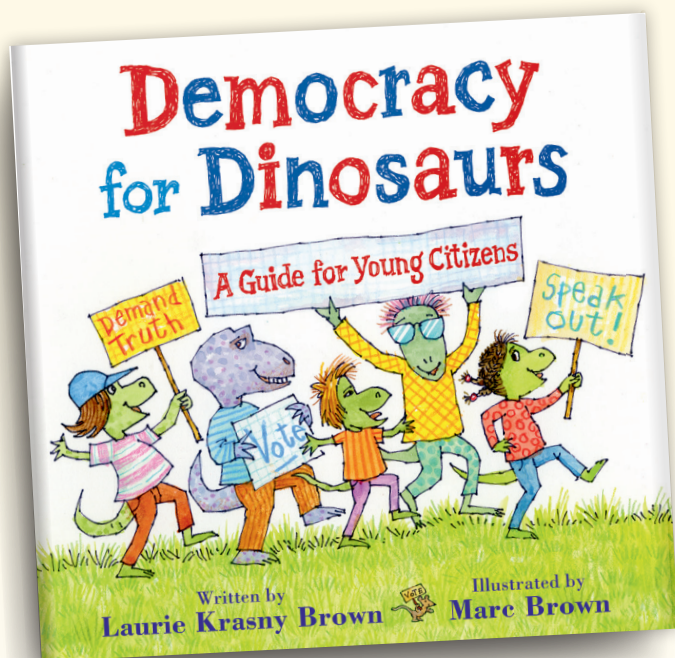


# Little, Brown Books for Young Readers Teaching Tips



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## 1. SHARE EQUAL RIGHTS. BE FAIR. VOTE.

Co-create your class constitution.

- Hold a meeting where you discuss class rules and norms as a way to ensure fairness and keep your classroom safe.
- With very young children, suggest rules and allow children to vote on whether they should be part of the constitution. Keep the rules simple and frame them positively (“Move Safely,” for example, rather than “Don’t run in the classroom!”).
- With older children, allow each student to submit suggestions for rules and discuss whether they should be part of the constitution. Try to reach a consensus rather than holding a “majority rules” vote.
- Aim to have 5 or fewer norms/rules that are general rather than an exhaustive list of specifics.

- Display the signed constitution prominently in the classroom.
- Hold a class meeting to discuss logical consequences for breaking rules.





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## 2. RESPECT FREE SPEECH. *Make class meeting a part of your weekly schedule.*

- With very young children, bring ideas to the meeting that impact the entire group.
- With older children, allow the students to set the agenda for your class meeting.
- Develop a protocol with your students and follow it. For example, decide how an order of speaking will be determined. With older students, gradually allow them to take over facilitation of the meeting using the protocol.
- Allow children to make important decisions about the classroom, such as what materials should be in the choice area, what song should the class sing for morning greeting, or how you should decorate some walls of your classroom. Be clear about what decisions must be made by you as a teacher to keep the classroom safe for all children.

## 3. BE HONEST. LOOK FOR TRUTH.

*Choose read-aloud texts that explore questions of integrity and discuss the value of integrity regularly with your class.*

## 4. RESEARCH EXAMPLES. *Set up a library in your classroom with biographies of social justice heroes, accessible histories of democratic movements, and current events magazines. You can find developmentally appropriate resources on these websites:*

- [Jane Addams Book Award](#)
- [Coretta Scott King Book Award](#)
- [Pura Belpré Book Award](#)

## 5. UNDERSTAND DEMOCRACY.

*Create a Word Wall to display “Words for Kid Citizens to Know.”*

## 6. STAND UP FOR DEMOCRACY.

*Take action in your school.*

- Use a class meeting to identify a positive change your class would like to make to the school.
- Write a letter as a class to your school leadership advocating for change.
- Invite the leadership to your class to hear your students read their letter.



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