

How to Train Your Amygdala
Discussion Guide
Grades Pre-K – 3

Before Reading: to activate schema, build background knowledge, and set a purpose.

- Start by showing a picture of the brain and asking students what they know about it. Activate prior knowledge by completing a [KWL chart](#) with your students about the brain.
- Read the title. As a class, say the word amygdala (uh-mig-duh-luh) together. On the inside cover of the book look at the picture of the brain and the tiny amygdala.
- Ask, “What does it mean to train something or to train for something?” (Optional: Pair Share). “Today we are going to read a book about the ways you can train the part of you brain called the amygdala.”

During Reading: to engage students, check for understanding, and make connections.

- Why is the amygdala important? What does it do?
- What are some of the actions that an amygdala may tell you to do when it senses danger?
- What does the girl’s body do when the amygdala starts the alarm?
- Why do you think the amygdala gets confused sometimes and starts the alarm system even when there isn’t any danger?
- How is training your amygdala like training a puppy?
- What are some ways you can calm your amygdala?

After Reading: to summarize, question, and reflect.

- This book gives lots of great examples of ways that you can train your amygdala to stay calm. What are some ways that you like to calm down when you are scared or upset? (Optional: Pair Share)
- Return to you KWL chart and complete the “Learned” section. Did you learn what you thought you would from reading this book? Did you think of any new questions after reading this book?
- The back of the book contains “The Amygdala Training Manual for Kids!” As a class, practice some of the different types of breathing and check out RIF’s video on taking a [Mindful Moment!](#)
- Set up a Calm Down Corner in your classroom where students can visit when they need a space to calm down. Have your students create posters of different techniques they can use to calm down. Use examples given in the book or come up with your own!

If your students enjoyed this book...

- Encourage them to continue to discuss it and refer to it in other lessons and conversations.
- Let them explore more books about mindfulness such as [King Calm: A Mindful Gorilla in the City](#) and [I Remember My Breath: Mindful Breathing for All My Feelings](#).