


# BACK TO SCHOOL BUNDLE

### Shine a Light on YOUR Signature Strengths!

List your 5 Signature Strengths below and then answer the reflection questions.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



**Signature Strengths Practice**

- What did you learn about yourself by taking the VIA? \_\_\_\_\_
- What surprised you most about your VIA results? \_\_\_\_\_
- How do your Signature Strengths enable you to succeed at school/work? \_\_\_\_\_
- How do your Signature Strengths show up in your personal life/relationships? \_\_\_\_\_
- Are there any ways in which your strengths hinder you? \_\_\_\_\_

### What Went Well Journal

Get started! For the next five days, reflect on three things that went well and describe them in the space below. Practicing gratitude and shifting your focus to the positive things each day enhances your wellbeing and can transform how you see the world.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Reflection Questions:** Why were these things good? Who was involved?  
How can you get more of them in the future?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_


- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Jolts of Joy Poster Example



Download and print this [Jolts of Joy classroom poster](#).

### Identifying Your Child's Strengths

**Parent Instructions:** Take the VIA Character Survey ([viacharacter.org](http://viacharacter.org)) for your child. Answer the questions from their perspective based on your observations of them in all areas of their life. Check the top five signature strengths on this sheet and reference it throughout the year. This is a great tool for IEP meetings and check-ins with your child's educator. It can help to affirm that goals, activities and feedback are aligned with your child's strengths. This is also a great activity to share with family/friends, so you can see both overlapping and unique strengths for the people your child regularly interacts with.

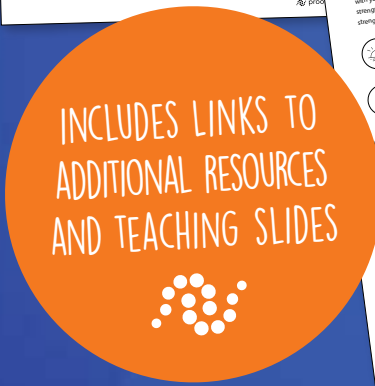
- Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence**  
Noticing and appreciating beauty, excellence, and/or skilled performance in various domains of life, from nature to art to mathematics to science to everyday experience.
- Bravery**  
Not dreading or avoiding threat, challenge, difficulty or pain; speaking up for what's right even if it's unpopular; acting on convictions even if unpopular; includes physical bravery but is not limited to it.
- Creativity**  
Thinking of novel and productive ways to conceptualize and do things; includes artistic achievement but is not limited to it.
- Courtesy**  
Taking an interest in ongoing experiences for its own sake; finding subjects and topics fascinating; exploring and discovering.
- Humility**  
Treating all people the same according to notions of fairness and justice; not letting feelings like decisions about others; giving everyone a fair chance.
- Forgiveness**  
Forgetting those who have done wrong; accepting others' shortcomings; giving people a second chance; not being vengeful.
- Gratitude**  
Being aware of and thankful for the good things that happen; taking time to express thanks.

### Gratitude Brainstorm

Take seven minutes to brainstorm as many of the things you are grateful for across each of the categories below. You can write them out, draw, or share verbally (including using a communications device). You can also do this on a separate sheet if you would like more room to write. Try this activity again after practicing What Went Well for a few weeks to see how your gratitude skills have improved!

Family & Pets	School or Work	Vacation & Holidays
Home	Friends	Food
Health	Nature	Special Interests

INCLUDES LINKS TO ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND TEACHING SLIDES



The following bundle includes overviews of 5 Back-to-School activities on a range of wellbeing skills. Each activity includes a printable worksheet — some for just educators, some for students, and some for both.



# Table of Contents

## Activity 1

<a href="#">Overview — Identify Your Character Strengths</a> .....	3
<a href="#">Worksheet: Shine a Light on YOUR Character Strengths</a> .....	4

## Activity 2

<a href="#">Overview — Start a What Went Well Journal</a> .....	5
<a href="#">Writing Worksheet: What Went Well Journal</a> .....	6-7
<a href="#">Drawing Worksheet: What Went Well Journal</a> .....	8-9

## Activity 3

<a href="#">Overview — Make Your Jolts of Joy List</a> .....	10
<a href="#">Example: Jolts of Joy Class Poster</a> .....	11

## Activity 4

<a href="#">Overview — Start the Year with Strengths at Back-to-School Night</a> .....	12
<a href="#">Worksheet: The 24 Character Strengths Defined</a> .....	13-15

## Activity 5

<a href="#">Overview — Gratitude Brainstorm</a> .....	16
<a href="#">Adult Worksheet: Gratitude Brainstorm</a> .....	17
<a href="#">Student Worksheet: Categories of Gratitude Brainstorm</a> .....	18-19



# AcTivity 1

## Identify Your Character Strengths

The skill of identifying character strengths centers on the question of “What is RIGHT with me?” and “Who am I at my BEST?” Focusing on what is uniquely right with you and your students promotes engagement, strong relationships, and increased wellbeing.

