

Letter to the Reader from Nancy Wilcox Richards

Dear Readers,

When I was a little girl, my best friend lived across the street from me. Her name was Pamela and we spent all of our time together. We walked to school together. Every day we played outside together. We even took swimming lessons together.

One time on our way home from our swimming lessons, we spotted some wild blueberries growing in the field. I knew they were one of my mom's favourite berries. I really wanted to surprise her by picking some for her. The problem was I didn't have a container to put them in. So, Pamela suggested that I put them in my pocket. That was probably not the best decision I have ever made! The blue stains never did wash out of my shorts.

They were ruined. And my mom was cross with me.

I insisted it wasn't my fault and I blamed Pamela for getting me in trouble – sort of like Arthur insisting it's not his fault he bugs Sonny in *We're All Friends Here*.

I had a lot of fun writing the book. It made me think back to when I was a little kid. (That was before anyone had computers or cell phones and online games didn't exist.) My friends and I always played outdoors. There were over sixty kids on my street and for the most part, we all got along. But every now and then, we'd have an argument or not see eye-to-eye. Then we would take a little break from each other. But by the next day, we had forgotten about the argument and we were back to being friends again. This is very much like Sonny and Arthur. They love to blame each other for all their troubles, but deep down inside, they truly do enjoy each other's company.

I hope you enjoy reading *We're All Friends Here* as much as I enjoyed writing it. Maybe it will even make you think a bit about someone else's perspective the next time you have a disagreement with a friend.

Remember: Friends are the absolute best! So enjoy spending time together with them. Laugh. Giggle. Play. Have fun. Maybe even share a few good books with them!

Happy Reading,

Nancy Wilcox Richards



Be a Book Detective

Use clues from *We're All Friends Here* to solve the mysteries below.

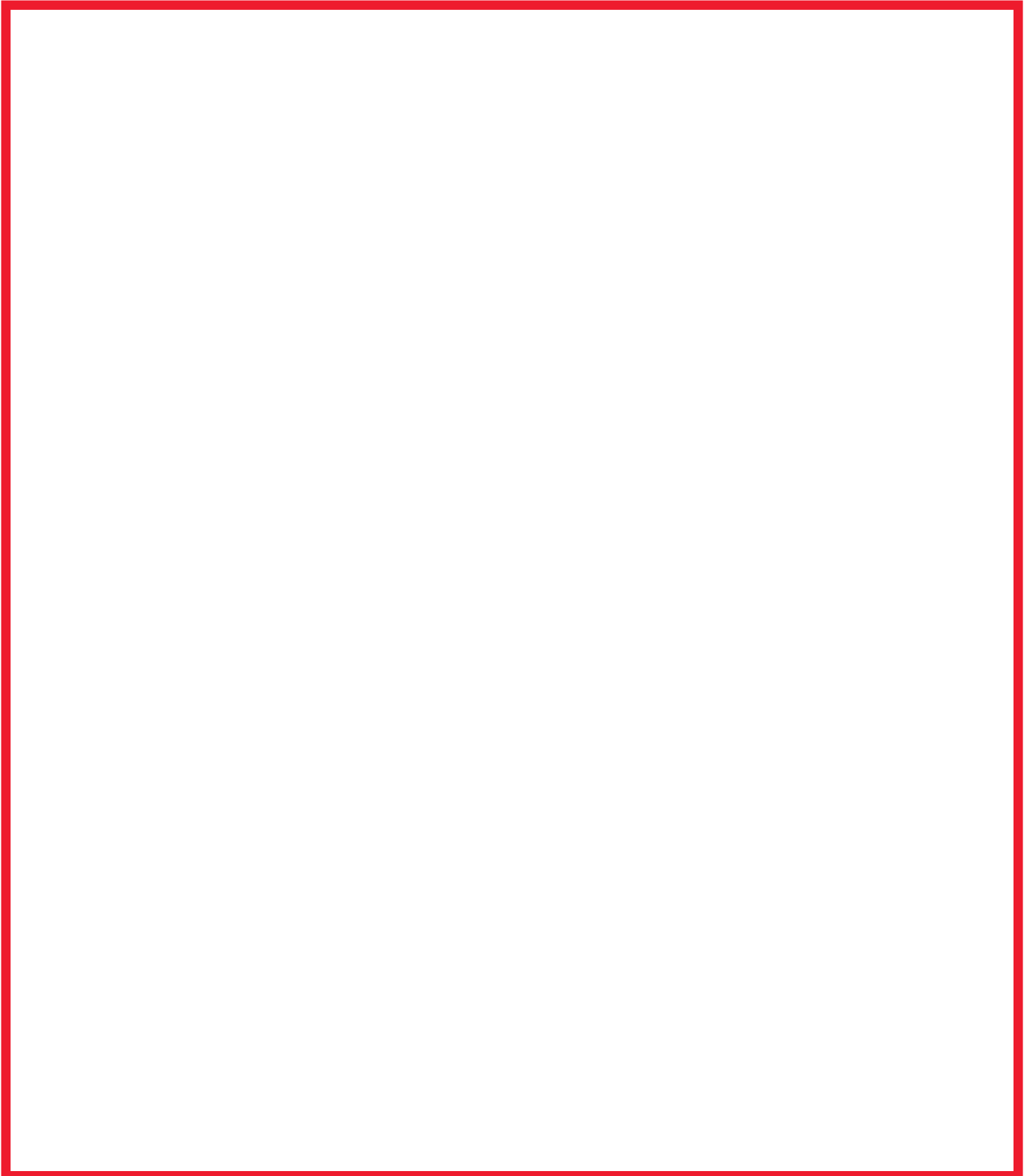
MYSTERY #1: Why does Arthur wiggle his desk?

