Maddie has a quirky sense of humor and a fondness for sporting fake mustaches, the more outrageous-looking—a neon pink handlebar, a green fuzzy chevron, a blue pencil mustache—the better. Maddie's world is turned upside down when she's diagnosed with a brain tumor.

Readers will take the journey with her as she battles her illness and encounters the usual obstacles of growing up by using her imagination to conquer her fears, her humor to stay optimistic, and compassion to stay connected to others in a meaningful way. Innocently and unknowingly, her example encourages those around her.

Compassion in Action postcards and stickers are available.

Based on a true story.
Activity Option #1
Research Science Fair Project

In Mustaches for Maddie, we’re introduced to many medical terms when Maddie discovers she has a brain tumor and needs surgery. Maddie’s fears are driven, in part, by her not understanding her condition or what doctors will be doing to make her healthy again. Have students research the following topics which they will encounter in the book: tumors which are benign or malignant, MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging), pituitary gland, neurologist, and anesthesia with the following objectives:

• Define each medical term.
• Detail a medical process like a tumor from symptoms to diagnosis to treatment to after-care. How many different types of medical professionals are involved in patient care?
• Discuss medical advances in treating tumors or cancerous tumors from the early 1900s to today including the early work on radiation treatments and chemotherapy.
• Invite a guest speaker who could share additional information and answer questions for the students about tumors, treatment options, and possible side effects of treatment, etc. Consider asking the school nurse, a parent or community member in the medical profession, or someone in the community who survived a tumor to be your guest speaker.
• Microsoft has a website to connect educators to volunteers with expertise on a wide variety of subjects to be guest speakers for your classroom. Learn more at this link: https://education.microsoft.com/skype-in-the-classroom-find-guest-speakers

Activity Option #2
Compassion into Action Auction: Everyone Has a Great Idea!

When confronted with challenges or situations she views as wrong or unkind to others, Maddie has a positive outlook and a genuine desire to put compassion into action to help. In this activity, students will focus on the impact compassionate acts have on others by generating ideas for a Compassion in Action Auction where students will offer services which other students can bid on by using “Thank You Auction coupons” that they have earned by doing kind things for others.

• Brainstorm ideas for services that students can do for others such as creating artwork to depict a notable deed, writing a poem to honor someone, volunteering to pick up trash on the playground, or making a breakfast basket for a group of students or a healthy, homemade snack bag, or fixing someone’s bicycle or skateboard.
• Have students send home the parent letter to explain the purpose behind the activity and resources needed. (Appendix A. Sample letter)
• Students will make a small poster to advertise the service that will be auctioned.
• Students can earn Thank You Auction coupons (Appendix B) for a month prior to the auction. Coupons are given by the teacher or librarian when they or another student sees a compassionate act that deserves a “Thank You.”
• Each student can receive up to five Thank You Auction coupons (Appendix C) to thank them for participating in the event.
• On the day of the Compassion in Action Auction, list all proper bids.

Supplemental Tools
Video Links about Compassion in Action

What Is Compassion?
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9-UZ0hn_Tpc

The Kindness Project: Being Kind is Easy!
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qGireQyomw

Activity Option #3
Compassion Scenarios

Students may not have a clear understanding of what compassion means, so this role-playing activity is designed to help illustrate this concept in realistic scenarios taken from the book Mustaches for Maddie.

Lexi is a new student in Maddie’s class and is left out of the fun and games at recess by Cassie, the self-appointed “class queen,” who chooses who will get to hang out with her in the cool group.

How did Maddie feel compassion for Lexi in this situation and what did she do about it?

Was there a difference between Maddie’s feelings and her actions and why?

How could you show compassion to a new classmate on their first day in class?

Cassie wants to play the lead in the class production of Romeo and Juliet. To make sure she does not have any competition, Cassie convinces everyone they should do other roles in the play.

If you had been there, how could you explain to Cassie in a kind way that other students have a right to try out for the lead in the play as well?

