

# KNUFFLE BUNNY TOO: A CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY

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by Mo Willems

Themes: Families, Relationships, First Friends, Growing Up, School

Grades: PreK-2; Ages: 2-7

Running Time: 10 minutes

### SUMMARY

Trixie has started Pre-K, and she can't wait to bring her one-of-a-kind Knuffle Bunny for show and tell. On the big day, Trixie eagerly pulls her Daddy all the way to school. Her excitement is quickly squelched, however, when she spots Sonja at school. It turns out that Sonja has a Knuffle Bunny too! The girls squabble over the correct pronunciation of "Knuffle Bunny" and whose Knuffle Bunny is the real one, until the teacher takes both of them away. The rest of the day passes smoothly enough, until Trixie awakes in the middle of the night and discovers that the Knuffle Bunny that she is sleeping with is an imposter. Before long, Daddy is on the phone with Sonja's daddy, and an exchange is planned. So it is, that in the wee hours of a New York morning, Trixie makes her first best friend, Sonja.

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will brainstorm ways to make new friends.
- Students will bring important personal items to school to share with their classmates.
- Students will compare and contrast their show-and-tell items.
- Students will write a story about making a new friend, real or imaginary.

### BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Invite students to bring in an important personal item for show-and-tell. Tell them that this could be something that they have had since they were a baby or something that they care about very much. For some students this may be a blanket or book, for others, a toy. During the show and tell, invite the students to speak about why the object is important to him/her and then allow three students to ask questions. Encourage students to speak in complete sentences. One of the objectives of this activity is to give students practice at oral language development.

Lead a discussion with students about making new friends.

Guiding questions:

- How did you feel on your first day at school/at a new school?
- How did you act toward the other children? How did they act toward you?
- How do you treat new students who come to school?
- How can you show someone that you want to be friends with him or her?
- What could you do if someone is acting shy or unfriendly?

Tell students that they are going to watch a film about a girl who makes her first friend in an unusual way. Encourage them to watch for similarities or differences between Trixie's and Sonja's experience and their own lives.

### AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Use a Venn Diagram to compare and contrast students' show-and-tell items from the Before Viewing Activity. Model comparing and contrasting the items brought in by two of the students in the class. Ask students to share ideas about similarities and differences that they notice between the two items. Record their answers on the Venn Diagram. Point out to students that even though Trixie's and Sonja's Knuffle Bunnies *looked* the same, both girls were able to tell the difference between them. Ask students to make inferences about how the Knuffle Bunnies could have been different.

After comparing and contrasting the items that the students brought in, provide students with their own Venn Diagrams. Allow them to choose partners to compare and contrast their own show-and-tell items. For students who are just learning to write, provide some common words that they might use on the side of the Venn Diagram, or allow them to draw instead of write. Provide discussion time at the end to close the activity. Guiding questions:

- Did you have anything in common with the classmate you partnered with?
- What did you learn about your classmate?
- What were some differences you noticed?

Ask students: How did you make your first friend or a new friend? Where were you? Did you become friends with that person right away? Did anyone help you become friends? Guide students through the writing process, by modeling a story about meeting a new friend or modeling the writing process for Knuffle Bunny.

- 1) Use a web or list to brainstorm ideas.
- 2) Use the web or list to choose the strongest idea. Using that idea, create an outline with the students. Since it is a story, the outline should be created in chronological order, using the key words *first, then, next, finally*. Encourage all students to contribute ideas to the outline.
- 3) Use the outline to fill in details and strong vocabulary, creating a story. Scribe the story on large chart paper, so that students can see how the ideas get transformed into complete sentences.
- 4) Conclude by having students tell the stories of how they met their first friends. Older students can use the writing process to create their story, while younger students can make a wordless picture book.

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