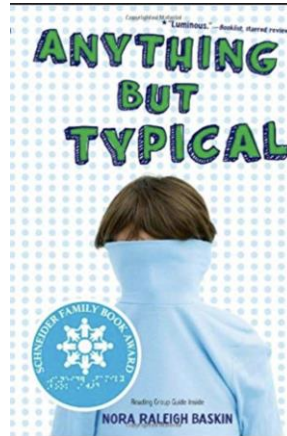


Anything But Typical

Writing Prompts



ISBN-13	978-1416995005
ISBN-10	1416995005
Author	Nora Raleigh Baskin
Publisher	Simon & Schuster
Copyright	2009
Lexile	HL640L
Genre	Fiction
Synopsis	Jason Blake is a twelve-year-old boy with autism. Through personal narrative and creative writing, Jason explores family, life, and the possibility of having his first real friend.
Themes	Adolescence; Autism; Friendship

Character-Based Literacy Program Writing Prompts

Anything But Typical, Day 1



Analyze the key paragraph.

Key Paragraph, p. 14

“How do you *show* appreciation? Appreciation is an emotion. It’s a feeling. You can’t draw a picture of it. Why do people want everyone to act just like they do? Talk like they do. Look like they do. Act like they do.

And if you don’t –

If you don’t, people make the assumption that you do not feel what they feel.

And then they make the assumption –

That you must not feel anything at all.”

EXTEND

Write a short product based on today’s prompt to connect to the unit theme.

In this unit, you will write about different types of interpersonal skills and virtues.. You will be asked to define what the interpersonal skill means to you, and where you can see this skill used in the chapter.

Write 1–2 paragraphs. Provide evidence from the text. Use as many details as possible.

Day 1. Today’s virtue is *gratitude*.

- Define what it means to express gratitude.
- Why is gratitude a virtue?
- Provide an example of gratitude from today’s reading. When was gratitude felt? Was gratitude expressed? If it was not, write how it could have been.

Character-Based Literacy Program Writing Prompts

Anything But Typical, Day 2



Analyze the key paragraph.

Key Paragraph, p. 28-29

“Jeremy knows, because I told him, that probably very few people have viewed my story since I posted it last week and that only two people have written comments. But that is how Jeremy is. He doesn’t think very much about the meaning of the words that come out of his mouth. It took me a long time and more careful observation to figure this out.

People don’t mean everything they say, my mother has told me. So has my physical therapist.

Then why do they say it?

Why do people say things they don’t really mean?

So far no one has given me a very good answer to that.”

Write a short product based on today’s prompt to connect to the unit theme.

Day 2. Today’s interpersonal skill is *encouragement*.

- Define encouragement and provide an example of how you can encourage a friend.
- Why is encouragement an interpersonal skill?
- Provide an example of encouragement from today’s reading.

Character-Based Literacy Program Writing Prompts

Anything But Typical, Day 3



Analyze the key paragraph.

Key Paragraph, p. 46–47

“My dad is pretty quiet too. He talks, but most of the time he listens. But that day I remember exactly what he said to my grandmother. And to my mother.

“It’s not meaningless to Jason,” my dad said.

“What? What’s not meaningless?” My mother’s face red and her eyes wet, even though she wasn’t crying. She was hurting, even I could see that.

“I never said—,” my grandmother started, but my dad interrupted her.

“The words. *And* the letters. Just because you don’t understand their meaning doesn’t mean they don’t have one.””

Write a short product based on today’s prompt to connect to the unit theme.

Day 3. Today’s virtue is *honesty*.

- Define what it means to be honest and why honesty is an virtue.
- Provide an example of honesty from the today’s reading. If there are characters who were not honest, consider how honesty could have changed the story.

Character-Based Literacy Program Writing Prompts

Anything But Typical, Day 4



Analyze the key paragraph.

Key Paragraph, p. 77

“Some people, like teachers and librarians and other adults, like to say that names are not important.
Like sticks and stones.
But they are wrong.
Every word you choose means something you think it means, and more.
Like if a person is *different*, that is a good thing.
But if they have a *defect*, that is not.”

Write a short product based on today's prompt to connect to the unit theme.

Day 4. Today's interpersonal skill is *conflict resolution*.

- Provide at least four ways people can resolve a conflict.
- Why is conflict resolution an interpersonal skill?
- Provide an example of a conflict from today's reading and how this conflict could have been resolved more effectively.