MYSTERY #2: Why does Arthur stick out his tongue?

MYSTERY #3: Sonny's double fudge brownie is missing at snack time. Why?

MYSTERY #4: What caused Sonny to trip in gym class?

Sonny has a difficult day at school in *We're All Friends Here*.
Draw a picture showing a bad day that you have had.



Experimenting with Expression

Below are some sentences from *We're All Friends Here*.
Have fun experimenting with your expression, reading the **bold**
words with more emphasis.

It's **not** fair.

It's not **fair**.

Arthur started it.

Arthur **started** it.

I don't like raisins.

I **don't** like raisins.

I don't **like** raisins.

Then I saw the problem.

Then **I** saw the problem.

Then I **saw** the problem.

Then I saw the **problem**.

I just know it.

I **just** know it.

I just **know** it.

I Can Feel Many Ways

Write something that makes you feel these emotions and then draw a picture to show how you feel.

I feel happy when

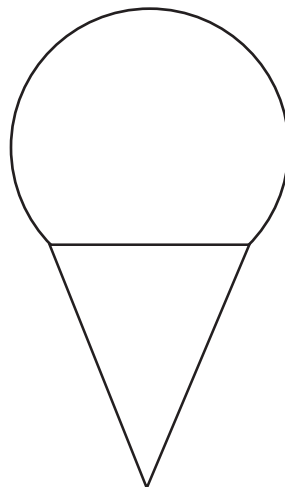
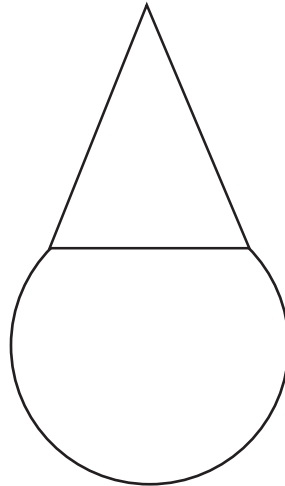
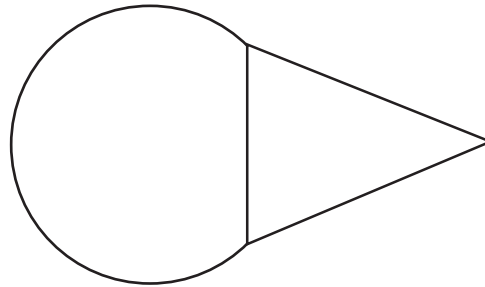
I feel frustrated when

Choose your own emotion such as sad, embarrassed, proud, scared, loved, lonely, excited, surprised or thoughtful. Write it down and draw a picture

I feel _____ **when** _____

In *We're All Friends Here*, Sonny and Arthur each tell about the same day at school but from a different perspective. **Perspective** is a point of view. Below are three identical shapes shown from different perspectives. What could they be?

