

BOOKNOTES

EDUCATORS GUIDE

**Meet Lumphy,
Stingray, and Plastic!**

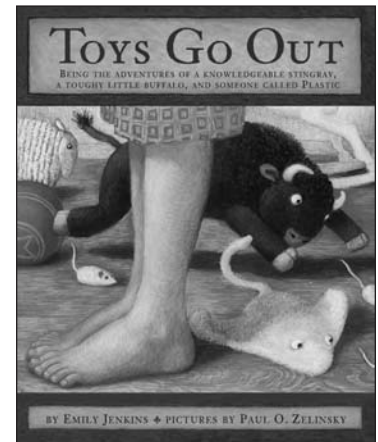
Grades 1–5

about the books

Toys coming alive? It is every child's dream, but a reality for the Little Girl whose toys sing, dance, and play while no one is looking. Their antics around the house often get them into trouble, but they are quick to come to the rescue of their friends. They test their bravery, learn about forgiveness, and show unwavering love for the Little Girl. Follow along as these small toys create big adventures.

about this guide

These books are a collection of linked stories that entwine the lives of the Little Girl and her bedroom toys. Take your students on a journey to learn about friendship, facing fears, and how to be part of a group. Discussion questions lead to class activities that explore character traits, literary tools, and reading comprehension strategies. By allowing your students to share in the adventures, you will see them engage in these stories like true readers!



Toys Go Out

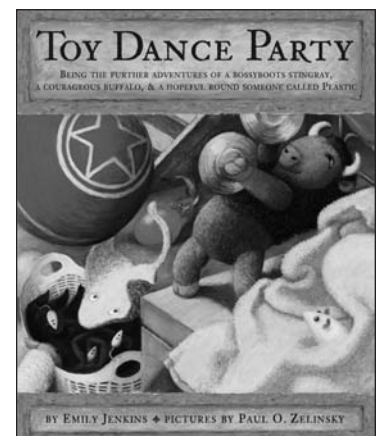
Yearling PB: 978-0-385-73661-9
Schwartz & Wade Books HC:
978-0-375-83604-6
GLB: 978-0-375-93604-3

praise for Toys Go Out

An ALA Notable Book

A School Library Journal Best Book of the Year

- ★ "Utterly delightful . . . bound to be a favorite with any child who has ever adored an inanimate object."—*School Library Journal*, Starred
- ★ "An entertaining look at identity, friendship, and belonging."—*Publishers Weekly*, Starred



Toy Dance Party

Schwartz & Wade Books HC:
978-0-375-83935-1
GLB: 978-0-375-93935-8

praise for Toy Dance Party

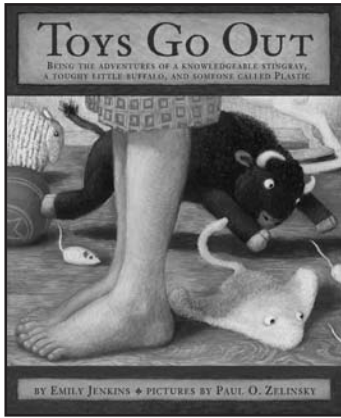
- ★ "Poignant and compelling, this sequel sparkles."—*Kirkus Reviews*, Starred



schwartz & wade books

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Toys Go Out



Chapter 1 In the Backpack, Where It Is Very Dark

It is dark in the Little Girl's backpack. Very dark. Lumphy, StingRay, and Plastic are scared. Where are they going? Their imaginations are wandering, and they are terrified of the possibilities. The veterinarian, the zoo, the garbage dump? The toys are pleasantly surprised to learn that the Little Girl has brought them to school for Show and Tell. She must really love them! The backpack ride home just doesn't seem as scary anymore.

For Discussion

Talk about a time when you were scared. Where were you? What was going on around you? How did the situation end?

Class Activity

Making Predictions—Create new endings to the backpack adventure. *Lumphy, StingRay, and Plastic are cramped in the dark backpack. Where are they going? The backpack thumps down with a bang, the zipper opens slowly and . . .* Have students finish the story in their writing journal, and then ask them to read their adventures aloud to the class.

Chapter 2

The Serious Problem of Plastic-ness

Plastic takes books very seriously, and spends some time reading one of the Little Girl's schoolbooks about animals. She reads all about stingrays, buffaloes, sheep, and mice, but she can't seem to find any pictures that look like her. Feeling very confused about her identity, she searches the dictionary for help. This only tells her what plastic is used for. TukTuk, the yellow bath towel, comes to her rescue by revealing exactly what she is. A round, red, bouncy rubber ball!

