



Bully on the Bus

Written by Kathryn Apel

- The first poem introduces readers to the bully and Leroy's feelings of helplessness. Have you ever felt helpless like Leroy? Discuss.
- Can you think of reasons why the bully picks on Leroy?
- How does Ruby try to help Leroy? Why aren't her attempts more successful?
- Why hasn't Leroy asked for help or told anyone about DJ?
- What role does the bus driver play in *Bully on the Bus*?
- The dedication of the text says "To Mum, who knew how to 'read' bullies." How can bullies be "read?" How can "reading" bullies help to overcome their behavior?
- Discuss Mrs. Wilson's comment that, "Bullies only THINK they're tough." (p96)
- Leroy is given some good advice about "How to Bust a Bully." (p98) Individually or as a class, write your own poem about "How to Bust a Bully."
- How does reading *The Big Bad Book of Fairy Tales* help Leroy? If you could combine some characters from different fairy tales to help "bust a bully," which new super character would you create? What would their strengths be?
- Explore and discuss the theme of courage: how does Leroy find the courage to confide in others about his problem and then, later, to stand up to the bully?
- Discuss how Leroy's relationships with others help him: his friends and teachers at school, his sister, Ruby, and his mother and father.
- Explore the various poetic devices used throughout the text, discussing how they contribute to the narrative. Examples include:
 - Alliteration: bubbling, boiling, burning to explode (p17)
 - Shape poetry: grasp, tug, pull (p18) falling (p49)
 - Simile: I want to roar like a lion ... stomp like a dinosaur ... my heart is howling like a hyena (p61) the clock ticks like a bomb (p67) chattering like magpies (p100)
 - Imagery: knife poised, air sliced (p67)
 - Metaphor: my cold jellyfish hand (p70)

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