



Family Guide



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Let's Meet! Welcome to LitCamp

LitCamp is a joyful and enriching summer literacy program for children in grades pre-K through 8. At LitCamp, your child, or LitCamper, is part of a community that supports academic and personal growth by way of a framework called the 7 Strengths. These Strengths provide a foundation for LitCampers to build on as they develop the skills they need to succeed at school, at home, and in their communities. (Read more about the 7 Strengths on page 5.)

LitCampers are reminded daily that they belong to a welcoming community where they—and their families—are valued. All campers are encouraged to be proud of their cultural traditions. They are invited to share their home traditions at LitCamp and to share their LitCamp experiences with you at home! At LitCamp, we welcome your family as important members of our community and partners in your child's learning.

Use this guide to find out about LitCamp routines, discover ideas for family conversation starters and read-alouds, get links to virtual field trips, and find suggestions for fun activites to enjoy at home. Then gather 'round the campfire

LitCamp

and experience the sense of belonging that comes from being LitCampers!

We're glad you're here!

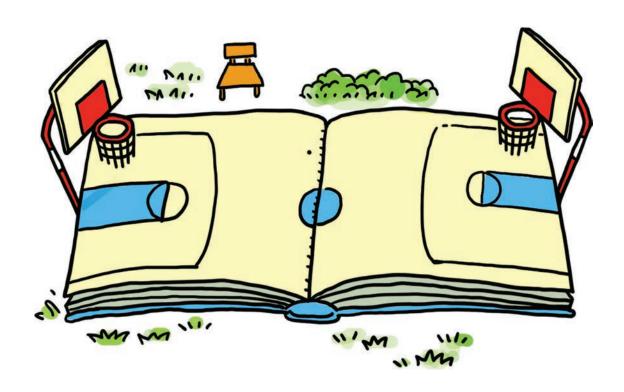
LitCamp Welcome 3

Let's Build! The 7 Strengths

LitCamp is built on a framework known as the 7 Strengths. The development and practice of these Strengths—Belonging, Curiosity, Friendship, Kindness, Confidence, Courage, and Hope—ensure that LitCampers will feel fully ready, willing, and capable to succeed in school, at home, and in their communities.

The 7 Strengths are woven throughout the LitCamp experience. In this nurturing and positive environment, LitCampers make friends, practice kindness, explore interests, and develop the confidence and courage to try new things, such as reading challenging books, expressing their ideas, and sharing their writing and reflections.

As campers read together and on their own, they notice how the Strengths shape the stories and the characters in them. They discuss and write about the Strengths in the context of their reading, and they make connections between the Strengths and their own lives and experiences. At home, you can support your child's development by sharing your own stories about the 7 Strengths.



7 Strengths



Belonging: Being a valued, cherished member of a community Celebrate and value your culture, language, ancestors, elders, traditions, food, songs, and history by sharing stories with your child.



Curiosity: A willingness to explore new territory and test new theories

Ask questions about your child's interests and ideas. Share your own. Create a "curiosity window." Look out your window each day and keep track of what you see, hear, and wonder about.



Friendship: Having close, trusting relationships with and personal connections to others

Create a friendship check-in schedule for your family. Connect with family members with encouraging messages, phone calls, or texts. Show appreciation for how your child is your reading friend when he or she reads aloud to you.



Kindness: Being compassionate toward others; expressing tenderness that has an impact, near and far

Help your child create a special, cozy camp space. If you can, keep paper, pencils, crayons, and books nearby. Offer your child compliments, such as "Great work!" and "Well done!".



Confidence: Thinking independently, expressing ideas, and pushing through the hard parts with assurance

Learn something new together or tell a story about a time when you learned something. Encourage your child to share LitCamp activities with you, such as retelling stories, singing songs, and playing games. Draw, write, or make up and act out stories together.



