

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

Welcome

Thank you for choosing to bring the **Red Bandanna Curriculum** into your classroom.

More than a collection of lessons about one extraordinary individual, this curriculum is an invitation to help young people discover the kind of person they hope to become. While the life of **Welles Remy Crowther** serves as the central inspiration throughout these learning experiences, the ultimate goal is not simply for students to know Welles' story. It is for them to recognize the countless opportunities they have to write their own.

Every day presents moments of choice. Most of those moments will never make the news or appear in history books. Yet they shape character just the same. A kind word, a difficult conversation, a courageous decision, a willingness to help someone else, or the determination to persevere through adversity can become defining moments in a person's life.

The Red Bandanna Curriculum uses Welles' example as a lens through which students can explore timeless human virtues—leadership, compassion, teamwork, courage, forgiveness, bridge-building, responsibility, and living each day with purpose. These are not lessons intended only for moments of crisis. They are habits that are formed through ordinary choices repeated over time.

Because these virtues are universal, this curriculum has been intentionally designed for use in public schools, private schools, faith-based schools, community organizations, youth programs, and families. Individual educators are encouraged to connect these themes to their own school's mission, traditions, and values.

A Note for Educators

Although the central themes remain consistent throughout the curriculum, each grade span approaches Welles' story through the lens of students' developmental needs and lived experiences. The guidance below highlights the unique emphasis for each level.

Elementary Educators

For elementary students, **Welles serves primarily as a model**—someone whose kindness, courage, compassion, and integrity provide an example that children can understand and admire. The stories, discussions, and activities introduce foundational character traits through concrete examples that students can recognize in their own everyday experiences. Encourage children to see that being brave, kind, honest, or helpful rarely requires extraordinary circumstances; it begins with small choices made every day. Above all, help students discover that they, too, can become the kind of person who makes a positive difference in the lives of others.

Middle School Educators

For middle school students, **Welles becomes a mirror** through which they can begin to examine their own character, values, and identity. As students wrestle with questions about friendship, belonging, courage, responsibility, and purpose, Welles' story invites them to reflect on who they are becoming. Encourage honest discussion, thoughtful reflection, and respectful dialogue, recognizing that this stage of life is often defined by questions rather than certainty. The objective is not to provide easy answers, but to help students develop the habits of self-reflection and empathy that will guide the choices they make in the years ahead.

High School Educators

For high school students, **Welles becomes a conversation partner** whose life invites deeper reflection on leadership, ethics, service, sacrifice, and the responsibilities of adulthood. Rather than simply asking students to admire Welles, these learning experiences challenge them to engage thoughtfully with his example, wrestle with complex questions, and consider how character shapes leadership and citizenship. Encourage students to recognize that extraordinary lives are often built through ordinary acts of integrity, compassion, and courage. Ultimately, the goal is for students not simply to ask, *"Who was Welles?"* but *"What kind of person do I hope to become?"*

Teaching the Red Bandanna Curriculum

The lessons in this curriculum are designed to encourage reflection, conversation, and meaningful application. While each learning experience contains suggested activities and discussion prompts, educators should feel free to adapt pacing, instructional strategies, and extensions to meet the unique needs of their students.

Throughout the curriculum, students are encouraged to connect the themes of each lesson to their own lives through **Welles' Way** reflections. These moments are among the most important parts of the learning experience. Rather than asking students simply to remember what they learned, they invite students to consider how they will live differently because of it.

No curriculum can manufacture character. It can, however, create opportunities for students to reflect, discuss, practice, and grow. Those opportunities become even more powerful when they are modeled by caring adults who embody the same values they seek to cultivate.

Closing Reflection

As educators, you have the extraordinary privilege of shaping not only what students know, but who they become. Every lesson you teach, every conversation you facilitate, every encouragement you offer, and every example you model has the potential to leave a lasting mark on a young person's life.

That is the enduring lesson of Welles Remy Crowther's story. His legacy was not built in a single moment on September 11, 2001. It was built over years through countless everyday choices—acts of kindness, responsibility, leadership, compassion, and courage—that prepared him to meet an extraordinary moment with extraordinary character.

We may never know what moments our students will one day face. What we do know is that the character they build today will help shape the choices they make tomorrow.

Every student who chooses kindness over indifference, courage over fear, service over self-interest, or hope over despair becomes part of a legacy that continues to grow. Welles' story is not simply one to be remembered—it is one that continues through the lives of those who are inspired by his example to make a difference in their own communities.

Thank you for joining us in helping the next generation discover that every day offers another opportunity to live with purpose, lead with compassion, and serve others.

Make Today Matter.