
Teachers' Notes

JERRY'S WINDOW

Y. K. Willemse

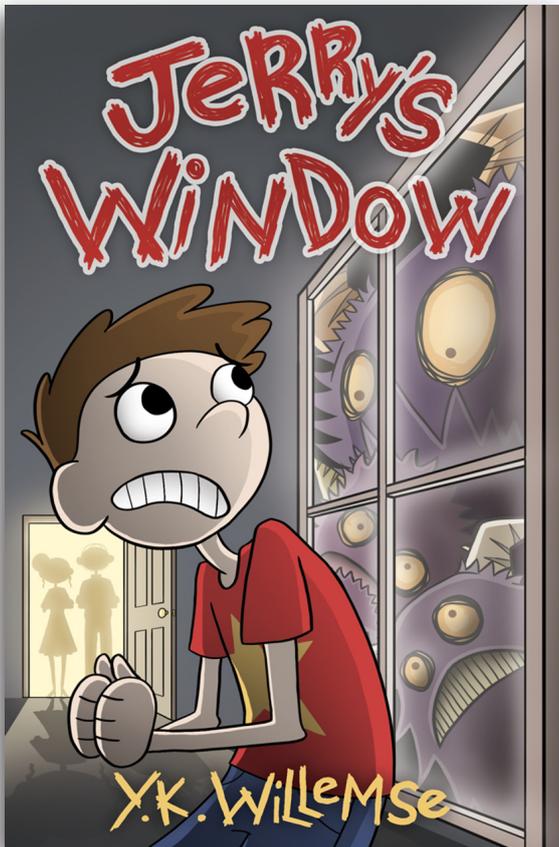
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Reading level: 7 to 12

BOOK SUMMARY

Ten-year-old Jerry is convinced his parents don't love him. He gets their attention by setting off stink bombs, flooding his mum's laundry, and causing mayhem on local transport. But when a window appears beneath his mum's washing line and the monsters beneath it start trying to kidnap Jerry, he changes his ways. The monsters don't have an appetite for good children. But Jerry can only fool them for so long...



THEMES

Love and forgiveness • Belonging • The need to feel wanted • Treating others with kindness •
Apologies • Mending relationships • Consequences

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**Y.K. Willemse is available for author talks and workshops.
Contact Wombat Books for more information.**

Jerry's Window Teachers' Notes can be used in schools (independent learning, small groups, and whole classes); at home with caregivers; and as part of mental health support programs facilitated by counsellors, psychologists, children's charities, etc.



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Y. K. Willemse wanted to be an author since she was very small and spent a lot of her spare time imagining up wild stories. She likes books with swords, pirates, monsters, and quirky characters. She's had several fantasy fiction books published and has two kids that she loves to read to. Most of Yvette's stories are imagined. Some are based on dreams she's had and others are just things that popped into her head. Yvette owns a real Norman sword and a large collection of books. She also plays the piano and sings very loudly.

AUTHOR NOTES

I wrote the first draft of this book when I was thirteen. (Don't ask how old I am now.) I was walking down the steps from the back door of our house towards the storage rooms of an old church hall that was part of our backyard at the time. I glanced towards the washing line and suddenly had the weird thought of what it might be like if there was another building or secret entrance somewhere else on our property, besides the church hall. A window under the washing line perhaps... And what might be under the window? Well, monsters of course. We've all been scared of monsters at some point in our lives, even if we don't like to admit it. Those thoughts got me started on this story.

I wrote the first few chapters one day after church, when my brother and I were bored. We had been sent into the old church hall to play while my parents had grown-up talk with several visitors they had round. I had an old notebook and a few pens with me, and I wrote the first chapter and read it to him. He liked it so much he waited patiently while I wrote the next one, and the one after that. I would pause every time I finished a chapter and share it with him. And that's how *Jerry's Window* was born.

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REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

Jerry's Window is a story about mending important relationships and the need to belong within a family and a community. It examines how our actions have consequences and how we can face those consequences and change our behaviour. And under it all the love and forgiveness we can have for each other once those actions are addressed.

KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

Curriculum Areas and Key Learning Outcomes.

YEAR FOUR

English

ACELA1494	ACELT1603	ACELT1605	ACELT1607
ACELY1687	ACELY1690	ACELY1694	

YEAR FIVE

English

ACELT1609	ACELT1611	ACELT1612	ACELY1698
ACELY1699	ACELY1701	ACELY1703	ACELY1704

YEAR SIX

English, Humanities and Social Science, Health and Physical Education

ACELA1517	ACELA1518	ACELA1523	ACELT1613
ACELT1800	ACELY1709	ACELY1711	ACELY1801
ACELY1714			

TEACHING POINTS AND ACTIVITIES

This book may be used in whole class, small group or independent learning activities in schools.

Please note, the following suggestions and activities are suited to a variety of year levels spanning Foundation to Year 6 primary aged children. Some activities may be applicable to early secondary school students, as well.

KNOWLEDGE AND LITERAL UNDERSTANDING

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

1. Show the cover to the class and ask the students what they think the book might be about.
2. Read the back cover blurb. Does this give them more of an idea of what the book could be about?

AFTER-READING QUESTIONS

1. Ask students how they feel about Jerry and his actions throughout the story.
2. Alternatively how do students feel about the actions of Jerry's parents throughout the story?
3. How do their actions impact each other? Do you agree with any of their reactions and the consequences of their actions?
4. What could Jerry have done differently? What could his parents have done differently?
5. Is there any way in which their actions were justified?
6. If you were Jerry how would you have handled the situations?
7. What was your favourite part of the book?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

BELONGING/NEEDING TO FEEL WANTED

- Jerry behaves badly partially because he thinks his parents didn't want him. How important is it to you to feel wanted by your family?
- When the monsters start hunting Jerry, he is upset that his parents don't believe what he is telling them. Have you ever told an adult something only to have them not believe you? And how did this make you feel? Discuss with the class.
- Write down a short story about a time that you were not believed by a grown-up, even though you were telling the truth.
- When the monsters are about to kidnap Jerry, he thinks of his parents, but only with despair. He doesn't think they would save him even if they could. Why?
- At the end of the book, Jerry said he thought his parents would be happier without him. Why does he feel this way?
- In the final chapter of the book, Jerry has the biggest change of heart yet. What do his parents tell him that changes him so radically? Write down some of the nicest things your parents have said to you.

LOVE AND FORGIVENESS

- Jerry doesn't think his parents really love him, and at the end of the book, they admit they're not always good at showing their love for him. What things did Jerry's parents do that made him feel unloved? Share your answers with the class.
- What things did Jerry do that made his parents think he didn't care about them? Can you think of a time you did something that made someone you love think you didn't care about them? Write down a short paragraph about it. Students can take turns reading their paragraphs to each other and talking about them.
- How did Jerry's parents show their love for Jerry at the end of the book?
- How can parents make their children feel special and loved? How can kids show their parents love?
- What did forgiveness look like in *Jerry's Window*? How did Jerry's parents show they forgave Jerry? How did Jerry show he forgave his parents for their mistakes? Write down a small paragraph about a time you forgave someone, and how it made you and them feel. Students can take turns reading their paragraphs to the class.

TREATING OTHERS WITH KINDNESS

- Jerry makes lots of enemies by misbehaving. But when he changes his behaviour partway through the book, he sees a different side of many of the people he knows. How does Mrs Gertson change when Jerry begins to behave himself?
- When Jerry surfs on his mum's ironing board, he also gets Tyler into trouble. Tyler's mum gives him lots of hard punishments. What sort of things could Jerry and Tyler have done together that wouldn't have

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gotten Tyler into trouble?