For Discussion

Describe yourself using physical characteristics. Do you resemble others in your family?

Class Activity

Art—Pass out handheld mirrors to each student. Ask them to look closely at themselves in the mirror. Guide them through looking at the shape of their eyes, the curve of their chin, the color of their hair, etc. Then have them draw *exactly* what they see. When they are finished with their portraits, post all of them on the board and ask the students to identify which drawing belongs to whom.

Chapter 3

The Terrifying Bigness of the Washing Machine

Lumphy finds himself covered in greasy peanut butter. This means only one thing—that he will be sent to the washing machine in the dark, dirty basement. To avoid this fate, Lumphy hides in the Little Girl's closet. The Little Girl searches for him for days with no luck. Lumphy hates to see her cry, and makes the decision to come out of hiding and face his fears. Luckily, Frank the washing machine is very friendly and helps Lumphy through his spin cycle with a little song and dance.

For Discussion

Talk about a time when you had to face your fears. What were you afraid of and how did you conquer that fear? Did anyone help you make it through? Explain that this is a very brave thing to do, and that students should feel proud of their accomplishment.

Class Activity

Self-Respect—Have students make medals in honor of the time when they faced their fears. Their names should be on one side, and a description of what they did should be on the other side. Hang the medals from ribbons so that students can wear them with pride!



Toys Go Out

Chapter 4

The Possible Shark

Plastic is on her way to the beach with the Little Girl, and StingRay is left at home feeling very jealous. Just because Plastic can float in the ocean doesn't mean that she is more fun to play with. Yet, they both find themselves in deep trouble. Plastic is tossed into the ocean and attacked by a "shark," while StingRay is determined to float but is close to drowning in the bathtub. After similar ordeals, StingRay and Plastic reconcile their differences and remain good friends.

For Discussion

Why does Plastic float but StingRay sinks?
What is different about their physical properties?

Class Activity

Science—Conduct an experiment that compares things that float with things that sink. Gather items that will either float or sink and present them to the class. Ask them to make predictions of what will happen when each item is placed in water. Then test each item and have students compare the results to their predictions.

Chapter 3

How Lumphy Got on the Big High Bed and Lost Something Rather Good-Looking

Lumphy longs to sleep on the big high bed with the Little Girl. So much so that he recruits StingRay to send subliminal messages to her in her sleep. It worked! But sleeping with the Little Girl isn't all that Lumphy thought it would be. Each night, he jumps off the bed to play on the floor with the other toys. The clever Little Girl decides to tie Lumphy's tail to the bedpost so that he won't "fall" off the bed anymore. This leads to the loss of Lumphy's tail . . . and no more nights on the bed.

For Discussion

What kinds of things do you do every night before you go to bed?

Class Activity

Sequencing—Have students think about their bedtime rituals. Ask them to write these things on slips of paper, one ritual on each piece. Then have them put these slips of paper in the order in which they take place at night. For the final copy, write these rituals in numerical order under the title "Goodnight, (student's name)."

Chapter 6

It Is Difficult to Find the Right Birthday Present

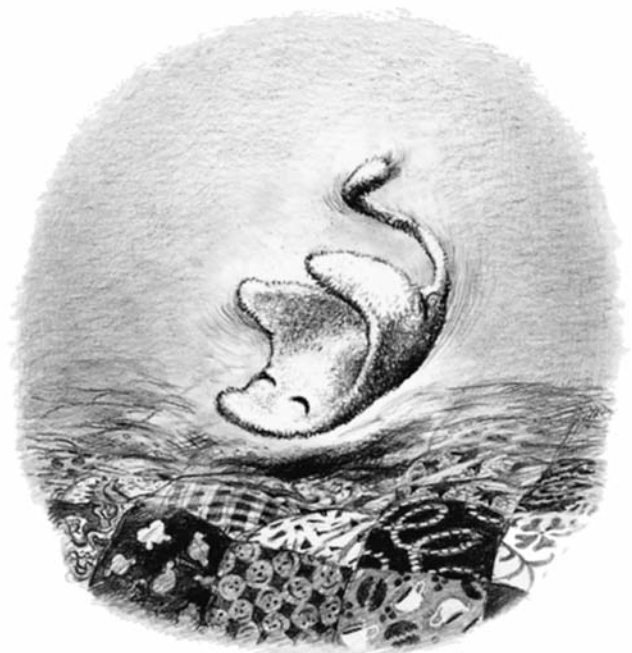
It is the Little Girl's birthday and she is having a party with all of her favorite toys. But what are the toys going to give her as a present? They don't have any money, so they must find the right present somewhere around the house. They look through the living room, the basement, and the closets but cannot come to a decision of what she would love the most. The answer is right in front of them—she loves them the most! They wrap themselves and wait for the Little Girl to open them.