What would you do if Cassie became angry at you?

Activity Option #4
Raindrops and Mustaches Door Display

The cover of Mustaches for Maddie represents the story metaphorically by showing raindrops as life’s challenges and a girl with a mustache umbrella protecting herself from the rain.

Have students create a door display of your own version of the book cover with mustaches representing events or people in our lives that make us feel better and who help us face challenges through acts of kindness—like getting a high five from a friend, a hug from a parent, or a kind note from a classmate—and raindrops representing challenges or things that make us sad like feeling lonely or scared, losing a friend or loved one, being sick, getting a bad grade in school, or losing a game in sports.

Common Core Connections

Activity Option #1
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.3 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Activity Option #2
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Activity Option #3
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Activity Option #4
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.

About the Authors
Chad Morris and Shelly Brown are the parents of five children—four sons and one daughter, Maddie. When Maddie was nine years old, she was diagnosed with a brain tumor. Her positive outlook, imagination, and courage in the face of such a challenge was an inspiration to her friends and family—and provided the basis for this novel. Maddie collected mustaches during her illness and still finds humor in them today.

MUSTACHES FOR MADDIE READER’S GUIDE
How would you describe Maddie as a person and as a friend? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Cassie is the “class queen” and takes a leadership role with her friends and always wants to be in charge. The other students know how powerful Cassie’s approval is socially in the school. Explain how it is a good thing to have a leader like Cassie and what might be negative about having a class leader like Cassie. Can you think of a time when you tried to be a leader on a project? Were you successful? What could you have done differently to ensure success?

Each character in Mustaches for Maddie has a distinctive personality. These personality characteristics help or present challenges for each character to achieve their objectives and goals and their ability to be happy. List the main characters’ personality traits and how these traits affect their goals and happiness. Which character in the book are you most like? How are you like this person? Have you ever been in a similar situation as that character? Do you have a similar personality?

Chapter 4: “Sneezing Laser Beams”

Maddie is nervous as she and her friends wait to audition for her class’s production of Romeo and Juliet and becomes even more anxious when Cassie points out that Maddie is holding her arm “funny.” Maddie uses humor to try to calm her fears and raise her confidence by asking her friends a few random questions like “Would you rather be super strong or be able to fly?” and “If you were surrounded by bad guys, would you rather be able to sneeze laser beams or burp bombs?” How does each friend react to her questions? Was Maddie able to change the focus from being on her arm being weird to something else? Did this conversation about flying and burping help to calm her fears? How did it help?

Maddie tries out for the part of Juliet even though she knows flying and burping help to calm her fears? How did it help? How did each of her classmates respond to Maddie’s tumor news and what did it reveal about them as friends?

Chapter 23: “Swim Party”

Maddie overhears Cassie and her mother talking at the swim party, and the conversation makes Maddie wonder if Cassie is hiding secrets about her home life. From what Maddie overheard, she knows that Cassie’s dad is gone and Cassie needs to do some of the chores that he used to do. In addition, Cassie has been selling her dolls online to earn money. How does this information change how you feel about Cassie? Do you think Cassie’s challenges at home better explain her behavior? Does it make her behavior okay?

Chapter 24: “Poison Dragon Death Claw”

Maddie is mad when she finds out that Cassie lied to her and didn’t actually invite Lexi to the swim party. Maddie decides to be proactive and find a positive way to fix the situation. She goes to Cassie to tell her how awesome Lexi is and that she wants to play with her wherever she can. On the spot, she makes up a new game called “Poison Dragon Death Claw” so everyone can play with Lexi and have fun.

What is Maddie hoping to accomplish with this new game? Was she successful? What do you think Cassie’s reaction will be to Maddie challenging her that way?
Chapter 25: “Over the World”
Maddie and her family are having a great time on vacation at Disneyland, but at night Maddie can’t sleep and overhears a conversation between her parents that makes her realize why this trip was so important to her dad. Just like Maddie had a reason for making up a game at recess, Maddie’s dad has a reason for taking the family to Disneyland before Maddie’s surgery.
Why did Maddie’s dad take the family on vacation?
How do happy experiences help us when we’re facing challenges or potentially losing someone we love?
How will the vacation impact the family if Maddie’s surgery is successful and will the impact be different if the surgery is unsuccessful?