Character-Based Literacy Program Writing Prompts

Anything But Typical, Day 5



Analyze the key paragraph.

Key Paragraph, p. 103

“He hears what the doctor proposes.

Your son won’t be short anymore, the doctor tells everyone.

But we don’t want everyone to be the same, do we? Bennu’s father says.

No, but if you agree to the operation, the doctor promises, *no one will look at Bennu ever again and know anything is wrong.*”

Write a short product based on today’s prompt to connect to the unit theme.

Day 5. Today’s virtue is *patience*.

- Define patience and why it is a helpful virtue.
- Include two ways a person can practice being patient.
- Provide an example of patience from today’s reading.

Character-Based Literacy Program Writing Prompts

Anything But Typical, Day 6



Analyze the key paragraph.

Key Paragraph, p. 132

“Wow, great story,” Aaron is saying. “Bennu, huh? So, he decides to have the operation. Scary stuff man.”

Aaron is putting the crumbled paper from his cupcake, the tinfoil from his sandwich, and the stems from his grapes into his paper bag. He is done eating. He pushes his chair out behind him.

He says, “But hey, wouldn’t it be weird if– Bennu wakes up from the operation, and he’s all tall and stuff, and then he doesn’t recognize himself in the mirror?”

Write a short product based on today’s prompt to connect to the unit theme.

Today’s interpersonal skill is *communication*.

- What moments from today’s reading support the view that communication can provide comfort and help?
- Why is communication an important interpersonal skill?
- Communication is not only spoken. What other forms of communication can you think of? Provide an example of each form.

Character-Based Literacy Program Writing Prompts

Anything But Typical, Day 7



Analyze the key paragraph.

Key Paragraph, p. 151–152

“They told me the word for what was wrong, three letters, and it gave me a name. My mom and dad were saying something. They were telling me things. But at eight years old I had already learned that people will say one thing and mean something else completely.

Special.

Different.

But in a way I was relieved.

...

But I didn’t think anything was going to get any better.

I didn’t need any letters or any name to tell me what I already knew.”

Write a short product based on today’s prompt to connect to the unit theme.

Today’s interpersonal skill is *active listening*.

- Define what it means to be an active listener.
- How did listening to each other help Jason and his mother navigate the trip to the convention?

Character-Based Literacy Program Writing Prompts

Anything But Typical, Day 8



Analyze the key paragraph.

Key Paragraph, p. 170

“There is no reason to go to the writing workshop.

There isn’t anything left.

Why tell a story if there is no one there to read it? Why make a sound if no one will hear it?

Now I am thinking of black paint all over my ceiling at home, covering up all those letters, all those letters twisting themselves into words that nobody understands anyway.”

Write a short product based on today’s prompt to connect to the unit theme.

Today’s virtue is *respect*.

- What does it mean to be respectful? What does it mean to be respectful of differences?
- Why is respect an important virtue?
- Provide an example of respect from today’s reading.

Character-Based Literacy Program Writing Prompts

Anything But Typical, Day 9



Analyze the key paragraph.

Key Paragraph, p. 187

“All we are, all we can be, are the stories we tell,” he says, and he is talking as if he is talking only to me. “Long after we are gone, our words will be all that is left, and who is to say what really happened or even what reality is? Our stories, our fiction, our words will be as close to truth as can be. And no one can take that away from you.”

Write a short product based on today’s prompt to connect to the unit theme.

Now that you have written about eight different interpersonal skills or virtues, choose three to include in your final paper. Your final writing product will be an essay in response to the following question:

How can people utilize these three skills and/or virtues to interact with one another? How can we use these skills and/or virtues to help people with autism to feel accepted?

Your essay should include at least 450 words (one page double-spaced).

The essay should be concise – avoid repetition and redundancy in statements. Use the following checklist to evaluate your work:

- The essay begins with a clear argument.
- The essay provides examples to clarify the reasoning.
- The essay includes good transition sentences and phrases.
- There is a topic sentence in each paragraph.
- There is a logical progression from one paragraph to the next.
- The essay ends with a strong conclusion.

Create a timeline to organize your writing schedule.

What	When
Create a thesis statement.	
Collect and organize ideas and facts.	
Complete an introduction paragraph.	
Complete the body paragraphs.	
Complete the conclusion paragraph.	
Read through and refine.	
Submit first draft.	
Revise based on feedback.	
Submit final draft.	