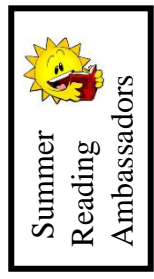
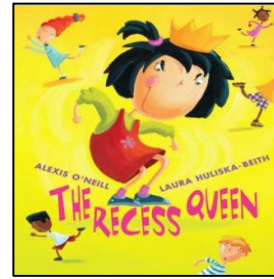




The Recess Queen by Alexis O'Neill

Bullying, Kindness, Friendship



A schoolyard bully is enlightened by the new kid in class in this lively story about the power of kindness and friendship. Each day at recess, Mean Jean blasts through the playground and her cowering classmates. When tiny Katie Sue, a new student, arrives, all bets are off. Unaware of the playground hierarchy, the new girl enthusiastically kicks, swings and bounces before the Recess Queen gets the chance. Her role usurped, Mean Jean moves toward a meltdown, until Katie Sue makes her an offer she finds difficult to refuse: an invitation to play *together*.

Before Reading:

- From the book cover, what inferences can you make about the main character?
- What do we know about queens? How would you expect a recess queen to behave?

After Reading:

- How did the recess queen act? Why do you think she acted the way she did?
- Do people sometimes act one way when they feel another? Why?
- Why did the other children allow Mean Jean to act the way she did?
- What do you notice about the size of Mean Jean compared to everyone else in the story?
- How was Katie Sue's behavior different from the others? Why is she like that?
- Have you ever been bullied on the playground? How did you stand up for yourself?

Extension Ideas:

- **PLAY!** Summer time is like RECESS all day, every day! What kinds of games did the children play at recess in the book? (hopscotch, basketball, kickball, soccer, tetherball, slides, jump rope). Have children choose games from the book and play!
- **Mean Jean!** Ask the children to create a poster of her that shows her behaviors. What happened to make her behaviors change? How was recess different at the end?
- **Jump Rope!** Encourage children to repeat the jump rope chants in the book and substitute with children's names. Have them create their own special summer chants.
- **Action charades!** Write action words from the book on index cards and have children take turns performing an action while the rest of the class guesses the action. ACTION WORDS: Bounce, Kick, Swing, Hop, Skip, Jump, Lift, Play, Hammer, Slam, Growl, Scare, Run, Charge, Grab, Snarl, Breathe, Pull, Sing, Stare, Giggle, Shout.
- **Act It Out!** Have children turn the book into a play and perform in small groups. Encourage them to use body language and movements to represent the feelings of the characters.

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