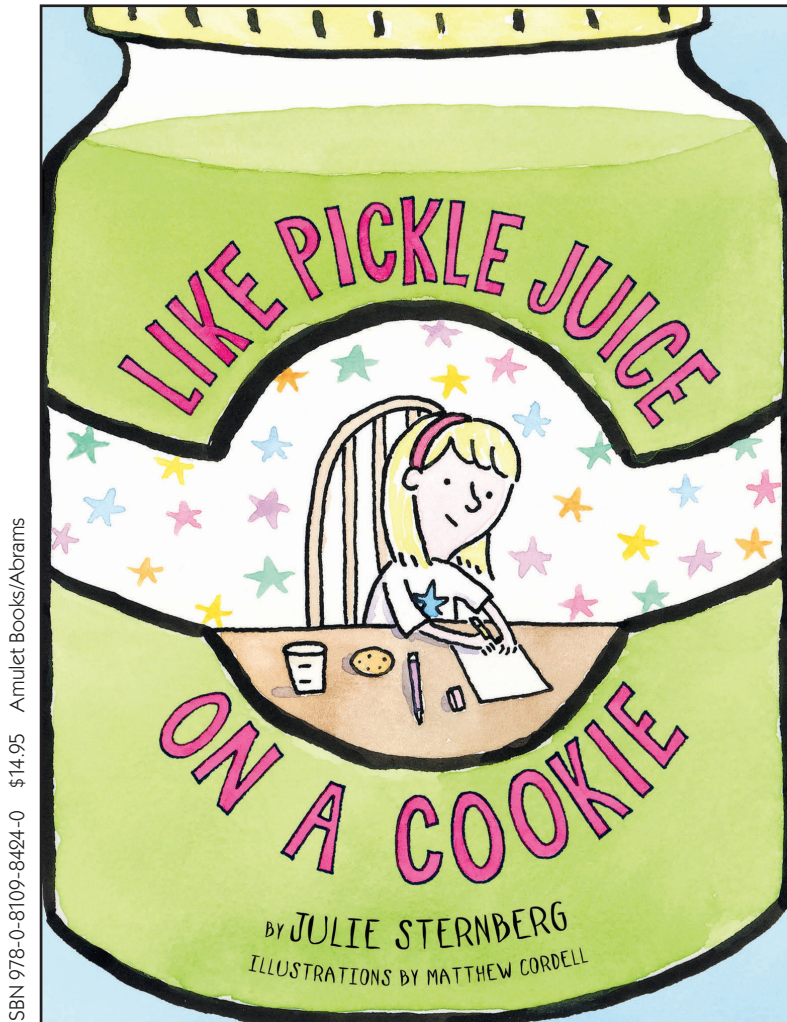


CURRICULUM GUIDE



LIKE PICKLE JUICE ON A COOKIE

By JULIE STERNBERG

Illustrations by MATTHEW CORDELL

Eleanor is NOT happy. Her beloved babysitter, Bibi, is moving away. Suddenly, the things that she used to enjoy, like eating pizza and riding her bike, aren't fun anymore. Everything reminds her of Bibi. To make matters worse, Eleanor has a new babysitter, Natalie, who just isn't up to snuff.

But as summer ends and a new school year approaches, so do new beginnings. Natalie isn't Bibi, but maybe she isn't SO bad. Can Eleanor stay in touch with Bibi despite the miles between them?

Eleanor learns some special things about herself, the true nature of friendship, and the bittersweet process of growing up in this charming and poignant first novel by author Julie Sternberg.

Before Reading

Have you ever had a grown-up in your life who does things just the way you like them? Maybe your grandma knows how to make macaroni and cheese exactly the way you like it, or maybe your dad does the best voices when he reads to you at night before bedtime. Share your stories of these special adults in your life and the things that they do for you that make them so special.

After Reading

- ★ Eleanor feels "just awful" after Bibi moves to Florida. Her mom tries to cheer her up by offering to make chocolate chip pancakes, cinnamon toast with extra cinnamon, and by reading five chapters aloud in a favorite book. What do you do to cheer up when you are feeling "just awful?" Write a recipe for how to make someone feel better when they are sad (guide page 3).
- ★ During her play date with Agnes, Eleanor is inspired to write a letter to Bibi to let her know how much she misses her. Think of a special person in your life. Write a friendly letter to him/her to show why you think he/she is special. Remember to use the

friendly letter format that includes the date, the salutation/greeting, the body of the letter, and the closing. If you know your special person's address, place your letter in an addressed envelope with a stamp and send the letter in the mail. Who knows? Your special person may write back just like Bibi wrote back to Eleanor!

- ★ Bibi was the perfect babysitter for Eleanor. She knew not to tickle Eleanor because Eleanor hated to be tickled. She made soup for Eleanor when she was sick, and she held Eleanor's feet when Eleanor did handstands. In your opinion, what makes a perfect babysitter? What would she/he need to be able to do? What might the perfect babysitter need to bring with her/him when taking care of you? Complete a newspaper advertisement for a babysitter (guide page 4). Read some classified ads from a real newspaper to get a feel for how these are written. Make sure you include good details in your ad about the type of person you would like to hire to take care of you.
- ★ Eleanor's feelings about babysitters and a new school year change throughout the story. Complete the Characterization Chart (guide page 5) to discover how Eleanor's emotions change over the course of the summer.
- ★ Complete a Venn diagram comparing Bibi with Natalie (guide page 6). What do Eleanor's two babysitters have in common? How are they different?
- ★ Val, Pearl, and Mr. Campanelli are also important characters in the book. Pick one of them and make a list of what you know about her or him from the story. What adjectives would you use to describe him/her? Write your own story with Val, Pearl, or Mr. Campanelli as the main character.
- ★ In chapter six, when Eleanor is feeling "just awful," her mom tries to make her laugh by offering her pickle juice on a cookie. "And then I had to smile," says Eleanor. "Because that was just ridiculous." As a class, brainstorm some other "ridiculous" food combinations. Discuss why author Julie Sternberg may have chosen **Like Pickle Juice on a Cookie** as the title for this novel.
- ★ On the first day of third grade, Mr. Campanelli has the students write "Love Is" poems. "Think about how you know you love someone or how you know someone loves you," he says. Eleanor's poem is:

Love is calling me Ellie.

