

Students can role-play the characters and situations in the book, taking turns with being the bully, the bullied and the bystanders.

Mr. Munson's Itvice on Bullying

Sometimes, it's hard being the new kid in school. (chanting from the background: "Stuart MacDuff thinks he's tough. Stuart MacDuff thinks he's tough")

Sometimes, it's hard being a shy kid.(chanting on the bus: "Stuart MacDuff wears ugly stuff. Stuart MacDuff wears ugly stuff").

It's always hard being the new, shy kid who is bullied.(chanting on the playground: "Stuart MacDuff is a powder puff; Stuart MacDuff is a powder puff"). That's what is happening to Stuart, and it's really starting to bother him. So, when his teacher reminds the class that Mr. Munson, the guidance counselor at Pickle Pond Elementary School, will be visiting his class today, his ears perk up.

Today, Mr. Munson is discussing 'bullying'. He reminds the children that they always have the right to be safe. No one has the right to scare them. No one has the right to hurt them, and no one has the right to hurt their feelings. There's always a grown up around who can help a child. Just ask.

Stuart listens very carefully to this lesson and thinks to himself: “maybe Mr.Munson can help me”.

So, Stuart goes to Mr.Munson’s office for a little talk.

“Kids make fun of my size. They make fun of my clothes, and they tease me because I’m not so good at Math. I haven’t bothered anyone. I’m friendly to all the kids. I just don’t understand why they pick on me”.

Mr. Munson listens to all that Stuart had to say, and it seems very clear that Stuart is trying to be a friend to his new classmates. Mr.Munson reminds Stuart about the lesson on bullying and some of the ideas that they had discussed in class.

“Did you try to ignore the bullies, Stuart?” asks Mr, Munson. “Yes, I tried that for three days. It didn’t work”.

“Did you ask them to stop the bullying, Stuart?” “Yes, and they just laughed at me.”

“Did you try to stay with a group of friends, Stuart?” “I remembered that idea, Mr. Munson but I really haven’t made many friends since I’ve started at this school.”

“Well”, says Mr. Munson, “here’s something else that you could try. The next time someone teases you, ask him or her a question.” “Ask someone

a question? I don't understand how that could help". "Let me explain", says Mr. Munson. Whenever, you ask someone a question, that person usually has to stop and think about answering the question. Sometimes just that few minutes can change things. It might even give you more time to think about another question to ask or to even change the subject and start talking about something else. Do you think you could try that, Stuart? Oh, and one more thing to remember, Stuart: using humor can change a situation. I don't mean making fun of the other person. I mean saying something really funny or telling a clever joke."

Stuart isn't very sure of Mr. Munson's idea but agrees to think about it.

The next day when the class is in line for lunch, Adam, the kid in front of Stuart turns around and says to him: "you stink". Stuart remembers Mr. Munson's advice about asking a question and says: "what do I smell like? " Adam looks quite surprised and pauses for a while before he answers. " Oh, you really don't stink. I was mad at that other kid over there, and I knew I could take it out on you." "Oh", says Stuart with a long pause. "Hey, are you going to play baseball this spring?" Both boys start to talk about baseball as they wait in line for lunch. They even sit down next to each other and continue to talk about sports.

Stuart listens as Adam talks about playing baseball. Together as they walk outside to the playground for recess, Adam asks Stuart how many home runs he has ever hit. Stuart answers that he loves to play baseball but he has never hit a home run. "In fact, I kind of 'stink' at baseball!" They both laugh as they run onto the playground.

Mr. Munson sees Stuart in the library a few days later and asks how things are going. Stuart tells Mr. Munson what happened with Adam in the lunch line. "I think I'm starting to understand a little more about bullying. I think I'm starting to feel a little more comfortable here at Pickle Pond. But I really think I need to learn a few more jokes, though. A kid has to know these kinds of things! (choosing a book on jokes)"

Mr. Munson smiles as he walks back to his office. "Stop by my office sometime and tell me some of your best jokes, Stuart. We all need a good laugh everyday."

Mr. Munson's
Advice on Bullying

- 1. Ignore the bully**
- 2. Walk away**
- 3. Ask the bully to stop**
- 4. Stay in a group**
- 5. Change the subject by asking a question**
- 6. Look confident**
- 7. Use humor**
- 8. Show kindness (a bully never expects this)**
- 9. Ask for help**

Know the difference between Tattling and Reporting:

Tattling is when you:

Tell on someone

The thing you're telling is not serious

The reason you tattle is just to get someone in trouble

Reporting is when you:

Tell on someone

The thing you're reporting is very important or very serious

The reason you report is that someone needs help