



Find out more about Kelechi's heroes

At the back of *Strong Like Me* Kelechi has added a list of some Black women heroes who have shown their strength in different ways.

Discuss these heroes. Tell the children a bit more about them – you could find out together. How does Kelechi describe their strengths – is there vocabulary that needs to be looked at more deeply e.g. endurance, pioneer, true self, revealing, vision.

Together with the children create an inspiring words and pictures collage of these heroes. Print a selection of pictures of them. Provide Kelechi's words about the heroes on pieces of paper. Do the children have other words they would like to add?

Shine your own light

Kelechi tells us that her favourite illustration in the book is on the page where Auntie Lynda says 'Your friends will shine in different ways, so you mustn't dim your own light just to please them.'

Look at this illustration together. What do they think Auntie Lynda means? Focus on the shining light that glows out of the page. Look at the colours, the shapes, the stars, the softness of the light.

Provide the children with dark paper and chalk pastels, coloured paints etc and invite them to create their own glowing light constellation. They could write what makes them special on a small piece of paper, or draw themselves, and stick it in the middle of their shining light.

What does 'being strong' look like?

In *Strong Like Me*, Auntie Lynda says 'there are different ways to be strong'.

Write some different ways to be strong on small bits of paper (e.g. being kind, being vulnerable, being brave, speaking out, lifting heavy things, asking questions, being creative, being quiet, being loud, being fast, being generous, having stamina, being a listener). Put them in a bag/hat/box.

Invite the children to pull one out and discuss it together. Help them to understand the vocabulary if needed. What kind of strength is it - physical strength, how we are with the people around us, how we feel about ourselves? The children could stick the bits of paper into a book about strength or choose a strength to write about.

Activities for

Strong Like Me

By **Kelechi Okafor**
Illustrated by
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Collecting kindness

Kelechi says that Kamara's greatest strength is her kindness. What does Kamara do that is kind? Do they think it was easy or difficult for Kamara to give up on winning the race to help Benji? Why do they think that?

Bring kindness into your daily conversation and expectation. At the end of each day, find 5 minutes to talk about what kindnesses the children saw or did today. Can they describe what happened? How did they feel – whether they were the person being kind or the person receiving the kindness.

What is your special thing?

Kelechi says that we all have a talent – sometimes she goes to the supermarket and after chatting with the cashier she leaves the shop so bright and happy. That person's talent is passing their brightness on to someone else.

Strong Like Me begins with Kamara thinking 'I wonder what my special thing is...?' Model talking about your own special thing. And the special thing of someone else in your life.

In their talking partners, invite the children to talk about their special thing. Sometimes it can be a bit tricky to talk about your own, and easier to talk about someone else's. Can they tell their talking partner what they find special about *them*? How does that make them feel?