

# CHAPTER FIVE QUALITIES OF SSB

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## OVERVIEW

The *Qualities of Strong, Smart and Bold* were conceptualized as a creative way to address the mission of GirlSMART while maintaining a strong focus on literacy. Site coordinators and teachers reported that their greatest struggle was maintaining a focus on building strong, smart and bold girls when the majority of the time in the afterschool program was allocated for literacy.

A recommendation was made by a literacy consultant to create “habits” similar to Sandra Kaplan’s *Habits of a Scholar*, referred to often as *Think Like a Scholar* which were created to challenge gifted students. These habits serve as a framework for behavior and attitudes. (See Appendix B for *Think Like a Scholar*.) In GATE classrooms, posters of the habits are posted and students are taught the characteristics of each habit. Once students are trained in them, these habits become part of the culture of the classroom and guide students’ ways of thinking, behaviors, and approaches to tasks and activities. The flexibility of these habits and the ease in which they are infused into the curriculum inspired GirlSMART staff to create their own icons, which are called *Qualities of Strong, Smart and Bold*.

With this goal in mind, a group of site coordinators and teachers convened during the summer of 2010 to identify what qualities they thought were most essential for strong, smart and bold girls. After extensive brainstorming, discussions and multiple drafts, *The Qualities of Strong, Smart and Bold* came to fruition in a final draft form.

The *Qualities of Strong, Smart and Bold* should become an integral part of the GirlSMART program and should be reinforced several ways. First, they should be explicitly taught at the beginning of the year and explained in developmentally appropriate ways. Teachers should give an overview of the qualities at the beginning of the year, then focus on each quality in depth. The qualities should be posted in the classroom daily. The teacher should use the qualities to help guide students during their individual goal setting. The teacher should also praise students who are demonstrating one of the qualities. Lastly, the teacher should make connections between these qualities and those of the characters in the read aloud books. The teacher should also expect girls to be able to identify characters that do or do not demonstrate qualities of strong, smart and bold.

*Qualities of Strong, Smart and Bold* appear on the last page of this chapter. Please note that for each quality, there is a child-friendly description framed with, “We are...” and a picture for each quality. This document should serve as a guide for all students and be posted in the classroom. Depending on your classroom set up, teachers may want to make this document poster size or use the large version with a single quality per page (see Appendix H). Mini lessons have also been created to assist teachers in

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explicitly teaching these qualities. There is one example of a mini lesson in responsibility below. Each quality has several descriptors, so you may want to modify them slightly for kindergarten. You can also choose for kindergarteners, to just focus on qualities of strong, smart and bold. Please note that you would need to come up with clear, child friendly definitions of these qualities.

## RESPONSIBLE

Grade (s)	1-3
Kid Friendly Definition	<p>Responsible:</p> <p>We come ready to share, learn, and participate</p> <p>We strive to organize our belongings and space</p> <p>We listen to our bodies and our minds</p> <p>We take care of the world around us</p> <p>We set personal goals</p>
Example	<p><u>*We come ready to share, learn, and participate:</u> When you come into the GirlSMART classroom you put your stuff down, sit down on the carpet, and get ready to participate in opening circle.</p> <p><u>*We strive to organize our belongings and space:</u> When you are at a desk or table, you are in your chair and sitting up. You have all the materials you need and keep them clean.</p> <p><u>*We listen to our bodies and our mind:</u> When you are uncomfortable and you know that you can't concentrate change where or how you are sitting. If something is bothering you, you can talk to a teacher or a friend.</p> <p><u>*We take care of the world around us:</u> When you have trash, you walk the extra distance to throw it in a trash can and not on the ground.</p> <p><u>*We set personal goals:</u> Think about what you want to be better at, think about how you can get better at it, and put your plan in action.</p>
Extend	<p>Give various scenarios that describe a responsible girl and a few that do not. Have the girls give a thumbs-up or down if the girl is showing that she is responsible. If she is not, ask a volunteer to explain how she can change her behavior to show that she is responsible.</p> <p>Example: Sanai comes to school every day excited and ready to learn. She listens to the teacher and her friends and shares her opinion. She always knows where her homework is and never loses her jacket because she keeps her backpack organized.</p> <p>Have the girls fill out a chart with the circle in the middle saying "responsible." In the five</p>

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	squares the girls will write the 5 actions and then think of their own scenario that relates to each to write and illustrate. Pages will be kept for book: <i>Strong, Smart, and Bold Girls</i> .
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The qualities taught to kindergarteners and the first graders during the first trimester differ from those taught starting the second trimester of first grade through third grade. Kindergarteners and first trimester first graders will be explicitly taught qualities of strong, smart and bold. Below is an example a mini lesson tailored for kindergarteners. See Appendix I for more examples of mini lessons for teaching *Qualities of Strong, Smart and Bold*.

## STRONG

Grade	K
Kid Friendly Definition	Strong can mean that we have a lot of muscles but it can also mean that we keep going even when things are hard.
Example	Sometimes we feel like we want to give up but sometimes we need to push through. Some of the things in kindergarten can be hard to learn, but since we are strong, we push through it and will be able to learn a lot.
Extend	<p>A game that can be difficult for kindergartners is the hand squeezing game because it requires a lot of patience and quiet. Have the girls stand in a circle and hold hands (make sure to tell the girls that we are not holding hard or pulling on other people). Then the teacher will pass a squeeze around the circle. As the girls receive the squeeze they will have to pass it to the next person. If it seems too easy, then have them close their eyes and do it. They will have to work together.</p> <p>When they can successfully pass the squeeze around see if they can do it faster. They will have to really work together. At the end make sure they clap for their hard work and tell them that though it was really difficult they all did a great job and showed that they could be strong. Though we may have wanted to give up, we didn't!</p>

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## Qualities of Strong, Smart, and Bold GirlSMART Girls

**We Are.....**

### **Empowered**

Stand up for what we feel is right  
Know when to ask for help  
Make positive choices  
Believe we can succeed



### **Responsible**

Come ready to share, learn, and participate  
Strive to organize our belongings and space  
Listen to our bodies and minds  
Take care of the world around us  
Set personal goals



### **Open**

Express our needs  
Listen to others with open minds  
Earn trust  
Appreciate and accept differences



### **Resilient**

Try new, challenging tasks and stick to them  
Recognize our inner strengths  
See mistakes as an opportunity to learn  
Forgive ourselves and others



### **Explorers**

Show curiosity by asking thoughtful questions  
Exercise our imaginations  
Look for answers and solutions by ourselves  
Interact with the world around us

