

WE DON'T EAT OUR CLASSMATES



Author: Ryan T. Higgins

Illustrator: Ryan T. Higgins

"It's the first day of school for Penelope Rex, and she can't wait to meet her classmates. But it's hard to make human friends when they're so darn delicious!" (Source: Amazon)

Think While You Read...

- Why was Penelope nervous before her first day of school?
- Why did Penelope have a hard time making friends?
- How did Walter help Penelope change?

BRING THIS STORY ALIVE WITH IDEAS TO...

Talk

It's okay to be nervous when we try something new or meet new people! Helping each other feel safe and welcome can help! What are some things we can do or say to help someone who is new or different than you feel safe and welcome?

Play

Penelope's classmates became scared of her after she ate them! Make up your own version of this story by choosing 5 different items from nearby—for example, a cup, a fork, a pencil, a book, and a small toy. Place them on the rug and pretend that they are students in the same classroom. Take turns pretending which one of these items the others might be afraid of. How could you tell the story so that they all get along? Be sure to use funny voices for each of the items!

Write

When we learn that we have things in common with one another, it can change the way we think! Penelope looked different from her classmates, but the illustrator helps us think about her feelings by drawing her with child-like details! Imagine a new classmate for Penelope by drawing a child with details of a dinosaur! What will you add? Big teeth, claws, a long tail? What do you think will happen when Penelope and your new classmate meet?

Connect

Watch the two videos below. How can you help people who may seem different than you be more comfortable at school? Share what you learned with someone!

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hUrbj4SZnxg>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PpPysRXn1Ug>



This book is best for kids ages 3-7 years.

Topics:

Friendship, empathy, lessons learned, diversity, compassion.

Model curiosity and wonder with these power phrases:

I wonder...

I noticed...

Tell me more!

Ask these questions about any book:

Why do you think the author wrote this story?
What did they want us to think about?

How did things change in the story?

What does this story make you wonder about?

Help readers show their thinking by asking:

That's interesting! What made you think that? Or how do you know?

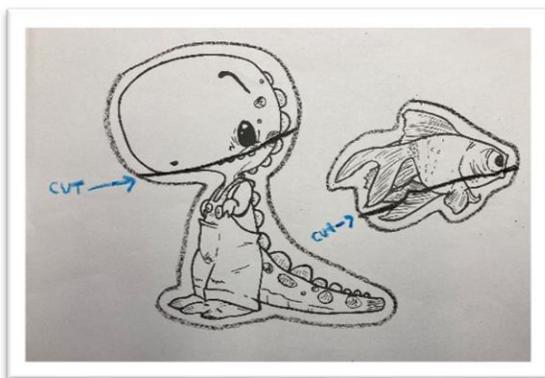
RETELL THE STORY!

Penelope changes in the story by learning to think about how her classmates feel after Walter bites her finger. Retelling a story in our own words helps us remember more about what happened and helps us think about why the story ends the way it does. Let's create puppets of Penelope and Walter to retell the story! Make up voices for the characters and imagine things they might say, think or feel. Want to keep going? Use your puppets to invent a different ending to the story!

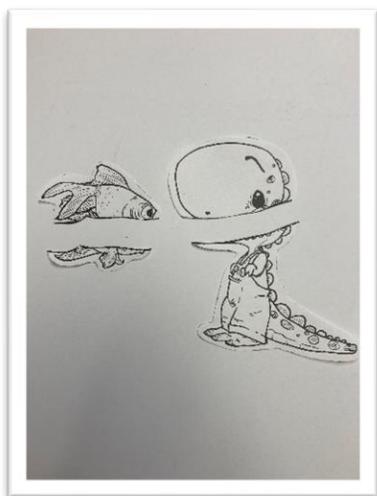
Materials

- Penelope and Walter puppet template
- Scissors
- Crayons
- 2 wooden clothespins
- Glue

Instructions



Color Penelope and Walter
Cut along outline of each character



Cut along the line to separate the top and bottom half of each character's mouth.



Glue top half of character on the top half of the clothespin. Match bottom half to top and glue the bottom half on to lower clothespin.



Play with your puppets!
Act out the story for a younger sibling or loved one. What does your dinosaur sound like?