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Making Friends with Characters: Exploring Friendship through Literature

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Introduction and Rationale

It was the end of math center time and the classroom was buzzing with noise and activity as each group began to clean up their station. Amongst the normal level of chatter came a determined exclamation – "I'm telling!" As most primary teachers would do, I shuddered at these familiar words. *Here comes more unnecessary drama.* Ella stomped over to me yelling, "Ms. Kiesler! Lucas is being mean to me!" "Can you be more specific?" I replied. "He hit me and knocked down my tower," Ella said as she scowled in Lucas' direction. "Lucas, please come here," I called and patiently waited for the culprit to mosey on over. "Lucas, why did you hit Ella?" Lucas looked up at me and adamantly swore, "I didn't mean to. It was an accident." "Well, did you stop to see if Ella was okay?" I ask, knowing full well that the answer would be a *no* uttered with a blank stare. (This exchange happens so many times a week, every week – all year long. I start to feel like a parakeet squawking to myself.)

Both parties in the above scenario are guilty of egocentric thinking. This whole episode occurred because neither child was able to stop and consider the other person's point of view. Lucas was so busy bounding through the classroom that he bumped into Ella and didn't think twice about stopping to see if she was okay. Her feelings didn't even cross his mind. Likewise, Ella was so offended by Lucas' behavior that she immediately called for my help instead of taking a moment to consider the intentions behind Lucas' actions. Perhaps he had intended to hurt her, or perhaps it was an accident. Ella assumed he had done it on purpose with no thought to the greater context in which the offense occurred. So wrapped up in their own experiences, Ella and Lucas failed to consider the other person's perspective. What's more, they took time from the proceedings of the class as I, the teacher, had to stop everything and help them resolve this conflict.

While such a dispute may seem minor to adults, it is a critical event in the lives of these young students who are ever present in the moment. As any primary grade teacher will tell you, our task is to squeeze content into the limited time in the school day when we aren't addressing the social development of our young students. It is often forgotten that the social-emotional wellbeing of children trumps all other areas of focus because if students are not emotionally healthy and happy they won't be able to focus on learning. This makes sense because social interaction is at the core of human existence. It's as Szalavitz and Perry so elegantly state,

> We live our lives in relationships. Shy or outgoing, rich or poor, famous or obscure—whoever we

> are, without connection, we are empty. Our interactions thrum with rhythm. From the moment of conception to the end of life, we each engage in a unique dance of connection. [1]

It logically follows that one of school's main purposes should be to teach skills and strategies for building and maintaining healthy interpersonal lives. What we seek in a formal education is delivered, utilized, and applied in a social context.

Thus the ultimate purpose of this unit is to cultivate in first and second grade students an ability to take another person's perspective – to consider what a person's actions, words, and reactions tell us. My hope is that this will help them gain critical skills necessary to manage and repair their friendships when conflicts and misunderstandings arise. I want my students not only to build empathy for the other people in their lives but also for the characters they encounter in literature.

Mary Gordon, the founder of *Roots of Empathy* – a program designed to teach young adults empathy within a public school infrastructure – aptly conjures up a sense of what cognitive scientists refer to as Theory of Mind. She says that "literature opens the door to feelings and perspective taking. It's an invitation to be under somebody else's skin." [2] This is exactly what I hope to provide for my students through the activities and strategies outlined here. I want to help them climb into 'somebody else's skin' and consider what the world might be like from that person's point of view. And perhaps see themselves – their own words and actions – in a different light as they try on a new perspective. James Howe, a well-known children's book author, spoke recently to a room of educators about the power of literature as a way for us to rehearse for our own lives. In that moment, he affirmed what I often feel to be true, that fiction gives us an imagined reality – a safe space removed from the complications of the reality of our own life – where we can take a look into what it means to be human and part of a socially based, interconnected culture.

I want to create this safe space for the young readers in my classroom where they can uncover/discover aspects of their own lives from a removed perspective. Through a series of thoughtfully selected read-aloud texts we will practice "reading" people on the page and then hopefully transfer that skill to "reading" people in our lives. When referring to the task of "reading" people, I am merely invoking an analogy that people's body language, words, and actions can be interpreted in some of the same ways literary works might be (and vice versa). I want to cultivate a deeper literacy in which my students become adept at not only reading texts but also reading the cultural landscape as well.

Common perception about teaching young students is that broad, complex ideas must be broken into smaller, more concrete pieces. It is frequently stated that more sophisticated concepts must be "dumbed down" or simplified in order for children to begin to understand. I believe this kind of approach to the conceptualization of young children is limiting and does our youngest learners a disservice. We must not lower our expectations of what they can and cannot comprehend, but instead, within a framework of developmentally appropriate practices, respect our young students as capable of tackling complex concepts. Our job must be to empower them to use their life experiences, however limited we may judge those experiences to be, to make sense of and talk back to the world around them. They have voices full of passionate and well-developed opinions. They have the capacity to build big ideas.

Content Objectives

The central aim of this unit is to begin a conversation that will empower students to think deeply about friendship, a topic that is significantly relevant throughout every person's life. I came to this idea through questioning my own pedagogical practices. I started to ask myself: *How can I make my read-aloud time more engaging and relevant to my students' lives?* I realized that I frequently chose from a group of "old-favorites" without thought to a deeper purpose for my text choices. Often, my read-aloud selections are chosen because they offer a chance for vocabulary development or they complement some aspect of the content being learned at the time. But, I began to wonder if I could put together a more thoughtful series of read-aloud texts that might connect to each other as well as to my students in a more significant way. Could I put together a group of texts connected by a common theme? If so, what theme might be important for every one of my students? And then it hit me: friendship. Friendship is a universally significant topic.

Developmental Phases of Children's Friendships

First and second-grade students are in a unique developmental period in which their friendships, or concept of 'friend,' starts to shift to become more complex and multifaceted. Jacqueline Smollar and James Youniss conducted a study on how children's concept of friendship develops. They found that six to seven year old children mostly say that people become friends when they merely "perform an activity together." Children in this age group also described a *best* friend as someone whom you spend more time with than other people. Friendships were defined by the amount of time spent together rather than the quality of the time spent. By ages nine to ten children still qualify friendship in this way but add to it the idea that friends "share with or help each other." By ages twelve to thirteen most children say that people become friends if they can "get to know each other" to discover if "they like the same things." [3] It is their conclusion that children who are in first and second grade have a very simple and somewhat superficial definition of what constitutes "friendship."

