



# TEACHERS/READERS GUIDE

## Winning

In the story, Kirk gets so caught up in his desire to win, he almost destroys his friendship with Richie.

- How could Kirk have won the contest without making Richie feel left out? If you were Richie, how would you have handled the problem with Kirk?
- Do you think winning is more important than anything? What else could be important besides winning?
- What makes a good winner? What makes a good loser?
- Can you remember a time when you wanted to win something very badly? If you won, how did you feel afterwards? If you didn't win, how did you feel?
- Did you ever learn something new about yourself by winning? Did you ever learn something new about yourself by losing?
- Did you feel that the contest or competition was fair? Were there things you did or could have done to help you win?
- Name five things a teammate can do to make you happy. Name five things that can make someone a difficult teammate.

## Adventure

In the book, Humphrey is longing for a great adventure. But his adventure turns out to be a lot more than he expected – and very scary.

- Can you remember an adventure you were looking forward to, such as a boat ride, bicycle ride, hike or camping? Did it turn out the way you expected? Did you have any surprising experiences, such as Humphrey had?
- What's the scariest adventure you ever had? Write a one-page story or draw a picture of what happened.
- Think of adventures that Humphrey would enjoy on a mountaintop, at the ocean, in a desert, in an airplane or other exciting places. Draw pictures of them.



## Art Smart

Gail's mom has a certain idea of how her daughter should decorate her boat. Gail's idea is very different.

- Study pictures of boats in books and on the internet. Is there a type of boat (tall ship, Viking boat, junk) that you especially like? What do you like about it?
- Draw a picture of a boat that you'd like to sail. Does it reflect your personality? Do you think this boat would float? What name would you give it?
- Ask your librarian to help you find ten picture books that feature the same type of animal character (mice, bears, hamsters, birds, etc.). Are they all the same style? How are they similar? How are they different? Graph the favorite character of each student in your class. How many different styles were favorites of someone in the class?

## Boats That Float

Humphrey's friends in Room 26 build their own boats for the contest on Potter's Pond. That leads them to learn about things that float. To learn more, try the following:

- Find five things that you're sure will float in water.
- Find five things that you're sure will *not* float in water
- Find five things that you're *not sure* will float or not.
- Fill a large plastic tub, a sink or bathtub with water and do your own test to see what floats, just like Richie and his cousins do. (Make sure NOT to choose anything that could be harmed by being wet, such as electrical or battery-driven articles or paper goods that would be ruined.)
- One by one, test the items on your list to see what floats. Were there any surprises? Things that you thought would float but didn't? Things you thought would not float that did?
- Many people think that heavy objects sink and lighter objects float. But heavy boats float while light coins sink. Think about why your objects sank or floated and try to make connections. Some things to think about besides weight are: the type of material, shape and displacement.
- Use what you've learned to make a game. Collect items of all sizes, some that will float and some that won't. Challenge kids or grownups who weren't



part of your original experiments to guess which will float and which won't. Be sure to have some large items that will surprise them.

- Look up the Greek mathematician, Archimedes, and the principle he discovered while taking a bath. (The amount of water displaced by an object depends on the mass of that object).
- Put a mixing bowl inside a larger, clear waterproof tub. Fill the mixing bowl with water to the very top. Place different sized items in the mixing bowl one at a time, refilling the bowl each time. Measure the height of the water that flows over the edge. Which object displaces the most water? Which object displaces the least? What was the most surprising?

## Pirate Story

*Jolly Roger's Guide to Life* is a story-within-a-story in *Adventure According to Humphrey*. Paging through the book, find the passages where Humphrey tells about the story Mrs. Brisbane is reading. Can you piece together the story?

- Using words or pictures, recreate the Jolly Roger story, filling in whatever details you like to make it funny and exciting.

## Real-Life Pirates

People like stories about pirates. Go to the library and check out books about real pirates. You can also go on the internet. Find out:

- What does a pirate do?
- What was the life of a real pirate like?
- Were there any women pirates?
- Are there pirates today? Where?

It's fun to pretend to be a pirate.

- After reading about pirates, do you think you would you want to be one? Why or why not?

In the book, Humphrey watches a movie called *Treasure Island*. This is a real book and a real movie. Go to the library or online to find out:

- Who wrote *Treasure Island*? What other books did he write?
- What is the story about?



## **The Library**

In the book, Humphrey makes his first trips to the library. Visit your school or community library and find out:

- What does a librarian do besides check out books?
- What other uses does a library have besides letting people check out books?
- How does a librarian choose what books to put in a library?
- Check with your public library or bookmobile and find out how to get a library card. If you don't have one already, get your own card.