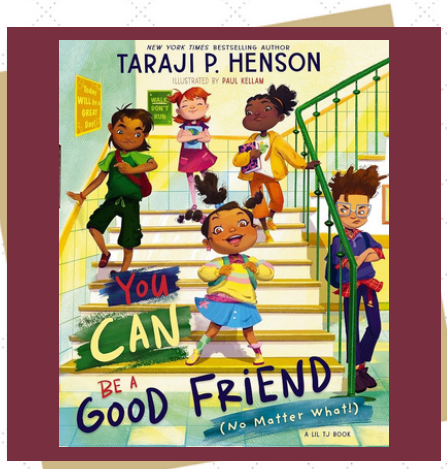


BEYOND THE BOOK GUIDE

You Can Be a Good Friend (No Matter What) by Taraji P. Henson

Book Summary

You Can Be a Good Friend (No Matter What) tells the story of Lil TJ, who is teased by a classmate and finds it difficult to fit in at her new school. She recalls Grandma Patsy's advice to embrace her uniqueness and show kindness to others. Lil TJ gains confidence and starts making friends, demonstrating that genuine friendship comes from compassion and embracing who you are. Readers learn a valuable lesson about empathy, bravery, and the value of staying true to oneself.

Before Reading the Story

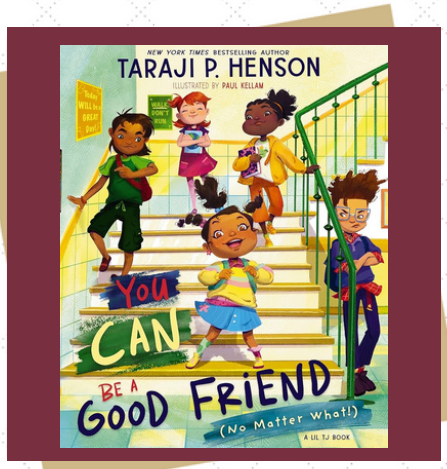
- Discuss what you see on the cover of the book.
- Make predictions on what the story may be about.
- Do you remember a time when you felt nervous about starting something new, like school or a sport? How did it make you feel?
- What do you think it means to be a good friend? Can you think of some ways to show kindness to others?

Target Vocabulary

- **magnificent:** very beautiful and impressive
- **friendship:** the relationship between friends
- **nurture**: to help something grow
- **nervous**: to feel anxious about something
- **jitters**: the feelings that go through your body when nervous
- **plunked**: to hit something to produce a sound
- **brave**: willing to do things that are difficult or that you are afraid of
- **special**: different from what is normal
- **tucked**: to cover up an object by placing something over it

MAYA'S BOOK NOOK

The VILLAGE
FLORIDA CENTER for READING RESEARCH



BEYOND THE BOOK GUIDE

During the Story

- Read the book aloud with the pictures facing your child.
- Make predictions about the story based on the pictures.
- Provide definitions and connections for any of the target vocabulary words that may be unfamiliar.
- Have your child repeat the words that they do not know.
- Relate the details in the story to events and experiences in your everyday life.
- Ask questions throughout the story to help your child understand what's being read.

After Reading the Story

- Have your child re-read the book in their own words using the illustrations.
- How does TJ change from the start to the end of the story? What does she learn about being a good friend?
- Have your child share one thing they appreciate about their friends or family members.
- One way to show kindness is to give compliments. Take turns giving compliments to each other.
- Think about a friend. Describe something you and your friend do differently.

Example Questions to Ask

- "You can be a good friend, no matter _____!"
- What lesson did Lil TJ learn from her Grandma Patsy to help her make friends?
- Can you remember a time when someone in the book showed kindness?
- What were some of the instruments Lil TJ tried in the story? Have you ever played an instrument?
- Why is it important to accept others for who they are?
- Who is someone you want to be a better friend to? What's one thing you can do this week to show them kindness?