Zick Rubin adds to the discussion of how young children understand and talk about "friendship." He writes,

> *What sorts of people make good friends?* For the young child who views friendship in terms of momentary interactions, the most important qualification for friendship is physical accessibility…Young children are also likely to focus on specific physical actions…for children at this level, moreover, one's own desires may be seen as a sufficient basis for friendship. When you ask a young child why a certain other child is his friend, the most common reply is "Because I like him." [4]

However, Rubin tries to complicate the view that children's understanding of "friendships" develops alongside their movement away from strictly concrete thought to an increased capacity for abstraction. He posits that children integrate a constantly growing number of social experiences into their slowly developing capacity for abstraction. It is this interplay between experience and developing cognition – nurture and nature – that meld together to create a child's sense of "friendship."

I believe Rubin's theory that experience must mix with cognitive development and that I can work to make more transparent for my students the processes involved in transitioning from a simple conception of what makes someone a friend to a more multifaceted understanding of such close relationships. I hope that my students' growing capacity for empathy will help them navigate these transitions through the next few years. I hope to nudge them towards considering points of view other than their own because I feel it is an essential

skill for negotiating a social landscape. Egocentric thinking can quickly lead to hurt feelings.

> Through their interactions with peers, children discover that other children are similar to them in some respects and different in others. And as children attempt to cooperate with one another, they discover that the coordination of behavior requires an appreciation of the other's capabilities, desires, and values. At first, these "discoveries" remain implicit and unexamined. Gradually, however, children integrate and organize what they have learned, leading to increasingly sophisticated understandings of social relationships. Talking openly about conflicts may be one particularly valuable way to further one's understanding of friendship. [5]

As Rubin explains, if one only focuses on what he wants and how he feels then he will not successfully participate in a social environment. This unit is designed to offer opportunities to teach empathy through a carefully constructed series of read-aloud texts. They include text that progress from more simple/explicit to more complex along many dimensions that will converge to meet my students' needs as readers and social beings.

Goals

More specifically, the goals of this unit are threefold. One, I hope to strengthen my emerging readers' ability to draw inferences while reading fiction. I want to name this strategy and guide them in practicing it independently in their reading lives. Two, I hope to make concrete the connection between inferring people's thoughts and feelings in real life and in reading fiction. If I arm students with an awareness of their inclination to infer people's states of mind and the intentions behind their actions and words, then they can begin to confront their frequent misunderstandings of each other. [6] Three, I hope to discover, uncover, and explore with my students the nature of their friendships and the ways in which their relationships develop and change as they mature. I hope they will become aware of their ever-changing conceptions of friendship through making connections to and discussing texts. I want to help them navigate the transition between having friendships based on simple, superficial connections to more multi-faceted and significant relationships.

Goal One: Building Skills in Reading

This unit is designed to focus on teaching making inferences as an integral reading skill. Inferring is defined as "deducing or concluding information from evidence and reasoning rather than explicit statements." [7] In order to understand a text as a whole, whether it is a picture book or a novel, one needs to be able to make inferences based on dialogue, descriptions, actions, or perhaps illustrations. I will begin this unit with texts in which my students will not need to make many inferences about a character because the author has explicitly described the character's motivations, thoughts, and feelings. We will then move across texts that begin to demand more and more inferential work from the reader. My hope is that by being mindful of this progression, I will be able to scaffold my students' entry into the world of inferring while reading, as they are emerging readers.

Inferring is one of the many comprehension strategies readers depend upon to make meaning during reading. Other comprehension strategies include synthesizing, retelling, monitoring, determining importance, predicting, questioning, envisioning, and making connections. Many of these strategies are interdependent

and difficult to teach in isolation. Drawing inferences may be closely related to being able to determine the importance of a part of a text as well as envisioning exactly what is happening in that part. Readers need to be able to put themselves into the text and imagine what it is like to be the character in that specific context in order to infer how the character feels or the intentions behind his/her actions.

Lisa Zunshine argues that part of enjoying reading is reliant upon our successful application of what cognitive scientists describe as humans' well-developed Theory of Mind, as well as our awareness that we are in fact successfully deducing and concluding as we put together clues from the text. Theory of Mind is the set of tacit beliefs and cognitive skills that lead most humans to automatically assume that another person's behavior, physical actions, or facial expressions reflect what he or she is feeling and thinking. Thus, we can "read" an individual's facial expressions, body language, tone of voice, word choice or actions as indicative of internal thoughts and motivations. We call upon our ability to "mind read," as Baron Cohen calls this kind of inferring, to read between the lines when reading fiction. [8]

Goal Two: Building Social Skills

Even the youngest of students make inferences throughout their daily lives. They are quick to ask you, "Do you feel okay?" or "Why are you so mad?" They pick up on the cues inherent in other people's facial expressions, intonations or body language with ease and use those clues to make conclusions. However, as with many other skills, it is our jobs as teachers to explicitly name and make apparent the usefulness and application of such a skill.

Rubin discusses the skills necessary in navigating conflicts among peers.

> The skills of friendship also include the ability to manage conflicts successfully. Children learn that it is often valuable to talk out their hurt feelings in order to restore good will…In order to maintain friendships in the face of the disagreements that inevitably arise, children must learn to express their own rights and feelings clearly while remaining sensitive to the rights and feelings of others. [9]

I want my students to reach a place where they feel comfortable saying things such as "I think you're mad at me because you haven't talked to me all day. Is that true? Are you mad at me?" And then hopefully they'll have the courage to follow up with "Why are you mad at me?" This process of voicing an assumption about the behavior of a friend allows our friend to affirm or deny our assumptions, as well as offers us a chance to start a transparent conversation. I would argue that too often, as adults, we infer incorrectly the reasons behind another person's behavior and act in response to such assumptions, creating a chain of reactions all based on an incorrect inference. As indicated in the opening scenario, children frequently make the same mistakes.

It is my hope that through providing opportunities to infer intentions from literary characters' words, actions, expressions, I can gently nudge my students away from their egocentrism towards a more empathic frame of mind. If I can encourage them to consider the perspectives of literary characters, then this seems like a logical step towards considering the perspectives of their classmates. If children have differing opinions about the thoughts and feelings of a character, it might also provide us with a chance to discuss just how hard it is to read another person's mind – opening up a conversation about misattribution of intent derived from physical and linguistic cues.

