



Hey Jack! The Scary Solo

By Sally Rippin, illustrated by Stephanie Spartels

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- Explore the concept of fear and how to manage this feeling.
- Compose and perform or record a song.
- Create a poster advertising the school concert.

About the Story:

Jack loves to sing. He wants to be a star! But Jack is also shy. So when tryouts for the school concert are on, Jack asks his best friend Billie to stand with him while he sings. Unfortunately, not even Billie can make that nervous and wobbly feeling go away and Jack completes the audition without singing a word. But just when Jack thinks he can't feel any worse, Billie decides to audition for a part in the concert too. Unlike Jack, Billie is brave and she sings so well that she is given the solo! Jack is grumpy, but he soon realizes that being Billie's friend is much more important than any school concert. But on the night of their performance, things don't quite go according to plan and Jack discovers he really is the star he had always dreamed of being.

Before You Read the Story:

Look at the front cover and read the blurb aloud. Using the illustration as a guide, ask students to define the word "solo" and why it might be described as "scary." Now turn to the back cover and read the blurb aloud. Invite students to comment on Jack's response to his best friend securing a part in the concert he wanted. Have students predict what might happen at the concert that requires Jack to save the day.

Questions and Activities:

Chapter One

- What does the word "jittery" mean?
- Jack really wants a part in the school concert, but he's too shy to try out by himself. Who does he call on to help him?
- What happens when the music starts and Jack tries to sing?
- Jack leaves the audition feeling cross and sad. Can you explain Jack's feelings?

Activity: Discuss Jack's fear of singing in front of an audience. Ask students to explain how we know Jack is feeling scared. Invite students to recall a time when their fear prevented them from doing something they really enjoy. Ask students whether they were able to overcome that fear and if so, how they managed to do this.

Chapter Two

- What does the word "mooches" mean?
- How does Jack describe his angry feelings?



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- How does the “big grumpy monster” make Jack behave? Does he stay in this angry mood forever?
 - How does Jack show Billie that he is a real friend?

Activity: Invite students to find a partner and compose a simple song. Give students a list of topics for inspiration. Students should also have access to some basic musical instruments and a recording device. Give students the option of performing their song for an audience or recording their song. Ask students to comment on the experience of singing in front of an audience.

Chapter Three

- What is a solo singer? What is a chorus singer? Which one would Jack prefer to be? Which one would you prefer to be?
- What happens to Billie on the night of the concert? How does Jack help her? Are you surprised by what Jack did?
- Describe how Jack feels at the end of the performance.

Activity: Show students images of posters that advertise different events. Note their features and ask students to comment on their effectiveness in drawing their attention to what they are advertising, recording these features as the conversation goes along. Review the list with students and advise students to consider these elements when designing their own poster for the school concert. Once complete, posters should be displayed around the room.

Teacher Tips adapted from Hardie Grant Egmont.