

THE BEACON KEEPERS



FIRST LIGHT

Extension Activities

Units 1-6

Support Materials

Educational Use Notice

These materials are provided by Lordsburg Press as optional companion resources for *The Beacon Keepers: First Light*. They are designed to support classroom, library, homeschool, family, and small-group conversations around the themes of the book, including trust, teamwork, integrity, student voice, purpose, and responsible leadership. These resources are not a formal curriculum, clinical program, counseling tool, psychological assessment, or substitute for professional judgment. Educators, librarians, parents, and facilitators should adapt questions and activities based on student age, readiness, classroom culture, district policy, and local requirements. Some prompts may invite personal reflection. Students should never be required to share private experiences. They may respond from their own experience, from a character's experience, or through a general "someone might" example.

Extension Activities

Classroom activities for reflection, collaboration, problem-solving, and applied learning

These activities help students connect the story to action through discussion, planning, presenting, creating, and teamwork. Each activity includes a story connection, simple steps, debrief questions, and options for differentiation. Use them flexibly based on student readiness, classroom needs, and available time. When personal sharing is not appropriate or desired, students may respond through a character, fictional scenario, or general “someone might” example. The goal is thoughtful participation, respectful collaboration, and meaningful connection to the story.

Unit 1

1A. The Beacon Quest | 20 min | Individual → Small Groups

Connection: Mirrors the characters' discovery process in Chapters 2–4.

Materials: Paper, pencils. Optional: index cards.

Setup: Assign the asking portion ahead of time, or let students complete the activity using a character, fictional student, or trusted classroom example. Tell students: “The Beacon Keepers had to discover their purpose by asking other people what they noticed. You’re going to do the same thing.”

Steps:

1. Students write down 2–3 people they trust.
2. Ask those people: “What do you think I care about most?” Write down the answers.
3. Look for patterns. What shows up more than once?
4. Write a personal beacon statement: one sentence.
5. Share in small groups of 3–4. No critiquing — just listening.

Debrief:

- Was anything surprising about what people said?
- Did the patterns match what you expected?
- How does writing it down feel different from just thinking it?

Scaffolding: *For struggling writers: “I stand for ___ because I always ___.”*

CCSS: W.5.3, SL.5.1 | SEL: Self-Awareness | Logbook: Section 1

1B. Lighthouse Diagram | 30 min | Individual

Connection: The three-part lighthouse is the novel’s central framework.

Materials: Large paper, colored pencils or markers.

Setup: Draw a simple lighthouse on the board. Label: Beacon (top), Foundation (base), Shoreline (visible line where light meets the world).

Steps:

1. Students draw their own lighthouse with personal content: Beacon = what matters, Foundation = values, Shoreline = visible actions.
2. Encourage both drawing and writing.
3. Display on a classroom wall as a gallery.

Debrief:

- Which part was easiest to fill in? Which was hardest?
- How does your shoreline connect to your beacon?

Differentiation: *For advanced students: add a “fog” layer representing fears or doubts.*

CCSS: RL.5.2, W.5.2 | SEL: Self-Awareness | Logbook: Section 1

Unit 2

2A. Room Redesign Challenge | 45 min | Small Groups (4–5)

Connection: The Beacon Keepers observed their school spaces to understand who felt welcome.

Materials: Paper, pencils. Optional: clipboards.

Setup: Tell students: “You’re going to observe our classroom the same way the Beacon Keepers observed their cafeteria.”

Steps:

1. Groups observe the classroom silently for 3 minutes. Write what they notice.
2. Groups share observations and look for patterns.
3. Each group proposes ONE change to make the space more welcoming.
4. Groups present proposals. Class votes on one to implement.

Debrief:

- What did you notice that you’d never noticed before?
- How does the physical space affect how people feel?

Differentiation: *Provide a checklist: lighting, seating, wall displays, entry/exit flow, isolated areas.*

CCSS: SL.5.1, W.5.1 | SEL: Social Awareness | Logbook: Section 2

2B. Invitation Role-Play | 20 min | Pairs

Connection: The Beacon Keepers recruited members one conversation at a time.

Materials: None required.

Setup: One student invites, one is skeptical (like Marcus: “If it turns into a popularity club, I’m out”).

Steps:

1. Pairs decide roles. Skeptic chooses a reason for hesitation.
2. Inviter has 2 minutes to get them interested — without pressuring.
3. Switch roles and repeat.

Debrief:

- What words helped? What pushed the skeptic away?
- How is inviting different from convincing?

Differentiation: *For advanced pairs: add a third person who observes and gives feedback.*

CCSS: SL.5.1 | SEL: Relationship Skills | Logbook: Section 2

Unit 3

3A. Ethical Dilemma Discussion | 30 min | Small Groups → Whole Class

Connection: The Beacon Keepers chose to disclose a mistake rather than hide it.

Materials: Scenario cards or projected on board.

Setup: Present: “Your team collected information to help students, but you didn’t get proper permission first. What do you do?”

Steps:

1. Small groups discuss for 8 minutes. Each must reach a decision with reasoning.
2. Groups present. No debating between groups yet — just listening.
3. Open the floor: “Did anyone change their mind after hearing another group?”
4. Connect to the book: What did the Beacon Keepers actually do? Why?

Debrief:

- Is there a difference between good intentions and doing the right thing?
- What’s harder: telling the truth or living with the secret?

Differentiation: *Provide a second scenario for groups that finish early.*

CCSS: SL.5.1, W.5.1 | SEL: Responsible Decision-Making | Logbook: Section 3

3B. Correction Plan Workshop | 30 min | Individual or Pairs ★ **Assessment Option**

Connection: The Beacon Keepers wrote a formal correction plan before meeting with the principal.