Goal Three: Growing Ideas About Friendship

In my years as a second grade teacher I noticed that many relationships between close friends became strained as my students matured. Throughout the year my students would start to grapple with wanting to have more than one close friend, or to shift who their "best" friend was at various points. These changes caused a lot of tension and hurt feelings within the classroom, and I often paused to consider why this drama kept recurring. My students' cries for help still ring in my ears: "She won't play with me! Why isn't she my friend anymore? I thought I was your best friend?!? He was my best friend, but now he won't let me play." I can't stop these transitions from happening, but I can provide a space within the classroom to discuss the inevitable shifts in friends and their social-emotional impact on my students. If, as a classroom community, we look closely at the friendships portrayed in a group of texts, then perhaps we can grow a few general ideas about friendship from those shared experiences.

Smollar and Youniss write that concepts about friendship develop along three dimensions. The first dimension describes friendship "in terms of ongoing interactions, that is, positive or negative. Becoming a friend involves engaging in a positive activity together." [10] The second dimension characterizes friendship "by a differentiation of peers into friends and 'not friends,' not on the basis of the qualities of actions, but rather on the qualities of persons." [11] The third dimension deals with the extent to which the individuals feel "that he or she can exchange personal information." [12] This meshes well with Rubin's aforementioned theories about the ways in which children develop a deeper conception of "friendship." He notes that "(f)or the young child, the question of what constitutes closeness translates into the question of what distinguishes a best friend from other friends. When such a distinction is made, it is strictly quantitative terms—whatever you do with a friend, you simply do more of it with a best friend." [13] This characterization of "best friends" is definitely prevalent in first and second-grade mind-sets. And as children try to prove the strength of their bond by simply increasing the amount of time spent together, I often find that these friendships begin to feel strained. These youngsters haven't yet had to reconcile the feeling of wanting time to themselves or time with other people with their perception that best friends do everything together.

There are many series written for young readers that have pairs of main characters that can be characterized as "best friends." For example, Arnold Lobel's *Frog and Toad* and Mo Willems' *Elephant and Piggie* and James Howe's *Houndsley and Catina.* These texts will offer us many opportunities to discuss what being "best friends" looks like in each of those relationships throughout a series. Do they all resemble each other in some way? How are the friendships different? Do the relationships between the main characters stay the same throughout the series or develop in complexity? Regardless of the conclusions my students come to through this process, I know that this kind of discussion will allow us to reflect on the nature of our own friendships.

Strategies

This unit maps out a few months' worth of read-aloud texts, allowing us the time for an in-depth discussion about friendship and making inferences. I plan to begin in the month of October for this inquiry because it is centered on a topic that is integral to our everyday lives in the classroom. I don't want to jump start the year with it because I want to put in place the procedures of read-aloud with accountable talk. We must all be comfortable with the procedures that govern our time enjoying, questioning, and talking back to read-aloud

text before we can begin to successfully explore one theme, such as friendship. Everyone has an assigned seat on the rug that allows her to sit next to her partner. In my classroom, rug partners are the same as our writing partners. For writing workshop I pair students who have similar strengths and needs in writing as writing partners. This partnership is fixed and may only change once during the year. This allows the partners to get to know one another as writers and as people in a very deep way, providing time to build trust. If writing partners sit together on the rug as well, they are given the opportunity to make connections between their writing work and our reading work.

After establishing seats on the rug, we work on what it should look like when partners "turn and talk." During any time we convene on the rug, I will ask partners to turn and talk about a part in a book or to try out something we just learned. When we "turn and talk" partnerships turn their bodies to sit knee to knee. This allows them to make eye contact and create a physical space that's divided from other partnerships. As students are talking, I float around the room listening in on their conversations and taking note of utterances I'd like to share out to the whole class. In this way, everyone feels heard and is actively engaged, and I am able to select what is shared in a more thoughtful way than by just calling on people with their hands raised or randomly selecting a child.

During read-aloud, the "turn and talk" structure is ultimately a way to support comprehension. Sometimes it opens a discussion about the message or theme of the text. Other times it provides an opportunity for students to discuss their connections or disconnections to the text. It can also be a time when students are allowed to share their emotional reactions. If there is a lot of blurting out or attempts to whisper about a certain part, I'll stop and let them talk about whatever it is that's engaging them. The infusion of multiple chances to talk/discuss/share within the classroom assures my students that their ideas/opinions/voices are valued. It creates a more democratic and less authoritarian classroom environment. We can work together to discuss ideas and draw conclusions. It also allows me the chance to teach how to listen to another person effectively and how to disagree respectfully. We will also record our ideas on charts, adding to them as we continue conversations across many sessions. These charts will provide us with evidence of what we've already discussed, as well as give us a jumping off point when we approach each new book. By the end of this unit we may end up with charts labeled "What is a friend?" or "What makes two people *best* friends?" or "What do we know about Frog and Toad's friendship?" These charts will help us refer back to ideas we've already had as we try to push our ideas about friendship to new places by making discoveries with each new text.

With all of these classroom procedures in place, we can begin to delve into growing ideas about friendship. Throughout the progression of texts we might approach each text in a similar way, by asking the simple, but provocative question – *What makes these characters friends?*

Frog and Toad: Best Friends

I would begin this series of read-alouds with the familiar *Frog and Toad* books by Arnold Lobel. There are four books in the *Frog and Toad* series and each book has five stories within it. If I read one story a day, that would be twenty days of read-aloud or about a month. I'm not sure every story in each book will lend itself to our discussion of friendship, so I may choose two or three of the most relevant stories to read allowing for two to three weeks worth of read-aloud selections.

Frog and Toad have a simple kind of friendship, much like the friendships of my young six and seven-year-old first graders. In *Frog and Toad Are Friends,* the students might conclude that they are friends because they are neighbors and they like to do things together. In the first chapter, Frog is lonely and wants Toad to wake up and spend time with him. He wants to walk and swim and sit and look at the stars with his friend, and he

can't do it if Toad won't get out of bed. As I read this book to the class, I might pause at the title and say, "This book is called *Frog and Toad Are Friends* so while I am reading it I want us to try to look for the answers to these questions (I would write the questions on chart paper): "What makes Frog and Toad friends? Why do you think they are friends?" We can continue to think about these questions as we read through the *Frog and Toad* series. We might also consider if Frog and Toad are "best" friends and why we might think that. What makes friends "best friends"? [14]

In *Frog and Toad All Year,* we get the chance to also consider "What does Frog do to show Toad that he is a good friend?" This question will begin to help us think about how actions and words are powerful aspects of a friendship. Frog brings his friend things, helps him overcome his fear, works to calm his worries, and brings Toad a present. Toad shows that he is a good friend because he worries about Frog and tries to bring him ice cream. There are many actions that can be interpreted as displays of friendship throughout the chapters in this book. It will provide many opportunities to explore how we *show* our friends that we like them and care about them.

