



Hello parents and educators!

The Nye, Sand and Stones Discussion Guide was created to help stimulate critical dialogue in your homes and classrooms. Much like the feeling that guides Nye throughout the story, *Nye, Sand and Stones* has lived inside my brain and being for most of my life, though it wasn't until the world-wide Women's Marches was I able to articulate the story and do justice to a heroine who refuses to accept the status quo.

The idea of writing a book featuring an angry heroine has been important to me since I was a little girl, and couldn't understand how Max from *Where the Wild Things Are* was allowed to be so angry – not only that, a story was written all about how he benefited from this emotion! My experience as a child of the 80's was completely dissimilar. Anger was an ugly emotion, and it was why women were described as “crazy” when mad. As [Soraya Chemaly](#) explains, “anger is reserved as the moral property of boys and men... the emotion is gendered. And so we teach children to disdain anger in girls and women, and we grow up to be adults that penalize it.”

With *Nye, Sand and Stones*, I set out to showcase a strong young girl who doesn't merely accept her anger, but embraces it as emotion that can create lasting change. The story follows along with Nye as she spends time feeling and making sense of this emotion, and ultimately uses it to end an abusive, inured tradition her and the people of her island faced for generations – one in which you will read they readily and generously contributed to. I came to this [Rachel Simmons](#) quote through Corrie Locke-Hardy of [The Tiny Activist](#) when co-creating this guide, and found it incredibly fitting: “when generosity leads to silence or abuse, it is not a generosity worth giving.”

We hope you use this guide as a tool within your own practice, and that it encourages creative ideas and compelling conversations, no matter the age of your reader. We have loosely organized the material into age groups (3-5, 6-9, 10+), but this is by no means a definitive grouping. Please share how you used the guide with us. We would LOVE to see/hear/read what your students gained from the book, whether it be through art, dialogue, poetry – you name it. If Nye inspired your children, they have the power to inspire many more!

Wishing you all the best,

Bree

Bree (+ Corrie!)



Discussion Questions 3-5 years

How did it make Nye feel that everyone around her was telling her, *“it’s just the way it is?”*

Can you share a time you used your anger to make something change for the better?

Have you ever stood up for something that you felt was wrong or not fair?

Who is allowed to decide that something needs to change?

Why do you think people living on the Island of Stones didn’t question the way things were?

Why are the kids on the island of sand supposed to accept that their castles would be ruined?

How do you think Nye decided that she would be the hero of her story?

Why do you think it was important for Nye to help her community instead of waiting for someone else to do it?

What about your community is important to protect?

What about your city? Your country? The Earth?

How would you feel if something you started doing impacted those around you in a positive way?



Discussion Questions 6-9 years

Why do you think people living on the Island of Sand didn't question the way things were? What about the people on the Island of Stones?

Do the people on the Island of Stones have a responsibility to think about how their actions affect others? Why or why not?

Can you think of anything in your life that should change, even though it's the way things have always been? What about in your neighbourhood? In your city?

Nye was following a feeling in her heart the whole story. Can you think of why the feeling didn't make sense at first? Was it important to carry the feeling with her instead of forgetting about it?

Why was Nye confident the people on the Island of Stones wouldn't throw another stone after she spoke to them?

Have you ever been to a large protest, or helped others stand up for what they believe in?

Talk about bravery as a group. What are some ways that you show courage?

How do we decide that something is worth changing?

Who gets to decide?

Have you ever been underestimated by your family or friends? How were you able to change their minds?



Discussion Questions 10+ years

Many of the questions from ages 6-9 can be used, as well as:

Do you remember reading books with angry female characters when you were younger? What about angry male characters? How does this inform your view of anger in girls vs boys?

When a girl is depicted as angry in a modern media (books, TV series, movies), what words are used to describe her? When boys are angry, do the same words apply?

Do you think it's important to read stories with angry young female characters? Why or why not?

What fuels you to want to make change in your own world?

What barriers stand in your way from speaking up for what you believe in? How can you knock them down?

When was the last time you doubted yourself? How did you overcome this feeling, and what happened when you did?

If you read this story to someone much younger, what would you hope they took away from it?



Project Ideas!

**We would love to see these projects come to life!
Please share the outcomes if you are able to.**

Learn about other peaceful activists like Nye.

What is something they all have in common? Why is it important to resolve situations with peaceful solutions instead of violence?

List of some activists to get you started:



Autumn Peltier
Greta Thunberg
Malala Yousafzai
Isra Hirsi
Yara Shaidi

Choose your favorite illustration in the book. Try and recreate the style of art by making a piece of art that showcases something important to you.

Consider making a monument to peace in your community or on school grounds.