Courage: Having the strength to stand up for yourself, for others, and to take action when it is needed

Model bravery by trying something new with your child. Be courageous by allowing your child to see you do something outside of your comfort zone. Share a story about a courageous family member or ancestor.



Hope: Thinking optimistically and believing that today's efforts will produce good things in the future for yourself and the world Create a shared calendar. Fill it with positive events and joyful celebrations for the future. Affirm a hope and a dream of your child's and share one of your own.

Let's Walk! LitCamp Lesson Steps

During LitCamp lessons, campers read great books—and a lot of them. They also write, talk, listen, share, and play! LitCamp's structured routine ensures that campers can set and meet expectations. From Opening Campfire to Closing Campfire, each lesson features whole- and small-group activities, time for independent reading and writing, and plenty of opportunities for lively collaboration and play.

Here's a look at the LitCamp lesson routine, with a description of what happens at each step. Invite your LitCamper to tell you about his or her favorite activities!



Opening Campfire Campers gather to greet one another, get settled, sing an opening song, and join in a community-building activity.

Words of the Day New vocabulary words are introduced at the beginning of each lesson. Campers are encouraged to use them in their speaking and writing.

Bring the Text to Life

Campers work together to creatively demonstrate their understanding of the readaloud book.

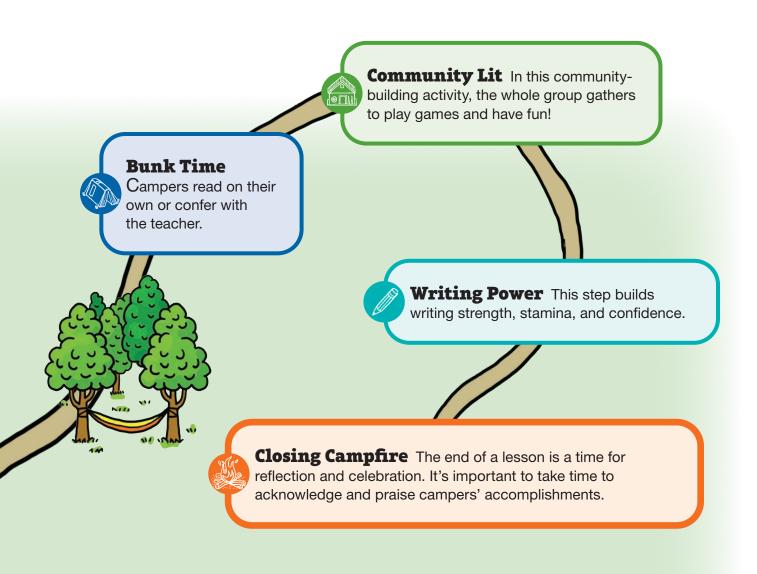


Read-Aloud The core of each lesson is the Read-Aloud. As the leader reads aloud, campers follow along with their own copy of the book.



Reading Power

Campers practice and strengthen their literacy skills.



Support for Multi-Language Learners



Throughout the lessons, supports are offered for multi-language learners. Home languages are celebrated in LitCamp!

Let's Talk! Family Conversation Starters

Use these conversation prompts anytime, anywhere to get your LitCamper (and other family members) talking. Want to get the whole family involved? Take turns choosing one prompt to start a conversation at mealtimes.

What gives you a sense of belonging?

What title would you give the story of YOUR life?

Which character from a book would you like to be friends with, and why?

What character or person in real life inspires you?

Without using words, confidently act out your favorite scene from a book.

Which of the 7 Strengths is your superpower?

Describe an act of kindness someone has done for you.

What is something you are hopeful about?

Which book that you've read would you recommend to a friend or family member?

Tell about one hope and dream you have for yourself as a reader. What gives you confidence?

How is a book you have read a mirror (you see yourself) or a window (you see the world) for you?

What is something you are wondering about today?

Compare an act of courage you read about in a book with a real-life act of courage you know or have heard about.

What is something you discovered at LitCamp that you want to share with friends or at home?