As we explore this example of a simple or "stage one" friendship we will begin to compare and contrast our own friendships with that of Frog and Toad's friendship. "Do you have a best friend? What makes him/her your best friend?" Further, Frog and Toad are characters whose intentions, thoughts, and feelings are mostly understood without the need for inferring. They say what they mean and their actions are fairly straightforward. We know that Toad wants to bring Frog ice cream because he thinks it will make his friend happy. We know that Frog rakes Toad's leaves because he knows it is hard work and wants to do something nice for a surprise.

There is one story in *Days with Frog and Toad* that I will save as the last story we read from the series; it is called "Alone". In this story, Frog leaves a note on his door saying that he has gone out to be alone for the day. Toad assumes that his friend is sad and even takes it personally, "Frog has me for a friend. Why does he want to be alone?" [15] Toad rushes off to find Frog sitting alone on an island and decides to make him a picnic lunch to cheer him up. On his journey he says, "Maybe Frog does not want to see me. Maybe he does not want me to be his friend anymore." [16] When he finally reaches Frog on the island Toad apologizes for being such a silly and clumsy friend, to which Frog replies that he is in fact very happy. He says, "I felt good because I have you for a friend. I wanted to be alone. I wanted to think about how fine everything is." [17] This is a perfect example of how we often misattribute the reasons our friends do things. I will use it to start discussing making inferences about our friends' feelings and thoughts – our friends' states of mind. I can ask, "What made Toad think Frog was sad? Why does Toad think Frog doesn't want to be his friend anymore?" It is also a perfect way to start a conversation about how to communicate our feelings to our friends without hurting their feelings. I might ask, "Was Frog's note mean? What else could Frog have written on that note to make sure Toad didn't take it the wrong way?" [18]

Exploring Friendships in Kevin Henkes' Books

After looking into Frog and Toad's friendship, we will move to looking at various works of Kevin Henkes. I will begin with *Jessica*, which is a story about a girl, Ruthie, who invents an imaginary friend named Jessica. Ruthie's imaginary friend goes everywhere she goes, does everything with her, and even feels the same feelings at the same time. This corresponds perfectly to the beginning conceptions of friendship young children have. A friend is someone who frequently engages in activities with you, just like Jessica. At the end of this book, Ruthie meets a real girl name Jessica and on the last page they are pictured doing many activities side-by-side. It will be interesting to see what similarities and differences my students find in this

portrayal of friendship in comparison to that of Frog and Toad. It seems to me that these are very similar portrayals of friendships based on the willingness to do things together. However, my students might also point out that we get more insight into the nature of Frog and Toad's relationships, as we see them do "nice" things for one another – things that they think will make each other happier. In contrast, we never get such information about Ruthie and Jessica's relationship. [19]

I will move next to Kevin Henkes' *Wemberly Worried.* Much as in the structure of *Jessica*, Wemberly worries for much of the book until she makes a friend, Jewel. Wemberly and Jewel are both worriers, and it is that commonality that brings them together. Once Wemberly and Jewel realize that they are similar in such a significant way, they end up "side by side" for the rest of the book. However, in this situation Wemberly and Jewel are the kind of friends who complement each other. They provide one another with enough comfort that they can worry a little less and enjoy school together. [20]

Chester's Way provides us with the perfect chance to discuss further what makes friends so close that they are best friends. It also provides us with a glimpse into how difficult it can be to integrate someone new into our circle of friends. At the beginning of this book, Henkes writes that Chester and Wilson are best friends because they do everything exactly the same way. I will stop here to posit, "Is that what makes best friends – doing everything together and the same?" Many students might agree with that idea, while others might have developed more sophisticated ideas about what qualifies someone to be a best friend. We will add our ideas to the chart about friendship, and at this point we might even have started a new chart focused just on the concept of "best friends." [21]

We will then read *A Weekend with Wendell* by Henkes. This story is about a girl, Sophie, who has to deal with the intrusion of weekend guest, Wendell. How Sophie feels about Wendell is not explicitly stated. Instead we have to infer from her facial expressions how she feels. This is the first place where I will model how to look at a character's facial expression and consider how she feels from those clues. Additionally, the interactions between Sophie and Wendell are more complicated and multifaceted. It's not automatically clear why Sophie and Wendell have trouble getting along. Some questions I might use for "turn and talk" discussions are "Why isn't it fun to play with Wendell? Is he thinking about Sophie when he decides what they are going to play? Is she allowed to voice her wants and preferences?" The conflict between these characters gets resolved rather quickly. I will want to pause in a number of places to tease out all the aspects of how Sophie and Wendell resolve their problem and to allow my students to voice their opinions about it. [22]

Next we will read *Chrysanthemum*, our last selection written by Kevin Henkes. This book is about bullying, and not really about the tricky relationship between friends. However, it does provide us with lots of opportunities to infer feelings from illustrations. It also provides us with an opportunity to discuss what makes it hard for certain people to be friends. Why is it that we aren't friends with some people?