Use your imagination and add details to each drawing to create something new.



We're All Friends Here

Discussion Questions

Discuss with students that a story is often told from a character's point of view or perspective. In *We're All Friends Here*, Sonny and Arthur have different perspectives about their day at school. Help students become aware of these perspectives and think critically about the book through discussion.

Some questions you might ask are:

- Whose perspective is correct – Sonny's or Arthur's? Why?
- What might have happened if Sonny had talked to Arthur about the things that were bothering him?
- Why do you think both Sonny and Arthur felt their side of the story was 'the right one'?
- What would you recommend the boys do to solve their differences in the future?

We're All Friends Here

Curriculum Links

(Grades 1 & Up)

Language Arts

Activity 1: *We're All Friends Here* uses many rich verbs. Have students work with a partner and use sticky notes to mark spots in the book that have strong or interesting verbs. Some examples include: scatters (p.4), wiggles (p.5), smirked (p.6), licking (p.8), tangled (p.11), hogs (P.12), gobbled (p.21).

Activity 2: Role-play to develop effective communication skills and assertiveness.

Preparation: Write the following scenarios on index cards:

- Someone keeps wiggling your desk and now your printing is very messy. You will have to do it all over again. Ask him to stop.
- Someone has eaten the snack from your lunchbox for the second day in a row. You are pretty sure you know who it is. Tell this person how you feel. Offer a solution for the next day.
- The person who sits next to you on the bus continues to tell you gross stories. You are tired of listening to them. Ask him/her in an assertive manner to stop.
- You find math really hard. Sometimes you make so many mistakes you erase a hole in your page. A student makes fun of you. This makes you feel bad. Talk to the student about your feelings.

Have students work with a partner and role-play these scenarios. As a class, discuss the way the situations can be resolved.

Art: Friendship Wreath

Although Sonny and Arthur have very different perspectives about their day, they really do enjoy each other's friendship. Create a class friendship wreath.

Have each student paint his/her hand with bright coloured tempera paint. Make a handprint on paper. Once it is dry, cut out the hand. Lay all the hands in a circular pattern to form a wreath, making sure the hands overlap. Add a bow and a caption such as, 'Friends Lend a Helping Hand'.

Health: “Drawing Twins” Activity

General Curriculum Outcome: to demonstrate effective communication and interpersonal skills that facilitate positive relationships between students and the world.

Materials: paper, pencil, and simple line drawings like a kite, face, house, etc.

Procedure:

- Students work with a partner.
- Give one of the partners a picture that must **not** be shown.
- The partner holding the picture gives instructions to his/her partner so the picture can be replicated.
(Example: There is a big circle in the middle of the page.)
- When the drawing task is completed, show the original simple line drawing.
- Exchange roles with a new picture.

This activity is a great one to demonstrate how easy it is to be misunderstood and misinterpreted. Link this experience back to Sonny and Arthur in *We're All Friends Here*.

Literature Connections:

The True Story of the Three Little Pigs

by Jon Scieszka, illustrated by Lane Smith

The Pain and the Great One by Judy Blume

Duck! Rabbit! by Amy Krouse Rosenthal, illustrated by Tom Lichtenheld

Dear Mrs. Larue: Letters From Obedience School by Mark Teague

Chester by Mélanie Watt

Hey, Little Ant by Phillip and Hannah Hoose, illustrated by Debbie Tilley

Diary of a Spider by Doreen Cronin, illustrated by Harry Bliss

Diary of a Worm by Doreen Cronin, illustrated by Harry Bliss

The Paper Bag Princess by Robert Munsch,

illustrated by Michael Martchenko

Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day

by Judith Viorst, illustrated by Ray Cruz

We're All Friends Here

Word Search

R R E F Y S S E M
X U U F I A F X T
F H N W A R B S P
U T R Q I R I E J
M R E E O T R N Y
D A N W N F D X N
L D N E E S O M N
S I D C B J M Y O
E J T T Z N E G S

Arthur

Sonny

messy

friends

perfect

brownie

dentist

gym

We're All Friends Here

Word Search

R R E F Y S S E M
X U U F I A F X T
F H N W A R B S P
U T R Q I R I E J
M R E E O T R N Y
D A N W N F D X N
L D N E E S O M N
S I D C B J M Y O
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