Learning disabilities, motor skill issues, and bullying are just a few of the daily challenges that many of our NF Heroes face while in school. Neurofibromatosis, or NF, is a genetic disorder that affects 1 in every 3,000 people of all populations. NF causes tumors to grow on nerves throughout the body, and can lead to deafness, blindness, disfigurement, bone abnormalities, learning disabilities, disabling pain, and cancer. There is no cure for NF... yet.

To educate and empower the local community, the Children’s Tumor Foundation has created Classrooms that Care, an educational program that enables students, teachers, and faculty to empathize and celebrate differences, while educating about NF.
Neurofibromatosis is a rare disease that has a multitude of manifestations both visible and invisible. Throughout this presentation, we ask that you focus on the Classrooms that “C.A.R.E.” words, Courage - Acceptance- Respect- Empathy. Please focus on the concept that what might be an “easy” everyday task for one student may be a true struggle for another, and what we can do to support them. And remember, bullying is never tolerated.

**Vision Issues** - Pass around non-prescription glasses with Vaseline smeared on the outside of one or both lenses to depict vision issues. Or ask a volunteer to come up and put the glasses on and read a book or eye chart.

**Cafe Au Lait Spots** - Use brown or gold eye shadow to draw "cafe au lait spots" on students (remember with NF you must have at least 6!).

**Fine Motor Skill Issues** - Ask the students to tie their shoes or write their names while wearing floppy gardening gloves.

**Low Muscle Tone** - Have students do 10 jumping jacks. Then have them put on 2lb ankle weights and do 10 more jumping jacks.

**Hearing Loss** - Place headphones or ear plugs on your ears and have another student whisper a message.

**Communicate with out Sound** - Give students a sentence to say using only bodylanguage. Examples: "Are you hungry?" or "Where is the gym?"

**Bone Discrepancy** - Use two rubber bands to attach a yoga block to a student’s foot and then ask them to walk around the classroom.

**Speech Issues** - Have students put a marshmallow in their cheeks and say the “Pledge of Allegiance” or sing “Mary Had a Little Lamb”.

After each exercise, ask the students how they felt and what they experienced. Were they uncomfortable? Embarrassed? Did it hurt? Did the impairment make a normally simple task harder? Ask them how living with each symptom every day might impact their life.
Here is a list of read-aloud ideas focusing on courage, acceptance, respect, and empathy. In general, any book that focuses on these main principles or your school’s caring words will work. The main goal is to have students not only understand NF but also learn how to be kind and accepting of others, especially those who are different.

**EACH KINDNESS**
With its powerful anti-bullying message and striking art, this book will resonate with readers long after they’ve put it down.

**I AM ENOUGH**
This is a gorgeous, lyrical ode to loving who you are, respecting others, and being kind to one another.

**THE INVISIBLE BOY**
Meet Brian, the invisible boy. Nobody ever seems to notice him or think to include him in their groups, games, or birthday parties... until, that is, a new kid comes to class.

**BE GOOD TO EDDIE LEE**
Christy’s mother always tells her to be good to Eddie Lee, a neighborhood boy with Down’s Syndrome. But Christy wants to run and play - and not worry about Eddie Lee tagging along.

**WE’RE ALL WONDERS**
This short story taps into every child’s longing to belong, and to be seen for who they truly are. It’s the perfect way to talk about empathy and kindness with young children.

**THE BLACK BOOK OF COLORS**
Imagine living without sight through remarkable illustrations done with raised lines and descriptions of colors based on imagery.

**WONDER**
August Pullman was born with a facial difference that prevented him from going to a mainstream school. As he starts 5th grade, he wants nothing more than to be treated as an ordinary kid.

**OUT OF MY MIND**
Eleven-year-old Melody is not like most people. She can’t walk, talk, or write because she has cerebral palsy. She’s the smartest kid in her whole school, but NO ONE knows it.

**A MONSTER LIKE ME**
Sophie is a monster expert. She’s convinced she is definitely a monster because of the monster mark on her face. At least that’s what she calls it. The doctors call it a blood tumor.

*chapter books for upper elementary*
We want this work to fit as seamlessly into your daily teaching as possible. Here are some ways to incorporate these read alouds into your reading curriculum.