Chrysanthemum becomes self-conscious about her name at the beginning of school as a classmate, Victoria, points out how different her name is. There are a few chances where we can infer how Chrysanthemum feels from the illustrations. When the teacher takes roll call, "everyone giggled upon hearing Chrysanthemum's name." [23] I might stop here to ask, "Wow, look at Chrysanthemum's face. How do you think it makes her feel when the other students giggle at her name?" For the next three pages Victoria continues to tease Chrysanthemum about her name. There are many picture clues to show how Chrysanthemum feels, so I might pause again to ask, "Victoria is making Chrysanthemum feel badly about her name. How do I know that she feels bad?" Or I might ask, "Why do you think Victoria keeps pointing out differences in her name? Why does she say, 'if I had a name like yours, I'd change it'?" Later on in the story, Victoria gets Jo and Rita to join in on

teasing Chrysanthemum. I might pause to discuss, "Does having people join her make her feel more special or powerful? Why do you think Jo and Rita join in? What does it give them? Are the girls jealous? Are they just thrown off by something so different that they decide to ridicule it?" At the very end of the story Chrysanthemum giggles when Victoria doesn't remember her lines. We could discuss, "Is that an appropriate response? Chrysanthemum never stood up to her classmates by herself. What could she have said to them?" [24]

The More Complex Friendship of Houndsley and Catina

After our further investigation of friendship as it is illuminated in Kevin Henkes' books, we will move to looking at another series that portrays "best friends." James Howe's short series *Houndsley and Catina* gives us a view into a friendship that is more complicated than ones explored previously. We are also often given many opportunities to put ourselves into either character's shoes to consider what he/she is thinking and feeling. As we read this series we will be relying on our Theory of Mind skills to help us make inferences. *Chrysanthemum* gave us the opportunity to start using this skill, and we will continue to draw upon clues in illustrations and dialogue to infer thoughts and emotions.

In *Houndsley and Catina* we meet this new pair of best friends as they deal with Catina's desire to be a famous, award-winning writer in the chapter "The Writer." In this first chapter, Howe lets us know exactly what Houndsley is thinking by writing his thoughts directly into the story. After reading Catina's very lengthy chapter book, Houndsley thinks, "Catina is a terrible writer. What am I going to say?" [25] We could stop here and discuss the possible things he might say to his best friend without hurting her feelings. I might follow up with questions such as, "Is it okay to tell a white lie to your friend if it will spare his/her feelings?" or "How do you help your friend get better at something?" Throughout the rest of the book, we find that Catina encourages Houndsley to enter a cooking contest. She compliments his cooking abilities and shows that she is a good friend by believing in him. At the end, the two friends take a quiet walk during which they are finally very honest with each other. Houndsley admits that he doesn't want to be the best at cooking, but that he only wishes to enjoy it. Catina admits that she doesn't really like writing and only did it because she desperately wanted to be famous at something. It is in this last chapter that Houndsley and Catina show us many qualities of being good friends. They trust each other enough to have an open and honest conversation, they listen to each other without interrupting, and they comfort each other. This first book in the series allows us to identify what makes these characters good friends fairly easily.

Next, we will read *Houndsley and Catina and the Birthday Surprise*. Before I begin to read, I will prompt the students, "We found out that Houndsley and Catina are really good friends, maybe even best friends. What *is* a best friend? How do best friends treat each other?" Houndsley and Catina find out that they don't know when their birthdays are, and they go off to surprise each other with a birthday party. Throughout this book these two friends are dedicated to thinking about and guessing how the other person feels. It offers a great example of misinterpreting another person's feelings and intentions. Houndsley runs into Catina in town after she has been distant for a few days and she runs off as if she is avoiding him. Houndsley decides that she does this because she is sad and sets out to arrange a birthday party to surprise her. He finds out at the end of the story that Catina was not sad, but instead was avoiding him because she was also planning a surprise birthday party for Houndsley. We will have a great discussion throughout this read-aloud about the mix-ups these characters have in trying to guess at what the other one is thinking. [26]

So far we have read stories in which Houndsley and Catina do everything together and do nice things for each other – qualities of stage one and two concepts of friendship. However, in *Houndsley and Catina Plink and*

Plunk Houndsley reveals that he does not like canoeing with Catina. Before reading this book, one might prompt the students to consider, "Do best friends have to do everything together? Is that what makes a best friend – doing everything together?" A few pages in Houndsley reveals that he doesn't like canoeing with Catina because she talks the entire time and ruins the experience of hearing the noises of canoeing. At this point it might make sense to stop and ask, "Is it ok that he doesn't like doing this one thing with Catina and would rather do it with Burt? Does that mean that Catina is no longer his best friend?' In the last chapter of the book we find out that Houndsley never thought about *why* Catina talks so much when they go canoeing. Catina says that she is willing to go canoeing with Houndsley because it is something he likes to do but it makes her very nervous. She talks so much because she is nervous. She even says, "I didn't want you to feel bad. You are my friend, and I wanted to do what you wanted to do." [27] This is the perfect place to stop and discuss, "Is that part of being a good friend – being willing to do things you might not want to do for the other person?" I might follow up that discussion at the end of the story with, "Houndsley and Catina are the kinds of friends who help each other overcome their fears and try new things. Is *that* part of being a good friend?"

While the focus of our discussion of this book is based on what makes Houndsley and Catina best friends, there are also many opportunities throughout the book to consider what Houndsley and Catina are thinking. There is also the very critical moment when we find out that Houndsley never considered why Catina acted the way she did. I would point this out to the students and follow up with, "Sometimes we think we know why someone acts a certain way and we are wrong. Sometimes we need to *ask* the person to explain their actions or feelings to us, just like Houndsley and Catina did."

Reading and Interpreting Facial Expressions with Piggie and Elephant

Mo Willems' *Elephant & Piggie* series is perfect not only for a discussion about friendship, but also for practicing the art of reading facial expressions. These books are deceptively simple as the story line of each book is presently solely through dialogue and fairly sparse line drawings. However, despite the minimalistic approach to the words and illustrations in these books, Willems portrays many complex dynamics between friends and aspects of how young children experience the world. The number of books in this series is constantly growing, so this unit will only use a few selections to focus in on interpreting the facial expressions of Piggie and Gerald (the elephant) as we also continue to consider our focal question: *What makes the main characters friends?*

We will begin our journey considering Piggie and Gerald's friendship with *Watch Me Throw the Ball.* Before reading the book one might say to the class, "Today I want to teach you that you can use the pictures to get ideas about a character's thoughts and feelings. One way to do this is to look closely at a character's facial expression. Watch me as I do that in this book – I'm going to look carefully at Gerald's face to get an idea about what he's thinking and feeling." This will set us up for the work we are about to do, in which I will model this strategy for my students first, before asking them to try it themselves. This book begins with Piggie skipping on to the page and finding a ball. Gerald comes running into the scene declaring, "You found my ball!" [28] At this point the reader can stop and say to the students, "I'm going to look closely at Gerald's face and describe his expression. He is smiling. His eyes are wide. His eyebrows are up. He looks happy! I wonder why he is happy. Maybe he's happy that Piggie found his ball."