For Discussion

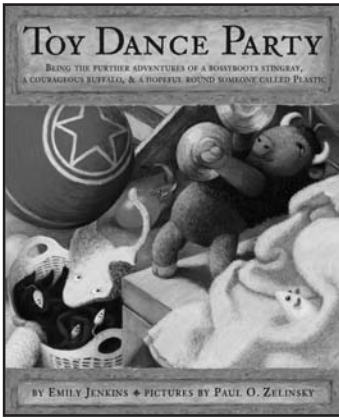
What is the best birthday present you have ever received?

Class Activity

Friendship—Place the names of all students in a bowl. Ask each one to pick the name of a classmate, without revealing who they selected. Give students time to consider their chosen friend—their likes, hobbies, interests, etc. Then give students time to search the classroom for an object that matches those hobbies and interests. They can create a card for their friend that explains why they chose that object. Have each student present their "gift" to their friend in front of the class.



Toy Dance Party



Chapter 1 The Toys Are Left In

The Girl and her family have gone on a winter vacation, and left the toys at home. They feel lonely, unloved, and a little scared that the Girl has been away for so long. Maybe she is lost? It is up to Lumphy and StingRay to find her. They head out into the snow, and run into more trouble than they expected. They certainly are happy when the Girl comes home and brings them in from the cold. The warm radiator sure feels good.

For Discussion

When you go on vacation, what do you make sure to bring? What possession is the most important to you?

Class Activity

Memory—Play the game “I Am Going on Vacation.” Sit in a circle. One student starts by saying “I am going on vacation, and I am bringing . . .” The next student repeats this phrase and the item that the last student is bringing, and then adds their own item. This process continues with each student repeating the items that all of the previous students have said as well as adding their own. This is a great test of memory!



Chapter 2 In Which There Are Wonderful Costumes and Violence Occurs

StingRay goes to the movies! When she gets home, she is excited to share the movie with all of her friends. They play pretend, with costumes and props, but the other toys are not following StingRay’s rules. They say StingRay is being a “bossyboots.” An argument between Lumphy and StingRay leaves both of them in need of help, and they have to solve their problems together.

For Discussion

What are the five senses?

Class Activity

Sensory Perception—Ask students to select one of the following locations—amusement park, swimming pool, grocery store, zoo, or beach. Direct them through an exercise in which they close their eyes and imagine themselves in that location. What do they hear, feel, see, and smell? Have students record these observations on a piece of paper. Ask each student to read their writing aloud to the class, and see if the other students can guess the place they are describing!

Chapter 3 The Garbage-Eating Shark (Which Is Not the Same as the Possible Shark)

There is a new toy in town! But when a shark pops out of the box, the other toys run for cover in the basement. Frank, the washing machine, is so happy to have visitors, that he thinks it is time for a dance party. The toys dance and sing until they remember that they left the shark upstairs. She could have eaten everyone else by now! They run upstairs and attack the shark, not realizing that she is quite friendly and fun to have around. An apology makes the shark feel like part of the group.

For Discussion

Reread aloud the section about the dance party. (pp. 68–70) What adjectives would you use to describe the dance party? Try to think of colors, shapes, sounds, movements, and feelings.

Class Activity

Imagery—Ask students to draw what they think this dance party would look like. They should have the book next to them so that they can refer back to the descriptions in the story. Be sure they include all of the characters in their picture.

Toy Dance Party

Chapter 4 Concerning That Plump Mouse Bonkers, the Vacuum Cleaner, and a Friendship Between Fish

It is cleaning day and the Little Girl is in charge of vacuuming her room. All of the toys know to stay out of the way, except Bonkers. He got sucked up into the vacuum! So, the toys embark on a rescue operation. They are unsuccessful in their efforts, until the shark, being an expert chewer, gnaws through the vacuum bag leaving a hole big enough for Bonkers. The shark saves the day, and makes StingRay realize that being friends might not be such a bad idea.

For Discussion

What is the dictionary used for? How can it be helpful? Review how to use a dictionary as well as what can be found in it—words in alphabetical order, multiple definitions, parts of speech, etc.

