The Beast in Ms. Rooney's Room

Written by Patricia Reilly Giff
Illustrated by Blanche Sims


TEACHERS GUIDE

NOTE TO TEACHERS

Newbery Honor-winning author Patricia Reilly Giff has used her writing talents and experience as a teacher to create the beloved Polk Street School books.

Discover the original Kids of the Polk Street School—with a brand-new look complete with discussion questions and themes to help explore typical classroom situations, as the kids in Ms. Rooney's room learn to solve the problems of growing up.

"An affectionate picture of lower elementary students making their way through the ups and downs of classroom life."
-Booklist

ABOUT THIS BOOK

Here you'll find the original Kids of the Polk Street School books, by Patricia Reilly Giff and illustrated by Blanche Sims. The "Specials" include easy and fun projects, and the New Kids at the Polk Street School stories are about Stacy, Emily's sister, for the slightly younger reader.

The Kids of the Polk Street School Series Yearling paperback, Grades 1-4 School, Humor

THE BEAST IN MS. ROONEY'S ROOM #1
For Richard "Beast" Best, being left back means being teased and having to face the same teacher.
0-440-40485-1
FISH FACE #2
School is fun for Emily Arrow until Dawn Tiffanie Bosco sits next to her and Emily discovers that Dawn is a thief.
0-440-41072-x

DECEMBER SECRETS #4
Emily is stuck with crybaby Jill Simon as her “secret pal” to be kind to for the whole month of December.
“A delightful holiday read-aloud.” – School Library Journal
0-440-41795-3

IN THE DINOSAUR’S PAW #5
Beast’s luck changes when he finds a magic ruler that makes all his dreams come true.
0-440-44150-1

THE VALENTINE STAR #6
Sherri Dent is angry with Emily for reporting her to Ms. Rooney. Now Emily wonders if Sherri will tell about something Emily’s done wrong.
0-440-49204-6

LAZY LIONS, LUCKY LAMBS #7
The children in Ms. Rooney’s room are supposed to be writing about real people, but writing is Beast’s worse subject.
0-440-44640-6

SNAGGLE DOODLES #8
Emily can’t help wishing that she, instead of Linda Lorca, had been chosen leader of their “invention group.”
0-440-48068-x

PURPLE CLIMBING DAYS #9
Beast hopes his friends won’t find out that looking at the gym rope makes him dizzy.
0-440-47639-9

SUNNY-SIDE UP #11
What is Richard Best going to do? His best friend Mathew Jackson is moving and Richard must find a way for him to stay!
0-440-48406-5
**PICKLE PUSS #12**
Emily and Dawn find a stray cat, but who will keep it? The girls agree that whoever reads the most books in the summer reading program gets to keep the cat.
0-40-46844-2

**BEAST AND THE HALLOWEEN HORROR #13**
Beast discovers that there is nothing more scary than facing up to his own lie _ when the author he wrote to (and lied to) comes to visit the Polk Street School.
0-440-40335-9

**EMILY ARROW PROMISES TO DO BETTER THIS YEAR #14**
Ms. Rooney asks her students to make New Year’s resolutions and Emily promises “to do better” – at everything. But can she keep such a challenging resolution?
0-440-40369-3

**MOSTER RABBIT RUNS AMUCK! #15**
Beast and Matthew have a problem! While moving the monster Easter rabbit onto the stage from the closet, its head breaks off. How can they fix it before Friday’s school assembly?
0-440-40424-x

**WAKE UP, EMILY, IT’S MOTHER’S DAY! #16**
Emily Arrow and her sister Stacy have a big surprise for their mother on Mother’s Day.
0-440-40455-x

The New Kids at the Polk Street School
Yearling paperback, Grades K-3
School, Humor

Emily’s younger sister Stacy has had to stay home while Emily went to school, made friends, learned to spell, and played games at recess. Now it’s Stacy’s turn to start kindergarten at the Polk Street School.

**WATCH OUT! MAN-EATING SNAKE #1**
“Stacy’s adjustment to school is already prickly – but when she tells a potential new friend that she has a man-eating snake at home, the alliance dissolves.” – Booklist
FANCY FEET #2
Stacy “borrows” a beautiful pair of shoes and must own up.
0-440-40086-4
Honesty

ALL ABOUT STACY #3
While working on her new class project, an “About Me” box, Stacy learns about feeling “special deluxe” because it’s what’s inside that counts.
0-440-40088-0
Self-Esteem

B-E-S-T FRIENDS #4
Stacy becomes friends with the new girl in class and discovers it’s fun to be different.
0-440-40090-2
Friendship

SPECTACULAR STONE SOUP #5
Mrs. Zachary wants her class to be people Helpers and prepare a spectacular stone soup together.
0-440-40134-8
Kindness/Good Deeds

STACY SAYS GOOD-BYE #6
Stacy’s thrilled to see everyone’s baby pictures go up on the bulletin board – but what surprise could Mrs. Zachary have?
0-440-40135-6
Growing Up
The Kids of the Polk Street School Specials
Yearling paperback, Grades 1-4
Schoo, Humor

These specials continue the adventures of the kids in Ms. Rooney’s class, and each book contains a special section that includes easy and fun projects* kids can do by themselves.

