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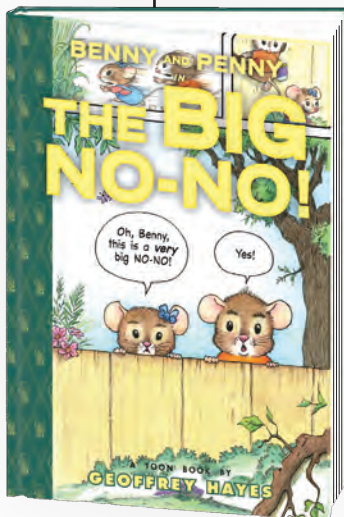
Lesson Plan for
Benny and Penny in
THE BIG NO-NO!

by Geoffrey Hayes



DOWNLOADABLE FROM TOON-BOOKS.COM
MAKING INFERENCES ABOUT CHARACTERS

Overview	Young readers can start to develop comprehension strategies such as making inferences from their earliest experiences with text. For this reason, both picture books and graphic works such as <i>Benny and Penny in The Big No-No!</i> can be used to support readers as they develop this skill and transfer it to all of their reading.
Subject	English Language Arts
Grade Level	1-2
Suggested Time	45-60 minutes
Objectives	Students will practice making inferences about fictional characters; they will also identify supporting evidence (in either print or art) for their inferences.
Before Reading	Explain the concept of making informed guesses, or “figuring things out” through “clues” in order to better understand stories. (Or review key points about making inferences you have already taught.) Preview both the content and the implementation of the skill itself by drawing attention to the book cover. Ask students how we know that Penny is talking to Benny even though she seems to be addressing the reader directly (i.e., she says his name). Have students identify the situation/setting of the cover image purely from visual clues (Benny and Penny are looking into another yard) and infer how the characters feel (they are unhappy or alarmed). Reinforce that using clues in this way to figure out meanings that aren’t stated directly is helpful to understanding—and enjoying—a range of stories, including those without pictures.
	To activate prior knowledge, invite students to share what they know about Benny and Penny (from <i>Just Pretend</i>) or what it’s like to play with an older/younger sibling or kids in their neighborhood. Discuss the sort of things a mean person does, the importance of sharing, or what misunderstandings are and how they can be resolved.



(Continued overleaf)

Benny and Penny in
THE BIG NO-NO!

(RAW Junior/TOON Books,
ISBN: 978-0-9799238-9-0, \$12.95)

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THE BIG NO-NO! LESSON PLAN (PAGE 2)



During Reading	Read the first half of the story (through p. 17) as a group, using whatever routine you're most comfortable with. Point out throughout how the words and pictures work together to allow readers to make inferences that tell them what the characters are doing and why. For example, on the very first page, draw attention to the clues that suggest that the main characters are brother and sister (they share the same yard; their names rhyme). Using a think-aloud process, continue to model the skill as needed. On p. 7, for example, you might ask why Penny says that girls are nicer (Benny has just been mean to her on the bottom of p. 6) or how one can tell that Benny is looking for his pail in panel three (the dialogue in panel 4 makes this clear).
	Have students read on their own to complete the second half of the story (pp. 18-31), instructing them to complete the activity sheet as they read to focus on making inferences. Clarify that the activity calls out only five inferences that readers might make for this section of the text, and that good readers make inferences about characters as needed.
After Reading	Have students share their work on the activity sheets with the group, and invite volunteers to identify other places in <i>The Big No-No!</i> where they needed to make inferences. Be sure to have them explain how story clues enabled them to figure out what the characters were doing and why. Finally, make a thematic connection by discussing how Benny and Penny made inferences—incorrectly—about their new neighbor from the clues that they came across. Ask students if they've ever experienced a misunderstanding as the result of an incorrect inference. Then connect this particular comprehension skill to another, making predictions, by having students reflect on Benny, Penny, and Melina at the conclusion of the story. What will the three characters do in the future? What is the evidence for such a prediction?



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