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Activity Guide

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Get Ready for Second Grade, Amber Brown

ABOUT THE STORY

Amber Brown is starting second grade, but there is a new teacher this year. Nobody knows what Ms. Light will be like, and Amber is worried. Will she be mean? Will she like the class? Armed with her new teddy-bear backpack, Amber marches off to school, ready to face the scary newness of 2nd grade.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paula Danziger is the well-known and well-loved author of more than 25 books, including *It's a Fair Day*, *Amber Brown*, another easy reader and Live Oak Readalong. Though many of the characters and situations in her books come from her imagination, the character of Amber Brown was inspired by a conversation Ms. Danziger had with her niece. Paula Danziger loves to travel and has been to dozens of different countries, but she always returns to her home in New York City.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Tony Ross was born in London, England. He trained at the Liverpool School of Art and was an art director at an advertising agency and an art instructor before he began illustrating children's books. He is the author and illustrator of over 50 books, including *It's a Fair Day*, *Amber Brown*. He lives in Cheshire, England, with his wife and daughter.

INTRODUCING THE STORY

Ask children if they feel nervous or worried when they start a grade with a new teacher. Have them describe their feelings and how they are resolved. Then tell them the book they will read is about a girl who is very worried about her new second-grade teacher.

READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- "Why is Amber worried about starting second grade?"
- "What do Amber's parents tell her at breakfast?"
- "What does Ms. Light look like?"
- "How does Ms. Light make Amber feel better?"
- "Is Ms. Light what Amber expected? Explain your answer."

(Compare and Contrast)

- "How does Amber finally feel about Ms. Light?" (Draw Conclusions)

Vocabulary

Write these columns of words on the chalkboard. Have children copy the columns and draw lines matching pairs of words to make compound words from the story. Then ask children to use three of the words in sentences.

note	bulb	home	board
back	pit	arm	book
chalk	work	light	pack

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Art: Design an Animal Backpack

Amber is very proud of her teddy-bear backpack. Ask children to design their own animal backpacks, choosing an animal and then drawing the animal as a backpack. Children can refer to pages 8-9 to see what Amber's backpack looks like.

Language Arts: Describe a Teacher

Amber is amazed by the way Ms. Light looks and acts. Have children describe a teacher they have had or a teacher they would like to have. They can tell what the teacher looks like and how he or she acts.

Science: The Story of Amber

Have children work with partners to find out information about amber. Using encyclopedias or other reference books, they can learn where amber comes from and how it is formed, and how people have used it in the past and today. Partners can prepare a brief report on amber to share with the class.

Drama: Act it Out

Have children work together to write a script for the scene on the playground before school, pages 18-27. Choose children to play each part, and encourage them to work together to rehearse and perform the scene they have written.

INTERNET ACTIVITY

Before you send children to do research using any of the keywords listed below, you may wish to try them yourself to be sure the sites are suitable.

Amber Insects

Have children use the keywords "amber" and "insects" to find pictures and information about insects preserved in amber on the Internet. If possible, ask children to print out pictures of insects in amber to share with the rest of the class.