

Literacy
Year 5 and 6
Week beginning.....

There's a Boy in the Girls' Bathroom

This week's literacy

- This week, we are going to be looking at an extract from a new book, but we won't tell you the title... yet!
- Follow the instructions for each day as you come to it.

Day 1

Explore It

The Story's Opening

Bradley Chalkers sat at his desk in the back of the room—last seat, last row. No one sat at the desk next to him or at the one in front of him. He was an island. If he could have, he would have sat in the closet. Then he could shut the door so he wouldn't have to listen to Mrs. Ebbel. He didn't think she'd mind. She'd probably like it better that way too. So would the rest of the class. All in all, he thought everyone would be much happier if he sat in the closet, but, unfortunately, his desk didn't fit. "Class," said Mrs. Ebbel. "I would like you all to meet Jeff Fishkin. Jeff has just moved here from Washington, D.C., which, as you know, is our nation's capital." Bradley looked up at the new kid who was standing at the front of the room next to Mrs. Ebbel. "Why don't you tell the class a little bit about yourself, Jeff," urged Mrs. Ebbel. The new kid shrugged. "There's no reason to be shy," said Mrs. Ebbel. The new kid mumbled something, but Bradley couldn't hear what it was. "Have you ever been to the White House, Jeff?" Mrs. Ebbel asked. "I'm sure the class would be very interested to hear about that." No, I've never been there," the new kid said very quickly as he shook his head.

The Story's Opening... continued

Mrs. Ebbel smiled at him. "Well, I guess we'd better find you a place to sit." She looked around the room. "Hmm, I don't see any place except, I suppose you can sit there, at the back." "No, not next to Bradley!" a girl in the front row exclaimed. "At least it's better than in front of Bradley," said the boy next to her. Mrs. Ebbel frowned. She turned to Jeff. "I'm sorry, but there are no other empty desks." "I don't mind where I sit," Jeff mumbled. "Well, nobody likes sitting ... there," said Mrs. Ebbel. "That's right," Bradley spoke up. "Nobody likes sitting next to me!" He smiled a strange smile. He stretched his mouth so wide, it was hard to tell whether it was a smile or a frown. He stared at Jeff with bulging eyes as Jeff awkwardly sat down next to him. Jeff smiled back at him, so he looked away. As Mrs. Ebbel began the lesson, Bradley took out a pencil and a piece of paper, and scribbled. He scribbled most of the morning, sometimes on the paper and sometimes on his desk. Sometimes he scribbled so hard his pencil point broke. Every time that happened he laughed. Then he'd tape the broken point to one of the gobs of junk in his desk, sharpen his pencil, and scribble again.

Questions to answer in your book

- What do you like or dislike about this extract?
- What do you think is happening in this extract?
- Who are the central characters?
- Where is it set?
- Can you summarise what you've read in a couple of sentences?
- What questions do you have about it?

Questions to answer in your book

- Think about the main character, Bradley. In the extract, he is described as **'an island**. What does this tell us about him?
- How do you think Bradley feels being in this class?
- Why do you think this?
- How do you think the teacher and the other kids feel about him? Why do you think this?
- How do they treat him? Is their behaviour fair?

Day 2

Illustrate It

The Story's Opening – read the extract again

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The Story's Opening... continued

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Questions to think about

- Think about the different characters in the opening of the novel. What impression are you given of Bradley Chalkers? Which words and phrases help you to imagine him?
- What impression do you have of Jeff Fishkin? Which different words and phrases suggest what he is like? Does he seem friendly to you? You might like to highlight or underline the parts of the text that help you to visualise these two different characters.



Bradley Chalkers from Jeff's perspective

Task:

Draw a sketch of Bradley Chalkers from Jeff's perspective. Write some words and phrases that have helped you make your picture.

Success Criteria:

Think about what would you need to include in the drawing. What do you think Jeff's first impression of Bradley is? What might his body language be like? Do you think he would look confident or shy and nervous? What kind of expression might you draw on his face? Why?

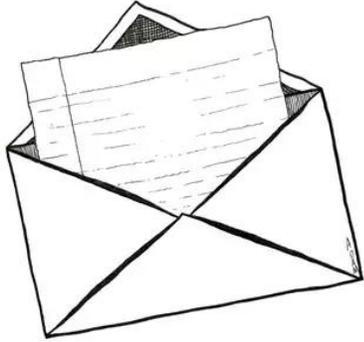


Day 3

Write About It

Questions to answer in your book

- What do you notice about the way Bradley is treated in the class, is this what you would expect from a teacher and other children?
- Why do you think Bradley would rather sit in the cupboard than in the classroom?
- Why do you think the other children and Mrs Ebbel behave in this way?
- Why do you think he smiles a 'strange smile' as Jeff sits next to him? Why do you think he looks away when Jeff smiles back?
- What do you think Bradley really feels? Why do you think he just scribbles all day? Is this what you would have expected?



What Would You Do?



Task

Imagine you are someone in Bradley's class and you have noticed that Bradley is lonely and being picked on by other members of the class – including the teacher!

Write a letter to Bradley to show that you understand how he feels and how you are there to support him. Explain how you would treat him differently and make him feel safe and that he doesn't have to hide in a cupboard.

Day 4

Imagine It

Imagine that you are Jeff and that you have just joined the class.

- Do you think you'd like to be in this class? Why or why not?
- What might you ask the other children and Mrs Ebbel?
- Do you think you might behave differently from the children in this class?
- How do you imagine they will make you feel welcome?
- Would you talk to Bradley? What might you say or ask?
- What do you think would be a better way to behave towards Bradley?

Imagine that you are Jeff and that you have just joined the class.

Task

Write a diary entry about your first day of school, particularly on your arrival into Mrs Ebbel's classroom.

Describe how you arrived, how you felt when Mrs Ebbel asked you questions in front of the class, any questions you were asking yourself about Bradley – when they spoke to openly about how no-one wants to sit with him!

Dear Diary,

This morning, I

Later, I decided to

Can you believe

Day 5

Create It

Design Your Perfect Classroom



Thinking about the experiences of Bradley and Jeff, design a classroom where you can make someone feel welcome, either a new student or someone who is finding school challenging. What would make people feel welcome? What behaviour would help someone to feel more confident and happier in a new space?

You need to think about:

- The classroom layout;
- The teacher – what are they like? How do they make the children feel?
- Your classmates – what personalities/qualities/talents would you like to see shine in your perfect classroom?