

Literacy Skills Teacher's Guide for

Lizzie Logan, Second Banana

by

Eileen Spinelli

Book Information

Eileen Spinelli, Lizzie Logan, Second Banana
Quiz Number: 24960
Simon & Schuster, Inc, 1998
ISBN 0-689-81510-7; LCCN
84 Pages
Book Level: 2.8
Interest Level: LG

When Lizzie's mother announces that she is going to have a baby, Lizzie's best friend Heather helps her deal with her fears that her stepfather will love the new baby more than her.

Topics: Emotions, Jealousy; Family Life, Birth; Family Life, Sibling Rivalry; Interpersonal Relationships, Friendship; Popular Groupings, Lower Grades Chapter Books; READNOW - Renaissance Learning, RLI - Grades 4-6 (Theme: Friends and Family)

Main Characters

Betsy and Bootsie Woolery three-year-old twins, who Lizzie thinks are spying on her

Dad Heather's dad

Granny Fryola a lady who is opening a fish store; she sponsors The Little Miss Seafood Pageant

Heather a third-grade girl who is Lizzie's best friend; she tells the story

Kayleen Bitterman a third-grade girl in Heather's class; she wins The Little Miss Seafood Pageant

Lizzie Logan a fifth-grade girl who becomes insecure when she discovers that her mother is pregnant; Heather is her best friend

Miss Kelsey Heather's third-grade teacher

Mom Heather's mom; she accidentally ruins Heather's teddy bear when she washes it in the washing machine

Mrs. Bright Lizzie's mom, who is expecting a baby boy in August

Mrs. Findley the owner of The Bagel Box, who sells her building to Granny Fryola

Mrs. Woolery the mother of the twins

Sam Bright Lizzie's adoptive father; he treats Lizzie like his own child

Uncle Frank Heather's mom's brother; Heather is very close to him

Vocabulary

condolences expressions of sympathy for a person who is suffering a loss

piped spoke up; said

remains the parts that are left after something has been destroyed

swooned fainted

tweaked pinched and twisted sharply

Synopsis

Lizzie Logan and Heather are best friends who live on the same street. Lizzie is a fifth-grade girl who watches public television, reads a lot and knows many facts about many things. Heather, who is two years younger than Lizzie, thinks Lizzie is very smart. When Lizzie learns that her mother is going to have a baby, she is upset. She thinks her stepfather, Sam Bright, will love the baby more than he loves her. When she finds out the baby is a boy, Lizzie feels even worse. She thinks that she will be "second banana" because dads like their sons more than their daughters.

Heather has some troubles of her own. Her mother washed her teddy bear, Pickwick, and ruined it. It had been a gift from her Uncle Frank and was very special to her. Soon after the teddy bear incident, Heather receives a new telescope from Uncle Frank. A short time after this, Heather learns that Uncle Frank is going to Michigan for a few months to help Grandpop Jacobs. She is very sad because she knows she will miss him.

Meanwhile, Lizzie decides to enter the Little Miss Seafood Pageant in order to win one hundred dollars. She wants to buy her own telescope. During this time, Lizzie, whose real father left when she was a baby, legally becomes Sam Bright's daughter. At the neighborhood party celebrating her adoption, Lizzie receives her own telescope from her parents. She decides to stay in the pageant anyway because she wants to make her mom and dad proud.

Literacy Skills Teacher's Guide for

Lizzie Logan, Second Banana

by

Eileen Spinelli

The night of the pageant arrives, and Lizzie makes her entrance as an octopus and recites her fish facts. She does a great job, but another girl wins the pageant. Lizzie is so upset that she runs away and hides. She feels that if she can't even compete in a contest and win, how will she be able to compete against an adorable baby? Everyone is very worried about her. A policeman finds her later that night, and the next morning Heather goes to Lizzie's house to talk to her. She convinces Lizzie that Sam has enough love for her and a new baby. By the end of the story, Lizzie is looking forward to having a new baby brother.

Open-Ended Questions

Use these open-ended questions as the basis for class discussions, student presentations, or extended writing assignments.

Initial Understanding

When something happens, a person often has many different feelings for different reasons. When Lizzie ran away, Heather felt several different things. How did she feel, and why did she feel that way?

Heather was worried that something bad may have happened to Lizzie. She was afraid for her. She may have been disappointed because Lizzie hadn't even said good-bye. She was lonely without Lizzie. She felt helpless because she wasn't allowed to go out and look for Lizzie.

Literary Analysis

Lizzie Logan Bright is a character that the author created. What are some of the ways the author made Lizzie seem like a real girl?

Answers will vary but could include that Lizzie wasn't perfect. She didn't always get along with her best friend. She was jealous when she found out her mom was going to have a baby. She had definite likes and dislikes. She calls people names just like a real kid might. She ran away when she was upset.

Inferential Comprehension

How did Lizzie's feelings about having a baby brother change from the beginning of the story to the end? What helped bring about this change?

At first, Lizzie was unhappy about having a baby brother. She thought her adoptive father would love the new baby more than her. She was jealous. Heather helped her to see that Sam had enough love for both of them. By the end of the story, she was looking forward to welcoming the new baby into the world.

Constructing Meaning

How could the reader tell that the people in Heather's neighborhood were good friends with each other?

When Uncle Frank was leaving for Michigan, they had a going-away party. They also had a party to celebrate when Lizzie legally became Lizzie Logan Bright. They all helped look for Lizzie when she ran away. Mrs. Woolery helped by watching many of the children while the parents searched. Lizzie and Heather knew the owner of the bagel shop and went to tell her they would miss her when her shop was closing.

Teachable Skills

Understanding the Author's Craft In this book, Heather is telling the story. The reader learns about things from Heather's point of view. Have the students choose a part of the story and rewrite it as though Lizzie were telling the story.

Identifying Persuasive Language Granny Fryola advertised The Little Miss Seafood Pageant in the paper. Have the students pretend that they are helping Granny. They should make a poster advertising the pageant. The poster should include who can try out, what the prize is, and when and where the contest is being held. The poster should also explain how the winner will be chosen. Chapter 6 contains most of the information the students will need to make their posters.

Literacy Skills Teacher's Guide for Lizzie Logan, Second Banana by Eileen Spinelli

Responding to Literature Divide the students into groups and have them choose a section or chapter of the book to act out. Help the students choose a part of the book that has conversation so that their "plays" will be interesting. Remind them to say their lines the way they are described in the book. For example, if the story says that Heather squealed, the person playing Heather should squeal.

Comparing and Contrasting As a class, discuss the ways in which Heather and Lizzie are alike and the ways in which they are different. Make a chart on the board that shows these similarities and differences.