How can sharing a story with someone be an act of kindness?

Demonstrate how a confident person acts and talks.

Tell about a time you were kind to someone. What did you do?

In your own words, what does it mean to "walk in someone else's shoes"?

How has a book you've read inspired you to be courageous?

How can you be a good friend to someone? What is one goal you have for your future? What can you do to achieve that goal?

What is something that surprised you today in your reading?

Describe the funniest scene you have ever read in a book.

How has a book or story made you feel closer to a friend or family member?

How might a

understand

others?

book help you

What is something you would like to be more confident about?

might happen

next in a book

Use your

reading?

or story you are

How does being part of the LitCamp community make you feel strong?

What do you think

How does a character or person in show courage?

How can a book help you empathize with other people, or understand their feelings and experiences?

your reading

How can having hope for the future give someone courage?

What is something new you would like to try?

imagination and describe—or draw what you think hope looks like. Describe a character

What would you like to ask the author of a book you are reading or recently read?

How would you make someone feel welcome in your community?

you've met in a book who reminds you of yourself, or who you'd like to be.

Tell a story about an act of courage that has inspired you.

How is friendship important to you?

What character in a book or person in real life has inspired you to be kind?

What other topics or ideas does the book you're reading make you wonder about?

How has an act of kindness you read or heard about inspired you to be kind?

Tell about a book that reminds you of your life, either in- or outside of school.

What action does your reading make you want to take, for yourself, your community. or the world?

Describe an unusual friendship you've read about in a book.

How does one character's courage affect other characters in a story or book you've read?

Describe the most confident person you know or have read about.

What can you do to help someone feel more hopeful?

Let's Read! Tips for Family Read-Alouds

In their book *Every Child a Super Reader*, 2nd Edition, authors Pam Allyn (LitCamp founder) and Ernest Morrell stress the importance of reading aloud with children. And they're quick to point out that reading aloud is good for everyone in the family, not just the kids!

Reading aloud to children is a research-proven strategy for helping children learn to read. That may seem odd, since the child isn't doing the reading. But reading aloud improves children's reading by

- immersing them in language, like soaking in a pleasant bath of words.
- · motivating them to pick up books on their own.
- exposing them to lots of new vocabulary and types of texts they might not be able to read on their own.
- inspiring them to be super readers!

Finding time to add reading aloud to your daily routine might seem challenging. Here are some tried-and-true tips for adding family read-alouds to your routine at home.

When?

- Make time for reading aloud each day. Too tired at the end of the day?
 Read in the morning! Too rushed in the morning? Read aloud at bath time.
- Ask your child or a family member to read aloud while others are preparing a meal, doing the dishes, folding laundry, or tidying up.
- Plan your family read-aloud time. Make a chart and hang it where everyone can see it. Invite family members to write their book suggestions on the chart and their names on the days they want to be the reader.

Where?

- Read aloud while waiting in line at the store or for an appointment.
- Find a quiet spot in your local park or in your yard and have an outdoor read-aloud.
- Set up a special place in your home for read-alouds. Make it as cozy as possible. Be sure there's plenty of reading light.
- Read aloud (quietly) on public transportation, in the library, and while waiting to meet with friends.
- · Read aloud everywhere!



What?

- Read everything! Picture books (everybody of every age loves them!), graphic
 novels, poems, short stories, informational texts on interesting topics, novels,
 speeches, biographies, and newspaper and magazine articles on current events.
 When you're out for a walk or ride, encourage new readers to read posters,
 signs, and billboards.
- Carry a book with you everywhere you go (and encourage your child to as well).
- Invite family members to take turns choosing the book for the family read-aloud.

How?