---

### For Educators

Complete the [VIA Character Strengths Survey](#) (less than 15 minutes) and encourage other staff on your team and in your school to complete the survey as well. Print and post your rank order of strengths somewhere you will see them every day (your refrigerator, workstation, or digital desktop). Then, explore and reflect on your Signature Strengths with [Shine a Light on Your Signature Strengths](#) (see worksheet page 4). Becoming aware of your strengths and the strengths of others is a great way to start the school year shining the light on what’s RIGHT!

*Looking for additional resources on how to practice character strengths for yourself? [Explore here.](#)*

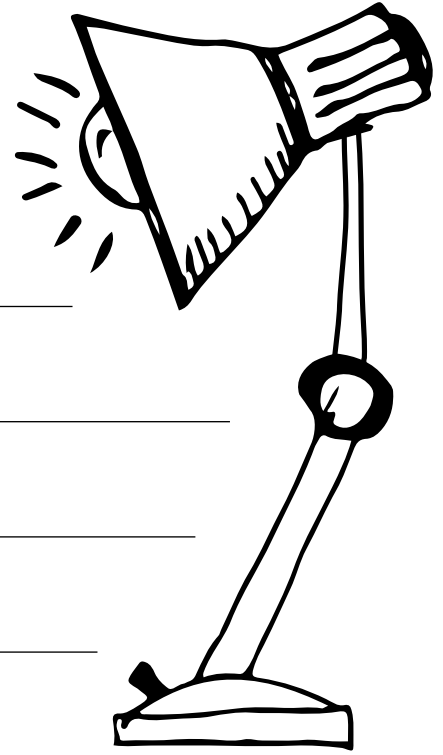
### For Students

Have students complete the [VIA Character Strengths Survey](#) in the first week of school. This is a great way to get to know your students, and is an opportunity for them to get to know each other when they share their signature strengths with their classmates. There is a [Supplement for Use When Supporting Youth with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to Complete the VIA-Youth](#), for students who need differentiated support.

# Shine a Light on YOUR Signature Strengths!

List your 5 Signature Strengths below and then answer the reflection questions.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_



## Signature Strengths Practice

- What did you learn about yourself by taking the VIA? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What surprised you most about your VIA results? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How do your Signature Strengths enable you to succeed at school/work? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How do your Signature Strengths show up in your personal life/relationships? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Are there any ways in which your strengths hinder you? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# AcTivity 2

## Start a What Went Well Journal

Pausing to ask yourself, “What Went Well?” trains your brain to focus on the good each day. Learning to focus on gratitude enables you to be more resilient while facing challenges and live a healthier, happier life.

---

### For Educators

Journaling about the good in life is a great gratitude practice. Starting the first week of school, set aside 5-10 minutes each day and ask yourself, “What Went Well?” These can be small wins or big accomplishments. Your list can include the obviously positive (e.g., positive feedback from a boss), the silver lining moments (e.g., I hit traffic commuting but got to catch up with an old friend on the drive), or the absence of the negative (e.g., no one engaged in dangerous behavior in my classroom today).

### For Students

On one of the first days back to school, have students share What Went Well for them over the summer. Use the [What Went Well Journal](#) (see writing worksheet pages 6-7 or drawing worksheet pages 8-9) and/or [these teaching slides](#). This could be a classwide share, a partner share, or an individual reflection. You can also lead a What Went Well activity at the end of the first week of school where students can share what’s gone well in their first week back at school.

# What Went Well Journal

Get started! For the next five days, reflect on three things that went well and describe them in the space below. Practicing gratitude and shifting your focus to the positive things each day enhances your wellbeing and can transform how you see the world.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Reflection Questions:** Why were these things good? Who was involved?  
How can you get more of them in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Reflection Questions:** Why were these things good? Who was involved?  
How can you get more of them in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

over >

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Reflection Questions:** Why were these things good? Who was involved?

How can you get more of them in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Reflection Questions:** Why were these things good? Who was involved?

How can you get more of them in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Reflection Questions:** Why were these things good? Who was involved?