Chapter 26: “The Basket and the Big Lie” and Chapter 27: “Made It All Up”
Cassie tells all of Maddie’s friends that Maddie made up the story about having a brain tumor because she wants attention. This hurts Maddie’s feelings and makes her question whether her friends think she lied.
Maddie’s brother, Ethan, becomes jealous of some of the thoughtful gifts Maddie’s friends have given her as a way for them to show Maddie that they love and support her before she has brain surgery. Ethan says, “I wish I had a brain tumor.” Maddie can’t imagine why he would say this and even though their mom quickly tells him that he does not really mean that, Ethan is not convinced.
When something serious happens, sometimes people can’t handle their overwhelming feelings and act out in negative ways. Describe how Cassie and Ethan might really be feeling about Maddie’s illness and how people are responding. What might have been a better way to handle those feelings?

Chapter 28: “Dear Mom and Dad”
The night before the brain surgery, Maddie writes her family a letter in case things do not go well during surgery.
How does the letter help us understand what Maddie is feeling?
What things are important to her?
Do you think writing the letter helped her or her parents more? Why?
Have you ever been in a situation where someone you love is worried about you and you express your thoughts to them to help them feel better?

Chapter 29: “A Tower of Dinosaurs” and Chapter 31: “Mustaches”
After surgery, Maddie has a bandage in her nose which the doctors call a “mustache bandage,” which is perfect since mustaches make Maddie happy. Maddie is in a lot of pain, but finding out that she has a mustache bandage makes her want to smile.
Think about how mustaches make Maddie happy and then about what makes you happy. Do you have something like silly mustaches that you love to collect?
What makes you happy or helps you face a challenge? How does this help you?
Maddie is still in the hospital and recovering from brain surgery. Although the surgery went well, Maddie struggles to relax and sleep. In fact, it has been four days since Maddie has slept. Maddie’s mom shows her an outpouring of photos of her friends, teachers, and family sporting silly mustaches on social media. Total strangers start adding their own well wishes for Maddie by posting pictures of themselves with funny mustaches. When Maddie realizes that people care about her, she is able to relax and sleep.
Why does this work? How does love and compassion play a role in helping Maddie to relax and sleep?
What are some simple things you could do to let others know you care about them?

Chapter 32: “A More Important Dream”
Maddie asks her dad about his newly published book and realizes that he didn’t get to promote it because he was with her in the hospital. Maddie feels bad because she knows that writing a book was an important dream of her dad’s, but her father insists that Maddie is a more important dream. Although her dad’s dream for his book did not turn out exactly how he wanted, Maddie feels his love for her and recognizes how important he is to her too.
What is your most important dream?
What will bring you the most happiness and why?

Chapter 34: “Mind Powers”
Maddie takes a stand and refuses to take orders from Cassie any longer. She says that she longer cares what Cassie thinks about her and does not feel the need to impress her any more.
Why is standing up to a bully so hard?
What advice would you give someone who is dealing with a bully?

Chapter 35: “Supernova”
Maddie is tired of being left out. She tells her classmate that anyone who wants to play her game is invited to play. Recess now has everyone interacting with one another. There is only one person left out and that is Cassie. Maddie realizes that she feels bad about Cassie being alone when she was at the hospital, realizing that she would forgive Cassie if she would apologize, but Maddie is pretty sure Cassie will not apologize.
Should Maddie reach out to Cassie?
What’s the best way to do that?
Make a prediction about how this problem will be solved.

