

The Value of Determination: A ValueTale about Helen Keller



The Value of Determination helps us to get past challenges we face in life.

Helen Keller, stricken by fever in her early childhood, became blind, deaf, and mute. But with determination and the help of her teacher, Anne Sullivan, she faced these difficulties and learned to read, write, and speak.

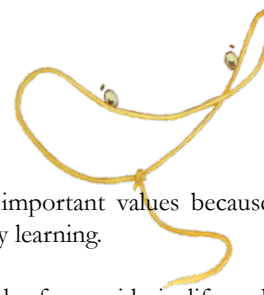
Through Helen's continued determination she helped others to see that they too could overcome any difficulties they might have and live happier lives as well.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

- 1) Have the children imagine themselves in Helen's world of total darkness, no sounds, and no ability to speak. *How would the world appear or seem to them? How would they feel?* The children can then write a description of how they would feel in such a situation; they should also include how they would try to communicate their needs/wants.
- 2) Once Helen was introduced to words by her teacher Annie, she understood that what was being touched on her hand was the name for that thing. Water was the first word that Helen understood. As a paired activity, have one person close their eyes, and have the other person hand them an object, and then write the word into their hand with a finger. Explore how this feels. *Do you think you would understand communicating this way?*
- 3) Without sight, hearing, or speech, Helen faced many challenges in communicating with the world. *How did Helen use her determination to help herself?*
- 4) Helen Keller used her determination to do things that others did not believe she could do. *How do you feel when you continue to be determined?* Discuss how Helen's determination was affected by others' beliefs in her.
- 5) As the story suggests, have children think about how determination can be applied in life. Have them each think of a personal goal that has been achieved, and identify how determination has led to the accomplishment.



The Value of Humor: A ValueTale about Will Rogers



The Value of Humor may be one of the most important values because the more children can enjoy laughter, the more they can enjoy learning.

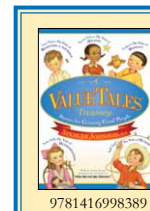
Will Rogers, the American humorist, always saw the funny side in life and he helped others to laugh with him. Will learned by making people laugh, he could also make them think.

When children learn to laugh at themselves, they can grow in remarkable ways.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