How can you get more of them in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# What Went Well Journal

Get started! For the next five days, reflect on three things that went well and describe them in the space below. Practicing gratitude and shifting your focus to the positive things each day enhances your wellbeing and can transform how you see the world.

Draw What Went Well today.

Draw What Went Well today.

over >



Draw What Went Well today.

Draw What Went Well today.

Draw What Went Well today.



# AcTivity 3

## Make Your Jolts of Joy List

Science shows that joy-inducing activities transform the way we think, perform and respond. Jolts of Joy are small, intentional actions that inject positive emotions into our day and help us take control of our wellbeing moment to moment.

---

### For Educators

Jot down 10-15 quick and easy activities that induce positive emotions for you. Aim to identify triggers for EACH of The BIG 10 Positive emotions — joy, amusement, interest, awe, gratitude, pride, serenity, inspiration, hope, and love. Post the list where you will see it frequently and be reminded to boost your positivity by accessing regular Jolts of Joy. Set alarms on your phone that remind you to practice one of your Jolts of Joy up to five times per day.

### For Students

As a class, create a [Jolts of Joy Class Poster](#) (see example page 11) to help students intentionally and mindfully access each of the 10 positive emotions throughout the school year. Ask your class: As a class, what do we want to feel? What are things we can do as a class or individuals to help us feel positive emotions? Give students time to brainstorm in groups and then design Jolts of Joy to add to the class poster.

# Jolts of Joy Poster Example



Download and print this [36x24" Jolts of Joy classroom poster](#).



# AcTivity 4

## Start the Year with Strengths at Back-to-School Night

### For Educators

At back-to-school night, have parents complete the brief VIA Strengths Survey to identify strengths they believe their child displays. Bring the group together and have a few parents report how they believe their child's strengths will be displayed during the year. Revisit their survey at ALL parent / teacher conferences.

Use [Identifying Your Child's Strengths](#) (see worksheet pages 13-15) with definitions of each of the 24 Character Strengths to help guide conversations.

# Identifying Your Child's Strengths

**Parent Instructions:** Take the VIA Character Survey ([viacharacter.org](http://viacharacter.org)) for your child. Answer the questions from their perspective based on your observations of them in all areas of their life. Check their top five signature strengths on this sheet and reference it throughout the year. This is a great tool for IEP meetings and check-ins with your child's education & care team to ensure that goals, activities and feedback are aligned with your child's strengths. This is also a great activity to share with family friends so you can see both overlapping and unique strengths for the people your child regularly interacts with.



**Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence**

Noticing and appreciating beauty, excellence, and/or skilled performance in various domains of life, from nature to art to mathematics to science to everyday experience.



**Bravery**

Not shrinking from threat, challenge, difficulty or pain; speaking up for what's right even if there's opposition; acting on convictions even if unpopular; includes physical bravery but is not limited to it.



**Creativity**

Thinking of novel and productive ways to conceptualize and do things; includes artistic achievement but is not limited to it.



**Curiosity**

Taking an interest in ongoing experience for its own sake; finding subjects and topics fascinating; exploring and discovering.



**Fairness**

Treating all people the same according to notions of fairness and justice; not letting feelings bias decisions about others; giving everyone a fair chance.



**Forgiveness**

Forgiving those who have done wrong; accepting others' shortcomings; giving people a second chance; not being vengeful.



**Gratitude**

Being aware of and thankful for the good things that happen; taking time to express thanks.

over >

# Identifying Your Child's Strengths (continued)



**Honesty**

Speaking the truth but more broadly presenting oneself in a genuine way and acting in a sincere way; being without pretense; taking responsibility for one's feelings and actions.



**Hope**

Expecting the best in the future and working to achieve it; believing that a good future is something that can be brought about.



**Humility**

Expecting the best in the future and working to achieve it; believing that a good future is something that can be brought about.



**Humor**

Liking to laugh and tease; bringing smiles to other people; seeing the light side; making (not necessarily telling) jokes.



**Judgment**

Thinking things through and examining them from all sides; not jumping to conclusions; being able to change one's mind in light of evidence; weighing all evidence fairly.



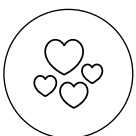
**Kindness**

Doing favors and good deeds for others; helping them; taking care of them.



**Leadership**

Encouraging a group of which one is a member to get things done and at the same time maintain good relations within the group; organizing group activities and seeing that they happen.



**Love**

Valuing close relations with others, particular those in which sharing and caring are reciprocated; being close to people.