**WRITE UP A STORM WITH THE POLK STREET SCHOOL #1**
Writing
0-440-40882-2
*Make your own book

**COUNT YOUR MONEY WITH THE POLK STREET SCHOOL #2**
Counting & Mathematics (Money, Personal Finance), Friendship
0-440-40929-2
*Slotted card for saving money

**THE POSTCARD PEST #3**
Activities, Common Childhood Experiences (Lying), Crafts & Hobbies, Geography, Travel & Vacation, Writing (Pen Pals)
0-440-40973-x
*Stamp album, stamp collecting

**TURKEY TROUBLE #4**
Activities, Crafts & Hobbies (Baking), Family & Relationships (Babies, Siblings), Holidays & Special Days (Thanksgiving)
0-440-40955-1

**GREEN THUMBS, EVERYONE #7**
Activities, Common Childhood Experiences (Bullies), Crafts & Hobbies (Gardening), Ecology, Emotions (Guilt), Holidays & Special Days (Earth Day), Honesty, Seasons (Spring), Science & Nature
0-440-41232-3
*Pet care guide
The Kids of the Polk Street School Specials
Yearling paperback, Grades 1-4
School, Humor

Each of these Polk Street Specials includes a “Visit the City Guide,” a kid’s guide to museums, landmarks, monuments, and more. The Polk Street Kids on Tour books include city guides and maps.
Art, Music & Theater, Travel & Vacation, U.S. Cities

LOOK OUT, WASHINGTON, D.C.! #6
0-440-40934-9

NEXT STOP, NEW YORK CITY! #9
0-440-41362-1

OH BOY, BOSTON! #10
0-440-41365-6

LET’ S GO, PHILADELPHIA! #11
0-440-41368-0

The Polka Dot Private Eye
Yearling paperback, Grades 1-4
School, Humor
Join Dawn Bosco, the Polka Dot Private Eye, and the rest of the gang of Polk Street, in these fun and easy-to-read mysteries.

RIDDLE OF THE RED PURSE
When three people claim the red purse found in the schoolyard, Dawn Bosco sets out to find the real owner.
0-440-47534-1

POWDER PUFF PUZZLE
When Dawn Bosco’ s cat, Powder Puff, jumps out of her arms and into a car that drives away, it looks like another case for the Polka Dot Private Eye.

CLUE AT THE ZOO
Dawn Bosco is faced with the mystery of a possibly poisonous notebook that she finds in the zoo.
0-440-40318-9
CASE OF THE COOL – ITCH KID
Dawn Bosco’s on her way to summer camp. She can’t wait for the fun to begin, but when a few of her favorite possessions disappear, it’s time for the Polka Dot Private Eye to investigate. 0-440-40199-2

MYSTERY OF THE BLUE RING
When her friend’s ring is discovered missing, Dawn Bosco decides to play detective. 0-440-45998-2

THE SECRET AT POLK STREET SCHOOL
Dawn Bosco wonders whether mean Drake Evans is behind the strange happenings at the Polk Street School. 0-440-47696-8

TRAIL OF THE SCREAMING TEENAGER
A summer day at the beach sets the scene for the Polka Dot Private Eye’s hottest case yet. 0-440-40312-x

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Patricia Reilly Giff has long been a favorite writer among young readers. She is the author of two series of books that deal with friendship—The Kids of the Polk Street School and The Polka Dot Private Eye. Her novels for middle-grade readers include The Gift of the Pirate Queen and Lily’s Crossing, which was named a Newbery Honor Book, an ALA Notable Book for Children, and a Boston Globe-Horn Book Honor Book. Nory kyan’s Song, her latest book, is a tribute to her Irish great-grandparents and her grand-mother, who lived through the potato famine in the mid-1800s. It was named an ALA Notable Book for Children and an ALA Best Book for Young Adults. She and her husband reside in Weston, Connecticut. In 1990, Giff combined her two greatest loves: children’s books and her family. With her husband and her children, Giff opened “Dinosaur’s Paw,” a children’s bookstore named after one of her Kids of the Polk Street School novels. This store is part of Giff’s quest to bring children and books together.
TEACHING IDEAS

**Themtic Connections**

**FRIENDSHIP/BEING NEW IN SCHOOL** - In Fish Face, Dawn is the new kid in school and desperately wants Emily to be her friend. Hold a discussion about being new and brainstorm ways to make someone feel welcome. Keep the list in the event a new student arrives in class.

