

TEACHER & PARENT GUIDE

Ricky Stands Tall

*A classroom-ready resource for confidence, resilience,
friendship & kindness.*



BASED ON THE BOOK BY RICK ALESSANDRI

ILLUSTRATIONS BY FARZANA • MAGAZINE EDITION

The Big Picture

Overview

This guide helps teachers and parents use *Ricky Stands Tall* to build confidence, resilience, and empathy in children. Use the prompts, lessons, and activities below to spark conversation in the classroom or at home.

Themes

Confidence

Perseverance

Friendship

Kindness

Growth Mindset

Learning Objectives

1 Effort matters more than size or ability

2 Responding to teasing and bullying

3 The importance of friendship

4 Positive self-talk



Classroom Lessons



Understanding Bullying & Confidence

Use Ricky's experiences to discuss teasing, resilience, and positive self-talk. Ask students how Ricky might have felt, and what they would say to a friend in his shoes.

Talk about the difference between being the biggest and being the bravest, and how kind words help everyone stand tall.



Friendship & Teamwork

See how friends encourage one another and celebrate effort. Notice how Charles and David stand beside Ricky when it matters.

Invite students to name a time a friend cheered them on — and a time they cheered for someone else.



Effort & Perseverance

Ricky practices baseball, basketball, and taekwondo harder than anyone. Show how trying again builds real strength.

Ask: what is something you've gotten better at by practicing, even when it was hard at first?

For Families & Teachers

Parent Discussion Guide

AFTER READING

Q1 What was Ricky's biggest challenge?

Q2 How did you feel when the kids made fun of Ricky's size?

Q3 What helped Ricky succeed?

Q4 What does "heart matters more than size" mean?

Q5 How can you be a good friend?

Activities

My Strength

"I may not be the best at _____, but I am good at _____."

Role Play

Act out kindness and standing up for others.

Confidence

"I stand tall when I _____."

Growth Mindset

Practice + effort = improvement.

At Home

Confidence doesn't only grow in the classroom — it grows at the kitchen table, in the car, and on the couch. The moment Ricky's parents believe in him is the heart of the story, and it's a moment every family can recreate. Use the prompts and activity that follow to keep Ricky's message alive at home.



“You don’t have to be the biggest,” his mom said. “Just be your best.”

♥ Reading Together

Read the story more than once. The first time is for the adventure; the next time, pause on the hard moments and ask your child how Ricky feels — and what they would do in his shoes.

Parent Guide

These prompts work anywhere — at bedtime, in the car, or right after reading together. Let your child lead the conversation, and listen for the moments that matter most to them.

Q1 What part of the story did you like?

Q2 Have you ever felt like Ricky?

Q3 What does trying your best mean?

AT-HOME ACTIVITY

Create a “Heart Chart”

Track effort each day. Celebrate trying hard, not just winning, and watch confidence grow all week long.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Rick Alessandri

“Stories have the power to bridge hearts and inspire change.” Ricky Stands Tall is a heartwarming story about courage, friendship, and believing in yourself — no matter your size.

Ricky@RickyStandsTall.com