

Character Building and Civic Engagement with *Monster Needs Your Vote*

Monster Needs Your Vote is a timeless, humorous, and positive story about building character, the democratic process, and the responsibility of voting for adults and kids of all ages! Monster figures out the differences between “wants” and “needs” as he perseveres to make a difference for the good of the community. His message emphasizes the importance of standing up for what you believe to foster a life-long commitment to active citizenship and building character with the tools and resources in this guide.

Included are materials to use with the book or on their own to enhance the reader’s understanding, knowledge, and participation in character development and civic engagement.

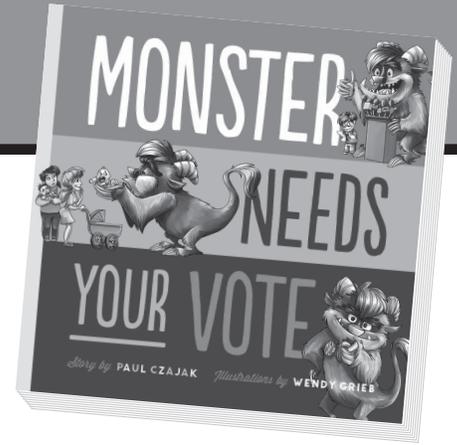
AGENDA

45 minutes (approx.)

- › Introduce Self and Book
- › Pre-assessment Activity: Monster Wants! Monster Needs!
- › Read *Monster Needs Your Vote*
- › Talk About the Book
- › Re-assessment Activity: Monster Wants! Monster Needs! (Take 2)
- › Play Monster ROAR Bingo

WHAT YOU NEED

- › *Monster Needs Your Vote* book/eBook
- › Skype/online connection (bring in author and/or development specialist—optional)
- › Read through activities and determine what tools and timeframe to use
- › Print out handouts for each person in your group/class if using paper versions
- › Online access to Kids Voting USA to build your own voting ballot, as applicable



Wants vs. Needs

ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY OPTIONS

For younger children, you may want to use the more visual handout on **page 7** that includes pictures along with the words based upon reading ability. Otherwise, you can use the handout on **page 6** for older children. Print out the handout and copy for each person in your group.

- › Online version
- › Paper version
- › Active group interaction version
 - › Quieter version for space and control of group issues
 - › Movement version for engaging interactive fun

For the active group interactive:

Tell the group that for each item you will call out, he/she needs to decide if the item is a “want” or a “need.”

Next, choose a response method from below:

Quieter version—Demonstrate how he/she should respond. Stretch arms up over his/her head for “want.” Stretch arms down toward feet for “need.” (*TIP to remember needs: needs ground you*).

Movement version—Demonstrate how he/she should respond. Stretch arms up overhead in a “w” shape, fingers wide-spread. Roar out WANT for “want.” Do a Hulk-like imitation and scrunch body down with arms at side and fists rounded in toward the center of their bodies for “need.” Roar out NEED for “need.” (*see YouTube video sample: <https://youtu.be/SE6C-BykZS88>*). Have the group mirror each move. Make corrections as desired.

PRE-ASSESSMENT: MONSTER WANTS! MONSTER NEEDS!

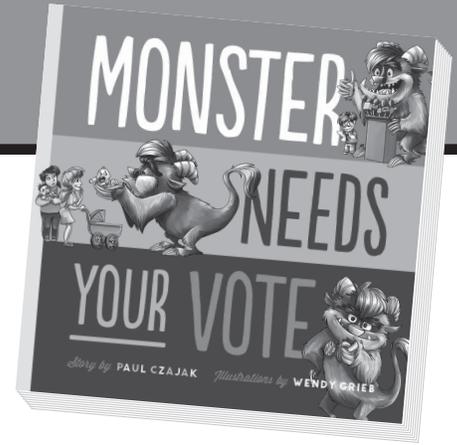
Instruct students to get into pairs and stand back-to-back. After the item is called and a 3-count given from leader, students will turn toward each other and roar “want” or “need” depending on his/her view.

Write the item on a white board or large sheet of paper. Ask for a show of hands of those who said “want” for that item. Record the total number for “want.” Ask for show of hands for “need.” Record the total number for “need.” Go to next item and repeat process. If desired, have students switch partners for the roar off.

Pick as many wants and needs as you have time for. Be sure to choose items from both “want” and “need” lists. You can add your own items to the lists to extend the activity for your group as needed.

VOTING ACTIVITY & TOOL GUIDE

Grades Pre-K–4



LET'S TALK ABOUT THE BOOK

In the story, Monster had to learn the difference between a “want” and a “need.” For instance: *Ice cream—is it a “want” or a “need?”*

Ask:

- › What is a “want?”
- › What is a “need?”

