



Billie B. Brown: The Cutest Pet Ever

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Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- Collect data to create a picture graph.
- Summarize the information presented in the picture graph.
- Construct a “For” and “Against” list as a means of making a decision.
- Differentiate between statements and questions.
- Learn about the responsibilities associated with being a pet owner.

About the Story:

Billie is bored, bored, bored. So when Billie comes up with the idea of getting a pony, she thinks she has found a way to ensure that she is never bored again! Unfortunately for Billie, her mom and dad don't agree with the idea of getting a pony and instead, suggest other pets for her to consider. But it's not until she visits the pet shop that Billie discovers the perfect pet. With ginger fur and a little pink nose, Molly is the cutest guinea pig Billie has ever seen and her mom's promise to return to the pet store after shopping has Billie feeling super excited. Billie spends the rest of the shopping trip showing her mom just how helpful and responsible she can be and, as a reward, Mom agrees to take Molly home. But Billie's excitement quickly turns to sadness when she discovers that somebody else has already bought Molly. Thinking that she will never find a cuddly companion like Molly again, Billie returns home to discover a snuffling ginger surprise waiting for her.

Before You Read the Story:

Read the title of the story to students. Invite students to identify the pet pictured with Billie. Give students the opportunity to discuss their own pets before asking students whether they agree with the guinea pig being described as the “cutest pet ever.” Now turn to the back cover and read the blurb aloud. Invite students to share their own experiences buying or adopting a pet. Discuss how Billie might convince her mom and dad to buy her a guinea pig. Guide students into a discussion about the responsibilities of owning a pet.

Questions and Activities:

Chapter One

- Billie is bored, bored, bored. What does she usually do when she feels this way?
- What has Billie done to try to stop feeling bored? What activities do you do when you feel bored?
- Billie eventually comes up with an idea to make sure she never feels bored again. What is her idea? What do you think of Billie's idea?
- What suggestion does Billie's dad have for Billie? How does Billie feel about this suggestion?



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Activity: Survey the students to identify the pets they have. Students draw and color a picture of their pet on a sheet of paper. Once complete, students use these drawings to create a picture graph. Assist students to make some summarizing statements about the data collected. Now send students to pose the same question to a larger group of students or the entire class. Each student should collect their own data and present it as a picture graph. Instruct students to give the picture graph a title and provide at least two summarizing statements about this graph.

Chapter Two

- Billie talks to her mom about her idea to get a pony. Does Billie's mom agree?
- What are some of the reasons Billie's mom and dad give Billie for not getting a pony?
- Billie is cross! Who does she blame for not getting a pony and why?

Activity: Review the reasons why Billie's mom and dad won't allow Billie to get a pony. Ask students to consider an animal that they would love to have as a pet. Using Billie's pony as an example, model constructing a "For" and "Against" list as a means of helping students to make decisions. Note how some reasons will hold more weight than others. With their desired pet in mind, have students make a "For" and "Against" list for owning that animal. Ask students to take this activity home and seek their parent's input on the question of owning that pet. Give students an opportunity to discuss any points their parents added to the list.

Chapter Three

- Billie and her mom visit the pet shop. What does Billie discover?
- How does Billie try to convince her mom to get a guinea pig? Do her efforts work?
- What surprise discovery does Billie make when she returns to the pet store?

Activity: Using the topic of pets, discuss the difference between a statement and a question with the students. Ask them to share statements and questions about pets they own or would like to own. Record these to present to the remainder of the class for discussion. Set aside a week for students and parents to bring in pets from home and share information about the responsibilities associated with owning that animal. At the end of each visit, add to the statement and question chart as necessary.

Chapter Four

- What happened to Molly? What suggestion does Billie's mom make?
- Billie feels very sad. Can you find some examples that show Billie is sad?
- What's inside the box Billie's dad gives her? Can you explain how the bad surprise at the pet store and the happy surprise at home are connected?

Activity: Invite a local vet to visit the class and discuss the responsibilities associated with owning a pet. Encourage students to share unanswered questions or questionable statements with the vet for consideration.

Teacher Tips adapted from Hardie Grant Egmont.