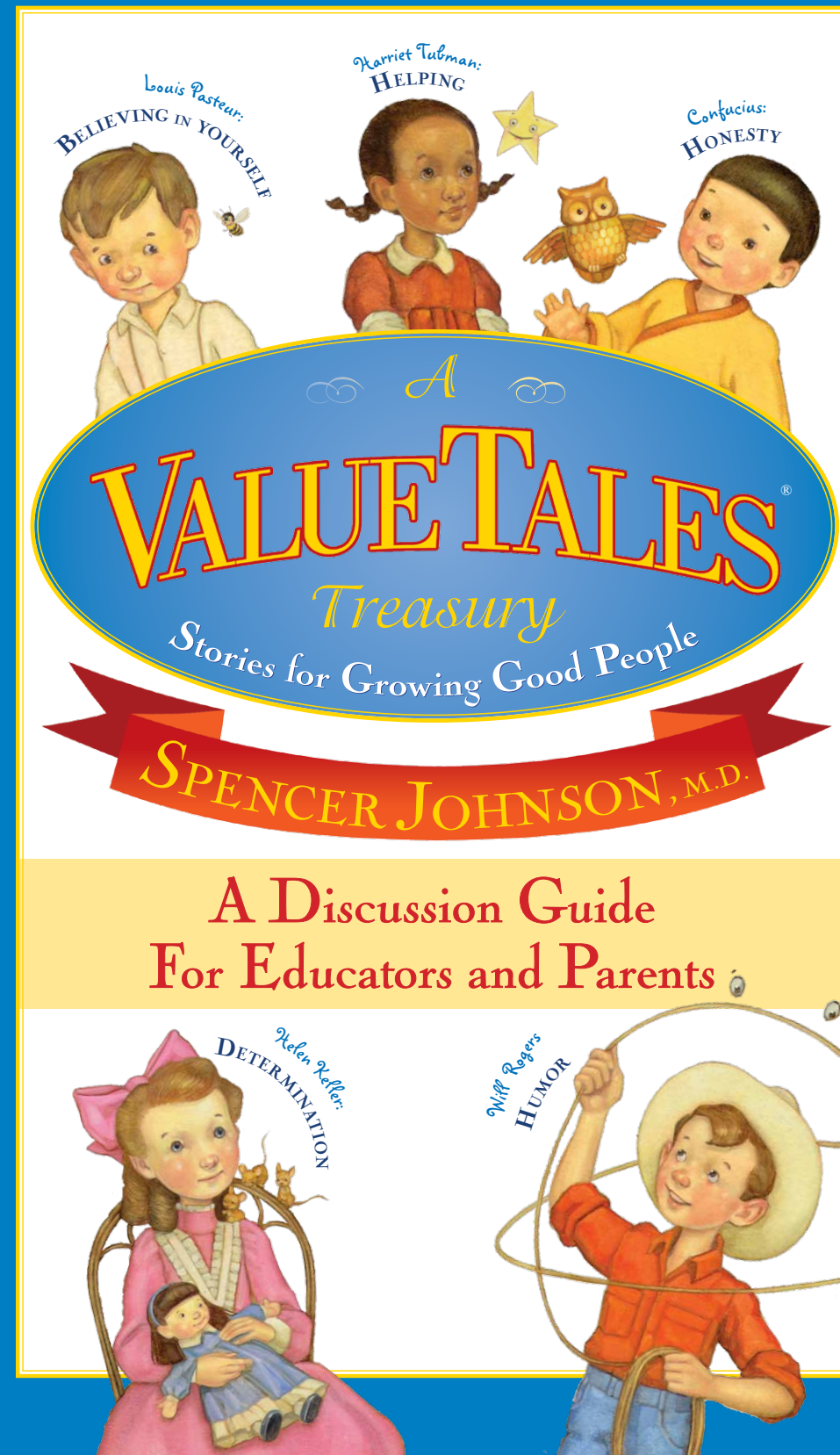
- 1) When Will was a young boy, television and movies hadn't been invented. *Can you imagine how people might have entertained themselves?*
- 2) As a young boy, Will Rogers learned to use humor to get others to laugh and enjoy themselves. *Do you like to laugh? How do you make others laugh?*
- 3) Will discovered performing his act was more fun when he learned to laugh at himself. *How do you feel when you make a mistake? Think about a time when you made a mistake. Were you able to laugh at yourself and improve?*
- 4) As an adult, Will was loved throughout the world for helping people laugh at life. Sometimes he would poke fun at a situation to help people think about things. *How does humor help us understand things?*
- 5) Writing humorous quips, without hurting others, was something Will was skilled at. Give some examples of his writing from the tale.

Are you using *ValueTales* with the children in your life? Share your experience with us at valuetalesfeedback@simonandschuster.com.



Spencer Johnson, M.D., is the creator and editor of the new ValueTales® series. The writer of several #1 *New York Times* bestsellers, he's one of the world's most respected and popular authors. More than 50 million copies of his books are available worldwide in forty-two languages.

This resource guide was prepared by JoAnn Jonas, MLS, a Youth Services librarian, reviewer, and Children's and Teen Library Services consultant in concert with the author, Spencer Johnson, M.D. and his editor, Alexandra Penfold.



Using *A ValueTales Treasury* to Help Children Grow Into Stronger, Happier People

A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

Dear Friends,

Each of the five stories in *A ValueTales Treasury* shows how a famous historic character grew from a child facing challenges into a remarkable person.

These individuals faced similar doubts and fears that children face today, but by listening to their True Voice—their own best thoughts—they were able to grow into stronger and happier people.

Now with these “imaginographies” and the discussions that follow, we can help today’s children use their wonderful imaginations to explore how they too can grow into the people they want to become.

