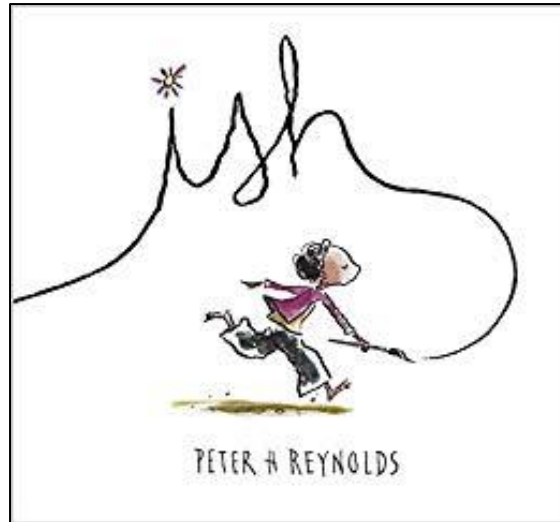


# DECEMBER SEL BOOK OF THE MONTH

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WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY PETER REYNOLDS



<b>SEL Competency</b> Responsible Decision-Making	Enables students to keep in mind multiple factors—such as values, ethics, standards, respect, and safety concerns—when making their decisions.
<b>SEL Theme</b> Inclusion	We identify ways to include all individuals and recognize the multiple perspectives that come with learning and physical differences.
<b>ELA Connection</b>	Narrative Writing, Figurative Language, Theme, Author's Purpose, Story Elements, Character Development
<b>Social Studies Connection</b>	Themes: Beliefs and Ideals
<b>Music &amp; Arts Connection</b>	Abstract Art and Realism

## Book Review

Drawing is what Ramon does. It's what makes him happy. But in one split second, all that changes. A single reckless remark by Ramon's older brother, Leon, turns Ramon's carefree sketches into joyless struggles. Luckily for Ramon, though, his little sister, Marisol, sees the world differently. She opens his eyes to something a lot more valuable than getting things just "right."

# ISH

## Suggested Guiding Questions for a Read Aloud

*These suggested guiding questions offer an opportunity to prompt student thinking and discussion around inclusion and responsible decision-making.*

1. What predictions can you make from looking at the cover illustration and the title?
2. What does Ramon love to do? How do you think he feels about creating art in the beginning of the story?
3. "*Leon burst out laughing. 'What is that?' he asked*"  
What impact did Ramon's brother have on his enjoyment of making his drawings when he said that?
4. "*Ramon kept trying to make his drawings look right.*" What was Ramon trying to do? What do you think "look right" means?
5. Does art have to "look right" (look exactly like the object the person is trying to draw, paint, sculpt) for it to be considered "good"?
6. What feelings do you think Ramon had while he was trying to make his drawings "look right" after his brother laughed at him?
7. How would you feel and if someone made a negative comment about your art? A positive comment? How would this affect how you make your art?
8. Is there anything you enjoy doing that either you or other people don't think you are very good at?
9. Is something worth doing if you cannot be perfect at it?
10. Is being perfect a good goal? Why or why not?
11. In the story, Ramon's sister showed him that she liked his art. How do you think Ramon's feelings about his art are changed after that?
12. What are some ways we can celebrate our own uniqueness and the uniqueness of others?
13. How can we use responsible decision-making to see the differences of others as unique gifts and be inclusive?

# ISH Lesson Ideas

*The following lessons ideas are provided to support teachers with utilizing the SEL book of the month as a mentor text, enhancing student social and emotional learning as well as academic skills development.*

## **Circle/Journal Writing Prompts.**

Keep students thinking and writing about the story.

- ✓ Think of a time someone put you down. How did you feel? What did you do to make yourself feel better?
- ✓ Why is it important to see that there are many different ways to do think and do things?
- ✓ How does it make our class, school, community and world a better place to be inclusive? What can you do to help make other students feel good about their differences, instead of ashamed?
- ✓ We celebrate “*Inclusive Schools*” week this month. What is something you can do to be more inclusive?
- ✓ This month we explore the SEL competency of Responsible Decision-Making. Why is it important to make decisions that help others and ourselves? Write about a time you made a good decision. What happened? How did it help?



## **The Squiggle-ish Game.**

Have two students each squiggle a line for the other and trade sheets of paper. Then ask them to make a drawing from the line their partner made. They can add some paint, cut out their images, and mount them on a darker piece of paper. Be sure to have BOTH artists sign their name to each finished drawing.

