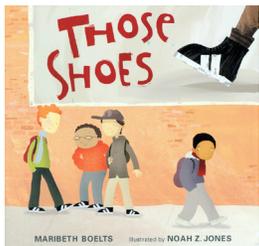


# READING INTO CHARACTER

A good story and its lessons can stay with a child forever. This reading guide can help you use a great story to illustrate an important character trait, helping children develop and grow into responsible, caring and contributing citizens.



## THOSE SHOES

written by Maribeth Boelts,  
illustrated by Noah Z. Jones

Like all the other boys in school, Jeremy wants black high tops with two white stripes. But when he finally gets a pair, he realizes that he needs to give them away.

This story models

## KINDNESS AND COMPASSION:

Valuing others so much that you show them respect and offer help to them as a way of honoring their value

## TALKING ABOUT CORE VALUES

These questions will help you start a conversation about the book after reading.

- High tops with white stripes are the most popular shoes in Jeremy's school. After Jeremy finally gets a pair of his own, why does he give them away?
- "There's no room for 'want' around here – just 'need,'" says Grandma. What does Jeremy see that Antonio needs?
- After Jeremy leaves the shoes outside Antonio's door, he runs away. Why do you think Jeremy doesn't stay to talk to his classmate?
- Jeremy feels happy when he sees a smiling Antonio in his new shoes. How does being kind to others make you feel? How does it make you feel when someone is kind to you?

## MAKING CHARACTER CONNECTIONS

In addition to **KINDNESS AND COMPASSION**, this story has examples of other important character traits you can share with children.

- **RESILIENCE.** When Jeremy and Grandma can't afford the expensive new shoes, they travel to three different thrift shops in search of a used pair.
- **LOYALTY.** Jeremy doesn't forget that Antonio was the only kid who didn't laugh at his babyish shoes.
- **GENEROSITY.** It's not easy for Jeremy to give away his shoes, but he does.

## DOING THE RIGHT THING

**SHARE THE WEALTH.** Many of us have new or barely used items that we've outgrown or lost interest in. Investigate local charities that welcome donations of good-as-new clothing, toys, books, or other useful items. Be sure to pay close attention to their donation guidelines. If feasible, organize a class- or school-wide donation drive.

### CHARACTER.ORG TIP

There is a difference between learning about terms like kindness and compassion, and actually being a kind and compassionate person. Take time to talk with children about kindness and compassion. Ask them personal questions about how they might demonstrate those qualities to others in their own lives. Then, provide lots of encouragement when they demonstrate these important qualities. To learn more, visit [character.org](http://character.org).