that failure takes courage!



“The two things in life you can control are ATTITUDE and EFFORT.” ~ Billy Cox



There are going to be so many things in life you can't control, such as the weather. The good news, however, is that you ARE always in control of your attitude and effort. Do your best to always focus on what you can 100% control.

When life gets hard, things don't go your way, or someone hurts you, remember you CAN control how you RESPOND. If it rains on your special beach day, go play in the rain. If you're stuck in traffic and late to an event, turn up the music and sing. If someone wrongs you, choose to take the high road and keep your chin up.

Everyone wears an invisible crown, and only YOU can keep that crown on; only YOU can pick it back up; and only YOU can wipe it off when it gets dirty. Keep that crown on and remember only YOU can control your attitude and effort.

**Gratitude** 

1.....

2.....


3.....

**I AM** 

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**Daily Challenge** 

- Do something kind.
- Do something brave.
- Do the right thing.

**Morning Giggles** 

What do you call cheese that doesn't belong to you?

*Nacho cheese!*

**Who can I make SMILE today?** 

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**Teacher perspective**

Share a time when you controlled your feelings even though you couldn't control the circumstances. Rain on your wedding day? A sick pet? Losing your job?



# The power of YET.

This simple, tiny word can make a BIG difference in your everyday life: YET. It's a superhero word. It's incredibly powerful, and if you have the RIGHT mindset, you can do ANYTHING. Having an "I can do it" attitude will get you very far in life. If you catch yourself saying, "I can't," sprinkle this word at the end of the sentence, and it'll change the way your brain works. "I can't ride a bike...YET." "I can't do math...YET." "I can't make the basketball team...YET."



Everyone struggles when they try something for the first time. The key is to not immediately give up. Patience, belief, the right attitude, and effort are the ingredients for making the best recipe in life. Sprinkle YET at the end of your sentences and watch the difference it makes.

You CAN do hard things, my little friend, and if you can't right now, you just haven't figured it out YET!

## Gratitude

1 .....

2 .....

3 .....

## I AM

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### Daily Challenge

- Do something kind.
- Do something brave.
- Do the right thing.

### Morning Giggles

Why can't a nose be 12 inches long?

*Because then it would be a foot!*

## Who can I make SMILE today?

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### Teacher perspective

Share a story that shows the power of YET: a time when you had to work really hard and remind yourself, "I just didn't get it yet," then with patience, work, and time, you did it!



## Treat everyone with equal RESPECT.

We humans look very different on the outside, but beneath the skin we are all so similar. Our hearts, our lungs, our bones...they're almost identical! On the outside, we all have a unique look, but if you look inside, we're incredibly similar.



Take two eggs, a brown one and white one. Although they're different colors on the outside, when you break them, you'll see there are no differences on the inside. This is important to remember if you're tempted to judge someone for the way they look. It doesn't matter where someone is from, what they look like, what they wear, what they do for a living, or what they believe in. It's so important to respect and love others for who they are.

The more you get to know someone, the quicker you'll realize we're all similar deep down. Imagine what the world would be like if we got past the differences and saw each other as all the same on the inside.

### Gratitude



- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

### I AM



### Daily Challenge



- ☑ Do something kind.
- ☑ Do something brave.
- ☑ Do the right thing.

### Morning Giggles



What did the left eye say to the right eye??

*Something between us smells!*

### Who can I make SMILE today?



### Teacher perspective

Challenge your students to meet someone who looks different than them and to always treat everyone with equal respect!

## Smart kids ask QUESTIONS.

Ask. Ask. Ask again. Always keep asking questions. It's so important to be curious, because there's so much to figure out in this great big, beautiful world!



Sometimes we get nervous that our questions aren't "good enough," or we fear what people will think about them. It can be hard putting yourself out there, but asking questions is the wisest thing you can do! You don't know everything (and never will), and the only way to learn is to feed that curious mind. By asking questions, you learn about life, you learn to solve problems, you avoid making judgments, and it makes you smarter! So, raise those sweaty palms and get your curious questions answered. People who ask questions are the changemakers of the world! Stay curious. Learn new things. Never lose your sense of wonder, and never stop asking questions. Life's greatest rewards are for the curious.

"Be curious, not judgmental." ~ Walt Whitman

### Gratitude

1.....

2.....

3.....

### I AM

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### Daily Challenge

- Do something kind.
- Do something brave.
- Do the right thing.

### Morning Giggles

Why do watermelons have fancy weddings?

*Because they cantaloupe!*

### Who can I make SMILE today?

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### Teacher perspective

Frequently remind your students that there really are no bad questions! Encourage them to be curious over complacent and to ask lots of questions!



DEEP BREATHS are like little love notes to your body. ~ Unknown

On average, you take about 20,000 breaths every single day. We most likely take this for granted because our bodies do this on their own (thank you, lungs). Understanding the power of deep breaths can change your life. A deep, slow breath calms you if you're feeling anxious, nervous, or stressed!



