

Sideways Stories from Wayside School

By: Louis Sachar

Library of Congress Summary: Humorous episodes from the classroom on the thirtieth floor of Wayside School, which was accidentally built sideways with one classroom on each story.

Book Information:

Genre: Fantasy

Booktalk:

<http://www.mackinbooktalk.com/viewbook.aspx?BookId=1476>

Author Information

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Pre-Reading Activities:

1. Wayside School is not normal; from the teachers to the students and the way it is built. Create your own school that is anything but ordinary. Include the building design and the types of students and teachers. Be descriptive and be creative; anything goes. Include pictures and make its name unique. Share your school with your classmates and post them around your classroom.
2. Using magazines create a collage of what you think should be in a school. Include things, people, food items, etc.

Chapters 1-3:

Questions:

What do you think the next teacher on the thirtieth story is going to be like?

What do you think of Mrs. Jewls? Would you like to have her as a teacher? Why or why not?

How would you teach Joe to count that was different from how Mrs. Jewls taught him?

Journal Topics:

Ch. 1 & 2- Write about what you think makes a bad teacher and what you think makes a good teacher.

Chapters 4-6

Questions:

If you fell asleep in class, like Sharie does, do you think they would let you keep sleeping like Mrs. Jewls does? Why or why not?

Based on the chapters you have read so far, what perspective is this story told from? Teachers? The imagination of students? After answering that question, do you think Todd really never does anything wrong, or is that just how he sees it?

Journal Topics:

Ch. 4- Using something that most teachers would not let you do in class, make up a way that could make you a better student.

Ch. 6- If you could be really fast at one thing, what would it be and why?

Chapters 7-10

Questions:

Have you ever been confused about why teachers have you do something? Give an example. Do you think they are just making you do it because you do not want to or because it is important?

Were Leslie's pigtails really telling Paul to pull them? Why did the author make it seem like the pigtails were telling Paul to pull them?

Journal Topics:

Ch. 8- Write about what you would do as your job if you were class president. What is the most important job in the classroom?

Chapters 11-13

Questions:

Before reading Chapter 11, only look at the picture. What do you think is the problem? And how do you think it will be solved?

When students get in trouble at school, should their punishment be to leave school early? Do you think students will behave better or worse? Why?

Why was Rondi so upset? Do you think it was fair for Rondi to get in trouble when she did not really do anything? Why did Mrs. Jewls right her name on the board if Rondi did not really do anything?

Journal Topics:

Ch. 11- If you were a teacher, rather than using mosquito bites, how would you teach arithmetic. What would you use to help the students learn? Why?

Ch. 12- Make up a plan to get Jason out of his seat and why that would work.

Chapters 14-17

Questions:

Before reading Chapter 14, look at the picture. What or who do you think is under all of those coats and why does it smell?

On page 69, it asks if you can figure out the solution. Read the hint, stop and think, and predict some ideas that Deedee might come up with.

Why could John not find the Tootsie Roll pops?

Journal Topics:

Ch. 15- Make up a plan on how you would get to recess early to get the green ball.

Ch. 16- Write about your reasons to be happy

Chapters 18-20

Questions:

In chapter 18, Leslie is not happy with her toes. After reading this chapter, what can be learned about valuing yourself?

How would you handle someone who thought they knew everything? Do you think that Kathy is ever going to have any friends? Why or why not?

Journal Topics:

Ch. 19- If there was a 19th story and a Miss Zarves, write about what she and her classroom would be like.

Ch. 20- Write about a time when you met someone who did not like anyone. What did you do?

Chapters 21-23

Questions:

Why do you think Louis played on Ron's team, even though he was bad at kickball? Do you think Louis cared about winning? Why or why not?

Before reading chapter 22, look at the picture. Do the 3 boys look the same? After reading, do the Eric's nicknames fit them? Why or why not? Do you think the Eric's like their nicknames?

