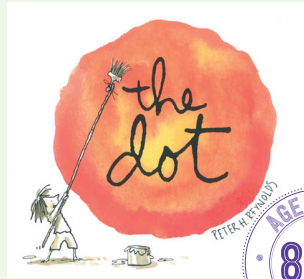


**Themes**

- Do Your Best
- Uniqueness of Me
- Self-Acceptance
- Encourage Others



Vashti leaves art class with a blank piece of paper believing that she can't draw. With the encouraging words from her teacher, she starts with something very simple – a dot – and begins to realize that when she takes a step towards doing her best - she begins an amazing journey of self-discovery and acceptance of her uniqueness.

**Teacher Note:** NED reminds kids to do their best at everything!  
*“Even if you can’t do something as great as someone else – you should always try to do YOUR personal best. That’s what makes you a champion!”*

**Before Reading: Discussion Starters**

1. Think about something one of your friends can do really well. How does it feel to not be able to do it as well as they can do it? *Answers will vary. Don't try anymore. Keep working at it. Allow students an opportunity to share.*
2. How does it feel to “Do Your Best” and have it not be as good as someone else? *Answers will vary. Encourage them to see the importance of doing your personal best and realizing that we each have unique strengths.*

**After Reading: Discussion Starters**

1. Why was Vashti’s paper blank at the end of class? Was she NED-like? *She did not feel she was an artist and instead of trying, she did nothing. She was NOT like NED – she DID give up and she DIDN'T do her best.*
2. Identify and discuss the different feelings, emotions and attitudes that Vashti showed throughout the story. Share WHY you think she felt the way she did at that moment. Use illustrations, story and inference to discuss and support answers.

Scene in story	Feelings/Emotions/Attitudes	Supported by
Sitting at table with blank piece of paper	Sad Angry Disgusted Depressed Frustrated	Turns her back to the paper Head on hands Eyebrows arched No smile Not amused by teacher’s funny comments

*Chart continues on next page*

# The Dot

by Peter H. Reynolds

## Themes

Do Your Best  
Uniqueness of Me  
Self-Acceptance  
Encourage Others

Scene in Story	Feelings/Emotions/Attitudes	Supported by
Marking the paper	Mad, aggressively compliant Unhappy Prove her point	"Grabs" the marker Doesn't turn around in chair Arched eyebrow Simple communication - "There!"
Signing the artwork	Ridiculed Made fun of	Arched eyebrows No smile "I CAN sign my name"
Seeing framed artwork	Surprised and shocked Motivated	"Hmmp" I can do better
Making new artwork	Determined Experimental Did her best	Paints and paints Tries new colors Smiles
Displaying her artwork	Proud Encourager	Smile Extends encouragement to someone else (line boy)

3. Does this story inspire you to "Do Your Best" at something you have given up on? Share your story with the class.

## Writing Prompt

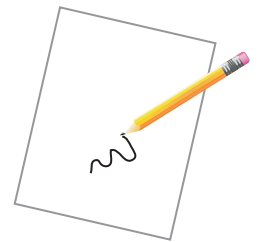
**Journal Writing:** Write a persuasive argument piece. Is it more important to DO your best or BE the best? Support your answers. Use the printable to aid students in organizing their arguments.

PRINTABLE:

Graphic Organizer

## Activities

**The Squiggly Line** Divide students into groups of 3-5. This is a silent activity (*you can thank us later!*)! Hand the group one piece of paper with a squiggly line on it. The first person has 60 seconds to do his/her best to create something using the line. Every 60 seconds, the paper and pencil is passed to the next person to do his/her best and keep the drawing growing. Students must add to what is drawn and not start something entirely new. Remind the student to not talk about what they are trying to draw. Provide encouraging words about discovery and experimentation as each person works on the drawing. Keep it rotating as long as interest is high and time permits. Have each student sign the drawing and hang your class masterpieces!



Resources

Accelerated Reading Quiz: 69954  
Author Website: [www.peterhreynolds.com/dot](http://www.peterhreynolds.com/dot)

### "I Did My Best" Button

NED buttons are a great reward when students do their personal best! Visit [www.thenedshow.com/shop\\_ned](http://www.thenedshow.com/shop_ned) to purchase.



# PERSUASIVE WRITING ORGANIZER



**YOUR  
POSITION**

**REASON 1**

**REASON 2**

**REASON 3**

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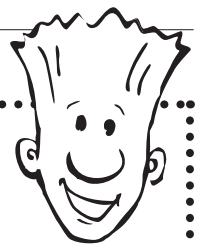
**SUPPORT**

**SUPPORT**

**SUPPORT**

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**DO YOUR BEST TO PERSUADE SOMEONE!**



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