

The Swap Teacher's Notes

Written by Jan Ormerod
Illustrated by Andrew Joyner
Published by Little Hare, 2013

SYNOPSIS

Caroline the crocodile has a new baby brother. Mama Crocodile thinks he is gorgeous, but Caroline doesn't think so. She thinks he is smelly and he drools too much. Plus Caroline is very jealous of all the attention her brother is getting from Mama Crocodile, especially all the big, smacky-smoochy kisses she gives him.

One day Mama Crocodile decides to go to the Hat Shop because the hat she has is not quite right and she wants to swap it for something that is just right. When Mama Crocodile goes into the Hat Shop she leaves Caroline outside to look after her baby brother. As Caroline is waiting she realises they are outside the Baby Shop. She decides that she will go into the Baby Shop and swap her baby brother for another one who is just right.

Caroline tries a baby panda brother, a baby elephant brother and even twin baby tiger brothers, but they are all even worse than her actual baby brother! Even though her baby brother is smelly and dribbly Caroline realises that he is just right after all. When Mama Crocodile finally comes out of the Hat Shop she is very proud of Caroline for taking such good care of her brother and she gives her a big, smacky-smoochy kiss.

THEMES

- Jealousy
- Family
- Change
- Compromise

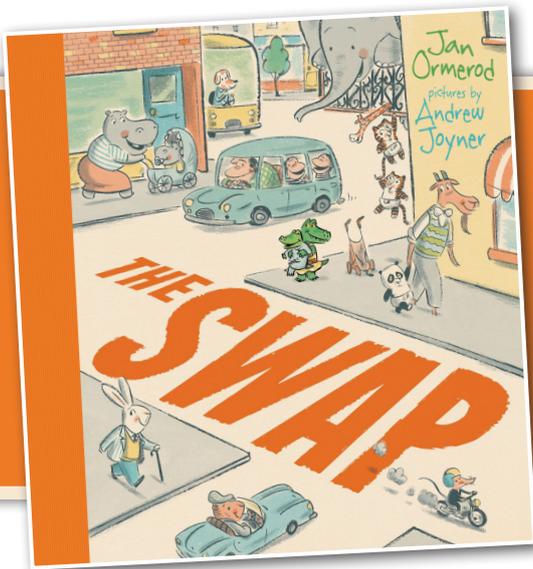
COMPREHENSION

What are the things that Caroline finds annoying about her baby brother?

What are the things that Mama Crocodile thinks are adorable about Caroline's baby brother?

Why do you think Caroline is so jealous?

What does Caroline want to do when she takes her brother into the Baby Shop? Why does she want to do this?



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COMPREHENSION

Why does Caroline think that Mama Crocodile will like the baby panda, the baby elephant and the baby tigers?

What reasons does Caroline give for returning the baby panda, baby elephant and baby tigers?

Why does Caroline decide to take back her baby crocodile brother?

What does Mama Crocodile say to Caroline when she comes out of the Hat Shop?

Why is Caroline happy at the end of the book?

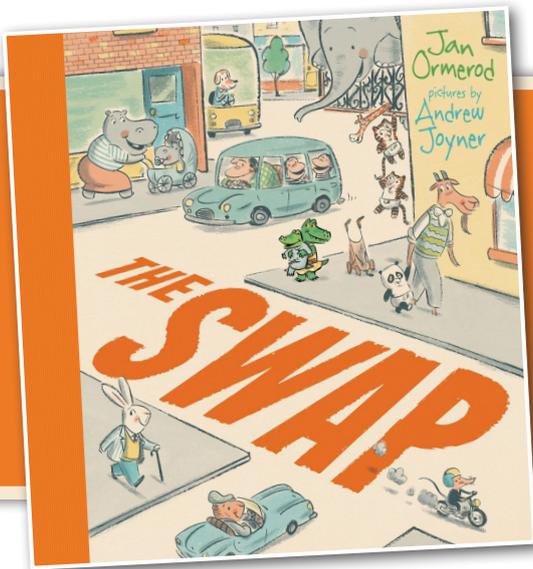
ACTIVITIES

Talk to the class about what it means to feel jealous. Discuss reasons that people might feel jealous and why jealousy is a negative feeling. Then ask the class to think about a time in their own lives when they have felt jealous, maybe of a new sibling, a cousin or a friend. Ask the students to write a journal entry about this experience that details why they felt jealous and what helped them to feel better (or what might help them to feel better if they are still feeling jealous).

Ask the students to imagine they are Caroline's aunt or uncle and that Caroline has told them that she is feeling very jealous of her baby brother. Get the students to write a letter to Caroline pretending to be her aunt or uncle giving her some advice to make her feel better about her new baby brother.

For every baby animal that Caroline is given there is a reason that she thinks Mama Crocodile will like the animal, and there is also a reason that Caroline gives the animal back. As a class go through the book and write these reasons down. Then get students to pretend that Caroline gets one more animal to try out. Get them to draw a picture of that animal and write a caption that gives a reason why Mama Crocodile might like that baby animal, and also a reason why Caroline might find the baby animal annoying and want to give it back.

There are lots of animals in The Swap. As a class go through each page and write a list of all the animals you can identify. Then get students to choose an animal from that list to do a research project on. Get students to collate their research in a poster that includes: what the animal is called when it is a baby, who looks after the animal when it is a baby, what the animal eats and where it lives and why it lives there.



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ACTIVITIES

Even though the author tells us that Caroline is jealous we also know this because of the illustrations. Talk with the class about how the illustrations make Caroline look angry and jealous. Then, as a class, look only at the illustrations and list down all the different emotions you can recognise throughout the book, such as angry, happy, surprised etc. Talk about why you can recognise each emotion without looking at the text.

After this discussion get each student to divide an A4 sheet into four different sections and label each with an emotion or characteristic, such as happy, angry, excited and surprised. Get students to look through magazines and newspapers and cut out images of people they think represent each emotion and paste them in the relevant section. Put the students into groups and let them present their work to each other and discuss why they think the images they chose represent a certain emotion. Does everyone agree? If not, why?