Monster discovered that longer summers, dessert for dinner, and ice cream were all things that he “wanted” and liked but did not necessarily “need.” When he saw that the library was closing, he realized THAT was a “need.” Everyone “needed” and benefited from it being open. Once Monster understood the difference between a WANT and a NEED, he then understood how he could best help his community.

Ask:

- › What are some needs you see at your school?
- › What are some needs you see in your neighborhood?
- › What are some needs you see in your family?
- › Is there something you can do to “roar” for one of these causes?

RE-ASSESSMENT: MONSTER WANTS! MONSTER NEEDS! (TAKE 2)

Do assessment again to observe any changes in understanding of “wants” versus “needs.”

Ask:

- › Why the change?

PLAY MONSTER ROAR (VARIATION OF BINGO)

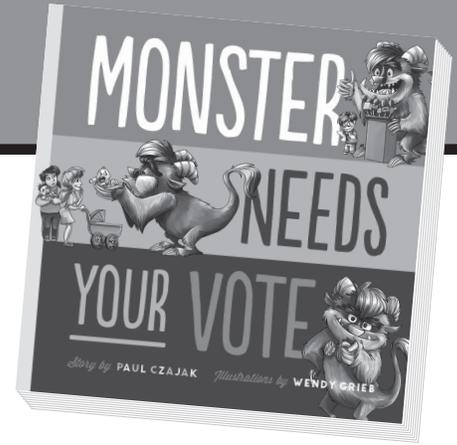
- › For large group options use your feet to vote. Call out the bulleted statements on **page 5** and tell group to move:
 - › One step to left for “yes” or right for “no.”
 - › Go to this side of room for “yes” or the other side for “no.”
- › Thumbs up for “yes” and thumbs down for “no.”

MONSTER ROAR BINGO DIRECTIONS

Use the Monster ROAR Bingo Card handout on **page 8**. Copy for each person in your group or create an online voting ballot with the content that correlates to this activity using the Kids Voting USA voting software. You can also create your own paper Monster ROAR Bingo card at www.bingobaker.com. You will find some additional bingo text blocks at the end of the directions or you can create your own content.

VOTING ACTIVITY & TOOL GUIDE

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Say:

- › You have 5 minutes to mingle, learn, and get as many people to sign off on your card as you can. You can only have one person's signature on your card. You can't have one person sign off on every square. However, note that the center space is a special space. It's YOUR space to think about what YOUR "roar" would be. You will answer in that space!
- › Mingle, ask questions, and get signatures except for the middle one. Each time someone signs off on a space, both parties "roar" in unison. When your card is complete, yell out "MONSTER BINGO" when done. (Note: you may have to encourage students to keep going once the first person yells out. Remind them of how much time they have left.)

Students mingle and fill out cards. When the first person finishes, acknowledge that, tell him/her to hang on, and keep the group going until the 5 minutes is up. As each person finishes, tell him/her to think about what his/her "roar" would be and fill it in (*the middle ROAR square*).

When time is up, ask the first person done to share his/her card responses and who each person was for each square, one at a time.

After each square, ask:

- › What did X say about this topic?

If the person had great conversations, you found a winner. If he/she didn't, offer thanks for sharing, and ask for someone else to share his/her card, and repeating the share/ask question process. Call on 2–3 people. Ask someone to reflect on what he/she learned about the people who shared to go over their cards. Repeat share/ask questions process as time allows.

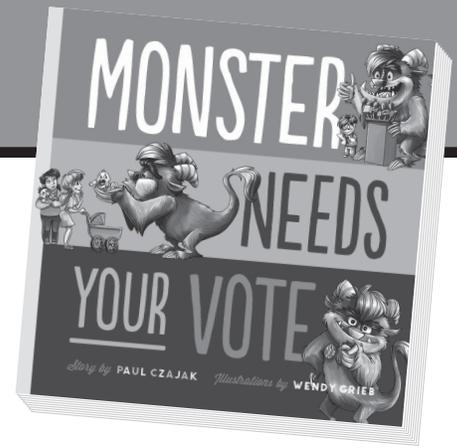
Announce as winner(s) the one(s) who took the time to listen and get to know his/her "community members." Have the group give the winner(s) a double-down "roar."

DEBRIEF WITH WHOLE GROUP AFTER MONSTER ROAR BINGO

- › Who thought the point of the game was to be the first one done?
- › What were the instructions (*mingle, learn, sign*)?
- › This activity is sort of how politics go. Every candidate makes the rounds (*like if you just signed off your name and didn't really chat*)—shakes hands, hugs babies, or smiles and nods.
- › Is that kind of interaction (*simply signing names*) meaningful? Do you feel like you know the person or that he/she knows you?
- › What does it take to really connect with someone else?
- › Why is it sometimes more challenging to connect with people who are different than us in some way?
- › The best leaders take the time to know his/her community—and EVERYONE in it, listen to needs, ask questions, and get opinions and ideas for making the community a better place for everyone. They listen; they learn; they care about all.

