

# FINNY AND THE 5Ls

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## Reader's Guide

### Introduction to the Guide

This guide is designed to help readers of "Finny and the 5Ls" explore the core messages of the book. Through discussion questions and activities, readers can reflect on the ideas of **LOVE, LAUGHTER, LABOR, LEISURE**, and **LEAVE**, and how they contribute to a happy and balanced life, just like they do for Finny!

Remember to adapt the questions and activities to suit your audience and encourage open, honest discussion! Be sure to read the book completely before facilitating a discussion.

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### Finny and the 5Ls: A Guide to Happiness!

#### Introduction: Meet Finny!



##### *Before Reading*

- **Ask:** Have you ever seen a really happy dog? What makes you happy?
- **Introduce:** "Today, we're going to read about Finny, the happiest dog in the whole wide world! He's so happy because he found something called the **5Ls**."
- **Show the book:** Point to Finny on the cover (if applicable).
- **Discuss:** What do you think the 5Ls could be?
  - *Brainstorm ideas, don't give away the answer yet!*



## Exploring the Magic of the 5Ls!



*During Reading - Pages 2-6*

In this initial section of the book, let's learn about each of Finny's special 5Ls toys and what they mean!



### The Magic of LOVE



*Page 2*

- **Read:** "The magic of having **LOVE** in your life. Finny loves to play with Mom."
- **Ask:**
  - What does Finny do with his Mom and the LOVE toy?
    - *Runs, tail wags, squeaks!*
  - Who do you love to play with? How do they make you feel?
  - What are some ways we show love to our family and friends?



### The Magic of LAUGHTER



*Page 3*

- **Read:** "The magic of having **LAUGHTER** in your life. Finny never actually laughs, but if dogs could, the smirk or smile on Finny's face when this toy goes FWOOSH would count as a laugh!"
- **Ask:**
  - What makes you laugh out loud?
  - Can you show me your "Finny smirk" or "Finny smile"?
  - Why is it good to laugh?





## The Magic of LABOR



Page 4

- **Read:** "The magic of having **LABOR** in your life. Ohhh! This is a toy Finny loves. Giuliana loves to pull this toy."
- **Ask:**
  - What is Finny doing with Giuliana and the LABOR toy?
    - *Playing tug-of-war, pulling back and forth!*
  - What does "labor" mean in this story?
    - *Working, trying hard, doing something that takes effort.*
  - What are some things you work hard at?
    - *e.g., building with blocks, helping clean up, learning to ride a bike.*
  - How does it feel when you try your best?



## The Magic of LEISURE



Page 5

- **Read:** "The magic of having **LEISURE** in your life. This toy is Finny's favorite to play with while Dad is making dinner."
- **Ask:**
  - What does Finny do with his LEISURE toy?
    - *Gnaws on it, hops around when it's cold!*
  - What do you think "leisure" means?
    - *Taking a break, relaxing, doing something you enjoy for fun.*
  - What are your favorite ways to relax or have "me time"?





## The Magic of LEAVE



Page 6

- **Read:** "The magic of having **LEAVE** in your life. Finny always saves this toy to play with Grandma."
  - **Ask:**
    - What does Finny do when Grandma leaves?
      - *Feels a little sad, tucks his toy under his chest.*
    - What do you think "leave" means in this story?
      - *Saying goodbye, moving on, changing plans.*
    - Have you ever felt a little sad when someone leaves or when something changes? What helps you feel better?
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## Finny's Great Toy Hunt & Big Ideas!



*During Reading - Pages 7-17*

Finny's toy is missing, and we have an opportunity to go deeper into the 5Ls to solve the mystery! Let's see what wise words he thinks about when he finds each part.



### Finding LOVE!



*Pages 8-9*

- **Read:** How Finny finds his **LOVE toy** in the laundry room.
- **Finny Says:**
  - "First, **LOVE** yourself."
    - *Why is it important to be kind to yourself?*
  - "**LOVE** your family."
    - *Who is in your family? How do you show them love?*
  - "**LOVE** your friends."
    - *What makes a good friend?*
  - "**LOVE** everyone."
    - *How can we show kindness to everyone, even people we don't know well?*
  - "Without **LOVE** in your life, your life can be very, very sad."
    - *How does love make us feel happy?*
- **Activity Idea:** Draw a picture of someone you love.



### Finding LAUGHTER!



*Pages 10-11*

- **Read:** How Finny finds his **LAUGHTER toy** in the bathtub!
- **Finny Says:**
  - "We should not take ourselves or our life too seriously."



- *What does that mean? Should we always be serious?*
- "If you do something silly, then laugh at yourself!"
  - *Have you ever done something silly and laughed about it?*
- "It's okay to make mistakes."
  - *Why is it okay to make mistakes?*
- "Having fun and **LAUGHTER** in our lives can really make you happy."
  - *What's the funniest thing that happened to you this week?*
- "Let's all find time every day to smile."
  - *Let's all try to smile right now!*
- **Activity Idea:** Tell a silly joke or make a funny face.