- Despite Jerry's behaviour, Tyler shows kindness to Jerry numerous times in the book. Find three examples of Tyler being a good friend.
- Draw a picture of what it looks like to show kindness to someone. It might be sharing a toy with them, spending time with someone lonely at the playground, or helping another kid up after they have hurt themselves.
- How did Mr Ronden feel after Jerry tried to steal his gold tooth? What would have been a better way for Jerry to try to get the money for the rainbow-coloured lollipop?
- Write your own short story about Jerry trying to get the money for the rainbow-coloured lollipop. This time, show him making good decisions as he tries to find a way to get what he would like. Share your story with the class.

CONSEQUENCES OF BEHAVIOUR

- What is a consequence? Discuss with the class.
- There are always consequences to our choices even when we aren't punished. Sometimes there are good things as a result. Other times bad choices lead to bad outcomes. What were some consequences of Jerry's behaviour on the bus?
- What were some consequences of Jerry stealing a lollipop?
- What about some of the consequences of Jerry dropping a stink bomb in his parents' lounge?
- Think of answers to questions 2 – 4 that do not involve monsters now. These are called "natural consequences".
- One of the saddest consequences of Jerry's behaviour was that people didn't want to be around him. Can you list some important people in Jerry's life who didn't want to be with him because of his behaviour?
- The author shows us several times that Jerry felt guilty about his actions. How does the author do this?
- Find examples of things that Jerry says that show he feels guilty about his behaviour. Jerry's feelings are also consequences of his actions.
- How do you feel when you do something wrong? With the other students, create a word pool on the board of your classroom or on a poster that describe the way you feel when you do something bad. (Ashamed? Scared? Sad?)

MENDING IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIPS

- Jerry and his parents mend their relationship in the end. Besides battling the monsters together, what other things do they do that fixes their relationship?
- How can saying sorry help fix a relationship? Write about a time you've said sorry and it's turned a relationship around for you. Share it with the class.
- What does "communicating" mean in a relationship?
- How did communicating help fix Jerry's relationship with his parents? What things did Jerry think about

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his parents that weren't true? And what did his parents think about him that wasn't true?

- What language did Mr and Mrs Ronden use to describe what Jerry meant to them in the last chapter of this book? How do you think this made Jerry feel?
- Write a poem about family.

APOLOGIES

- What does it mean to apologise sincerely?
- What are some ways in which apologising can help fix a situation?
- Is apologising sincerely for your benefit or someone else's? What are some of the ways in which apologising is about the other person's emotions and needs?
- Does the other person always have to forgive you?
- Does Jerry's parents and Jerry apologise in ways that are sincere and acknowledge their behaviours?

ACTIVITIES

THE APOLOGIES GAME

The aim of the game is to come up with a situation to apologise for, while the next person continues the apology with a reason and the third finishes the apology with the promise of further action and accountability.

For example: One student apologises for doing something: 'I'm so sorry I slept on your flowerbed last night' The next person continues the apology with a reason: 'I didn't realise that the English word 'flowerbed' does not mean a human bed' And the third person finishes that same apology off with a promise of future action: 'I'll plant you some new flowers first thing tomorrow'.

The situations can be silly and fun but the important thing is to continue the apology with the reason and promised accountability.

DRAW YOUR MONSTER

Think about the monsters that Jerry encounters throughout the story as consequences for his bad behaviour. Think about something that you may have done that could count as bad behaviour (for example, maybe you didn't share with your sibling or you were or maybe you lied about doing your reading homework) and design a monster for you to face.

Write underneath your drawing about how you can take responsibility for that behaviour and make the monster go away.

FORGIVING FINGERS

- Forgiving others and yourself can be hard. Take a moment to think about why it can help to forgive people and help yourself to move on from a situation. Are there any reasons why you might not forgive someone? Perhaps their apology wasn't sincere or maybe they never take responsibility and change their behaviour.
- Print out this [hand picture](#). Cut out the hand. In the palm write why it can help to forgive. On the fingers on this side write the reasons you might forgive them. E.g. sincerity. Then on the opposite side write the reasons you might not forgive someone. Then on the fingers write what you could say to give feedback to the person. E.g. 'You didn't stop doing the action that hurt me.'
- Decorate your hand!