Chapter 36: “The Surprise Ending”
Maddie and Devin act in Romeo and Juliet with a revised ending that they created.
What is the new ending and how is it different from the original play?
Do you like their changes?
Why do you think Maddie and Devin made the changes that they did?
Look for evidence in the text as to why Maddie did not want Juliet to give up on life.
Activities

Mustache Connections Reader Response Interactive Bulletin Board

Use the Mustache Connection bulletin board template to create an interactive bulletin board (Appendix D).

- As students finish the chapters, they will use a Post-it Note to react to the book and display their thoughts on the bulletin board.
- Students can see what other students are thinking and display their own ideas. Powerful classroom discussions can be generated from the connections students make with the text and with each other with this interactive bulletin board.

Raindrop/Mustache Pair Think

This think/pair/share activity will focus on students identifying the problems and solutions presented in the story.

The teacher will pair up students. The teacher will then assign each pair to be responsible for three chapters in the book.

During the reading of the book, each pair will take note of the chapters they have been assigned and think about the raindrop (the problem) and the mustache (the person or event who helps make it better).

Each pair of students will write about the raindrop/mustache connection and their reaction to this situation.

Activity Prompts Along the Way

These are quick activities and writing prompts that can be implemented during the reading of the novel.

Have students make up a creative game.
Make and play a creative game as Maddie creates at recess.

Importance of supportive people in your life.
Maddie thinks about the attributes she loves about members of her family. Choose an important person in your life and write a note to that person telling him/her what you love and value about that person.

Helping others.
Maddie's classmates do many nice things for her to boost her mood when she is having a tough time. Make a list of ten nice things you have done for other people this week.

What is your monster?
Have students write about a challenge they face in their daily lives. Make an illustration demonstrating this monster and how you conquer it.

New kid on the block.
Lexi is the new girl in school. Write a letter to her giving her advice about how to make new friends.

Mustache cards.
At the end of the book, the entire class makes cards for Cassie to help her feel better. Make a card for someone that will cheer them up.

Diary entries.
Write five diary entries written in the first person point of view from one of the characters.

Bullying journal prompt.
Have you ever felt bullied by someone else? How did you handle it? Write a journal entry about this experience.

What makes you unique?
Maddie is true to herself. What makes you unique? Create a comic strip to introduce yourself. Tell about you and what makes you unique.

CIA Monday Mustache Day

Make the class part of the CIA (Compassion into Action) Day. In chapter 27, Ethan was jealous of all the nice things people were doing for Maddie and was upset that nothing nice ever happened to him on a Monday.

- Students will select a specific Monday to do something nice for others and complete a Monday CIA project. The class will plan a secret service for another class or group, carry out that project, and then discuss how the project made them feel. Use the CIA Planning sheet for this process (Template E).
- For extra fun, have the students leave behind an anonymous mustache calling card (Template F) for the person or group that the Monday Mustache project was done for.

Interview Project/Friendship Quilt

Students will conduct an interview and present their findings with a friendship quilt.

- Give students the Friendship Quilt interview directions handout (Appendix G).
- Students will conduct an interview with a family member, neighbor, teacher, or another individual outside of the classroom and ask this person about a friend that made an impact on his or her life.
- After students conduct the interview, they will fill in the Friendship Quilt template.
- Students will present the Friendship Quilt template (Appendix G) to the class.
- Friendship Quilt templates will be hung on the wall side by side to create a giant class friendship quilt.

Compassion around the World

Students will learn about “Compassion into Action” around the world by marking on a map where outstanding people around the world have made a difference.

- Have students conduct research and mark on a map the people around the world who have demonstrated outstanding acts of compassion and courage. One example might be Malala Yousafzai, who was the youngest recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize for her work in the struggle against suppression of children and the right of all children to an education.
- Students will use the Compassion in Action Around the World handout (Appendix I) to document their findings and mark the place on the map where the person lives.
Activities

Maddie’s Memes to Live By

Students will create memes that represent Maddie from the novel Mustaches for Maddie.

