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Billie B. Brown: The Second-best Friend

By Sally Rippin, Illustrated by Aki Fukuoka

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- Engage with the characters.
- Practice writing a thank-you card.
- Consider the qualities and actions that epitomize a good friend.
- Experiment with writing an invitation.
- Write a simple recipe.
- Use descriptive language to convey a variety of emotions.

About the Story:

Billie loves being best friends with Jack. Billie also loves the sparkly pens that Jack bought her for her birthday. So when her new friend, Rebecca, suggests that Billie swap her beautiful sparkly pens for a purple toy pony, Billie is a little muddled. She really wants to be friends with Rebecca, but she doesn't want to hurt or disappoint Jack. Having a new friend suddenly means that Billie has to make a lot of tricky decisions. Will Billie find a way of solving this problem and find room for two friends?

Before You Read the Story:

Read the back cover blurb aloud and ask students: Have you ever had to choose between friends and why? Invite students to describe what is happening in the accompanying illustrations and how the illustrations are presented. Ask: How do you think Billie feels about making a choice between friends? Encourage a discussion among students about alternatives to Billie's dilemma of choosing a best friend.

Questions and Activities:

Chapter One

- What special birthday gift did Billie decide to bring to school/ Who bought this present for her?
- Ms. Walton asks Billie if she has brought candy to school. Why would Ms. Walton think this?
- When Billie explains where the sweet smell is coming from, what do some of her classmates do?
- Why does Billie feel a bit annoyed in this part of the story?

Activity: Receiving a gift is so exciting! Write a description of one of your favorite gifts. Draw this gift below your description. Now write a thank-you card to the person you received the gift from.

Chapter Two

- Billie has beautiful sparkly pens, but what else does she wish she could have?



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- Billie is very muddled about a decision she has to make. What does Billie have to decide? Do you agree with Billie's choice? If not, what would you have done?
 - Billie says that her tummy is jumping around like a little fish. What does this mean?

Activity: Billie is excited about making friends with Rebecca. She describes her excitement as feeling like a little fish is jumping around in her tummy. Write about a time when you felt really excited about something. Can you explain what your body feels like or does when you are really excited?

Chapter Three

- Billie and Jack were going to work on their fort when they got home from school. What does Billie do instead?
- Billie is excited about her new friend and her new toy. So why does Billie also feel bad?
- Jack frowns and looks down at the ground. What does this tell you about the way Jack feels? When you feel upset, how do you show it?

Activity: Write an invitation to a friend asking them to a play date at your house. You can use the example below to get you started. Don't forget to make your invitation look cool!

Dear

Come over for a Play Date!

When:

Time:

Where:

Bring:

Organizer:

Chapter Four

- When Billie sees Rebecca unpacking the sparkly pens, her tummy squeezes tight. What does this mean?
- Cupcakes and juice for afternoon snack sound yummy! So why isn't Billy enjoying her treats at Rebecca's house?
- What does Billie do to help herself feel better?



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- Billie mentions so many nice things about Jack when describing him to Rebecca. If you were talking about your best friend to another friend, what five nice statements would you make about them?

Activity: Imagine that you could follow a recipe and make the perfect best friend. Create a simple recipe that includes all of the qualities you think are important in a best friend. Use the ideas below to get you started. Don't forget to include a picture of this best friend at the bottom of the recipe!

How to Make a Best Friend

Ingredients:

- 1 cup of happiness
- 1 bucket of big hugs

Steps:

1. Mix all of your ingredients in a bowl.