



LESSON PLAN: PINKY AND REX AND THE BULLY BOOK DISCUSSION

OVERVIEW: This book talk is based on the book *Pinky and Rex and the Bully*. In the story, Pinky is teased because his favorite color is pink and his best friend is a girl. Pinky has to decide whether he will stay true to himself, his best friend and his favorite color. The book provides an opportunity to explore name-calling and put-downs at a developmentally appropriate level. In addition to providing an anti-bullying message the lesson helps build confidence for students to remain true to who they are.

OBJECTIVES:

- Students will be able to explain the importance of valuing difference
- Students will be able to define the problem of name-calling and bullying in schools
- Students will be able to identify those traits that make them special

AGE/EXPERIENCE LEVEL: Grades 3-5

TIME: 45 – 60 minutes

MATERIALS: Lesson plan, *Pinky and Rex and the Bully* by James Howe and published by Simon and Schuster (ISBN: 0-689-80834-8)

PROCEDURE:

Invite students to sit in a comfortable group setting such as a circle or half circle. If class already has ground rules, review them or quickly create some.

1. Start the activity by letting students know that you will be leading them through a read-aloud of the book, *Pinky and Rex and the Bully*.
2. Show them the cover of the book. Allow three students to really examine it up close. Identify the characters (Pinky, Rex and the Bully) to the class. Ask the three students one at a time to describe the expression on the characters' faces to the rest of the class.
3. From the title and cover illustration, ask the class what they think the book might be about.
4. Ask the students to turn to a partner and tell them what a bully is. (Listen in on their conversations).
5. Share what you heard students saying.
6. Lead the students through a discussion about bullying in school with the following questions:
 - a. Have you witnessed or heard of name-calling and bullying in our school because someone was different?



- b. Do you think this is a problem?
- c. How would you feel if you were called names for being different?

Read the book, *Pinky and Rex and The Bully* with students, asking them if they would like to read as well. Lead the students through a discussion using the following questions after reading the corresponding chapter.

After reading chapter one, *Sissy*, ask the following questions:

- What happened in the story this far?
- Is there anything that Pinky could have done to end the bullying?

Introduce the acronym SAFE and let students know that when they are being called names or bullied, they should remember how to stay **SAFE**:

Say what you feel
Ask for help
Find a Friend
Exit the area

After reading chapter two, *Cookies and Lemonade*, ask the following questions:

- Pinky's favorite color is pink, what's yours?
- Do you think it's OK for the bully to make fun of Pinky because his favorite color is pink?
- How would you feel if other students made fun of you because of your favorite color?
- Ask students to recall the meaning of SAFE and to turn to a partner to tell them.

After reading chapter three, *Recess*, ask the following questions:

- What role did Pinky's friend Anthony play in this chapter?
- Ask students if they have ever heard the word, "ally." Give them a hint by telling them that Anthony was being an "ally." Have them turn and tell a partner what they think.

Explain that Anthony was being an ally by intervening when he saw his friend being bullied and that we should always intervene when we see name-calling and bullying, if we feel it is safe to do so. Being a bystander, watching the bullying and not saying anything, is like saying "bullying is okay and acceptable." Doing something sends the message that this behavior is not OK in your school.

After reading chapter four, *Billy*, ask the following questions:

- What happened in this chapter?
- Did you think it was right for Pinky to give up his name, his favorite color, and all of his stuffed animals to fit in?
- How would you feel if you had to give up your favorite things, because other students



were making fun of you?

After reading chapter five, *Hard Choices*, ask the following questions:

- What did we learn about Mrs. Morgan in this chapter?
- How did she feel about giving up painting to fit in?

After reading chapters six and seven, ask the following questions:

- What happened in the last two chapters?
- How did Pinky finally stand-up to the bully?
- What did we learn about being different?

Being different is part of who we are. We all have different things we like, or dislike. We shouldn't be made to feel bad about liking a certain color, or because of who we hang out with.

- Have you ever tried to hide who you were to fit in?
- Give a "thumbs up" if you think it is ok to call someone names or bully them, because you think they are different?
- Give a "thumbs up" if we can all agree to not call people names, or bully them, because we think they are different?
- Give a "thumbs up" if we can agree to be allies?
- Give a "thumbs up" if we can agree to keep our friends and classmates SAFE?