- Before you start reading, discuss what the book is about. If it's a topic that might
 be new to some family members, make sure everyone has enough information
 about it to make sense of the story. Building background knowledge makes
 reading and listening to a story more enjoyable for everyone.
- Bring on the drama! Read with feeling and use facial expressions! Use different voices and facial expressions for different characters.
- To be continued . . . Leave listeners wanting more by ending your reading for the day at a dramatic moment in the action.
- Not sure about a book? Skim it before you read it aloud.
- Before reading, make note of any unfamiliar words, look up their meanings and how to pronounce them, then read them with confidence when you get to them.
- Read in your home language too.

Let's Go! Virtual Field Trips

Thanks to technology, you can visit almost any place on or beyond Earth from the comfort of your favorite chair. Here are some virtual field trips that your whole family is sure to enjoy.

LAND

NATURE

Name: The National Park Service IRL Location: All across the U.S.!

Virtual Location: www.nps.gov/findapark/

index.htm

Description: From coast to coast, north to south, and high to low, you can visit the most spectacular spots in the United States. You can search for parks by location, activity, or topic. To plan your visit, from the home page, go to Find a Park. Select a state on the map, then choose the park you want to visit from the list.

MUSEUMS

Name: Smithsonian Institution

IRL Location: Most in Washington, D.C.;

two in New York City

Virtual Location: www.si.edu

Description: The Smithsonian Institution is the world's largest museum, education, and research complex. The complex includes museums of art and design, history and culture, and science and nature. The institution's website features "vast digital resources" and opportunities to learn online. From the home page, choose Learn, then For Kids and Teens to find loads of resources and activities. To see a list and descriptions of the other museums that make up this amazing institution, on the home page select Visit, then Museums and Zoo. Don't miss the National Museum of the American Indian (https://americanindian.si.edu), the National Museum of African American History and Culture (https://nmaahc.si.edu), and the National Air and Space Museum (www.si.edu/ museums/air-and-space-museum).

Name: Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty

IRL Location: You can reach the islands by ferry from the Ferry at Battery Park in New York City.

Virtual Location: www.statueofliberty.org/ellis-

island

Description: From the home page, select Ellis Island to explore the History of Ellis Island, Tour the Museum, and even search your family history at The Family History Center. Or select Statue of Liberty to read The Story of Liberty and explore the Statue of Liberty Museum.

SEA

Name: Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution

IRL Location: 86 Water St., Falmouth, MA 02543

Virtual Location: www.whoi.edu

Description: From the website of "the world's independent leader in ocean discovery, exploration, and education," you can explore ocean topics, such as corals and whales; read about WHOI research; learn about corals, seashells, waves, and more; plus see loads of photos, watch videos and slideshows, and immerse yourself in interactive science. From the website home page, choose What We Do, then Ocean at Home, to discover amazing online learning activities for you and your children!

SPACE

Name: The National Aeronautic and Space Administration (NASA)

IRL Location: go to www.visitnasa.com to find Visitor Center Locations across the U.S.

Virtual Location: www.nasa.gov

Description: This website is full of fascinating information about everything and anything

you want to know about space and space exploration, including the history of space missions, images from the Webb Telescope, a map showing you where and when you might be able to spot the International Space Station, and live NASA TV, plus much more. On the website, check out NASA STEM Engagement, then select a grade range for activities just right for you. From here, be sure to check out Be a NASA Intern and other items of interest to find out whether a career in space could be in your future!

And don't miss these amazing sites!

U.S.A.

The National Civil Rights Museum (Memphis, TN): www.civilrightsmuseum.org

Boston Children's Museum (Boston, MA): www.bostonchildrensmuseum.org

National Constitution Center (Philadelphia, PA): https://constitutioncenter.org

The White House (Washington, D.C.): www.whitehouse.gov

San Diego Zoo, Ape Cam (San Diego, CA): https://zoo.sandiegozoo.org/cams/ape-cam

Explore.org (Live cams of wildlife around the globe): https://explore.org/livecams

The Nature Conservancy: www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/who-we-are/how-we-work/youth-engagement/nature-lab/virtual-field-trips

Mount Washington Observatory:

www.mountwashington.org (From the home page, choose Experience the Weather, then choose from a list of live weather cameras to see live-streaming video atop the highest peak in the Northeastern United States.)