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- › When did Monster become his “best leader” self? (*When he got excited about the library and education.*)
- › What happened when Monster didn’t run? Did he give up on the issue and go home? Did Monster say, ‘I didn’t win so I’m done’? (*No, he continued to speak out for the library.*)
- › Quality leaders do what they say they will do. They know what’s important; they stand up for others, for causes and work to make the world a better place. They don’t just go with what’s popular or makes them look or sound good.
- › They exhibit character. What character traits do you think a leader should have? (*Examples could include honesty, integrity, compassion, respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, citizenship, self-discipline, courage, fairness, patriotism, perseverance, etc.*)

ADDITIONAL BINGO SQUARE TEXT SUGGESTIONS

To customize your own bingo cards, use the suggestions below or create your own items in regards to civic engagement, voting, and character traits.

- › Felt like you set a good example for someone.
- › Stood up for what you believed in with others your age.
- › Worked through a disagreement with a friend.
- › Have been brave and stood up for your self.
- › Gone out of the way to help someone out.
- › Spoke up when you saw a friend bullying someone else.
- › Knows someone who is honest even when its hard.
- › Knows someone who puts others’ needs before their own wants.
- › Supported an issue you care about.
- › Voted in a mock election for kids.
- › Helped at a community garden and shared the produce with someone in need.
- › Wrote a thank you note to a community or school leader.
- › Asked your teacher how you can promote kindness in your school.
- › Acted as an active member in your community.
- › Complained about something you didn’t feel was fair at school.
- › Raised or given money to a cause you believed in.
- › Asked your friends to get involved as volunteers with you.
- › Helped keep the peace at school.
- › Spoke up when someone was being bullied, or teased, or called names.
- › Knows someone who is respectful of others.
- › Name a leader who you feel is honest and trustworthy.
- › Solved a problem at home with your parents or siblings.

MONSTER WANTS! MONSTER NEEDS!



CHECKMARK WHICH ONE YOU THINK EACH ITEM IS—A WANT OR A NEED.

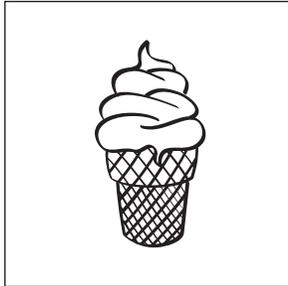
Item	Want	Need
Ice cream		
Food		
Family		
Soda		
Sweets		
Clothing		
My own bedroom		
Television		
School		
Safe environment		

Item	Want	Need
Smart phone		
Quality air		
Air conditioning		
Video games		
Love/caring		
Internet		
Water		
Home		
Friends		
Toys		

MONSTER WANTS! MONSTER NEEDS!

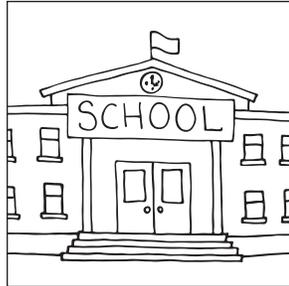


CIRCLE WHICH ONE YOU THINK EACH ITEM IS—A WANT OR A NEED.



