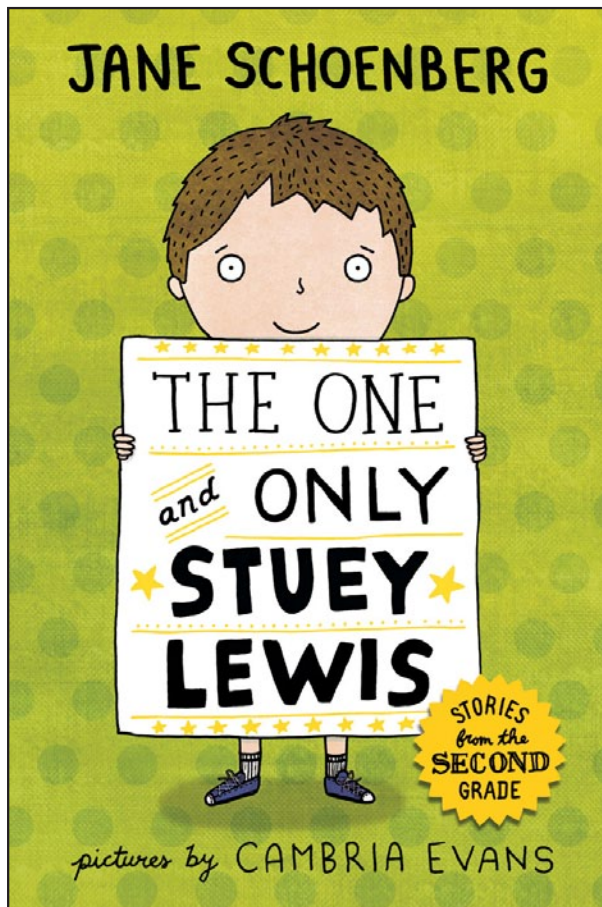


A DISCUSSION GUIDE TO



Grades 1–4 / Ages 6–9 · HC: 978-0-374-37292-7

“With a sweet supporting cast of family, friends, and a teacher, Ms. Curtis, whom everyone wishes they had, [Stuey] goes through the ups and downs of early elementary school . . . There are enough laughs to keep [readers] engaged, and pen-and-ink illustrations bring the colorful characters to life.”

—*School Library Journal*

“Stuey’s fans will be crossing their fingers for a sequel.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*

“Teachers and librarians often encourage students to graduate from picture books to chapter books with few or no illustrations. Jane Schoenberg has crafted a lovely transition—an easy-to-read chapter book.”

—*USA Today*

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR STUDENTS

- Which story do you like the best, and why?
- How are your classroom and school week the same as Stuey’s? How are they different?
- Have you ever had a favorite teacher? What did you like about her or him? What makes Ginger special?
- Have you ever had some of the same fears or struggles as Stuey? Talk (or write) about what you did or can do to deal with them.
- Talk (or write) about something (e.g., sports, school, art, or music) that’s been easy for you. Talk (or write) about something that’s been challenging.
- What do you think of Stuey and Anthony’s relationship? Talk (or write) about the benefits and challenges of having an older or younger sibling.
- If you could choose one character to visit your classroom for a day, whom would you pick and why? How are you different from or similar to this character?
- What do you think of Lilly? Do you think she’ll be different in third grade? Why, or why not?
- If you were able to choose a secret friend to be nice to, whom would you pick? Write a list of things you might do for and with that person.

ACTIVITIES FOR FURTHER UNDERSTANDING

- Even though Stuey and Will are best friends, they sometimes have problems. Have your students think of a time when they had a conflict with a good friend. How did they resolve it? Ask for volunteers to role-play these experiences.
- Have students illustrate their favorite scene from the book. They can also write a brief description to go along with it. Form a writers' circle, and have the kids share their illustrations and read their descriptions.
- Discuss Ginger's own difficulty learning to read when she was a child. Ask students to interview some adults, to ask them about challenges they faced when they were children.
- Like most of us, Stuey has a lot of inner conflicts. As a class activity, draw Stuey's face on the board. Brainstorm with the class to compile two lists: On one side of the drawing list the things that Stuey wants to do. On the other side list why he doesn't do them.

For example:

Wants to tell Ginger and Will he can't read

Wants to play soccer

Wants to tell Lilly off

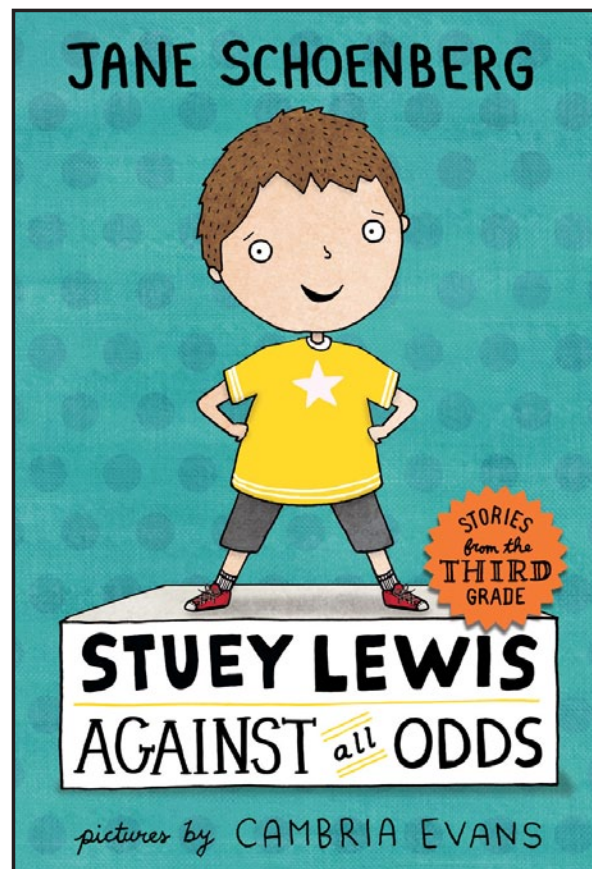
Is too embarrassed

Is scared he won't be good at it

Knows he'll get in trouble

Follow up with a discussion about the differences between external and internal conflicts and how they're all a normal part of our lives.

COMING SPRING 2012!!



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Farrar Straus Giroux Books for Young Readers