Gerald then goes on to explain to Piggie that he is a very good ball thrower. At this point in the story I would stop and say, "Here I'm looking at Gerald's face and the way he is holding his head. He's got a small grin on his face, with his eyes closed and his head held high. Have you ever seen someone look like that? I have. My friend Kat does that sometimes. She sort of smiles and holds her nose up in the air like that when she thinks

she's right – like when she's really proud of something. Maybe Gerald is proud. That would make sense because he's telling Piggie that he's good at throwing a ball and he should be proud of that."

Now that I have modeled for my students twice, I will give them the opportunity to try out mind-reading using Gerald's expression with their partners. When Gerald says, "Do you know the secret of throwing?" and Piggie answers, "Sure. 'Have fun.'" Gerald has a shocked expression. [29] The teacher can stop and ask, "Now stop and think to yourself: How does Gerald feel? How do you know that? Once you have decided, turn and tell your partner what you think and why."

In the last half of the book Piggie starts to brag about how she is super at throwing a ball because she believes she threw it all around the world. Gerald responds with multiple different facial reactions, and we can consider how Gerald feels throughout this interaction, making sure to reference what we see in his facial expressions.

Next we will read *My Friend is Sad* because on the very first page there is another opportunity to practice interpreting facial expressions. Willems begins with an illustration of Gerald sitting with his eyebrows raised, his eyes wide, and his mouth in a frown. In the next illustration, Gerald has his shoulders hunched and the same expression as he sighs. Piggie peeks in from the corner of the page and says, "My friend is sad." [30] I will stop there and ask, "Piggie thinks Gerald is sad just by looking at him. I think she sees that Gerald's mouth is frowning and that his body is hunched over. These are usually signs that tell us that someone is sad. Can you show me what it looks like when you're sad?" We would then take a minute or two showing each other our sad expressions and trying to name what it is we see. "Now turn and show your partner your sad face. Try to describe your partner's sad face. How do his/her eyes and eyebrows look? How does his/her mouth look?" Piggie spends the rest of the book trying to make Gerald happy and Gerald continuously alternates from extreme bodily expressions of happiness to sadness. We will flip back and forth between Gerald's alternating emotions and work to compare and contrast how the happiness and sadness are shown through Gerald's body. Towards the middle of the book Piggie begins to get angry, and you can see it on his face. We will also stop to consider how we know he is angry.

The next selection from this series will be *Should I Share My Ice Cream* because this book will allow us to continue interpreting emotions through the characters' illustrated body language while also allowing us to consider if Piggie and Gerald are best friends.

It's a hot day and Gerald runs in to an ice cream cart. He goes through a roller coaster of emotions as he tries to decide whether or not to share his ice cream with his best friend, Piggie. These emotions include happy, contemplative, elated, confused, apprehensive, mischievous, worried, determined, proud, shocked, sad, disappointed, surprised, and happy. We will not try to decipher every one of Gerald's myriad emotions, but will focus on the ones the students might be most familiar with. Gerald also grapples with wanting to keep the ice cream all to himself versus being a good friend and sharing it with Piggie. He tries to convince himself that perhaps Piggie wouldn't want any of his ice cream – justifying his urge not to share it. With a look of inspiration and joy Gerald says, "Maybe Piggie does not like this flavor! Sharing a flavor Piggie does not like would be *wrong.* I will eat the ice cream!" [31] This scenario will set us up for a discussion about how hard it can be to do something nice for another person if it means we have to sacrifice something for ourselves. Some questions to spur conversation might include, "What do you think Gerald should do? Should he share his ice cream? How does it feel when you really want something all to yourself, but you know deep down that it would be nice to share it?"

Next, we will read *I Am Going!*, which is about Gerald getting upset when his best friend, Piggie, declares,

"Well, I am going." [32] Gerald responds with panic, fear, disbelief, and anger. He tells Piggie that she may not leave him because he doesn't want to be alone. Finally Gerald asks Piggie why she has to leave and Piggie calmly explains that it is lunchtime and she is going to eat her lunch. Gerald responds with a clear look of embarrassment and asks if he can join her. Now that we are in our third book of the series, we will have started to make a chart of facial expressions that show the feelings we have deciphered from Gerald, such as sad, happy, and shocked. We will now be able to add fear and embarrassment to our chart. (See Classroom Activity One for a longer description of this extension.) This selection will also allow us to discuss how we feel when we have to leave our friends. I might say something like "We often feel a less intense version of Gerald's reaction when our friends leave us. What does it feel like when you have to say goodbye to a friend after spending lots of good time with him/her? Why is it so hard? Is it that you don't want the good feelings to end?" We will add our ideas to our chart about friendship, or make a new one entitled: "How does a good friend make us feel?"

Finally, we will reread *Watch Me Throw the Ball* to consider how it feels when our friends brag and gloat. We might try to answer some of the following questions: At the end of the story Piggie starts to brag like Gerald did at the beginning. How is their bragging the same and how is it different? How does Piggie respond to Gerald's pride? How does Gerald respond to Piggie's gloating? What is the line between feeling proud of your accomplishments and bragging? How does it make you feel when your friends brag and brag about how good they are at something? What can you say to your friend if their bragging makes you feel bad? We might start a chart entitled, "What to say to a friend when he/she hurts your feelings." This chart may also be relevant to some of the books we read by Kevin Henkes.

Classroom Activities

Included here are three activities you might use to extend the discussions outlined above for read-aloud time. These activities will help to address the multi-modalities (or multiple intelligences) of young students. The procedures surrounding accountable talk during read-aloud described previously are dependent on the verbal, oral, and aural transfer of information. I want to expand on that curriculum here with a few ideas for activities that bring in dramatic play, gross motor action, and artistic representations.

Activity One: Acting Out Emotions

Objectives

The goal of this activity is to create a feelings chart that the whole class can reference when trying to interpret characters' expressions in illustrations, as well as each other's expressions in everyday interactions. It will also introduce the vocabulary of emotions and provide a concrete example of what that emotion might look like. This tool will not only be helpful in making inferences while reading, but will allow students a reference when trying to add emotion into their writing.

Materials

- Poster board
- Camera

- Printer
- Glue
- Marker
- Copies of the *Elephant & Piggie* books already read

Procedures

After reading the first two or three books in the Piggie and Elephant series, the students will have had exposure to the facial representations of a few common emotions, such as happiness and sadness. At this point it will be a good time to devote some time to making a classroom feelings chart.