**ACCEPTANCE OF OTHERS/KINDNESS** - In December Secrets, Emily is stuck with fat Jill Simon as her secret pal, but ends up discovering that Jill is a true friend after all. Ask the class to write one nice quality about each person in the class and share them. Explain that everyone has something good to offer and that kindness can go a long way.

**LEARNING TO WORK TOGETHER/IMAGINATION** - April is invention month and, in Stiaggle Doodles, Emily invents a new expression. Discuss the role of imagination in inventing new things. Then have the class create their own inventions. Working together in groups, have the children "invent" their own collages using scissors, paste, and old magazines. Topics can include: things that happen in the classroom, something at home, crazy inventions (a homework doer, a spinach eater, a pizza maker).

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something at home, crazy inventions (a homework doer, a spinach eater, a pizza maker.

**Interdisciplinary Connections**

**HISTORY**-Learn about the Presidents! Start with James K. Polk, of course. Born on November 2, 1795, he was a serious man who banned dancing in the White House. He declared war on Mexico and added six western states to the Union.

**RESEARCH**-Use Polks story as a jumping-off place to teach your class beginner research techniques. Even first and second graders can learn about the biography section in the library, look at old newspapers, and discover the wonders of an encyclopedia.

**MATH/ESTIMATING**-In The Candy Corn Contest, Ms. Rooney asks the class to estimate the number of pieces of candy in the jar. Hold a similar contest using popcorn kernels. Once the students have submitted their guesses, divide the class into groups and have each group count by tens to determine the total number of kernels. Then have a pop-corn party.

**LANGUAGE ARTS/READING**-In The Beast in Ms. Rooney's Room, the students try to win the school banner for best class. Promote reading, as well as good behavior, by hosting a best-student contest. Create the rules as a class, where students aim to read as many books as possible, in addition to promoting random acts of kindness. Each week a different student gets awarded the banner.

**SCIENCE/GARDENING**-In Green Thumbs, Everyone, Richard and Emily discover the effort required to maintain a garden. Have children share the excitement of planting a seed and watching it grow! Students can be responsible for planting, watering, and nurturing their plants. Discuss the various ways seeds can be planted and grown, as well as water and light requirements. Materials needed for an indoor garden: at least two medium planting pots, soil, fastgrowing seeds such as bean sprouts or grass seed, a ruler, and a cup for water. Compare the progress of the plants over time.
BEYOND THE BOOK
On the Web

For additional activities and teaching ideas... Visit our free online site Teachers @ Random and be sure to sign up for our online newsletter! http://www.randomhouse.com/teachers


OTHER TITLES OF INTEREST

Other Early Chapter Book Series for Grades 1-4
A TO Z MYSTERIES®
Ron Roy  Illustrated by John Steven Gurney
Random House/A Stepping Stone Book

JUNIE B. JONES
Barbara Park  Illustrated by Denise Brunkeus
Random House/A Stepping Stone Book

MAGIC TREE HOUSE®
Mary Pope Osborne  Illustrated by Sal Murdocca
Random House/A Stepping Stone Book

MARVIN REDPOST
Louis Sachar
Random House/A Stepping Stone Book

NATE THE GREAT
Marjorie Weinman Sharmat  Illustrated by Marc Simont
Yearling paperback

PEE WEE SCOUTS
Judy Delton  Illustrated by Alan Tiegreen
Yearling paperback
ABOUT THIS GUIDE

In the Classroom
There are many different ways to use the Polk Street books in the classroom. You can follow the months of the year with the Kids of the Polk Street School, use the various themes for lively discussion, and create any one of the numerous activities to go one step beyond. You can even begin a unit on the presidents of the United States, beginning with Polk!

Pick a Kids of the Polk Street School book and read about the school year with Ms. Rooney’s class:

The Beast in Ms. Rooney’s Room
September  Back-to-school, being left back, reading

Fish Face
October  Stealing, honesty

Beast and the Halloween Horror
October  Telling the truth, holidays (Halloween)

The Candy Corn Contest
November  Bed-wetting, cheating, holidays (Thanksgiving)

December Secrets
December  Acceptance of others, kindness & giving, holidays (Christmas/Hanukkah)

In the Dinosaur’s Paw
January  Magical thinking, dinosaurs

Emily Arrow Promises to Do Better This Year
January  Friendship, self-improvement, holidays (New Year’s Day)

The Valentine Star
February  Friendship, holidays (Valentine’s Day)

Lazy Lions, Lucky Lambs
March  Responsibility, writing, self-improvement
Monster Rabbit Runs Amuck!
March-April  Sibling relationships, holidays (Easter)

Snaggle Doodles
April  Learning to work together, sharing, teamwork

Purple Climbing Days
May  Fear, health, nutrition & physical fitness

Wake Up, Emily, It’s Mother’s Day!
May  Doing for others, gardening, holidays (Mother’s Day)

Say “Cheese”
June  Friendship, back-to-school

Sunny-Side Up
July  Moving away, summer

Pickle Puss
August  Competition, reading, summer