Love is ice on my arm.

Love is three green barrettes.

Love is lemonade.

Write your own "Love Is" poem and illustrate it. Create a "Love Is" gallery in the classroom and display all the poems.

Julie Sternberg was one of those kids who read all the time. Her love of *To Kill a Mockingbird* may have played a role in her decision to become a public interest lawyer as an adult. Her love of children's books certainly led her to give up practicing law to earn an MFA in creative writing from the New School. *Like Pickle Juice on a Cookie* is her first book. She lives in Brooklyn, New York. For more information about her life and work, visit her website: www.JulieSternberg.com

Matthew Cordell is the author and illustrator of *Trouble Gum*, as well as the illustrator of *Toby and the Snowflakes*, and many more books for children. He lives near Chicago, Illinois. For more information about his life and work, visit his website: www.MatthewCordell.com



The activities in this curriculum guide were created by Leigh Courtney, Ph.D. She teaches first and second grade in the Global Education program at a public elementary school in San Diego, California. She holds both master's and doctoral degrees in education, with an emphasis on curriculum and instruction.

Name _____

Recipe to cheer up a person who is feeling "just awful"

What 'ingredients' would you mix together to make a person feel better?

A pinch of cartoons? A cup of hot chocolate? Think of things that could improve someone's mood and list them in the form of a recipe.

Use measuring and baking words like "cup," "teaspoon," "sprinkling," "dash," "pinch," "heap," "mix," and "stir" when creating your recipe.



Name _____

★ DAILY NEWS ★

WANTED: The Perfect Babysitter

MUST KNOW HOW TO _____



MUST BE ABLE TO BRING _____

MUST BE INTERESTED IN _____

ADDITIONAL DETAILS (days and times needed/description of child to be cared for): _____

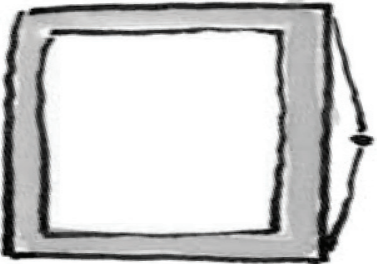
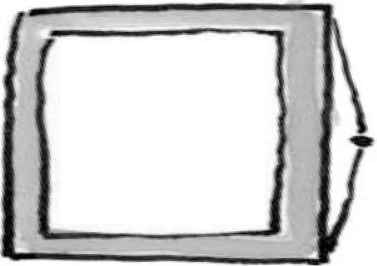
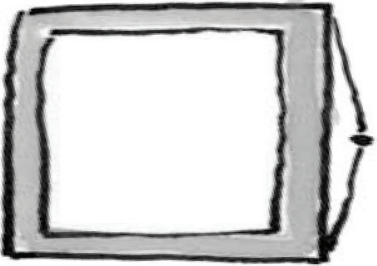
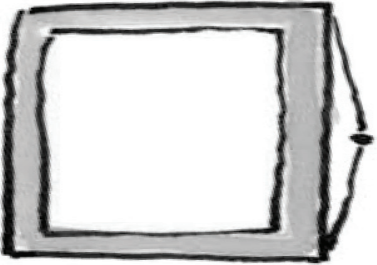
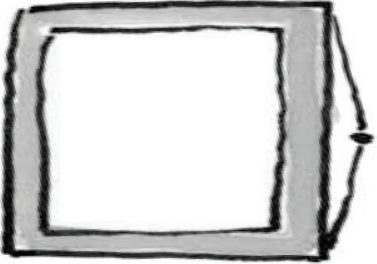
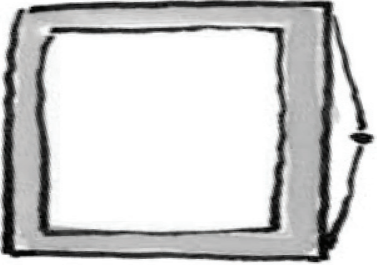


Characterization Chart

Name _____



Over the course of the novel, Eleanor's feelings change. Draw a picture of Eleanor's face in the frame below each story event to show how she felt at that point in the story. Write a word beneath each picture to describe that emotion. If Eleanor has more than one feeling in the scene, you may write more than one word. Use this characterization chart to discuss how Eleanor changes over the course of the story.

Story Event	How Eleanor Felt					
Eleanor's parents tell her that her beloved babysitter, Bibi, is moving to Florida.						
Eleanor's family has a going-away party for Bibi.						
Eleanor's dad invites Agnes over for a play date.						
Eleanor meets her new babysitter, Natalie.						
Natalie brings a photo album and camera and has Eleanor help her take photos of flowers.						
Eleanor finishes the first day of third grade.						

Name _____

Venn Diagram

Compare Bibi with Natalie. What do they have in common? How are they different?

Bibi

Natalie

