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DAY

AGES
5-8

AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR MASTERCLASSES

NOTES FOR TEACHERS & LIBRARIANS

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EmpathyLab

FRANCESCA SIMON & STEVEN BUTLER FAMILIES AND OTHER FUNNY CHARACTERS



BEFORE WATCHING THE VIDEO AND READING THE EXTRACT:

GET IN THE ZONE!

In their film, Francesca and Steven talk about the importance of families and the relationships between family members in their stories. Both of them say that their books are 'about families'.

To get children thinking about family dynamics, ask them to get into groups of four and discuss their own families with each other. Who in their families is the most dominating? Who is the bossiest? Who is the quietest? Who is the most sensitive? Who is the funniest?

In their groups, ask children to create Family Dynamic Scenes for the following: a family

argument; a family holiday; and a family celebration. How can children use their body language, body position, levels and facial expressions to convey the family dynamic in each scene? How can they show the relationships between the different characters? Can children see any similarities between these scenes and their own families?

AFTER WATCHING THE VIDEO AND READING THE EXTRACT:

Taken from pages 1–15 of Horrid Henry: Up, Up and Away and pages 9–19 of The Nothing to See Here Hotel (you can download the extracts at worldbookday.com/online-masterclasses/families-other-funny-characters).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does Henry feel at the start of the extract? How can you tell?
2. Do you think Henry gets along with his parents? Why or why not?
3. What annoys Henry about his parents' idea of 'a great holiday' on pages 11–12?
4. What is strange about Frankie Banister's Grandma in *The Nothing to See Here Hotel*?
5. How can you tell that 'family' is important to Frankie?
6. How is Frankie's family unconventional?
7. Do you find these two extracts humorous? Do they make you laugh? How?
8. Can you see any other similarities between the themes in the two extracts?

FUN ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1: GOOD AND BAD BEHAVIOUR DOORS

In the film, Francesca explains that Henry is a naughty character. She talks about how he ‘walks through those doors marked “No Entry” – and it’s a really fun way of exploring bad behaviour!

- Draw six door templates on each side of a piece of paper. Mark one side of doors as ‘good behaviour’ and the other as ‘bad behaviour’. Can you think of examples to go in each door? For example, an example of ‘good behaviour’ might be: ‘sharing my sweets at brektime’.
- Think about how many ‘bad behaviour’ doors you walk through on a daily basis. Why is the behaviour considered to be ‘bad’? What impact does it have on other people? How can you change it?

ACTIVITY 2: FAMILY TREES

Steven explains that the main character in The Nothing to See Here Hotel is ‘mixed species’. In fact, in his family tree there are lots of diverse creatures – from Witches to Puddle Nymphs!

- What is your own family tree? How many diverse people and characters can you include on your family tree? On an A3 sheet of paper, draw your own tree and decorate it using different colours and textures – you could even mount your family trees to create a beautiful classroom display!
- Share your family tree with someone else in the class and discuss the different people that are in your family. Which relationships are the most important to you? Why?

ACTIVITY 3: TRYING ON DIFFERENT HATS

Francesca and Steven talk about how reading is important because it allows you to have empathy with lots of different people. It’s exciting to try out what it’s like to be a villain, to be bossy or even to be bossed around!

- Think about the different types of characters that you see in the books you read: Good, Bad, Hero, Villain, Naughty, Bossy, Clever, Funny, Bully, Bullied, Attention-Seeking, Shy, Quiet, Nervous,

- Using paper and pens create hats for each of the different characters that you can think of. Take turns wearing each hat and acting out the actions, behaviour and speech of that particular hat. How do you feel doing this activity? What does it help you to learn about yourself and other people in the world?

SHARE A STORY

Think of a story you read recently that included characters that made you laugh. How did they tickle your funny bone? Was it the things they did, the things they said, or the things that happened to them? Perhaps it was just one particular passage, or section of dialogue, or even a character description that made you howl with laughter! Spend ten minutes sharing your favourite funny characters with your friends, classmates and family members. Can you make them laugh with your hilarious descriptions?

SPARK YOUR IMAGINATION...

AN INSPIRING SHARE A STORY CHALLENGE FOR YOU from Francesca and Steven...

Francesca Simon and Steven Butler give not one but TWO Share a Story Challenges based on their books!

1. *Francesca asks you to come up with your own Horrid Henry character by thinking of the worst adjectives you can, and putting names to them to create alliteration – for example, Horrid Henry! Then, come up with a new story for your character and share it with your friends!*
2. *Steven’s Share a Story Challenge is to create a MAP just like the one in his book, The Nothing to See Here Hotel. Create your own Hotel – either for Monsters, Ghosts, Space Aliens or something else of your choice, and create a cross-section map of your Hotel. When you’ve finished, don’t forget to share your work with classmates, teachers, friends and family!*

DID YOU KNOW?

There are more brilliant Masterclass films and resources featuring amazing authors and illustrators over at [worldbookday.com/online-masterclasses](https://www.worldbookday.com/online-masterclasses). Don’t miss out, download them today!