

Literacy Skills Teacher's Guide for

Superfudge

by

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Book Information

Judy Blume, Superfudge
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In this sequel to TALES OF A FOURTH GRADE NOTHING, twelve-year-old Peter relates his life with his troublesome little brother, Fudge.

Award: Bilby Award; NCTE Notable Children's Books in the Language Arts; State Award; Young Reader's Choice Award/Nominee

Topics: Family Life, Babies; Family Life, Brothers; Family Life, Misc./Other; Family Life, Moving to a New Area; Read Now with Power Up Recommended Lists, Onward and Upward: Change; READNOW - Demco Media Turtleback Books, Demco Media - Read Now Grades 1-3; READNOW - Renaissance Learning, RLI - Grades 4-6 (Theme: Friends and Family)

Main Characters

Alex Peter's friend in Princeton

Fudge Hatcher Peter's younger brother, who causes hilarious problems for his family on a regular basis

Jimmy Peter's best friend in New York City

Mr. and Mrs. Hatcher Peter and Fudge's parents; they deal with a move, career changes and three unique children

Peter Hatcher the principal character in the story, who has to deal with the antics of his younger brother, Fudge, as well as a new baby sister

Vocabulary

bonjour French for "hello"

catastrophe a great or sudden disaster

embellish to add fanciful or fictitious details

exaggerate overstate

fortified strengthened or enriched

privilege a special right or permission

suspense anxiety or uncertainty about an outcome

unanimous sharing the same opinion

Synopsis

Peter Hatcher is still not sure how he will survive life with his younger brother, Fudge, when he receives shocking news: His parents are having a baby. He's worried that he will have another Fudge on his hands. Just when he gets used to the idea of having new sister Tootsie around, his parents announce another surprise. His dad is quitting his job and the family is moving from New York City to Princeton, New Jersey, for a year. When his best friend, Jimmy, becomes angry at the news, Peter finds himself thinking about staying behind and sleeping on Jimmy's floor. The boys vow to remain friends, and Peter moves with his family.

Not only does Peter have to start sixth grade at a new school, but he also finds out Fudge will be attending the same school. Of course, he imagines the worst. The ensuing year brings doses of Fudge-induced laughter: Fudge attempts to cover Tootsie with trading stamps and trade her for a two-wheeler; he instantly dislikes Mrs. Hildebrandt (otherwise known as Rat Face), his Kindergarten teacher, because she calls him by his real name, Farley; and he begins sleeping outside his parents' bedroom when he decides there are monsters in his room. Fudge keeps Peter busy, as well as frustrated. Along with dealing with his brother, Peter is concerned about his dad, who has quit his job and is trying to write a book. Things do not seem to be going very well for Mr. Hatcher, as Peter realizes after learning that his dad has signed up for Chinese cooking lessons. Meanwhile, Peter himself is caught between his two friends, Jimmy and Alex. He doesn't know how to handle the two getting along as if they'd been friends for the last hundred years, or both boys teasing him about his interest in his classmate, Joanne.

Things take a dramatic turn when Fudge becomes angry after he is told he can't go with Peter to the

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lake for a picnic. The younger Hatcher runs away with his friend, Daniel. The boys are found at the bakery, and Fudge's bike is taken away from him for a month. The story closes with the Hatchers moving back to New York City.

Open-Ended Questions

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

Initial Understanding

What do you feel is Peter's conflict with Fudge and his behavior?

Perhaps Peter feels neglected or overlooked as the older, more responsible child, or he might feel his parents love Fudge more. With Tootsie in their lives, there is even less time for Peter. The differences in their ages and personalities has an impact. Peter's life is more structured, whereas Fudge seems to live in the moment; Peter is more mature, but Fudge tends to act his age, if not younger. Peter seems to be constantly helping Fudge out of messes and taking care of him.

Literary Analysis

Fudge looks up to Peter and Peter watches out for his younger brother. Find examples from the story that show how Peter and Fudge relate to each other.

Some examples include Fudge's revelation that he knows there is no Santa and Peter's admission that Fudge was "the best" pretender, Peter's attempt to tell Fudge to stop being such a baby and Peter's relief when Fudge is found at Sandy's Bakery.

Inferential Comprehension

How would you face the challenges Peter faced upon moving to Princeton? How would you handle being in a new school? Have you experienced this before? Would you mind having a younger sibling in the same school building? Why or why not?

Answers will vary depending upon students' experiences. Students might have personal information to share. Others may only be able to give hypothetical answers based upon what they think being the new kid in a school and dealing with a younger sibling might feel like.

Constructing Meaning

Which character in this story would you most like to be? Why?

Student responses will vary depending upon the character chosen.

Teachable Skills

Recognizing Setting The first part of the story takes place in New York City. The Hatchers move to Princeton, New Jersey, shortly after Tootsie is born. Look up both cities on a map. Have students calculate the distance between them and identify populations and city attractions. How are the two cities similar? How are they different? Utilize each city's Chamber of Commerce to find out about the city. Which city is most appealing and why?

Understanding Characterization Fudge has a vivid imagination. Discuss the scenes in which he still believes in monsters, yet doesn't believe in Santa Claus. Students should create a picture book drawn by Fudge. What might he include in his book? What might be some of the events from the story he would draw? Instruct students to keep in mind Fudge's personality. He can be described as wild, outspoken, humorous, and intelligent. He likes to be the center of attention. Would he draw colorful pictures? Would he use only pencil? Would he be the main character in his picture?

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Understanding the Author's Craft Fudge has moments where he wants to get rid of Tootsie. She has taken away some of the attention he is used to getting from his family. He hides her in a closet, tries to trade her by covering her in trading stamps, offers to sell her for a quarter, wants to pay someone to take her away, and finally decides to give her away. Have students prepare a skit in which Peter tries to get rid of Fudge. How might Fudge react when he discovers what Peter is trying to do? Would Fudge think it's a game? Would he go along with it because he loves to have fun? Would he be hurt or angry? How would Peter go about getting rid of his brother? Change the roles. How might Fudge attempt to get rid of Peter?

Understanding Literary Features Peter is in the sixth grade, the oldest of three children and experiences several major changes in the story, including a new baby sister, a dad who quits his job, and a move to a new city and school. If he were asked to write about the last year of his life in a five-hundred word essay, how would he bring it all together in a summary? Students might summarize the last year of Peter's or their own lives, considering any major changes or expectations of change.