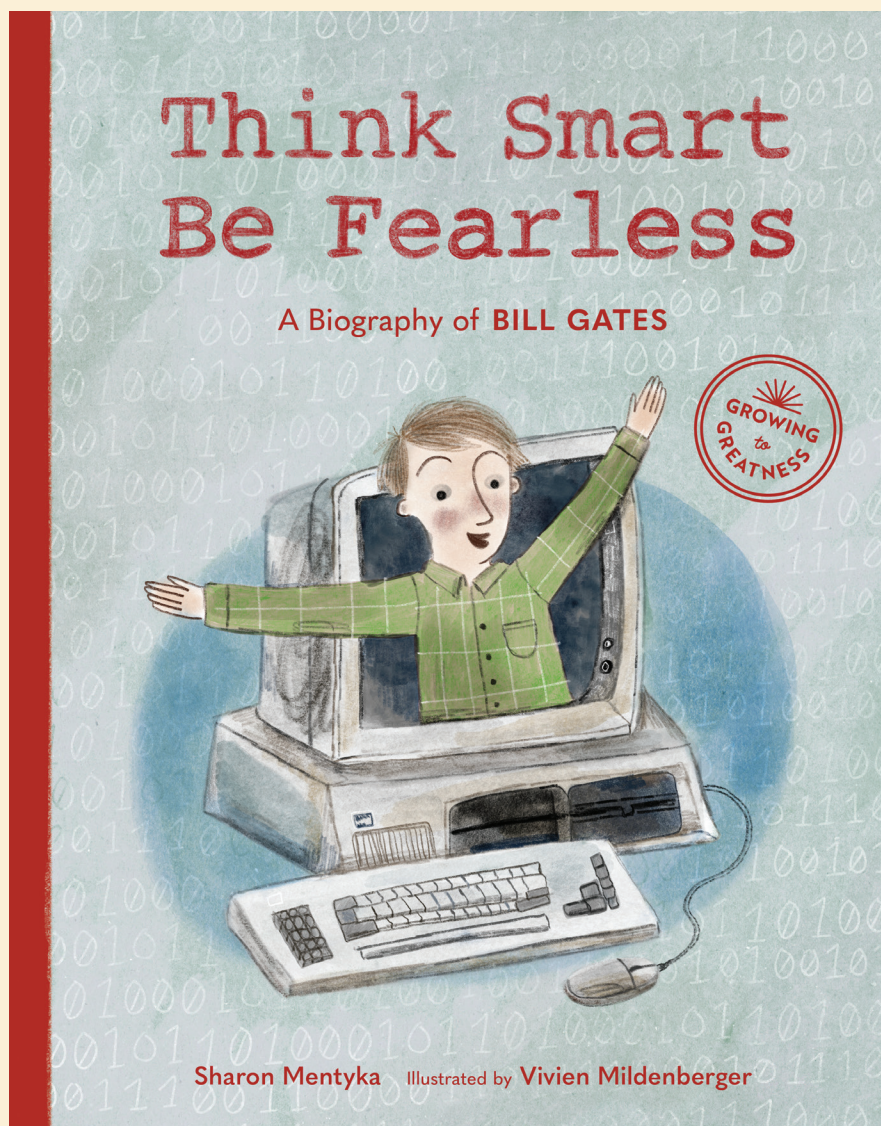




# EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



## THINK SMART, BE FEARLESS

**A Biography of Bill Gates**

Written by Sharon Mentyka; Illustrated by Vivien Mildenerberger



little bigfoot

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# GET MORE OUT OF THIS BOOK

## GROUP DISCUSSION

- Before reading, elicit prior knowledge about what children think a biography is. After discussion, explain it is common for famous people, who have a big impact on the world in some way, to write their life's story. This is called an **autobiography**. However, when someone else writes their story, it is called a **biography**.
- Ask, "Why would it be a good thing to read about someone's life?" Tell the children it is good to learn about people who have had a positive impact on the world, because they teach how positive choices can give us better lives. Their stories may also reveal how they overcame difficulties in their lives, which can help us learn how to overcome difficulties in our own lives.

## GROUP ACTIVITIES

- After reading the book, discuss details about Bill Gates that set him apart as he grew up. Make a list of details that could be used to build a character profile. This could include his family's passion for games, his innate curiosity about how the world works, his intense drive to think smart, his eagerness to learn new things, and his perseverance when things became hard.
- Ask, "Why did Bill get into trouble in school if he was so smart?"
- Discuss challenges children may have had when they had to change schools. Ask, "What was hard? What was exciting?"
- Think about a childhood experience Bill had. Ask, "How did this childhood experience help him later as an adult?"
- Discuss why it was hard when Bill expected people to act like computers. Discuss why there was so much pressure during this time of his life.

## INDEPENDENT ACTIVITIES

- Write a response to the question: "Why is it important for young people to identify and connect with a group?" Reflect on when this happened for Bill as a young person.
- Write a response to the questions: "What does being fearless mean to you? How can fear hold people back from success? Does making mistakes mean we aren't successful?"
- As a young student at Lakeside School, Bill had a vision of the future. What is his vision of the future today? How has it changed? As a young person looking forward in the twenty-first century, what do you see as being the future? Will technology always be the future?
- Though Bill Gates is one of the wealthiest men in the world, it might surprise young readers to learn that his life's work is now focused on finding worthy causes, through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, to which he can give away his accumulated wealth. There may be a lesson for humanity hidden in this endeavor: people gain fulfillment and happiness when giving back to help others. Write to the questions: "Do you have to be wealthy to share? How do you give back?"
- Reflect on the quote from Bill Gates in the front of the book, which reads: "Humanity's greatest advances are not in its discoveries—but in how those discoveries are applied to reduce inequity." Discuss what "reducing inequity" meant to both Bill and Melinda Gates in the end of the book. What does it mean to you?

