



USE WITH:

Individual students, small group, or whole class



GRADE LEVEL:

Middle school or high school



CONTEXT:

Remote friendly

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Make a Strengths Chain

Help students identify and celebrate their strengths.

Created by [Understood](#)

Description:

Students will identify their strengths and showcase them on a paper chain. Recognizing and celebrating strengths builds classroom community and helps students recognize their skills and resilience.

Prep time needed:

5 minutes

Est. time to complete:

20 minutes

Steps:

1. Explain to students that recognizing and celebrating strengths is just as important as working on challenges. Communicate that everyone has strengths and that strengths are what you are good at. Share that students will be identifying their strengths and then making a paper chain to display those strengths.
2. Give each student a copy of the [Make a Strengths Chain download](#) and a pair of scissors. Students will also need a set of markers, colored pencils, or crayons.
3. Explain that as a class you will be working through a few sets of strengths: character strengths, social strengths, language strengths, and more. Take the first set of strengths, labeled as Character Strengths. Decide on a color to represent the strength. Then have the students color in the strengths on the page that they think they have. Briefly discuss the strengths as a whole class or in small groups as you color them.

4. Repeat step #3 with each of the strength categories. Note that there's space on the last set of strengths for students to write in additional strengths.
5. Ask students to cut out the strengths they have colored. Pick a set number of strengths (for instance, 12 in all) so all students have the same amount.
6. Have students use tape to make a paper chain out of their individual strengths. Make sure the strengths are on the outside of the rings.
7. Once all the chains are complete, close the activity with a brief reflection. Take a moment to share out loud some of the strengths you see in the class. Invite students to share one of their strengths or observations. If time allows, invite students to share a strength and how this shows up in their life in pairs, possibly moving from pair to pair a couple of times.

Tips for Educators:

- String all the individual chains together to make one class chain. Display the chain and ask students to notice all the strengths. Talk about how the class community is stronger when it draws on everyone's strengths.
- Some students may feel challenged to recognize their strengths. Use your observations about students to help you support them to identify their strengths.



Inspired by:

1. Brownlee, K., Rawana, J., Franks, J., Harper, J., Bajwa, J., O'Brien, E., & Clarkson, A. (2013). A systematic review of strengths and resilience outcome literature relevant to children and adolescents. *Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 30(5), 435–459. <https://doi-org.tc.idm.oclc.org/10.1007/s10560-013-0301-9>

Related Materials:

Make a Strengths Chain

https://assets.ctfassets.net/p0qf7j048i0q/uvqC72wUOXlmeesapX3Y6/7c0fcc7b9271d4374c7a9afdcbd8b08/Strengths_Chain_Understood.pdf