



Teacher Notes

Kenneth and Queenie: Super Friends!

by Raymond McGrath

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Publication Details

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Reader ages: 4-8 years

Themes

- Family
- Pollination
- Disagreements

About the Book

A charming, funny graphic novel series about bee besties, in the spirit of *Narwhal and Jelly*.

Kenneth is on a mission. Queenie is almost the queen of her hive. Together with their pollinating pals, they're going to save the world, one flower at a time ...

Story 1: Fuzzy Bits!

Queenie has found a fun new way to pollinate, but Kenneth is not impressed! Will they ever agree?

Story 2: Fuzzy Friends!

Kenneth is thrilled when Queenie makes an important discovery. Shall Kenneth try something new?

Story 3: Fuzzy Feelings!

After a big day, Queenie has some big feelings. Luckily, Kenneth, Barbara, Zippo and Dungaree are Super Friends!

About the Author/Illustrator

Ray McGrath is an award-winning veteran of the film, television, advertising and children's publishing industries for more than 30 years. His books have been published internationally (a New York Times bestselling illustrator) and he is the writer/director and creator of TVNZ children's series *Puzzle Inc* as well as a storyboard/animatic artist on the international award-winning television series *Kiri and Lou*, and senior animator on BBC series *Tiny Wonders*. Ray lives in NZ with his wife, four children, a cat and a small but perfectly formed cluckery of chickens.

Before Reading

- Read the blurb of the book aloud – what do you think will happen in the book?
- Summarise the key events of book one – what or who do the readers need to know coming into book two?
- Explore the cover of the book – who might some of the 'super friends' in the story be?

Comprehension Questions

- What incorrect assumptions does Queenie make about pollination in 'Fuzzy Bits'?
- What does pollination require?
- What is the difference between Queenie's approach to pollination and Kenneth's? Why does Kenneth think that his way is the 'right way'? How does Queenie react to this?
- Dungaree suggests that there's no such thing as right or wrong. Do you agree? Why/why not?
- What is Queenie trying to tell Kenneth and the others through her interpretive dance?

Comprehension Questions cont.

- What goes wrong with Kenneth's super pollinator?
- How does Queenie come up with a way to make it fun?
- How many sisters does Queenie have? How does she remember all of their names?
- How does the hive warm Queenie up?

Literacy

Word play

The segments 'the delicate art of pollination' use word play to make the reader laugh.

- Look up the meaning of the word 'pun'. Where is the pun in each of these sections?
- Discuss other forms of wordplay and nonsense words. Can you think of any stories or poems that use wordplay? Is wordplay always used for humour? What is your response as a reader?

Theme: Family

In the third part of the book, Queenie reveals that she misses her fifty thousand sisters, leading to a conversation where everyone shares details of their families.

- How do each of the characters feel about their siblings?
- What are the similarities across each of their families? What are some of the differences?
- What makes Queenie decide to return to her friends?
- How do they step in for her family when she gets cold?
- Do families always have to be related? What do you think this story suggests about how families can come together?

Final reflections

- What other books would you recommend to readers who enjoyed *Kenneth and Queenie*? Why?
- What do you think Kenneth and Queenie will get up to next? What do you want to happen in the next book?
- What did you learn from the book? What did it make you think about?

Creative Activities

- What would you miss the most about your family if you had to go away? Write a short scene that captures the thing you love the most about your family (or you could reverse this and write about the thing that annoys you the most).
- Come up with your own bumblebee pun and use it to design your own 'delicate art of pollination' excerpt.
- What, does Kenneth say, are the most important steps in pollination? Do some research on the act of pollination – does what you find support his claim, or is Queenie right, is there room to have fun? Design a poster that helps to explain the steps of pollination without sending people to sleep!
- Choose one of the secondary characters in the story and rewrite (redraw) one of the scenes from their perspective.