I would begin by gathering a small group of children (about 5 or 6) on the rug, perhaps some who can easily decipher facial expressions and some who are not so skilled. You will not be able to include all the students in this activity, as the feelings chart should be focused on just a few familiar and easily recognizable emotions. Remind the students of the work you have been doing with Mo Willems' books: "We have been looking closely at character's facial expressions, especially Piggie and Gerald's. In *Watch Me Throw the Ball!* we saw Gerald was happy (show the illustration). In *Should I Share My Ice Cream?* we saw a sad expression on Gerald's face. Today we are going to make a chart with pictures of your faces showing different emotions. It will help our classmates better identify emotions shown on people's faces. I was thinking that this chart should definitely have a happy face and a sad face. Then I thought we could add anger, fear, confusion, and surprise to our chart. Let's practice acting these out." Start a discussion of when and why someone might feel each of these emotions. Set up a scenario for each one, so that the students can better embody each emotion. It can be difficult for young children to name emotions, but they have felt these common emotions many times. Draw on their prior experiences to help them act out each emotion together as a group. As they do so, you will be able to get a sense of who is best at expressing which emotions. Assign each child an emotion and take a photo of their face while they are acting it out. If their body also helps to portray the emotion, you could take a longer shot of the child.

Write "Feelings" or "Emotions" at the top of the poster board. Print out each photo and affix them to the poster board. Write the emotion under each photo in print big enough to be seen from across the classroom. Find a place to hang the poster where it is easily accessible.

Activity Two: Dramatic Interpretations of *Watch Me Throw the Ball*

Objectives

This activity is designed to give students the opportunity to retell one of the selections from our read-alouds. Young students need to move their bodies as well as to rehearse life scenarios through play. Additionally, acting out this text will allow them to take on the perspective of the characters in a more concrete and accessible way. When asking young children to consider how a character feels, it might be helpful to set up an opportunity for them to truly feel what it is like to be in a certain situation.

Materials

- Two to six copies of *Watch Me Throw the Ball* (or you can photo copy sections of the book for each set of partners)
- A soft ball to throw
- A large space in which it is safe to throw a ball

Procedures

You could have 2 to 3 partnerships perform different sections of *Watch Me Throw the Ball.* You will want to break up the text into sections that allow the students to practice portraying more than one emotion. A suggestion might be to have one set of partners perform pages one through twenty-one, another set do pages twenty-two through forty-four, and a final group do the last third of the book.

Give each set of partners a copy of their section of the text. Allow them to spread out into their own spots around the room to practice. Encourage them to think about using their faces and bodies to show how their character feels. Their goal is to make the characters' emotions over the top and obvious. You may need to model this for the students by acting out a part of the book yourself and over-emphasizing your facial expressions. Let the partners go off to practice for 5-10 minutes, while you float between the groups to listen in and offer advice. You may need to allow them multiple opportunities to practice throughout the week. When you feel they are ready, gather the rest of the class to sit as an audience and watch their classmates perform.

To follow up, you may want to meet with all of the partners to discuss how it felt to be Gerald or Piggie. It is during this time that you could ask questions such as, "What was Gerald feeling when Piggie said that the secret to throwing was to have fun? Why do you think he felt that way? What clues in the illustrations made you think that?" or "When Piggie was gloating about throwing the ball all the way around the world, why do you think she did that? What was she feeling? And how do you think it made Gerald feel when she bragged like that? What clues in the book make you think that?" As you have this discussion it is likely that the students will draw upon their own prior experiences to help them sympathize with the main characters. This will lead to conversation that may seem off topic as they share experiences and say things like, "One time…" Let the students make the personal connections, but then make sure to pull them back to the text and search for evidence to support their ideas with the question, "What clues in the illustrations/text make you think that?" Readers need to rely on their personal experiences to make a text come to life, but they also need to support their inferences or predictions or conclusions with evidence from the text. Hopefully, being able to act out the story will make the plot more concrete and relatable to the students opening up the chance to discuss the feelings and motivations of the characters in a more in depth manner.

Activity Three: Illustrating in Response to *Elephants Cannot Dance!*

Objectives

Students will try to apply their ability to interpret facial expressions to a text by making their own illustrations. *Elephants Cannot Dance!* will be read without showing the illustrations and the students will have the opportunity to predict what the characters' facial expressions are, which will also show what they think the characters are feeling throughout the book.

Materials

- four sheets of white drawing paper for each student and the teacher
- crayons and colored pencils
- one copy of *Elephants Cannot Dance!*

Procedures

As students sit at their desks, distribute paper and drawing materials to each child. Prepare to read the

selected text while standing up and moving around the classroom. Explain to the students that they are going to help illustrate the book. You are going to read the text out loud to them and at key points throughout the book you are going to pause and let them draw what they think the characters look like in that moment. They should not worry about drawing just like Mo Willems; in fact they can just draw stick figures if they want. Give them a bit of practice drawing before you start reading. Reference the feelings chart and say, "Let's practice. We're all going to try to draw a stick figure with a happy face. Hmmm. If I look at the happy face on our chart I see his eyes are wide open, his eyebrows are up, and his mouth is in a really wide, open smile. It might look like this. (Draw a crude stick figure with a happy face on the board.) Now, you try to draw a happy character." Then practice sad, angry, and embarrassed. Next ask them to label the top of their papers with the numbers one, two, and three. This will help you so that when you collect their drawings you can see which illustration matches each section of the story.

Begin to read the book, reminding them not to draw until you ask them to. Stop when Gerald says, "I would love to learn how to dance. But elephants cannot dance." and ask them to think how Gerald might feel at this moment. [33] Reread the section to give them support, making sure to read Gerald's words with sadness and disappointment. Then tell them to take their first piece of paper and draw how Gerald feels right here. The second place to stop is after Gerald says, "You are right, Piggie! I *can* try to dance! I *will* try to dance! LET'S DANCE!" They can sketch what they think Gerald looks like here on page two. The last place to stop might be after Piggie tries many times to teach Gerald and he keeps getting it all mixed up. He yells, "ENOUGH! I HAVE TRIED! AND TRIED! AND TRIED! AND TRIED! AND TRIED!" [34] Again, have the students sketch what Gerald might look like here on page three. Give them time to share their drawings with their desk partners after each stopping place.

