
Literature Selection: *Jennifer Jones Won't Leave Me Alone!* by Frieda Wishinsky

Summary

This rhyming story is about a young boy who complains about Jennifer and her affectionate behavior towards him. She adores him but his friends tease him so he pretends he does not like her. She moves away for a while and he misses her more than he thought he ever would. When he learns she is moving home he decides to tell everyone how he really feels.

Suggested Activities

- Writing and Performing Poetry (Pros and Cons of Mixed Sex Friendships)
- School Survey
- Graphing Data and Math Problems
- Debate

Writing and Performing Poetry

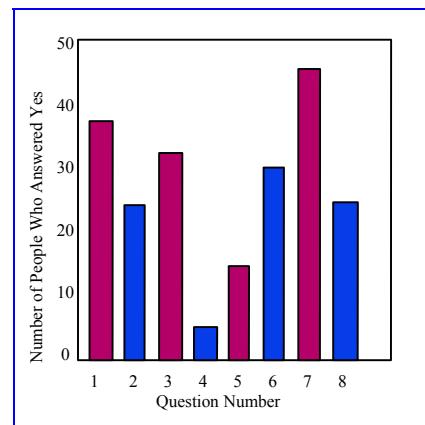
Have students identify the pros and cons of mixed-sex friendships. Write the list on the board for student reference. Have students write a poem about the pros and cons of mixed-sex friendships to be shared with a group of students (4-5). The groups then identify one of the poems that they would like to perform using Readers Theater. Introduce some of the different ways that readers can perform Readers Theater (for example, each student reads a stanza, one student joins in each stanza until all are reading, pairs read alternating lines, and so forth). To extend this activity, give the students musical instruments, props and puppets to perform the poems.

School Survey

As a class, create a survey form that consists of approximately 5-7 questions about mixed-sex friendships. At recess, or during a prearranged “survey time” with other classroom teachers, have students distribute the surveys to other students. Once the students have completed the questions, collect the surveys and tally the data. If you have access to computers, introduce how computers are used to tally the data and show what types of things a computer can do with data (graphing, sorting, etc).

Graphing Data and Math Problems

Make a wall graph that represents the results of the survey questions. Discuss the graph with the students and then have them answer some teacher created math problems based on the data on the wall graph. Or, have the students make up their own questions that could be answered using the wall graph. Students complete the questions created by a peer.



Debate

Divide the class into two groups. Each group defends a position, either 'GIRLS AND BOYS SHOULD NOT BE FRIENDS' or 'BOYS AND GIRLS SHOULD BE FRIENDS.' Set up the class for an oral debate. Give each group some time to come up with some points to support their position. Establish the rules of the debate. Have the groups switch positions after a while and debate again. Discuss the debate. Which argument was better? Why? Did both positions have valid arguments?

Additional Literature Selections

***Everett Anderson's Friend* by Lucille Clifton**

Everett learns that having a girl for a friend is not so bad after all.

***Best Friends for Frances* by Russel Hoban**

Frances shows her male friend that there is no reason to have "boys only" activities and that there are certain benefits that come with having female friends.