Class Activity

Vocabulary—Provide each student with a list of vocabulary words from this chapter: *bustle*, *mildew*, *persist*, *finery*, *fiesta*, *immobile*, *thorough*, *pry*, *discernible*, *joggles*, *aperture*, *dispirited*, *jubilant*, and *glee*.

Ask them to use the dictionary to find the definitions of these words. They should record the definitions and then write sentences using each word. Allow them time to quiz each other on the meanings of these words and then create a crossword puzzle to test what they have learned.



Chapter 5 In Which There Is a Sleepover and Somebody Needs Repair

The dryer is in need of repair and Frank, the washing machine, is worried that his friend might be replaced by a stranger. Lumphy is worried too and during the toys' sleepover, he asks everyone to wish on a star that the dryer will feel better. Lumphy knows just how to make himself dirty enough to visit Frank, and finds that the dryer is fixed. What a relief! All of toys celebrate together with a dance party.

For Discussion

Who do you love and care about?

Class Activity

Poetry—Have students write a song for someone that they care about. The song can be written to the tune of a common song such as “Happy Birthday to You” or “Old MacDonald Had a Farm.” Students should try to have lines that rhyme, as well as a chorus. When they are finished, ask them to sing their song to the class, as well as to the person it was written for!

Chapter 6 Let's Do Our Nails

How observant is the Little Girl? Shark suggests that they test her by painting the Barbie box with nail polish. Plastic wonders if this is a naughty or nice thing to do, but joins in anyway. What fun the toys have painting the box! But when the Little Girl returns and sees the box and the mess the toys made, she takes the blame in front of her parents. Secretly, she knows that the toys were the ones who made her this wonderful present.

For Discussion

What does it mean to be observant? What kinds of things do you see around the classroom?

Class Activity

Observation—Ask the students to take a good look around the classroom. Have them draw the classroom as they see it. Then ask them to close their eyes. Change a few things around in the room—remove an object, move a piece of furniture, write something on the board. Then have the students open their eyes and draw the way the classroom looks now. Have them circle the items that have been changed to see how observant they are!

Final Projects

Personification

Explain the concept of personification—assigning human traits to an animal or object. Divide students into three groups. Assign each group to one of the main characters of the stories—StingRay, Lumphy, and Plastic. Ask students to create a character map that describes the physical features and personality traits of that character. They should be as specific as possible, citing examples from the story that support each trait.

Then ask students to create their own personified toy. They should choose a type of toy and give it a name. Place this information on a blank character map. Have students fill in the new character map with their toy's physical characteristics and personality traits. Be sure they draw a picture of what their toy looks like. To expand on this activity, have students write a story about the adventures of their toy!

Character Development

Throughout these books, we are able to follow the development of several characters, including the Little Girl. We watch the characters display numerous behaviors, some of which are very important in leading a positive and productive life. Others are negative traits that the characters learn to conquer and resolve. Some of the traits highlighted in these books are: facing fears, determination, greediness, giving, thoughtfulness, bravery, friendship, being judgmental, being helpful, caring, and forgiveness.

Have students find examples of these in their books and discuss the situations as a class. Then pair students together and assign them to a trait. Ask them to think of a scenario that would demonstrate their trait. They can act it out in front of the class, and have their classmates determine which trait they are exhibiting.

Onomatopoeia

Toys Go Out and *Toy Dance Party* are filled with onomatopoeias! Discuss the definition of onomatopoeia—a word that imitates the sounds associated with an object or action. Brainstorm examples together such as *zoom*, *zip*, *boom*, etc. Then send your students on an onomatopoeia scavenger hunt. Each student should look through their book and find as many onomatopoeias as they can, recording them on piece of paper. Ask students to read the words they found aloud and award a prize to the one who found the most!

Research

Take your students on a journey through the animal kingdom. Collect nonfiction books from the library on stingrays, buffaloes, mice, sheep, and sharks. Pass them out to your students and give them some time to explore the information. Ask them to record three things that they learned about these animals.

Now have your students choose their favorite animal. Ask them to use credible Web sites to gather information about that animal such as physical characteristics, habitat, diet, offspring, and protection against predators. They should print out pictures as well as informational passages. Students can compile this information on a display board to show off all they have learned.



Photo Credit: Heather Weston

about the author

Emily Jenkins is the author of numerous highly acclaimed books for children. She lives in Brooklyn, New York.



Photo Credit: Rachel Zelinsky

about the illustrator

Paul O. Zelinsky's retelling of the classic fairy tale *Rapunzel* received the 1998 Caldecott Medal. He lives in Brooklyn, New York.