



Ginger Green, Play Date Queen: The Next Door Friend Teacher Notes

**Written by Kim Kane
Illustrated by Jon Davis**

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Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- Learn about stereotypes
- Interview someone they know who defies a stereotype
- Pretend to be someone else in a class play

About the story

Ginger Green, Play Date Queen is seven years old. A new family has just moved in next door, and one of them is a seven-year-old boy named Edgar. Ginger can't wait to have him over for a play date.

But when Edgar arrives he doesn't want to do anything that Ginger wants to do. Every time she suggests an activity he tells her it's for girls. Cooking, dancing – the only thing Edgar wants to do is play ball outside. Ginger knows that things like cooking and dancing aren't just for girls. And she loves dirt, pirates, running and Lego just as much as she likes cooking, dressing up, and dancing. But she does not like balls.

When they get outside, Ginger tries to play ball with Edgar, but she can't catch it. So Edgar keeps playing on his own, and Ginger sits to the side, left out and in a huff. She doesn't want to play alone, she wants to play with Edgar. Ginger suggests that they skip rope, but Edgar thinks that's for girls too. He keeps playing football, and is soon imagining himself winning an Olympic medal. It gives Ginger a great idea – they could play pretend!

But Edgar responds the same way he has to everything else – he thinks that pretend is for girls as well! This makes Ginger furious. Edgar is so wrong about what things are for boys and what things are for girls. And she can prove it too. Ginger tells Edgar that he's been pretending the whole time he's been at her house – he's been brave like a robber, agile like a spider, jumping like a pirate, and imagined himself as a sports star. Edgar admits that Ginger is right, so she suggests that they pretend together. After all, she may not like balls, but she loves robbers, spiders and pirates.

Ginger and Edgar fight like pirates, they dig for treasure, and they make a pirate sail for their pirate ship. They have great fun. And when Ginger's dad brings the cookie bowl outside to lick they realise that they have something else in common – they both love licking the bowl!



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Themes

- Stereotypes
- Friendship
- Pretending

Reading Questions

Chapter One

- What is special about the date?
- Who is Edgar? How does Ginger know him?
- What do Edgar and Ginger have in common?
- What is unusual about Edgar's arrival for the play date?
- How are Edgar and Penny like spiders?

Chapter Two

- Who does Edgar think cooking is for? Is he right?
- What are 'boy things'?
- What are some of the things Edgar thinks are only for girls? Why do you think he thinks this way?
- What things does Ginger Green like to play? What does she not like?
- How does Ginger feel when Edgar plays something that she can't play?

Chapter Three

- What does Edgar say that makes Ginger furious?
- What examples does she give to prove Edgar wrong?
- What do Edgar and Ginger pretend to be?
- What games does Ginger like? What does she like about Edgar?



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Activities

- Talk to the class about what a stereotype is. Ask them to make a list with girls on one side and boys on the other. On the girl's side of the list, write down any activities that they either think only girls should do or have been told that only girls do. Do the same for the boy's side. Now have a class discussion about the things that ended up on each side of the list. Are there really things that only girls can do, or only boys can do? Where does the idea that there are 'girls' things' and 'boys' things' come from? What can they do to move away from stereotypes?
- Based on your discussions about stereotypes, ask students to think of a person they know who defies some sort of stereotype (i.e. a dad who loves to cook or a stay-at-home dad, a mum who works or loves football, a brother who dances). Ask them to interview this person (this could be done either as a piece of writing, a recording, or a video) and to present their work to the class.
- Pretending is an important aspect of play, and also teaches us to imagine life as someone else. Ask your students to choose a character and to imagine how they would pretend to be them. Now come up with a scenario (i.e. class party that everyone's invited to, an alien invasion, a bake off) and ask them to come as their character.

