

Lines:

"I have school today."

"Where did she go?"

"The ice cream spilled on my skirt."

"She told me to leave the store."

"I can't find my keys."

"My dog is in the backyard."

Emotions:

scared

excited

anxious

irritated

energetic

confused

Lines:

“Who told you to come over?”

“Follow me over here.”

“Why is she calling me?”

“Come over on Thursday night.”

“School is out for summer.”

“Move just a little to the left.”

Emotions:

thrilled

bold

puzzled

caring

calm

lonely

Lines:

"Where did you get that?"

"I can't believe you did that."

"Help me with my painting."

"I don't want to."

"I ran away as quickly as I could."

"I read my book for an hour."

Emotions:

relaxed

jealous

shy

horrified

hurt

aggressive

Lines:

"I have to babysit my brother again."

"I caught the Frisbee three times in a row."

"My new skateboard is bright green."

"How many times do I have to tell you?"

"I went swimming today."

"I wanted to go first."

Emotions:

shocked

annoyed

grateful

suspicious

cautious

playful

School Secretary

Directions: With a partner, take on the roles of school secretary and parent. Then practice the dialogue and perform it for an audience.

School Secretary: Good morning, Lincoln School, this is Diane. How may I help you?

Parent: Good morning, this is Marcia Sanderman, Nadia's mother. I'm calling because she's not feeling well, and I am going to keep her home today.

School Secretary: I'm so sorry to hear that. I hope it's not too bad.

Parent: No, no. She has a slight fever and a cough. Nothing too serious, I hope.

School Secretary: Well, I hope she feels well soon.

Parent: Thank you. Do you think I could get her homework for today?

School Secretary: Is there any specific class?

Parent: I'm especially worried about math and science.

School Secretary: Okay, is it okay for me to give your phone number to Nadia's teachers? They can call you later today with any assignments.

Parent: That would be great. Do you have my phone number on file?

School Secretary: Just a moment. ... We have 847-555-2323. Is that correct?

Parent: Yes, that is correct. But I also have a cell number; it's 847-555-3684.

School Secretary: Okay, I'll make sure Mr. Maxwell and Ms. Smith get your message and contact information.

Parent: Thank you very much.

School Secretary: I hope Nadia feels better soon.

Parent: She should be fine by tomorrow. At least that's what I am hoping. Thank you so much for your help.

School Secretary: My pleasure. Have a wonderful day.

Parent: Thank you. Goodbye.

School Secretary: Goodbye.

Sam and Sharon

Directions: With a partner, take on the roles of friends Sam and Sharon. Then practice the dialogue and perform it for an audience.

Background: Two friends in school, having a conversation

Sam: Hi Sharon, what are you working on?

Sharon: Hello Sam. Oh, I'm just studying for our science exam.

Sam: I hate science. I think it's boring.

Sharon: I don't. It's interesting. I'm reading about photosynthesis right now.

Sam: Do you mean people who take pictures?

Sharon: No, silly. How plants make food using the light from the sun.

Sam: Oh. I wonder why I never heard of it before.

Sharon: You are hopeless. So, what are you doing?

Sam: I'm preparing for my club's meeting later today.

Sharon: When's the meeting?

Sam: It's scheduled for 3:30 pm, right after school.

Sharon: ... And what are you preparing?

Sam: I'm giving a presentation on our proposal for new school rules.

Sharon: Really?

Sam: Yep. We are going to propose to the principal that homework be reduced to one day a week.

Sharon: That sounds interesting. Do you think Mrs. Katz will go for it?

Sam: Well, at our meeting, we plan on coming up with reasons why this would be a good rule.

Sharon: Oh, really? Are there good reasons for limiting homework?

Sam: Well, as a matter of fact, there are. For one, kids and parents are stressed too much today, and daily homework just adds to the stress.

Sharon: Hmmm. Interesting. Come up with a few more reasons like that, and I think Mrs. K. will have to give your proposal a lot of thought.

Sam: That's what we're hoping.

Sharon: Well, good luck to you and your club. I'll be pulling for you.

An Interview With Children's Author Judy Blume

Directions: With a partner, take on the roles of author Judy Blume and the person interviewing her. Then practice the interview and perform it for an audience. You can shorten the transcript by eliminating some of the questions and answers.

Do you think of the plot first or the characters when you write a story?

I almost always think of characters first.

How do you come up with such great ideas for plots, like in *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing*?

I'm really quite bad at coming up with plot ideas. I like to create characters and just see what will happen to them when I let them loose!

What are some suggestions for good character development?

Observe. Make notes. Listen carefully. Listen to how people talk to one another. A good writer is always a people watcher.

Where did you get the ideas for the characters Fudge, Peter, and Tootsie?

Fudge is based on my son, Larry, when he was a toddler. A very interesting child. Peter and Tootsie are from my imagination. At least, I think they are.