Materials: Paper, pencils. Optional: four-box template.

Setup: Tell students: “The Beacon Keepers didn’t just apologize. They wrote a correction plan.”

Steps:

1. Students choose a real or hypothetical mistake.
2. Fill in four sections: (1) What went wrong? (2) What did we do about it? (3) How do we prevent it next time? (4) Who do we need to involve?
3. Pairs review each other’s plans and give one piece of feedback.
4. Volunteers share with the class.

Debrief:

- What’s the difference between apologizing and having a plan?
- Why does ‘How do we prevent it next time?’ matter most?

Differentiation: *Provide the four-box template printed for students who need visual structure.*

CCSS: W.5.2 | SEL: Responsible Decision-Making, Self-Management | Logbook: Section 3

Unit 4

4A. Presentation Workshop | 45 min | Individual → Whole Class ★ Assessment Option

Connection: The Beacon Keepers learn that communicating something true is different from performing.

Materials: Paper, pencils. Timer.

Setup: Tell students: “Prepare a 3-minute presentation about something you genuinely care about. Rule: start with WHY you care, not with facts.”

Steps:

1. Choose a topic. Write an outline: (1) Why I care, (2) What I know, (3) One takeaway.
2. Present to the class (3-minute limit, timed).
3. After each, the class asks one respectful, challenging question. The presenter answers honestly.

Debrief:

- What was harder: preparing or presenting?
- How did starting with your story change how the audience listened?

Differentiation: *For anxious presenters: allow presenting to a small group of 3–4.*

CCSS: SL.5.4, SL.5.1 | SEL: Self-Management | Logbook: Section 4

4B. Values Comparison Chart | 20 min | Pairs or Individual

Connection: The Beacon Keepers and Apex Robotics represent two different philosophies.

Materials: Paper, pencils.

Setup: Tell students: “We’re comparing two teams — not to decide who’s better, but to understand what each values.”

Steps:

1. Two-column chart: Beacon Keepers vs. Apex Robotics.
2. List: What do they value? How do they prepare? What do they show judges?
3. Each student writes: “Which team would I rather be on, and why?”

Debrief:

- Can both approaches lead to success? What kind?
- Is Ethan a villain, or does he just define leadership differently?

Differentiation: *For advanced students: write a paragraph from Ethan’s perspective.*

CCSS: RL.5.3, RL.5.2 | SEL: Social Awareness | Logbook: Section 4

Unit 5

5A. Decision Filter Activity | 30 min | Small Groups

Connection: Dr. Martinez’s three-question filter is an age-appropriate introduction to strategic thinking.

Materials: Decision cards (6 fictional opportunities). Paper.

Setup: Prepare 6 cards with opportunities (e.g., “A TV station wants to interview the team tomorrow,” “A school 2 hours away wants help”).

Steps:

1. Groups receive all 6 cards.
2. For each: (1) Does it serve the mission or purpose? (2) Does it make us stronger? (3) Can we do it without breaking?
3. If not YES to all three, the answer is NO.
4. Groups present decisions and reasoning.

Debrief:

- Which opportunity was hardest to say no to?
- Where in your own life could you use these three questions?

Differentiation: *Provide the three questions on a card for each group.*

CCSS: SL.5.1, W.5.1 | SEL: Responsible Decision-Making | Logbook: Section 5

5B. Capacity Planning | 20 min | Individual

Connection: Amil says “Interest creates load. Load creates risk.”

Materials: Paper, pencils. Optional: weekly calendar template.

Setup: Tell students: “The Beacon Keepers had to learn that saying yes to everything leads to burnout.”

Steps:

1. List everything you do in a typical week: school, homework, sports, chores, family, screen time, sleep, free time.
2. Estimate hours per week for each.
3. Identify: Where do I have capacity? Where am I at the limit?
4. Write one thing to add and one thing to protect.

Debrief:

- What surprised you about how you spend your time?
- Is rest a waste of time, or part of your capacity?

Differentiation: *For younger students: provide a pre-printed weekly calendar.*

CCSS: W.5.2 | SEL: Self-Management | Logbook: Section 5

Unit 6

6A. Full-Circle Writing | 30 min | Individual

Connection: The novel begins and ends in Saltwind Bay, but Leo has changed.

Materials: Paper, pencils.

Setup: Tell students: “The best stories end where they began — but the person has changed.”

Steps:

1. Choose a place that matters to you.
2. Write the opening paragraph: describe the place using 3–5 specific details.
3. Write the middle: what happened that changed how you see it.
4. Write the closing: same place, same details, but one detail has shifted.

Debrief:

- How did changing one detail at the end change the whole meaning?
- Why is it powerful to end where you started?

Differentiation: *For struggling writers: provide the opening frame and write only the closing.*

CCSS: W.5.3, RL.5.6 | SEL: Self-Awareness | Logbook: Section 6

6B. Letter to a Character | 20 min | Individual

Connection: Students write directly to a character, building empathy and textual connection.

Materials: Paper, pencils. Optional: envelope.

Setup: Tell students: “Pick any character. Write them a letter. Tell them what you want them to know, and ask one question.”

Steps:

1. Choose a character.
2. Include: (1) Something you admire, (2) Something you wish they knew, (3) One question.
3. Optional: swap letters and write a response *AS* the character.

Debrief:

- Which character did you choose, and why?
- If you wrote a response, did it change how you understood them?

Differentiation: *The character-response swap builds perspective-taking for advanced students.*

CCSS: W.5.1, RL.5.3 | SEL: Social Awareness | Logbook: Section 6