## Finding LABOR!



Pages 12-13

- **Read:** How Finny finds his **LABOR toy** stuck between Giuliana's bed and the wall.
- **Finny Says:**
  - "Whatever you do in life, make sure you try to do it the best you can."
    - *What does "try your best" look like?*
  - "Having fun at whatever you do can make you very happy!"
    - *Can work be fun? How?*
  - "Take a break from whatever is pulling you now and then."
    - *Why is it important to take breaks?*
  - "Sometimes we get stuck, and it is okay to ask for help."
    - *When is a good time to ask for help?*
  - "Sometimes we have to work on the important relationships in our lives."
    - *What does "working on a relationship" mean?*
- **Activity Idea:** Share a time you worked hard on something and felt proud.





## Finding LEISURE!



Pages 14-15

- **Read:** How Finny finds his **LEISURE toy** hiding behind the trash can.
- **Finny Says:**
  - "You need to take time every day to relax."
    - *What helps you feel relaxed?*
  - "When you get tired, it's okay to rest."
    - *Why is rest important for our bodies and minds?*
  - "It's important to recharge your batteries."
    - *What does it mean to "recharge" yourself?*
  - "It is important to take care of yourself."
    - *What are some ways you take care of yourself?*
  - "Me Time is different for everyone, even for dogs!"
    - *What does "me time" mean to you?*
- **Activity Idea:** Practice a quiet moment of relaxation, like taking a few deep breaths.



## Finding LEAVE!



Pages 16-17

- **Read:** How Finny finds his **LEAVE toy** in Grandma's knitting basket.
- **Finny Says:**
  - "It's okay to change your mind and **LEAVE** and move on to something else."
    - *Is it okay to change your mind about something?*
  - "Sometimes leaving something can be the best thing you can do."
    - *Can you think of a time when leaving something behind was a good idea?*



- "When you **LEAVE** something, you might be a little scared about not being sure what will happen, and that's okay."
    - *What does it feel like to be a little scared?*
  - "It's okay to do something you never did before because you might like it even better."
    - *What's something new you'd like to try?*
  - "It's important to always know that brighter days are coming."
    - *What does "brighter days are coming" mean?*
  - **Activity Idea:** Talk about a new adventure you'd like to have.
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## Conclusion: All 5Ls Together!



After Reading - Page 18

- **Read:** Finny's final thoughts about having all 5Ls.
- **Ask:**
  - How does Finny feel when he has all 5Ls in his life?
    - *The happiest dog in the world!*
  - Why do you think having all the 5Ls working together makes Finny so happy?
  - Which of the 5Ls do you think is most important for you right now? Why?
  - How can we remember the 5Ls in our own lives?

**The 5Ls: LOVE, LAUGHTER, LABOR, LEISURE, LEAVE!**

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## Extension Activities

- **Draw Your Own 5Ls Toy:** Imagine your own magical 5Ls toy. What would it look like? What color would each piece be?
- **5Ls Charades:** Act out each of the 5Ls (e.g., showing love with a hug, laughing, pretending to work hard, relaxing, waving goodbye).
- **Happy Moments Jar:** Decorate a jar and write or draw moments when you experience each of the 5Ls. Keep it to remember all the things that make you happy!
- **5Ls Song/Chant:** Create a simple song or chant to remember the 5Ls and their meanings.

This guide provides a framework for discussion and activities, but feel free to adapt it to the age and interests of the children you're working with!



## Finny For Grown Ups!

Finny is a great resource for adults also. It can be used in team building or wellness experiences. Or it can be used as a tool to help teams explore work/life balances. You can also consider it for meeting openings or retreat activities. To take a deeper dive into the 5Ls check out page 21 of the book for more information about "The 5Ls- The Gift of a Balanced Life" by Sal LaGreca and Mike Mannix.

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### Discussion Questions:

1. At the end of the book, Finny has all his 5Ls. How does he describe his happiness now? Is there a comparable feeling in your life? A family holiday dinner? A staff happy hour? A reunion weekend with high school friends?
2. What does Finny mean when he says, "When I have the 5Ls in my life working together as a team, I am the happiest dog in the world"?
3. Which of the 5Ls do you think is most important? Can you have one without the others?
4. How does having the right "balance" of the 5Ls make Finny feel like he can "do anything"?
5. How can you try to incorporate all five of the 5Ls into your own life to be your happiest?

### Activity Ideas:

- **LOVE: "Love Jar":** Decorate a jar. Throughout the week, write down or draw small acts of love you give or receive (e.g., a hug, a kind word, helping someone) and put them in the jar.
- **LAUGHTER: "Silly Faces & Giggles":** Have a silly face contest or share lighthearted jokes to encourage laughter and release.
- **LABOR: "Teamwork Challenge":** Work together on a small task or puzzle. Discuss how everyone's effort (labor) contributed to the success.



- **LEISURE: "Mindful Moments":** Practice a short relaxation exercise, like deep breathing or listening to calming music. Discuss how it feels to take a moment for leisure.
- **LEAVE: "New Beginnings":** Talk about a time you "left" something (e.g., an old grade, a favorite toy you outgrew) and how it led to something new and positive.
- **"5Ls Wheel of Happiness":** Draw a circle and divide it into five sections, one for each "L." In each section, draw or write something you can do to bring that "L" into your life. Discuss how they all connect.
- **"My Happy List":** Ask participants to draw or write down things that make them happy, similar to how the 5Ls make Finny happy. Share and discuss.