With role models from history, and stories based on real events, educators and parents can use these tales to build on classroom curriculum and spark imaginative conversations with children about values.

I hope you’ll enjoy using *A ValueTales Treasury* and this guide as a jumping off point for animated discussion!

Spencer Johnson, M.D.

The Value of Believing in Yourself: A ValueTale about Louis Pasteur



The Value of Believing in Yourself helps us to be our very best at whatever we choose to do. When you believe in yourself you can do more than you ever thought you could.

As a boy, Louis Pasteur believed he could find a way to aid people who were sick. By believing in himself and experimenting, he discovered a cure for rabies as well as a process for the pasteurization of milk.

Not everyone will accomplish truly extraordinary things, but when you believe in yourself in big and small ways you can accomplish what you believe in and make the world a better place.



QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

- 1) Louis Pasteur was born in France more than one hundred and fifty years ago. *What was the world like when he was a boy? What happened to people who got sick with rabies before Louis invented the vaccine?*
- 2) Discuss the concept of believing in yourself. *How do you feel when you believe in yourself?*
- 3) Identify a time you believed in something, even if others didn’t share your belief. *How did it feel when others didn’t share your belief? What did you do?* Children can talk about these events and/or even explore them as a writing assignment.
- 4) To help each child internalize the concept of believing in yourself, have the children write down something they would like to do in their own lives; remind them that it does not have to be something big, just something that they want to do. Ask them to list three things they could do to help accomplish this dream.
- 5) If you are working with older children, ask them to identify other people, either current or historical figures or even family members, who believed in themselves. *What happened because they believed in themselves?*

The Value of Helping: A ValueTale about Harriet Tubman



The Value of Helping shows us how we can feel good by helping ourselves and helping others, too.

Harriet Tubman escaped slavery with the help of many people who risked their lives so she could be free. Harriet in turn went on to help many other slaves make that same trip to freedom.

This story encourages children to think about how they can enjoy helping others and to discover how they can be happier too when they help others in big and small ways.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

- 1) Life during Harriet’s time was very different from our own. Familiarize your students with a discussion of freedom, slavery, and what was happening in the United States before the Civil War. Ask your students to imagine what life was like for slaves in the South during this time.
- 2) *How was Harriet treated by different people in the story? How do you feel when you help others?*

- 3) As this tale points out, Harriet had to work selling pies to earn money that would allow her to escape and then help others. In today’s world, we continue to raise money to help others in need. Discuss how children today can help others. Give examples of contemporary children who have raised money for a worthy cause.
- 4) Plan an activity that includes setting a goal of helping others. Implement the activity and then to complete the circle, compare it to the helpful work that Harriet did.
- 5) Harriett helped others at great risk to herself. *Can you name other people who have helped others?* (They may or may not be famous.)

The Value of Honesty: A ValueTale about Confucius



The Value of Honesty helps us to see how being truthful, especially with ourselves, can make us stronger and happier in what we do.

Confucius abided by the Golden Rule, to treat others as you would want to be treated—treated honestly. By dealing with everyone with honesty and fairness, Confucius not only made himself happier, but everyone around him became happier, too.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

- 1) Confucius lived in China 2,500 years ago. *How much do we really know about that time? Imagine what life was like in ancient China. Compare childhood then to childhood today.*
- 2) Confucius’s father was his first teacher, and taught him about being honest in all that he did. In the ValueTale, Confucius strove to be wise and honest like his father. *How do we learn lessons from one another? What do we learn from our families?*
- 3) Confucius used honesty in his teachings. Name ways Confucius practiced honesty in the tale. Try to think of at least three ways you’ve been honest in your life. Describe or illustrate the situations and what you did.
- 4) Think of someone who was dishonest with you. *What happened? How did you feel?*
- 5) There are people in our lives who show us the value of honesty. Have children think of someone—a friend, a parent, or another family member—who has taught them about honesty. *Did they use examples like Confucius did?*