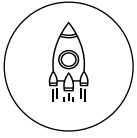


**Love of Learning**

Mastering new skills, topics, and bodies of knowledge, whether on one's own or formally; related to the strength of curiosity but goes beyond it to describe the tendency to add systematically to what one knows.

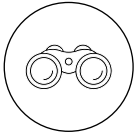
over >

# Identifying Your Child's Strengths (continued)



**Perseverance**

Finishing what one starts; persevering in a course of action in spite of obstacles; "getting it out the door"; taking pleasure in completing tasks.



**Perspective**

Being able to provide wise counsel to others; having ways of looking at the world that makes sense to oneself/others.



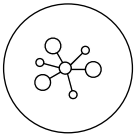
**Prudence**

Being careful about one's choices; not taking undue risks; not saying or doing things that might later be regretted.



**Self-Regulation**

Regulating what one feels and does; being disciplined; controlling one's appetites and emotions.



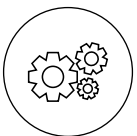
**Social Intelligence**

Being aware of the motives/feelings of others and oneself; knowing what to do to fit into different social situations; knowing what makes other people tick.



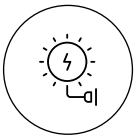
**Spirituality**

Having coherent beliefs about the higher purpose and meaning of the universe; knowing where one fits within the larger scheme; having beliefs about the meaning of life that shape conduct and provide comfort.



**Teamwork**

Working well as a member of a group or team; being loyal to the group; doing one's share.



**Zest**

Approaching life with excitement and energy not doing things halfway or half heartedly; living life as an adventure; feeling alive and activated.



# AcTivity 5

## Gratitude Brainstorm

### For Educators

Spend a few minutes doing a [Gratitude Brainstorm](#) (see worksheet page 17) to get your gratitude baseline. For individuals new to this practice, it is common to focus on only one or two areas of gratitude. This resource will help you broaden your view of gratitude across multiple aspects of your life. Many find it helpful to revisit this activity once per month to see the impact of integrating What Went Well into their daily or weekly routines.

### For Students

Have students complete a [Categories of Gratitude Brainstorm](#) (see worksheet pages 18-19), where they explore a variety of things they are grateful for in several categories (e.g. family, health, vacations, interests, etc). You can also lead this as a class-wide activity using [these teaching slides](#), where you can add examples from the class into bullet points on the slides for each of the 12 categories.



# Gratitude Brainstorm

Take seven minutes to brainstorm as many of the things you are grateful for across each of the categories below. You can write these out, draw, or share verbally (including using a communications device). You can also do this on a separate sheet if you would like more room to write. Try this activity again after practicing What Went Well for a few weeks to see how your gratitude skills have improved!

Family & Pets

School or Work

Vacation & Holidays

Home

Friends

Food

Health

Nature

Special Interests

# Categories of Gratitude Brainstorm

Write or draw what you are grateful for in each of the brainstorm boxes below!



Family



Health



School



Pets



Friends



Holidays

over >



Vacations



Sports



Clubs



Interests



Food



Games, Toys  
& Books

# Want to learn more about the **SKILLS** of happiness?



## Jolts of Joy

**Need a spark of joy in your life?**  
Try Jolts of Joy for an instant boost to your wellbeing.



## Character Strengths

**It is easy to spot what's wrong ...**  
But can you spot what's right in yourself and those around you?



## What Went Well

**Practicing gratitude each day?**  
Try a gratitude practice to improve your students' mental health.



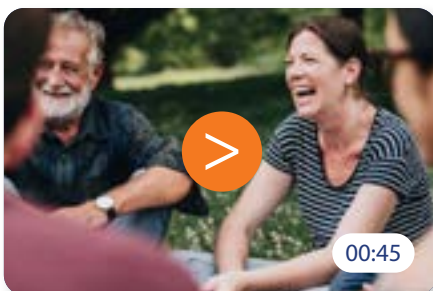
## PERMA+ Snapshot

**Measure what matters most.**  
Your wellbeing! Start here with the PERMA+ Snapshot.



## Strengths Spotting

**See the positive side of people!**  
Strength Spot to improve your wellbeing, relationships and life satisfaction.



## Positivity Portfolios

**The little things count, and add up!!**  
Use a Positivity Portfolio to feel more positive emotions.



---

## Curious about the **SCIENCE** of happiness?



Proof Positive is committed to providing the autism community with science-based resources and the latest information to support wellbeing. Here, we have curated relevant research studies to enrich your learning and wellbeing practice. Check back regularly, as we'll be adding additional articles and studies as the research evolves.