What message would you like it to portray? Come together as a classroom, school, or community and make your plan for a symbol of peaceful activism.

Sometimes the way history is written makes us believe that there weren't any women doing certain things.

Research: What are some historical jobs that you want to know more about? Do you think women did those jobs too?

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Do you live near the beach?
Or maybe you have a sandbox?
If so, build a sandcastle that
you see in the book!



Learn more about activism in your area, and choose a project as a class. Have a clothing drive, write letters to your local government, or stand up for something you feel is right!

Gloria Steinum, Alice Walker, and many others saw inequality as something that can be fixed with hard work, and you can be part of that!

Often, we want to make a difference in people's lives that have less than us. This is such an important value, but it must be done in a way that is not further marginalizing, othering, or colonizing to the individuals receiving help.

Find an organization that focuses on community and self-empowerment, sustainability, and not pocketing donations.

Project Ideas!

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Please share the outcomes if you are able to.

Read about the Birmingham Children's March, and what it inspired people around the country to do. What other actions were a direct result, and how were youth vital to the movement's success?

Design your own island that represents you. What colors, landscapes, and symbols are important to you and your family?



Learn more about cartography, or map-making.

Look at maps of your community and make a road map out of masking tape on a carpet. Can everyone put their houses on the map, or do some friends live farther away?

Design and draw your own neighborhood! What do you wish was near where you live, and what are your favorite parts of the community?

Make a collage that shares some wisdom from your own community family. Hang all of the wisdom that the classroom creates to form a giant collage on one wall!

Crossword

See if you can find all these words!

R I E G C G V B H Z G D M B E L I E V E
P D R I L R L E W M M H C F W I M D O N
R R V X M J A L C B Z T P P A K P E L O
D J M Z D N T N E D I F N O C M C M G T
Q A Q N G E F A Y A G S Z W R N I N G S
H G A E O E C X B T P M T M E I I L E I
L S R M I H Y Z G M I T Q R N L A Q Y M
E T T H E Z F L A Y C N E T E F R F B C
T R S Q S L T U M M O F U E T N M W U H
I U I Z N J G Z Y I F I F M D F G I A A
E Z V P D G G F G I T F Y L M R Q T J N
U W I N S Y T K D I L I I G N O B F H G
D A T O B N V S O M D U C H C V C K Y E
Z Z C I D U I N A Y B J G A A Q H G S A
K M A T N L X E B P O U N C T O P X E Q
I J I O A Y R P P U O M P T R A X F V R
H W L M L C G G R N L W Z U G E P C A A
I P V E S Z A N E S K Q E L G Y A U W U
V T W E I H E M N M G P I R V R H T L V
B P H Z R Y J H K K X W N B E L L P E T

Activist
Anger
Beach
Bell
Believe
Build
Catapult
Change
Community

Confident
Create
Difference
Enough
Emotion
Family
Fair
Feeling
Inspire

Intuition
Island
Journey
Power
Sand
Scream
Stone
Strength
Waves

About us

Meet the makers of the *Nye, Sand and Stones Discussion Guide*.



Bree Galbraith

Bree Galbraith (she/her) is an award-winning children's book author who writes to inspire critical thought in adults and children alike, and make them think about the ways in which we can challenge the systems in place to create change. She holds a Master of Creative Writing from the University of British Columbia, and a Master of Design from Emily Carr University of Art + Design. She uses her work to amplify the voices of her two children, who are Black/Cherokee/white, and have forever been underrepresented in media. Her titles include: *Once Upon a Balloon*, *Milo and Georgie*, *Usha and the Stolen Sun*, *Nye, Sand and Stones*, the *Wednesday Wilson Series* (Summer 2021), and *Hold That Thought!* (Fall 2021). Bree lives in the heart of Vancouver, BC. with her lovely family and their dog.

[Learn more at Breegalbraith.com!](http://Breegalbraith.com)



Corrie Locke-Hardy

Corrie Locke-Hardy (she/they) is a former classroom teacher who is dedicated to examining and working against the Eurocentric heteropatriarchy of school systems and many of the most visible books for children. She lives on unceded Pocomtuc/Nipmuc/Wabanaki Confederacy land. An alum of the University of Massachusetts Boston and Simmons University, Corrie's work is informed by her masters in Gender and Cultural Studies. Corrie is the co-founder and Schemeboat Captain of [The Tiny Activist](#), which reviews children's books and has an emphasis on social justice education and BIPOC narratives. Corrie has been focusing on ABAR (anti-bias anti-racist) curriculum since 2017 and ran a research study focusing on implementation strategies for the classroom. She has presented internationally. Corrie also co-hosts a podcast called [Picture Bookstagang](#) which takes a deep dive into the world of literacy, books, and publishing.