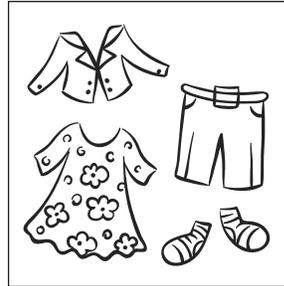
Ice Cream

WANT NEED



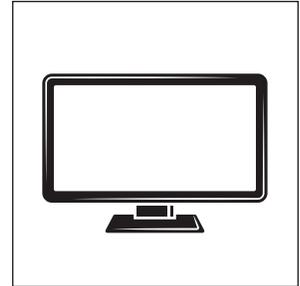
School

WANT NEED



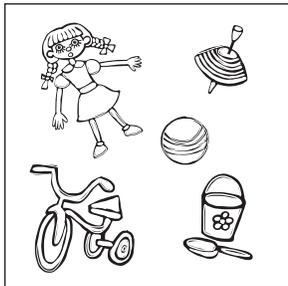
Clothing

WANT NEED



Television

WANT NEED



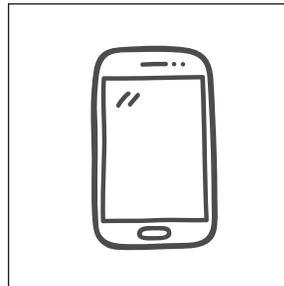
Toys

WANT NEED



Food

WANT NEED



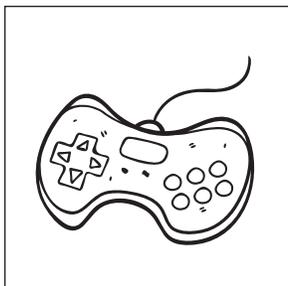
Smartphone

WANT NEED



Soda

WANT NEED



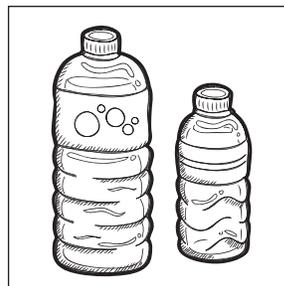
Video Games

WANT NEED



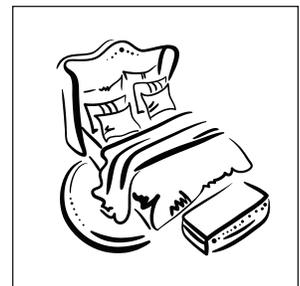
Home

WANT NEED



Water

WANT NEED



My Own Bedroom

WANT NEED

MONSTER ROAR BINGO



<p>SPOKE UP FOR SOMETHING THAT CONCERNS YOU</p> <hr/>	<p>SET A GOOD EXAMPLE FOR SOMEONE</p> <hr/>	<p>SAW OTHERS BEING MEAN TO SOMEONE</p> <hr/>
<p>RAISED MONEY FOR SOMETHING YOU BELIEVE IN</p> <hr/>	<p>MY ROAR!</p> <hr/>	<p>WORKED THROUGH A DISAGREEMENT WITH A FRIEND</p> <hr/>
<p>HELPED OUT IN THE COMMUNITY</p> <hr/>	<p>WENT OUT OF YOUR WAY TO HELP SOMEONE</p> <hr/>	<p>DID A SECRET ACT OF KINDNESS</p> <hr/>

VOTING ACTIVITY & TOOL GUIDE

Grades Pre-K–4

ABOUT MIGHTY MEDIA

Mighty Media Press, for-profit children’s publisher, is partnering with non-profit, Kids Voting USA, to support civic engagement for kids in grades K–12 across the country. Mighty Media Press has developed a free, downloadable Civic Engagement & Character Building Activity Guide around its recently published and nationally-distributed picture book, *Monster Needs Your Vote*, to teach youth about democracy, nonpartisan politics, character building, and the importance of taking a stand for what you believe.

Our goal is to get young people involved in the democratic process at an early age in order to cultivate life-long active citizenship and strong character. Mighty Media offers books or eBooks, publicity, buttons, and posters, plus Core Curriculum and National Social Studies assessment tools, resources, and activities that correlate to all Kids Voting affiliates’ efforts and materials.

Mighty Media Inc., parent company of Mighty Media Press, has a successful history of working with non-profit organizations to engage youth to become compassionate, confident, well-informed, and socially conscious kids who want to make a difference through such organizations as: YMCA of the USA, BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MINNESOTA, DO SOMETHING, EDUCATION MINNESOTA, and MINNESOTA ALLIANCE WITH YOUTH.

To purchase books/eBooks at a special single product or bulk rate discount and to set up a Skype session, contact: Nancy Tuminelly, publisher, nancy@mightymedia.com. To find out more, go to mightymediapress.com.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paul Czajak got an F with the words, “get a tutor,” on his college writing paper and, after that, never dreamed he’d become an author. But after spending 20 years as a chemist, he knew his creativity could no longer be contained. Paul believes in exposing young readers to higher-level concepts and vocabulary in his humorous, read-aloud verse to build life skills and foster creativity. He lives in New Jersey with his wife and two little monsters. In addition to the best-selling *Monster & Me™* series, he’s also the author of *Seaver the Weaver*. Connect with Paul at pczajak@gmail.com.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Wendy Grieb is a professional working and teaching in the Los Angeles animation industry. She is an award-winning storyboard artist, who has worked as a developmental artist, illustrator and character designer for many major animation film productions. Wendy lives in Yorba Linda, California.

ABOUT THE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST

Susan Ragsdale is a nationally-recognized positive youth development specialist and a best-selling co-author with seven titles to her name, including best-sellers *Great Group Games: 175 Boredom-Busting, Zero-Prep Team Builders for All Ages, Groups, Troops, Clubs & Classrooms: The Essential Handbook for Working with Youth*, and the newest creation, *Brain Boosters for Groups in a Jar*.

Susan partners with youth-focused agencies for professional development. Her experience includes civic engagement, service-learning, and character building. You can learn more about her workshops and books through her website and blog. Connect with her at susan@TheAssetEdge.net or follow her on Twitter @TheAssetEdge.