**GRADES K-2**

Use these read alouds to discuss:

- **Story Elements** - Discuss character, setting, problem, solution/resolution.
- **Making Connections** - Draw comparisons from what they have learned about NF to another book and/or to something they’ve experienced in their own lives.
- **Character Feelings** - How are the major and secondary characters feeling? What is making them feel this way?

**GRADES 3-5**

Use these read alouds to discuss:

- **Character Traits** - What kind of person is each character? What evidence supports this?
- **Character Relationships** - Think of how the actions (or non actions) of each character affect the others. Are these characters showing empathy? Are they understanding and accepting of others?
- **Character Change** - How do the major and secondary characters change from the beginning of the story to the end?
- **Themes/Lessons** - What is the message the author is trying to send us? How does this theme/lesson/message tie into what we’ve learned about NF?
- **Making Connections** - Draw comparisons from what they have learned about NF to another book and/or to something they’ve experienced in their own lives.

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Here are some writing ideas! We tried to think of ways that NF could be brought into your narrative, expository, and opinion writing. Similar to our reading goal, we hope that through these activities, children are learning, writing, and teaching about NF, exploring what makes them special and unique, standing up for what they believe in, as well as thinking of ways to spread kindness through their words.

**GRADES K-2**
- **Draw and Label** your own Superhero! - What makes your hero special or different?
- **Write a Letter**
  - To a character from one of our read alouds
  - To an NF hero
  - To someone to teach them about NF
- **Opinion Writing**
  - What is a hero?
  - What does it mean to be kind?

**GRADES 3-5**
- **Literary Essay** - Use one or more of our read alouds for this!
- **Persuasive Essay/Speech**
  - Putting an End to Bullying
  - Ways to be Inclusive
- **Personal Narrative/Memoir**
  - Write about a time that you felt different or a time you faced a problem because of your differences.
  - What makes you unique?
- **Realistic Fiction**
  - Write your own story about a character with differences.
  - Write a story about any of our Classrooms that ‘CARE’ words. (Courage, Acceptance, Respect, Empathy)
- **Non-Fiction**
  - Practice research and note taking. Research something you learned about NF. Use the information to write a report, create a poster or give a presentation.

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These word problems (or variations of them) can be used during morning class work, as a time filler, for homework. We encourage you to change around the numbers based on your grade level and/or individual classroom goals and progress!

**MONEY**

- _____ Elementary School raised 500 pennies so far. How many dollars have we raised?
- Someone put two quarters into your coin box. How much money did they give you?
- 60 pennies is too many to carry! How can we change 60 pennies into less coins?

**ADDITION AND SUBTRACTION**

- Our class ran two laps during the hero dash. Ms. P’s class ran one more lap than us. How many laps did Ms. P’s class run?
- We are going to walk 10 laps for NF! If we have already walked six laps, how many more do we have to go?
- I’ve collected 47 pennies so far. How many more until I have $1?
- Ms. M’s class collected 128 pennies. Ms. P’s class has collected 346 pennies. How many more pennies did Ms. P’s class collect? How many pennies did the classes collect altogether?
- Our class wants to collect 1000 pennies. So far we have 478 pennies. How many more to reach our goal?
- Time to see what we’ve raised! Here are the totals for each grade. How much did our school raise for NF?
  
<table>
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</table>

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MULTIPLICATION AND DIVISION

- If it takes me three minutes to walk one lap during the lapathon/hero dash, how long will it take me to walk six laps?
- Our class is having a competition to see which table can collect the most pennies. There are four people at my table and so far we have each collected 15 pennies. How many pennies do we have in total?
- There are 24 kids in our class and each of us has brought in 80 pennies. How much money have we collected so far?
- If each third grade class collects 800 pennies, how many total pennies will be donated by the third grade?
- Our class set a goal to collect 7500 pennies for NF. Since there are 25 kids in this class, how many pennies should each student collect?
- Our class set a goal to collect 7500 pennies for NF. There are 25 kids in this class. If each student collects $5 in pennies, would we reach our goal? If yes, how much extra do we have? If not, how many more pennies do we need?

FRACTIONS, DECIMALS, PERCENTS

- Your goal is to collect 100 pennies. If you have hit ¾ of your goal, how many pennies have you collected?
- You are hoping to collect $15 for our NF fundraiser. So far you have raised $9. What percentage of your goal have you raised so far?