



## ***I Am the Turkey***

By Michele Sobel Spirn, pictures by Joy Allen

GRL J

### **ABOUT THE BOOK:**

Mark wants a good role in his class's Thanksgiving play, so when the teacher assigns him the part of the turkey, he is thrilled. However, when Mark tells his family about his part, his brother, Tim, laughs at him and tells him that he will be eaten by the Pilgrims and Indians at the end of the play. With this information, Mark does his best to convince his teacher that he cannot be in the play, but his teacher will not excuse him. Mark makes plans to hide behind the other characters on stage so no one will see him, but when John forgets his lines, Mark must save the play.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. What is Mark's brother's reaction to Mark being the turkey in the play? What does Mark do as a result of his brother's reaction?
2. Why won't Ms. Willow allow Mark to give up his part in the play? What does she say to encourage Mark?
3. Why can't John speak his lines at the end of the play?
4. How do the audience and Ms. Winslow react to Mark's speech? What does his brother say to him?

*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:**

**All the World's a Stage:** Ask students to write about a time they had to perform in front of an audience. Students should include specifics about where they performed, when the performance occurred, the role they played, their reaction to performing in front of people, and the reaction other people had to the performance. Have students draw an illustration to accompany their stories. Then ask students to share their stories and illustrations in small groups. *This activity correlates to Common Core State Standards (Writing): W.1.3, W.2.3, and W.3.3; (Language): L.1.1, L.2.1, and L.3.1; L.1.2, L.2.2, and L.3.2.*

**The Role of an Author and an Illustrator:** Ask students to write the name of the author and the illustrator of *I Am the Turkey*. As a class, discuss the role of an author and an illustrator in creating and publishing a book. Then have students create a book cover for their own story about having a part in a school play. On one side of the inside flap have them write about their experiences as an "author" and on the other side they should write about their experiences as an "illustrator." Post book covers in the classroom. *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): L.1.1, L.2.1, and L.3.1; L.1.2, L.2.2, and L.3.2.*

**Special Teacher:** Ms. Willow is a special teacher, and she encourages and praises Mark. Ask students to think of a teacher who did something special for them and to write a thank-you note with a drawing depicting the incident. Students should express in the note how they felt as a result of the kindness. Then ask students to deliver or mail the note and picture to their teacher. *This activity correlates to Common Core State Standards (Writing): W.1.8, W.2.8, and 3.8; (Language): L.K.1, L.1.1, and L.1.2; L.K.2, L.1.1, and L.1.2.*

**Big Brothers Are a Pain!** Ask students to describe the relationship between Mark and his older brother Tim based on Tim's actions. Students should include specific details from the text in their writing to support their opinion of the brothers' relationship. Have students write a list poem entitled "Five Reasons Brothers Are a Pain!" and then have them list reasons from the text that brothers are "a pain." Model for students how to write a shift at the end of the poem that will show the positive or changed nature of the relationship. *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): L.1.1, L.2.1, and L.3.1; L.1.2, L.2.2, and L.3.2.*

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