

## Percy's Perfect Friend



LANA BUTTON Illustrations by PEGGY COLLINS

### STORY SUMMARY

Percy feels uncomfortable and alone in a classroom full of unfamiliar children until he meets a new friend, a plush cat he names Miss Petticomb. When Miss Petticomb is apparently kid-napped by other children, Percy must overcome his shyness to save her—but, in fact, it may be Miss Petticomb who is helping Percy.



### Pair this book with:

- *Harley the Hero* by Peggy Collins

**Lana Button** is an early childhood educator and a children's author, educator, and entertainer who is passionate about supporting and encouraging children through entertainment. Lana began writing following a career in television and theatre. Her books, including *Willow Finds a Way*, have been shortlisted for the Blue Spruce Award, The Shining Willow Award, the Jean Throop IODE Award, the Rainforest of Reading Award, and more. Her most recent book, *The Cow Said BOO!*, was a *Parents Approved* book. Lana lives in Burlington, Ontario.

**Peggy Collins** is an award-winning children's book author-illustrator with more than 35 titles to her name, including Blue Spruce Award-winner *Harley the Hero*, *In the Snow*, and *In the Garden*. *A Sky-Blue Bench* was an ALA Schneider Family Book Award Honor Book. She has also written and illustrated for animated apps teaching math, indigenous history, and education. Peggy lives in Newburgh, Ontario, with her two children. Peggy's most recent title is *Whistling for Angela*.

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### THEMES

Friendship, Entering Play, Conflict Resolution, Feelings

### BISAC CODES

JUV039060 JUVENILE FICTION / Social Themes / Friendship  
 JUV039050 JUVENILE FICTION / Social Themes / Emotions & Feelings  
 JUV039090 JUVENILE FICTION / Social Themes / New Experience  
 JUV051000 JUVENILE FICTION / Imagination & Play  
 JUV040000 JUVENILE FICTION / Toys, Dolls & Puppets

### CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Language Arts: adverbs and adjectives, making connections between a text and real life; Drama; Health: breathing techniques

### READING LEVEL

Lexile Measure: AD540L | Fountas & Pinnell: K

**THIS GUIDE CONTAINS:**

ACTIVITY	MAIN SUBJECT AREAS	SPECIFIC SKILLS AND TOPICS
Read-Aloud	Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• activate prior knowledge</li> <li>• infer, predict, and make connections</li> </ul>
What Do Friends Do?	Language Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• create a written list of what friends do for one another</li> </ul>
Act This Way	Social Play Drama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• act out different scenes from the book and discuss the points of view of the main characters</li> </ul>
Adverbs and Adjectives Charades	Language Arts Drama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use dramatic play as a basis to understand adverbs and adjectives</li> </ul>
Deep Breath	Mental Health Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use different breathing techniques to practice care for their body and mind</li> </ul>





**THE READ-ALoud**

For this activity, teachers can choose the discussion points most appropriate for their particular group of students.

**Learning Expectations:**

Students will:

- identify reading comprehension strategies (e.g., activate prior knowledge, infer, predict, make connections) and use them before, during, and after reading to understand texts

**You Will Need**

- *Percy's Perfect Friend*

**How To:****Before Reading**

Read the back blurb on the book cover. Explain to students that this is how readers sometimes choose their stories. It's a short way of describing what the book is about and it entices the reader to further read the book. Based on the blurb, who do you think Miss Petticomb is? Predict if you think that Percy will have courage to rescue her. Ask for students to share if they have ever had to have the courage to do something. Percy worries that Miss Petticomb will like his classmates better than him. Have you ever worried that a classmate liked a friend better than you because they chose to play with them instead of you? How did you feel? Discuss with students how our feelings can affect the way we act.

**During Reading**

**First Spread:** Percy is standing away from the other children in this spread. Ask, "How do you think he is feeling? Look at his facial expression. How is it different from those of the other children?" "What was it like when you started school or had to start in a new classroom?" "Explain what you think the children are playing in this spread. What are your favourite games to play at school?" "Have you ever had an animal in your classroom?" "Do you think the cat is real or pretend? What makes you think this?"

**Second Spread:** Percy meets Miss Petticomb. "How do you think he is feeling now?" "How has his facial expression changed from the first spread?" "Did you ever have something special like a favourite toy or stuffed animal that helped you feel better when you were feeling sad? What was it about the special object that made you feel better?"

**Third Spread:** Percy holds Miss Petticomb close to his face. "How can a hug make you feel better?" "What makes you feel better when you are feeling sad? Do you like to be hugged? Do you have a special stuffed animal or a real animal that you can snuggle?" "How do friends playing with us make us feel good?"

**Fourth Spread:** Percy talks about how Miss Petticomb was a "perfect" friend. "What does it mean to be 'perfect?' Is that something that can actually exist?" "If a friend makes a mistake, does that mean they aren't 'perfect' anymore?" "Do you think it's okay if Miss Petticomb plays with other children? Does it mean she can't be Percy's friend if she plays with others?" "How do you think Percy can be friends with Miss Petticomb and the other children in his class? What should he do?"