Research shows that you can change your mood by changing how you breathe! Breathe in like you're smelling a flower, and breathe out like you're blowing out a candle. It's so important to just pause and breathe every once in a while. Being mindful of this will help you in difficult situations, such as before a test or the big game! Did you know that just five minutes of quiet meditation a day helps you become more focused, puts you in a better mood, and makes you feel better about yourself? Doing this will also help you become more aware of when your body gets anxious. At that VERY moment, practice taking deep breaths and watch how it slowly calms you down.

**Gratitude** 

1.....

2.....


3.....

**I AM** 

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**Daily Challenge** 

- Do something kind.
- Do something brave.
- Do the right thing.

**Morning Giggles** 

What word begins and ends with an E but only has one letter?

*Envelope!*

**Who can I make SMILE today?** 

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**Teacher perspective**

Encourage your students to take some time today to go outside and just BE in nature. Tell them to close their eyes and “hear with their ears.” Then to open their eyes and “see with their eyes.” This is a simple step toward becoming more mindful.



## STAND up for those who have no voice.

Have you ever witnessed a bully making someone else feel small? Did you know deep down it was wrong but didn't say anything because you didn't want to feel uncomfortable? That's a normal feeling.



Standing up for others can be difficult, but not standing up for someone might be harder. When we don't choose to do the right thing, guilt, shame, and sadness follow. Standing up for someone is HARD, especially when no one else will, but it's always the RIGHT thing to do.

Use your voice. Dig up some courage. If it's a safe environment, speak up or find an adult to help. It will have a lasting impression on the person you're protecting. Have someone's back, because one day you might need that, too. It won't always be easy, but do the right thing and know what's worth standing up for.

### Gratitude



- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

### I AM



### Daily Challenge



- ☑ Do something kind.
- ☑ Do something brave.
- ☑ Do the right thing.

### Morning Giggles



I make a loud sound when I'm changing. When I do change, I get bigger but weigh less. What am I?

*Popcorn!*

### Who can I make SMILE today?



### Teacher perspective

Share a time when you stood up for someone or wished someone had stood up for you. Brainstorm times when it's a good or bad idea to speak your voice.



### Grow your empathy muscles.

Everyone has feelings, but we don't always feel the same way as someone else. It's important to understand how others feel. Have you ever felt sad just because your friend was sad? That's empathy. Empathy allows you to FEEL what others feel. It allows you to step into their shoes and join them in their arena. It's a skill you NEED to go far in life. There are two kinds of support we can give when helping others: sympathy and empathy. Sympathy is showing you're sorry when someone is going through a hard time, but empathy takes it one step further. Empathy shows that you truly understand. It helps you become relatable. It allows the other person to feel less alone and safe. For example, think of what scares you. Is it heights, spiders, the dark, roller coasters, mayonnaise, failing a test? Now imagine a friend of yours tells you they're scared to go swimming. In your eyes, swimming might be fun, so it's easy to tell someone not to be scared and to just jump in. But that won't make your friend feel less scared. Instead, put yourself in their shoes and think of something that scares you. Tell them, "I know what it's like to be scared." That is powerful! Remember, all people, no matter their color, size, or gender, just want to feel understood and heard. Empathy is your inner hero.



### Gratitude



- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

### I AM



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### Daily Challenge



- Do something kind.
- Do something brave.
- Do the right thing.

### Morning Giggles



Why is Cinderella bad at soccer?

*She runs away from the ball!*

### Who can I make SMILE today?



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### Teacher perspective

Encourage empathy throughout the year with stories, role-playing, watching inspiring movies, or reading a book, and take time to understand the characters. Some great movies that express empathy: *Wonder*, *E.T.*, *Zootopia*, *Remember the Titans*, *Inside Out*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and *Freaky Friday*.



## It'll all come together. Trust your journey.

So many seeds have been planted through this journal. You've learned about failure, how to get back up, all about grit and resilience, how to forgive and let go, how to do the right thing, stand tall, use your voice, listen to your gut, be kind yet tough, take risks, show respect, follow your heart, do your best and, most importantly, that you matter. These are your roots. Now go forward with your beautiful toolbox and be the best version of you. One day you'll look back at your life, see all the ups and downs, connect the dots, and it will all make sense. Steve Jobs once said, "You can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backward. So, you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future." They will be RIGGED in your favor, even though it won't always seem that way at the time. Trust the timing of your life, trust the hard moments, trust your gut, and trust yourself! Life is full of beautiful lessons, so keep your eyes and heart always open to them. Your life will be a series of dots that will guide you on a path, and as long as you stay true to yourself, you'll see a day when they all connect, and it'll all make sense. You're ready to sprout, my little seed!



### Gratitude



- 1 .....
- 2 .....
- 3 .....

### I AM



### Daily Challenge



- Do something kind.
- Do something brave.
- Do the right thing.

### Morning Giggles



What keys are extra sweet?

*Cookies!*

### Who can I make SMILE today?



### Teacher perspective

I'm sure you've learned by now that this book was created for you, too. We're all going through this together, and no matter what age, title, or income, we're all trying to figure things out and be the best version of ourselves. This is the most important journey we'll ever take. Teachers, you're doing great!