## **Ishing — Not Dishing.**

After reading the book, discuss what Leon could have said to Ramon to be kinder. Have your students heard people say hurtful things about someone's art or their attempt to try something new? Brainstorm some things you can say to encourage rather than discourage.

## **Ishful Portraits.**

Have the whole class create ishful self-portraits, or have pairs do portraits of each other. Label them ishfully; for example, Peter-ish or Wanda-ish.

## **Ishful Gallery.**

Start a gallery of art that is ishful. For example, print out a Picasso portrait — you can label it “Face-ish.” Look online using a search like “abstract boat” or “Greek painting boat” or “children face art,” print out the images, and add them to the gallery. Ask the class what each one is. Students will learn to see patterns, be more imaginative, be more generous in their interpretations, be less literal, and develop open minds.

## **Ishful Feelings.**

Brainstorm moods. Have students select a mood to paint or draw. Label them ishfully; for example, stubborn-ish or happy-ish.

## **It is Great to Be Ishy Writing.**

Have students write about how they will choose to see others for their strengths or how they as individuals are unique.

### **Create Buddy Reading Partners.**

Read the SEL Book of the Month, then partner with a teacher in another grade level to pair older and younger students. Have them share a favorite book. Have older buddies select books (either past SEL books of the month or another favorite). After reading, have the students discuss the SEL competency their book relates to and why.

### **Book Talk Using Flip Grid.**

After reading the book, have students give a 2 minute summary of the book, including the main idea, author's purpose, and theme or respond to one or more of the guiding questions on Flip Grid. Older kids can share it with their reading buddies or one another before engaging in a conversation about ways to help someone like Ramon feel as though his uniqueness is brilliance. [www.flipgrid.com](http://www.flipgrid.com)

### **Self-Portraits.**

Have students create a self-portrait and write about what makes them special. Post portraits in the classroom so students can see positive statements they wrote about themselves for encouragement during learning.

### **Ish Upon a Star.**

Have each student draw a star on a note card, paint it, and sign their name. Then glue them all to a big banner, creating a night sky. You can label it "When You Ish Upon a Star." Ask students if there are two stars that are exactly the same. Then discuss what a real star is. What does it look like? Show images from [www.nasa.gov](http://www.nasa.gov) of real stars and ask the class if their stars look like the photos. Let them discover that their drawings are actually star-ish!

### **Ishful Poems.**

Read Ramon's poem from the book and some poems that don't rhyme or have innovative structure. Have students brainstorm their favorite words. Perhaps those words will trigger some ishful poetry. Magnetic poetry is also helpful for ishing up a good poem.

### **Ishful Math.**

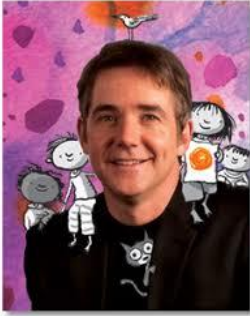
Estimation is a skill students will use throughout their lives. Show the class photographs of groups of items, but only for a few seconds. Then ask students to estimate how many items were in the image. For example, how many chickens in the farmyard? Perhaps a dozen-ish? The number of muffins in a bakery store window — a hundred-ish? The number of people in a baseball stadium — twenty thousand-ish? If a student is stumped in math class, encourage them to put down an "answer-ish."

### **Ishful Science.**

Show the class images of familiar animals. Then begin showing some that are less familiar and ask students to identify them. If they are unsure, encourage them to use ishful thinking: monkey-ish, raccoon-ish, etc. Write down their ishful names and then discuss the possible connections between the animals — is that leopard-ish animal related to a leopard somehow? This kind of thinking allows scientists to make an educated guess or hypothesis, which is one step of the scientific method.

**Source:** [https://www.candlewick.com/book\\_files/0763663271.btg.1.pdf](https://www.candlewick.com/book_files/0763663271.btg.1.pdf)

# Author/Illustrator Study



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## **Additional Book Recommendations for December's SEL Theme: Responsible Decision-Making and Inclusion**

### Book Titles

- Wonder
- Not So Different: What You Really Want to Ask about Having a Disability
- I see without my Eyes
- My Friend Has Autism
- Thank you, Mr. Falkner
- The invisible Boy
- Do Unto Otters
- Juice Box Bully
- Rules of the Playground
- The Invisible String
- It's Okay to Be Different
- The Judgmental Flower
- The Story of Ruby Bridges
- Chrysanthemum
- The Sneeches