Kilauea Volcano (Hawaii): www.usgs.gov/volcanoes/kilauea/multimedia

The Metropolitan Museum of Art: metmuseum. org (Be sure to check out the Met 360 Project: Short videos of MET classics with interactive, moveable camera-like Google Maps, www. metmuseum.org/art/online-features/met-360-project; and MetKids: a super interactive site with fun facts, an illustrated map of the MET, videos, and a blog: metmuseum.org/art/online-features/metkids)

GLOBETROTTING

Son Doong Cave (Vietnam):

www.nationalgeographic.com/news-features/son-doong-cave/2/#s=pano60

The Great Wall of China (China):

www.thechinaguide.com/destination/great-wall-of-china

Deserts and Grasslands of Africa (Kenya and Burkina Faso): https://cptv.pbslearningmedia. org/resource/7015b3e1-64c1-411c-943b-743302a747c6/virtual-field-trip-africa

Machu Picchu (Peru): www.unesco.org/ archives/multimedia/document-1258 (From the home page, choose Video to find out about the Historic Sanctuary of Veiled Aeropolice.)

Acropolis (Greece):

https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/404

Great Barrier Reef (Australia):

https://greatbarrierreef.org

The Pyramids of Giza (Egypt; plus six other Wonders of the Ancient World):

https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/history/

article/seven-wonders



Let's Play! LitCamp Cheer, Games, and Songs

CAMP CHEER

Big Camp Mambo

DIRECTIONS

Sing the chorus of the "Big Camp Mambo" first. Ask your LitCamper to demonstrate the moves for everyone, such as clapping or stomping.

LYRICS

(Chorus)

I said hey, hey

I said ho, ho

Come on down and do the big camp mambo

(clap) 1 2 3 & 4

(knees) 1 2 3 & 4 (stomp) 1 2 3 & 4 (clap) Hey

That was fun, let's do part one (Chorus)
That was cool, let's do part two (Chorus)
Skin your knee, let's do part three (Chorus)
On the floor, let's do part four (Chorus)
Kick the beehive, let's do part five (Chorus)
Join the mix, let's do part six (Chorus)
Howdy Kevin, let's do part seven (Chorus)
It's your fate, let's do part eight (Chorus)
Just in time, let's do part nine (Chorus)
That's the end, let's do part ten (Chorus)

GAMES

Going on a Picnic

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Choose a leader to explain the game. Today we are going to play a game. I want everyone to think quietly of what they would bring if they were going on a picnic. We'll go around in a circle.
- 2. Start by saying, *I* am going to the picnic and *I'm* bringing... Say an item that begins with the first letter of your first name.
- 3. Help players by giving an example.

 My name begins with A, so I am going to bring an apple.
- 4. Go around in the circle with each person saying, I'm coming to the picnic, and I'm bringing..., so I can come!
- 5. As the leader, every time a player correctly mentions something that starts with the letter of his or her first name, respond, You can come!

6. You can also choose to have players simply say something they love to eat at a picnic.

Alphabet Circle

DIRECTIONS

This activity is a fun word game for the whole family.

- 1. Choose a leader to organize the game: Have players stand in a circle.
- 2. Tell players that in this game, you will take turns choosing a category. Then you will go around the circle naming things in that category in alphabetical order. For example, if you choose Fruit as the category, the first person could say apple, the second person could say banana, the third person could say cherry, and so on. Continue around the circle until you have reached z.
- Invite the first player to choose a category and go around the circle! You may want to do a couple of rounds of the game using different categories.

