



## Arthur's Pen Pal

By Lillian Hoban

GRL K

### ABOUT THE BOOK:

Arthur enjoys writing to his pen pal, but Arthur does not enjoy his annoying little sister, Violet. His pen pal is cool. He has an older brother, takes karate lessons, and has a set of drums; but most of all, his pen pal does not have a little sister. Violet constantly wants Arthur to play games with her, but Arthur always wins because they play what Arthur wants to play. So Violet suggests they jump rope, and for once Violet wins because she is great at jumping rope. When a letter arrives with a picture of Arthur's pen pal, he discovers that his pen pal is a girl; worse than that, she is a little sister!

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Other than being a girl, in what ways is Violet different than Arthur?
2. How does Violet prepare to arm wrestle with Arthur? Why don't her preparations help her win?
3. Why does Violet want to jump rope with Arthur? Why is she better at jumping rope than Arthur?
4. What makes Arthur change his mind about Violet being such a pain? What does he realize about Violet?

*The above questions correlate to Common Core State Standards (Reading): RL.1.1, RL.2.1, and RL.3.1; (Speaking & Listening): SL.1.1, SL.2.1, and SL.3.1; SL.1.3, SL.2.3 and SL.3.3.*

### EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

**Pen Pals of the World:** Arthur enjoys writing to his pen pal. Today, many pen pals communicate through e-mail, but students can write a letter in class, and then if they choose, they can e-mail their pen pal from home. Ask students to find a pen pal they can write to from almost anywhere in the world by going to the following website:

[www.studentsoftheworld.info](http://www.studentsoftheworld.info). When students have selected a pen pal, have them write a letter introducing themselves to their new pen pal. Students should also tell a little about their hometown or city and their school. *This activity correlates to Common Core State Standards (Writing): W.1.3, W.2.3, and W.3.3; (Language): L1.1, L.2.1, and L.3.1; L.1.2, L.2.2, and L.3.2.*

**Wrestle with Your Arms and Skip with Your Feet:** Arthur is best at arm wrestling; Violet is best at skipping rope. Give all the girls a jump rope and ask the boys to select a partner to arm wrestle. Ask students to observe each other as they play, and after five minutes, switch the activities. Again, ask the students to observe each other, and after five minutes, ask the students to return to their seats. Ask students to work with a partner and to write their observations of the activities, and based on their observations, determine what group was better at each activity. Students should avoid specific criticisms of individual students but support their decisions with specific details from their observations generally. Have partners share their observations in small groups. *This activity correlates to Common Core State Standards (Writing): W.1.1, W.2.1, and W.3.1; (Language): L1.1, L.2.1, and L.3.1; L.1.2, L.2.2, and L.3.2.*

**This Book...** At the top of a sheet of manila or white paper, ask students to write the name of the book, the author, and the illustrator of the book. Then have students divide the page into two halves; on one half, have students state their opinion of the story by writing or drawing what they liked, and on the second half, have students write or draw what they didn't like or would change about the book. Ask students to supply the reasons that support their opinions on both halves. Then have students share their ideas with the class. *This activity correlates to Common Core State Standards (Reading Literature): RL.1.2, RL.2.2, and RL.3.2; (Writing): W.1.1, W.2.1, and W.3.1; (Language): L1.1, L.2.1, and L.3.1; L.1.2, L.2.2, and L.3.2.*

**Little Sisters Are a Pain!** As a whole class, discuss the relationship between Violet and Arthur based on their actions at the beginning, the middle, and the end of the book. Then have students write about the relationship between Violet and Arthur and how it changes from the beginning to the middle to the end of the book. Then have students finish their writing by making a personal connection to the book. Have students think of a personal relationship they have with a sibling, cousin, or other family member. Have them compare their relationship with their family member to Violet and Arthur's relationship at one of the three specific points in the book. Have students share their writing in small groups. *This activity correlates to Common Core State Standards (Reading Literature): RL.1.3, RL.2.3, and RL.3.3; (Writing): W.1.1, W.2.1, and W.3.1; (Language): L1.1, L.2.1, and L.3.1; L.1.2, L.2.2, and L.3.2.*

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