Do you think that children are really smarter than their teachers? What do you think would happen if children taught the class instead of the teacher?

Journal Topics:

Ch. 21- Is it more important to you to play for fun or play to win? Why?

Ch. 22- Write about your nickname and how you got it. If you do not have a nickname, write about a nickname you wish you had and why.

Ch. 23- Write about a time when you were right and a teacher was wrong. What happened? Did the teacher listen to you?

Chapters 24-26

Questions:

How could Mrs. Jewls have prevented Dameon from running up and down the stairs that many times? What are some ways that the students could put their names on their pencils?

Before reading the last page of chapter 25, predict what you think happened to Mrs. Jewls and the class.

What would you do if someone kicked all of the balls over the fence at recess?

Journal Topics:

Ch. 24- Write about a time you missed out on something because you had to do something else.

Ch. 25- Write about what you would do if you came to school on a Saturday and no one was there.

Chapters 27-30

Questions:

Why does every turkey sandwich, piece of chocolate cake, apple, and Tootsie Roll pop that Joy eats taste like porridge? What could Joy have done differently?

Why did Mrs. Gorf show up in the classroom? Why did she disappear?

If the students from Wayside School were in your classroom, what do you think they would find to be weird?

Journal Topics:

Ch. 27- Come up with a creative plan you would do if you forgot your lunch at home.

Ch. 28- If you could change your name, what would you change it to? Why?

Ch. 29- Write about what the best Halloween party would be like. Include lots of details.

Ch. 30- Write a story that you think Louis would tell the Wayside School students about your classroom.

Vocabulary:

Arithmetic (p.25): The mathematics of integers, rational numbers, real numbers, or complex numbers under addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.

Discipline (p. 27): Punishment intended to correct or train

Criminal (p.30): One that has committed or been legally convicted of a crime.

Horried (p. 60): To cause unpleasant surprise to; shock

Solution (p. 69): The answer to a problem

Apiece (p.79): For each one

Scrawny (p. 80): Gaunt and bony

Windbreaker (p.91): A warm outer jacket having close-fitting, often elastic, cuffs and waistband

Pupil (p. 95): The apparently black circular opening in the center of the iris of the eye

Leotard (p.117): A snugly fitting, stretchable one-piece garment with or without sleeves that covers the torso, worn especially by dancers, gymnasts, acrobats, and those engaging in exercise workouts.

Activities:

1. Create your own flavor of ice cream. Make it to describe your personality and what you like to do. Write a paragraph explaining your ice cream and why you chose the things you included. As a class, make ice cream in baggies, adding your own special ingredients. Have the class vote on whose ice cream is the best. (Language arts and Science)

2. Create your own way to do arithmetic. Dana had so many mosquito bites that she used them to do her arithmetic. What will you use? Create your times tables and present them to your class with your new method. Write a paragraph explaining what you used and why it helps you. (Math and Language Arts)

Related Websites:

<http://www.aaronshp.com/rt/RTE32.html>

A reader's theatre that allows the students to act out 3 of the scenes from Wayside School.

<http://www.playkidsgames.com/mathGames.htm>

Instead of counting mosquito bites, students can practice their arithmetic on this website.

Books by Louis Sachar

Someday Angeline

Johnny's in the Basement

The Boy Who Lost His Face

Dogs Don't Tell Jokes

There's A Boy In The Girl's Bathroom

Sixth Grade Secrets

Holes

Small Steps

Stanley Yelnats' Survival Guide to Camp Green Lake

The Marvin Redpost Series

Kidnapped at Birth?

Why Pick on Me?

Is He A Girl?

Alone in His Teacher's House

Class President

A Flying Birthday Cake?

Super Fast Out of Control!

A Magic Crystal?

The Wayside School Series

Sideways Stories from Wayside School

Wayside School is Falling Down

Wayside School Gets a Little Stranger

Sideways Arithmetic from Wayside School

More Sideways Arithmetic from Wayside School