Contact

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Players stand in a circle.
- 2. One player is "It." That player thinks of a word in his or her head and tells the rest of the group the letter that it starts with. For example, "The word I'm thinking of starts with a."
- 3. Go around the circle and have each player guess what the word is by giving his or her definition of the word. For example, "Is it a fruit that keeps the doctor away?"
- 4. The player that is "It" must answer by either denying or confirming what he or she thinks the guesser's guess is. For example, "No, it's not an apple." Or, "Yes, it is an apple."
- 5. Before "It" confirms or denies, any player who thinks he or she knows what word the guesser is thinking can call out "Contact." When this happens, that player will face off with the guesser and count down "3-2-1." Both players then have to call out the word they think has been guessed. If both players call out the same word, and that word is not the word that "It" has in his or her head, then "It" must call out the second letter of the word. For example, "The second letter of the word I'm thinking of is v."
- Players continue to guess until either "Its" word is guessed, or all of the letters of the word are spelled out.

20 Questions

DIRECTIONS

- One player is selected to be "It" and picks something to be, such as a person or an animal.
- 2. The rest of the group asks yes or no questions until someone guesses who that person is (e.g., "Are you an animal?").
- 3. The player answering can only respond yes or no.

4. If the group can figure out who or what the player is before reaching 20 questions, the group wins.

I Never

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Have players stand in a circle.
- 2. The first player stands in the middle of the circle and says something he or she has never done.
- 3. Each player who has not done the same thing as the player in the middle steps into the circle.
- 4. The game continues until everyone has said something they have never done.
- 5. Encourage players to get creative and not repeat what others have already said.
- 6. When all players have gone, reflect with the group and see whether players learned something new about each other.

Poetic Challenge

DIRECTIONS

This game is best for larger groups, but can also be played with individuals or in pairs.

- Divide players into small groups (three or four players per group), pairs, or play as individuals.
- 2. Each group, pair, or person should come up with one fun or inspiring poem (or song) to present on the topic of Hope. Remind players about different types of poetry (e.g., limerick, haiku, sonnet, song lyric) and challenge each group, pair, or person to write a different type of poem.
- 3. Have everyone present their poems and briefly discuss what hope means to them.

Three Stories: Two Truths and a Lie

This game helps people get to know each other better and find out what they have in common.

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Have all players arrange themselves in a circle.
- Each player must think of three statements about themselves. Two must be true statements, and one must be false.
- 3. Each player shares the three statements (in any order) with the group.
- 4. The goal of the game is to determine which statement is false. The group votes on which one they feel is not true.
- 5. At the end of each round, the player reveals which one was false.

SONGS

The Bean Song

DIRECTIONS

Sing "The Bean Song." Have everyone stand up and form a circle. It is a silly song that is easy for everyone to learn. It's also great because everyone can come up with their own beans to put in the song! The song is sung in a circle, with one person singing the first stanza and then the whole group singing the second. Some fun bean options are: jelly, cocoa, kidney.

You can access the song at www.youtube.com/user/litworld.

LYRICS

My dog Lima likes to roam,
One day Lima left his home.
He came back nice and clean,
Where oh where has Lima bean?
Lima bean, Lima bean,
Where oh where has Lima bean?
Lima bean, Lima bean,
Where oh where has Lima bean?



Boom Chicka Boom

DIRECTIONS

This song is a great, fun activity to get everyone in a good mood. It is a call-and-repeat song, so take turns being the caller. After each line, have everyone repeat it after the caller. After doing the song once, you can replace "real loud" with any instructions: real quiet, real slow, real fast, etc. You can access the song at www.youtube.com/user/litworld.

LYRICS

Caller: I said a boom chicka boom!
All: I said a boom chicka boom!
Caller: I said a boom chicka boom!
All: I said a boom chicka boom!

Caller: I said a boom chicka rocka chicka

rocka chicka boom!

All: I said a boom chicka rocka chicka

rocka chicka boom!

Caller: Uh-huh!
All: Uh-huh!
Caller: Oh yeah!
All: Oh yeah!

Caller: One more time...

Real loud!