• Choose ten visuals that reflect the story. Label them as “Maddie’s Words to Live By” or caption the visuals with thought bubbles of the characters.

• Students could also use a meme generator to create memes which represent Maddie.

• Students can also use paper and crayons to create original memes or thought bubbles.

CIA Secret Service

Students will write kind, anonymous notes for one another.

• Put the names of everyone in the class in a bowl and have each student draw one and keep it a secret.

• Have each student write a note or make a card for that person. Have them write compliments to that person.

• Gather up the cards and disperse them back out.

• Ask students how it felt to do something nice for someone else. Then ask them how it felt to receive something nice from someone else.

Performing Arts

Students will perform scenes from Romeo and Juliet.

• Break students into small groups and have them perform a scene or two from Romeo and Juliet as mentioned in the book.

• For extra flair, let students wear mustaches!

• For an additional activity, have students draw a picture of the character they would like to play and write a paragraph or two about why they would like to play that character.

Compassion into Action Auction Parent Letter

Dear Parents,

Our class is reading the book Mustaches for Maddie by Chad Morris and Shelly Brown. One of the themes in the book is Compassion in Action and to illustrate that we’ll be having an auction of special services and talents. During the month before the auction, teachers and librarians will be giving out “Thank You Auction coupons” when they see a student showing kindness and compassion to another student. Students will then bid on service auction items with the coupons they have earned.

Our class came up with several great ideas for the auction, and your student would like to offer the following for bidding:

Your student will be asked to make a poster to advertise their service project the week before the auction. We will be holding the Compassion into Action auction on __________________.
Appendix B

Thank You Coupons for Compassion into Action Auction

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Appendix C

Compassion into Action Auction Coupons

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### Appendix D
Mustaches Connection Bulletin Board Template

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<th>The author is very good at:</th>
<th>If this story was told from the point of view of &quot;x&quot;, it would be more:</th>
<th>My mustache is:</th>
<th>When I need a friend, I talk to:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It wasn't fair when:</td>
<td>We can be more accepting of:</td>
<td>My monster is:</td>
<td>wonder:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know someone like:</td>
<td>I predict that:</td>
<td>I laughed when:</td>
<td>I feel inspired to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It upset me when:</td>
<td>We can show others respect by:</td>
<td>I will put compassion into action by doing the following:</td>
<td>Just like Maddie, I feel:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In Chapter 27, Ethan was jealous of all the nice things people were doing for Maddie. He was upset that nothing nice ever happened to him on a Monday. As a class, we are going to make someone’s Monday great! You may even want to leave a mustache as an anonymous sign that you have been doing great work!

Choose
Who will you do something nice for?
• A person—your principal, a secretary, a computer teacher
• A group—another class, the lunch ladies, a group of teachers

Plan
What are you going to do?
• Write notes
• Draw pictures
• Do a job like take out the recycling

Do
When will you do this?
• At recess
• During lunch
• In secret
Friendship Interview

You will interview someone outside of our classroom. This person could be someone in your family, a neighbor, a teacher, someone you respect--anyone you want that is not in our class. Ask the person the following questions:

• Who was a friend that made a big impact on you?
• How did that person make you feel?
• What specific actions did that person take to make you feel good about yourself or your situation?
• How did that person positively impact your life?

When you are done, you will complete the Friendship Quilt paper and we will make a classroom Friendship Quilt.
Appendix H
Friendship Quilt Template

A Good Friend Friendship Quilt

Example of a good friend from your interview (use 4 or more sentences)

How does a good friend make you feel? (use 3 descriptive words from your interview)

What does a good friend do? (use 2 verbs from your interview)

Picture of a someone being a good friend (draw 1 picture)
Appendix I
Compassion into Action Around the World

Compassion Into Action Around the World

Compassion Into Action #1
Name:
What did this person do?

Compassion Into Action #2
Name:
What did this person do?

Compassion Into Action #3
Name:
What did this person do?

Compassion Into Action #4
Name:
What did this person do?
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