**Fifth Spread:** Discuss the word *snatched* and explain its meaning. "What do you think it means that Percy searched 'courageously?' What are other things that you can do 'courageously?'"

**Sixth Spread:** Discuss the word *captured* and what this means in relation to Miss Petticomb. "Why do you think there are two exclamation marks used in this spread? How does this punctuation give the reader a clue about how the character is feeling?" "Look at the word *appeared*. Why do you think that this word is in italics?"

**Seventh Spread:** "The italicized word *appeared* shows up two more times in this spread. Does this help the reader identify what Percy thinks is actually happening to Miss Petticomb?" "The tea that the children are having is described as 'giggly.' Can tea have feelings? Can it laugh?" "Do you think that

Miss Pettcomb is being forced to play or eat the cake?" "What does the word *delicious* mean? What is something that you have eaten that is delicious?" "Percy is hiding under the table. Why do you think he's doing this? How does it show the reader how he is feeling?"

**Eighth Spread:** Percy takes Miss Pettcomb from the children. "Do you think that this was the right thing to do when Percy didn't like them taking her from him?" "What words should we use when we want to play with a toy that someone else is playing with?" "Percy calls her 'Miss Pettcomb' and the children call her 'Kitty'. Are both names for her correct? Why?" "Use emotion words (*sad, angry, frustrated, etc.*) to describe how each of the characters is feeling. Can you identify why you think the characters are each feeling this way based on what you know so far?"

**Ninth Spread:** "In the eighth spread, Percy told the kids her name is Miss Pettcomb. In this spread, the children tell Percy that it's Miss Pettcomb's birthday. Do you think that the way they communicated this information to each other was helpful or hurtful?" "How has Miss Pettcomb's expression on her face changed from the beginning of the book? Look at previous pages to see how it has changed."

**Tenth Spread:** Discuss what it means when we are surprised by something. "Percy does something that is unexpected. He gives the other children Miss Pettcomb to play with, because he thinks she might be the 'perfect' friend for them. Do you think that he should have done this? Why or why not?" "How can you be 'alone in the crowd?' What do you think Percy meant by this?" "Have you ever felt alone? What can we do for a friend that is feeling lonely?"

**Eleventh Spread:** "Why do you think Percy takes a glance back at the children and Miss Pettcomb?" "Look at the facial expressions on all of the characters, including Miss Pettcomb. What do you notice?"

**Twelfth Spread:** "Percy took a deep breath. How does taking a deep breath help us with our emotions when we are upset?" "Why do you think Percy is brave for holding out his hands to pretend to bring ice cream to Miss Pettcomb's party?" "Can trying new things make us brave?"

**Thirteenth Spread:** "We never get to learn Miss Pettcomb's favorite kind of ice cream. Predict what kind of ice cream Percy brought to the party. What is your favourite kind of ice cream?" "The word *appeared* is shown on this page again, but it is no longer in italics. Using information that we learned previously about why the word *appeared* was in italics, why do you think it does not need to be italicized now?" "Look at the expressions on all of the characters' faces. How are they different than how they were in the eleventh spread?"

**Fourteenth Spread:** Here, we learn that the children's names are Hannah and Jack. "Why don't we get to know their names until the end of the story?" "Throughout the book, Hannah is referred to as 'fluffy-scarf kid' and 'kid with the fluffy scarf.' Jack is referred to as 'the kid with the apron.' Percy is describing what he sees them wearing. Why do you think this is?" "At the end of the book, he is no longer describing them, but is actually using their names. Can you suggest a reason for this?"

### After Reading

Consider comparing the characters from *Harley the Hero* by Peggy Collins to this story. What is similar? How do both stories discuss the topic of friendship in different ways?



## ACTIVITY 1: WHAT DO FRIENDS DO?

Students will respond to the text by making their own list of things that friends do for one another.

### Learning Expectations:

Students will:

- express their own ideas about what friends should do for one another
- make a list of what they want a friend to do for them

### You Will Need

- *Percy's Perfect Friend*
- chart paper
- markers
- "What Do Friends Do?" blackline master

### How To:

1. Read *Percy's Perfect Friend*.
2. After reading the text, go back to the third spread where Percy says, "Of course I'll play with you" because "that's what friends do", the fifth spread where Percy says, "I'll find you, Miss Petticomb" because "that's what friends do", and the fourteenth spread where Percy serves "extra scoops of ice cream. Because that's what friends do."
3. On a piece of chart paper, make a t-chart. On one side of the t-chart, outline what Percy says friends do, according to the text.
4. Have students think-pair-share two things that they feel a friend should do to show that they are a good friend.
5. After giving some talk time (approximately 3 minutes), have students return their attention back to the t-chart.
6. Ask students to share what they discussed in their partner discussions. Add their ideas to the other side of the t-chart, which will identify what students think a friend should do.

