

# The Power of Literacy



In the short story, “*The Difficult Path*,” Grace Lin writes about the power of literacy through the main character Lingsi. Lingsi is able to gain an education thanks to her mother’s strength of character. Lingsi is a bright young lady who enjoys learning and literacy--and it is literacy that then saves Lingsi!!

For this project, first read the short story, “[The Difficult Path](#).” Have students consider what literacy means to them and how it empowers Lingsi, and how it can empower us as well. Students may also evaluate what a lack of literacy would mean. Perhaps students can explore the importance of

literacy in various cultures and places around the world, or throughout history. **Consider these two definitions:**

**Literacy is** how we make meaning of the world around us through language, through reading-writing-listening-speaking-problem solving.

**Empowering literacy** leads us to gain control of our own lives and to effect positive change in our lives and the lives of those around us.

## Simple Version:

Have your students describe a time they learned a valuable lesson. Then have your students write a short story explaining what they learned, what the process of learning was like, and how it was valuable to them. An example could be learning to ride a bike, which was important for riding to football practice. Maybe they capture how this empowered them.

## Advanced Version:

Have your students explore the power of literacy around the world. Begin by having students read about young people whose literacy experience empowered their lives or their communities. Then have students write a narrative about an individual they discovered who gained control over their own destiny through literacy, or someone who effected positive change in the lives of others around them. Consider stories such as: *The Long Walk to Water*, *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*, etc. This dovetails nicely with the Unsung Hero project.

**Here are some Common Core Standards that can be engaged by this project:**

[Writing Standard 5](#)

[Writing Standard 8](#)

[Speaking and Listening Standard 8](#)

## Teachers:

**When your students are finished, please share their projects with**

**[bgsulitpark@bgsu.edu](mailto:bgsulitpark@bgsu.edu) BY APRIL 1, 2020. Have students label their project with Name, School, Project #.**