

WISCONSIN BOOKWORMS™

Activity Sheet



Jessica by Kevin Henkes

"Can your best friend be imaginary?"

Ruthie spends all of her time with her invisible friend, Jessica. She eats with her, plays with her and gets into trouble with her. This quiet, comforting story reveals the extent to which a little girl will go to have a best friend. And the surprising moment when it comes true.

Before you read this book, if you had an imaginary friend when you were a child, talk about your friend or tell a story about someone's imaginary playmate. Ask your children if they like to pretend that they have a friend playing with them when they are playing alone.

While you read this book, use a stern parent voice when you read, "There is no Jessica!" Re-read the book and pause for your kids to say this part. Don't forget to say, "but there was."

Reading Tip: Pause while reading to ask open-ended questions about the story. "What will happen next?" "What would you do?"

After you read this book, play act the story. Have your children line up two by two and ask, "Can I be your partner?," just as Ruthie and Jessica found each other as partners. Make sure everyone is paired so no one is left out.

Share paintbrushes to make one picture. Pair your kids together and have them take turns using a paintbrush (one stroke each) to make a picture. Help them to brainstorm how they might work together.

At home, make a name tower (just like Ruthie and Jessica). Use alphabet blocks or make your own from empty boxes. Help your kids make a name tower for their name. How many blocks will you need?

Check out this book

There's more "friends" fun with *Ira Sleeps Over* by Bernard Waber.

Also, look for other great books by Kevin Henkes.

WISCONSIN BOOKWORMS™: Giving young children an opportunity to be read to and own their first new books, this project is supported by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting with additional funding provided by Friends of WHA-TV Inc, WAHCE and local county-based partners.