Also, as they are sketching Gerald, you may want them to try to consider what Piggie feels at each moment, too. This is harder because in all the moments above, Piggie is not talking. However, it might be a great way to see if they can infer what Piggie feels based on Gerald's reactions and Piggie's prior words. You could also focus solely on drawing Gerald the first read through, and then reread the book and have the students add Piggie to each drawing.

Resources

Bibliography for Teachers

Rubin, Zick. *Children's Friendships.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980.

This is a must read if you are interested in how friendships develop throughout the early childhood years. It is full of vignettes from classroom environments that the author seeks to explain from a psychological standpoint.

Smollar, Jaqueline, and James Youniss. "Social Development Through Friendship." In *Peer Relationships and Social Skills in Childhood*. New York: Springer-Verlag, 1982.

This is a published empirical study on how children from early childhood to adolescence qualify their own friendships. It gives a window into the psyche of children in a way that seeks to generalize experiences across a developmental spectrum.

Szalavitz, Maia, and Bruce D. Perry. *Born for Love: Why Empathy is Essential - and Endangered.* New York: Harper Collins, 2010.

The co-authors of this book are a neuroscientist and a psychiatrist seeking to combine their perspectives on the nature and nurture of empathy. It seems as if their efforts seek to create a more robust understanding of how empathy is cultivated. They alternate between describing the physical chemistry involved in developing empathy from the very beginning of life and case studies of individuals who have non-normative developments of empathy.

Zunshine, Lisa. *Why We Read Fiction: Theory of Mind and the Novel.* Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2006.

Zunshine's book applies the cognitive science concept of "Theory of Mind" to the processes involved in reading and enjoying novels. She discusses the skill of mind-reading as integral to the understanding of a fiction story that depicts human interaction. It is argued that humans seek to attribute intention to another human's actions and words, and it is the challenge of reading another's mind to determine their intentions that makes reading novels a pleasurable experience. She also discusses Simon Baron-Cohen's work on the possible absence of mind-reading among autistic individuals.

Read Aloud Selections

(Descriptions of these selections are included in the strategies portion of this unit.)

Henkes, Kevin. *A Weekend with Wendell.* New York: Greenwillow Books, 1986.

—. *Chester's Way*. New York: Greenwillow Books, 1988.

—. *Chrysanthemum.* New York: Scholastic Inc., 1991.

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—. *Frog and Toad are Friends.* Columbus, Ohio: Atlas Editions, Inc., 1970.

—. *Frog and Toad Together.* New York, New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1971.

Willems, Mo. *Elephants Cannot Dance!* (New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2009)

—. *I am Going!* New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2010.

—. *My Friend is Sad.* New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2007.

—. *Should I Share My Ice Cream?* New York: Hyperion Press for Children, 2011.

—. *Watch Me Throw the Ball!* New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2009.

Appendix: Implementing District Standards

There are a number of Virginia Standards of Learning for both grades one and two addressed by this unit. Oral Language standards 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 as well as 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 are all addressed, at least in part. As students listen to the books and discuss them in small groups or partnerships, they are practicing expressing their ideas orally in ways in which others can understand them. They will also need to retell parts of books in order to make some of their arguments or points during discussions. There is also the possibility that they will need to clarify their ideas or expand the vocabulary they've chosen to use when having conversations about the texts and our bigger conversations about friendship. It is also necessary for them to follow general rules of conversation, such as active listening and waiting for a turn to talk, during our classroom discussions. Furthermore, the opportunities for dramatic play will allow for retelling stories in logical order as well as adapting oral language to fit the situation.

This unit will also address parts of the Reading standards 1.9 and 2.8. While the students are not engaging in the actual reading of text, they are practicing many of the skills needed to read text independently through the activities in this unit. We will set a purpose for reading each time we begin a new text, such as reading to find an answer to a question about friendship. These read-aloud experiences will also offer opportunities to relate previous experiences to what is read as doing so is key to considering a character's state of mind. It will also be necessary to ask and answer questions, identify characters and important events, as well as to discuss problems and how they are solved within the plot.

Endnotes

1. Maia Szalavitz and Bruce D. Perry, *Born for Love: Why Empathy is Essential—and Endangered* (New York: Harper Collins, 2010), 3.
2. Ibid., 9.
3. Jacqueline Smollar and James Youniss, "Social Development Through Friendship," in *Peer Relationships and Social Skills in Childhood* (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1982), 282.
4. Zick Rubin, *Children's Friendships* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), 33-34.
5. Ibid., 41.
6. Lisa Zunshine, *Why We Read Fiction: Theory of Mind and the Novel* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2006).
7. "inferring," (Dictionary.com, LLC, 2011) http://www.dictionary.com.
8. Zunshine, *Why We Read Fiction*.
9. Rubin, *Children's Friendships,* 54.
10. Smollar and Youniss, "Social Development," 292.
11. Ibid., 293.
12. Ibid., 294.
13. Rubin, 36-37.
14. Arnold Lobel, *Frog and Toad are Friends* (Columbus: Atlas Editions, Inc., 1970).
15. Arnold Lobel, *Days with Frog and Toad* (New York: Scholastic Inc., 1979) 52.
16. Ibid., 59.
17. Ibid., 62.
18. Ibid.
19. Kevin Henkes, *Jessica* (New York: Greenwillow Books, 1989).
20. Kevin Henkes, *Wemberly Worried* (New York: Greenwillow Books, 2000).

21. Kevin Henkes, *Chester's Way* (New York: Greenwillow Books, 1988).
22. Kevin Henkes, *A Weekend with Wendell* (New York: Greenwillow Books, (1986).
23. Kevin Henkes, *Chrysanthemum* (New York: Scholastic Inc., 1991) 7.
24. Henkes, *Chrysanthemum.*
25. James Howe, *Houndsley and Catina* (Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press, 2006) 8.
26. James Howe, *Houndsley and Catina and the Birthday Surprise* (Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press, 2006).
27. James Howe, *Houndsley and Catina Plink and Plunk* (Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press, 2009) 35.
28. Mo Willems, *Watch Me Throw the Ball* (New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2009) 6.
29. Ibid., 14-15.
30. Mo Willems, *My Friend is Sad* (New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2007) 5.
31. Mo Willems, *Should I Share My Ice Cream?* (New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2011) 17-19.
32. Mo Willems, *I Am Going!* (New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2010) 7.
33. Mo Willems, *Elephants Cannot Dance!* (New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2009) 7-8.
34. Ibid., 42-45.

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