7. Have students write their own list in a journal, using the environmental text created on the t-chart, outlining three things a friend should do.
8. *Optional:* Once students have completed their list, have them share this with the class.

## ACTIVITY 2: ACT THIS WAY

Students will practice acting out what happens in the story between Percy, Hannah, and Jack.

### Learning Expectations:

Students will:

- practice how to enter a social play situation by acting out different parts of the story that happen between Percy and his new friends
- learn, through play, how each friend might have been feeling in each part of the story

### You Will Need

- *Percy's Perfect Friend*
- stuffed animal or special toy
- optional: dress-up items for students to use in their play center

### How To:

1. The teacher can guide students through important parts of the text that are helpful for acting out a beginning, middle, and end story model.
2. Students will first act out how Percy feels when he enters the classroom. As part of this play, students can also show how Percy felt when he met Miss Petticomb.
3. Next, have students act out how Percy felt when Miss Petticomb was "snatched." Have a different group of students act out how Hannah and Jack felt when they took Miss Petticomb.



4. Finally, have students act out different points of view on how Percy, Hannah, and Jack all felt when they found a way to play together at the end of the story.
5. After the play, the teacher can ask the students a variety of questions to deepen their understanding of how others feel in different parts of various play situations, using some of the prompts in the read-aloud section.

**ACTIVITY 3: MY PERFECT FRIEND**

Students will draw a picture of their perfect friend.

**Learning Expectations:**

Students will:

- discuss character traits and what they mean in terms of friendship
- create a drawing of their idea of the perfect friend

**You Will Need**

- *Percy's Perfect Friend*
- chart paper
- markers
- white paper
- crayons and pencil crayons

**How To:**

1. Read *Percy's Perfect Friend* to the whole class.
2. On a piece of chart paper, draw an outline of a person.
3. Talk to students about what the word *characteristics* means in terms of discussing what makes a good friend.
4. Ask students to describe characteristics of characters from *Percy's Perfect Friend*. Write their ideas down on the outline of the person created on chart paper.

5. On white paper, students can draw their perfect friend in crayon or pencil crayon.
6. Ask students to choose three characteristics that what would make a friend "perfect" for them. Have students add these words to their drawings.
7. Encourage students to share their drawings with the class or consider having a special area in the classroom called "Friends that are perfect for me" and place student pieces here.

**ACTIVITY 4: ADVERBS AND ADJECTIVES CHARADES**

Students will learn about adverbs and adjectives through dramatic play.

**Learning Expectations:**

Students will:

- learn about adverbs and adjectives
- use their learning of adverbs and adjectives to act out those mentioned in the story

**You Will Need**

- *Percy's Perfect Friend*

**How To:**

1. Read *Percy's Perfect Friend*.
2. Discuss with students what adverbs and adjectives are (if students have not been taught about the meanings of a noun and verb, please discuss these first).
3. Tell students that they are going to play charades (act out) the different adverbs and adjectives used in the story.
4. Have students act out the adverbs: *courageously, excitedly, bravely*.
5. Next, have students act out the adjectives used in the story: *delicious, careful, giggly, fluffy, happy, surprised, shocked*.

6. Discuss which ones were harder to act out and why.
7. Extension: Create a classroom list of adverbs and adjectives from classroom discussion. You might choose to add to the list as you read different stories.

## ACTIVITY 5: DEEP BREATH

Students will learn different ways to practice taking deep breaths.

### Learning Expectations:

Students will:

- discuss different ways of keeping our bodies and minds healthy
- practice different breathing techniques to use when they are experiencing strong emotions

### You Will Need

- a quiet space

### How To:

1. Introduce the term *mental health* and what this means in terms of our overall health.
2. Have students sit quietly either in a circle or in assigned spots. Tell students that they are going to use their imaginations to help them learn different breathing techniques.

3. For the first breathing technique, tell students that they are going to imagine holding a warm cup of hot chocolate. Make sure that they know it's not important whether they like hot chocolate or not, but that it's important to imagine holding a warm cup of hot chocolate in their hands.
4. Taking a deep breath in, breathe in the delicious smell of chocolate and cocoa.
5. Slowly blowing out their breath, gently blow on the hot chocolate to cool it down.
6. Repeat this as many times as you'd like.
7. For the second breathing technique, take one hand and hold it front of your body. Using the index finger from your other hand, start by tracing up the side of your thumb while breathing in. Trace down the other side of your thumb while you breathe out. Complete this breathing sequence for each finger.
8. *Optional:* Before the breathing exercises, ask students to close their eyes and take note of how their bodies are feeling. After the breathing exercises, have students check in with themselves again to identify how the breathing has made their bodies feel.

### Bibliography

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### What Do Friends Do?

Write a list of things friends should do for one another.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_