How did you come up with characters' names in *Freckle Juice* and *Fudge-a-Mania*?

Character names pop into my head. I've no idea where they come from. But since I've written so many books, I sometimes use the phone book for names, too.

Did you want freckles when you were younger, like in *Freckle Juice*?

No, I got the idea for *Freckle Juice* from my daughter, Randy. When she was small, she'd get into the bathtub at night and make a mess. She called this concoction Freckle Juice. It consisted of baby powder, shampoo, and anything else she could mix together. So I had to write a book with that title. That time I had a title first!

Why do you like to write about families?

What else is there? No, really, I like families. I like all the drama about families, and we all come from families, don't we?

What gives you ideas: people, places, things, or all of them?

Ideas seem to come from everywhere—my life, everything I see, hear, and read, and most of all, from my imagination. I have a LOT of imagination.

How do you organize your thoughts before you write a novel? Do you write an outline?

I keep a notebook and jot down everything that comes to mind about characters and places and anything else. That notebook is my security blanket. That way I never feel alone with a blank page or a blank screen.

Do you write your books all at once or in fragments as you get ideas?

I write one scene at a time. I keep a notebook before I start a book with everything I can think of about my characters, so that I'm never totally alone with a blank screen or page. Once I begin a book, I try to sit at my desk for two or three hours every morning.

Did you want to write when you were young?

I never really thought of writing professionally. I never knew it was a possibility. I liked writing in school; I wrote for the school paper. I have always liked to make up stories.

When you first started writing, did you have any doubts about whether you could do it? What kept you going?

I was filled with doubts. At night I would think, I'll never get anything published. But in the morning I'd wake up and say I CAN do this. It's hard to deal with rejection, but if you write, it's a fact of life.

How did you write before there were computers?

I started on my old college typewriter. Then I bought my first electric typewriter when I sold my first book. Then I moved to a computer. But if you want to know the truth, I still get my best ideas scribbling with a pencil.

What is your favorite part of the writing process?

I'm a re-writer. The first draft is torture! It's so hard for me. Once I've written the first draft, I have the pieces to the puzzle, and I love to put it together and make it into a

whole. I rewrite about five times. Though with *Summer Sisters*, I went through about 20 drafts!!!

What do you do when you are not writing?

When I'm not writing . . . hmmm . . . well, I kayak in summer and ride my bike in winter (in Key West). I love going to the movies and to the theater and reading. My one regret is that I seem to have less and less time for just sitting and reading! I really miss that time to myself to get lost in a good book.

Was there an author that inspired your writing style?

Oh, yes! I was so inspired by Beverly Cleary's funny and wonderful books. And also, Louise Fitzhugh's *Harriet the Spy*. And E. L. Konigsburg's first book, *Jennifer, Hecate, Macbeth, William McKinley, and Me, Elizabeth*. And my favorite books from when I was young, the Betsy-Tacy books.

What do you think makes a book good?

Well, when I'm reading, I like to care about the characters. I like to know what's inside their heads. And when I'm writing, the same thing is true. For me, character is everything. I'm interested in people and how they cope and how they relate.

Who were your heroes when you were a kid?

That's an interesting question. I think, because I didn't know people with very exciting jobs or careers, my heroes—aside from my father, who was definitely my hero—were movie stars. They seemed to lead exciting lives. Also, I wanted to be a detective.

Were there any teachers or other adults who inspired and encouraged you to become an author?

I had a writing teacher when I was in my twenties and decided to take a course. She encouraged me. At school I had an English teacher, Mr. Komishane, who encouraged and supported all of our creative work. But no one thought I should become a writer. That was my idea, and I didn't get it until I was grown.

What was your favorite childhood book?

I loved *Madeline* when I was very young. Then I loved the Maud Hart Lovelace series about Betsy, Tacy, and Tib. I also liked the Oz series. And Nancy Drew. Basically, I just loved to read. I read whatever I could find. My parents had shelves of books in our living room.

Did you take any special classes before you started writing stories?

I don't think writing classes necessarily help you become a writer, but I did take a course in writing at New York University, which was my alma mater. My teacher there gave me what every writer needs: support and encouragement.

What advice would you give to an aspiring young author?

Keep writing! Don't let anyone ever discourage you. Just keep on going, because you can't help yourself. You have to write! No one chooses to become a writer. You write because you can't not write.

Do you think that your books encourage kids to read?

Well, I hope so. I think any book that someone likes encourages that person

to pick up another, and that's how readers are made.

What kinds of books do you like to read?

I like to read fiction. I like to get completely involved in the characters' lives. Sometimes, when I'm writing fiction, I have to switch to reading nonfiction.

Do you celebrate when you finish writing a book?

Oh, yes! But there's also a tremendous letdown. It's as if you have to say goodbye to your best friends, the people you've been so close to for a year or two or three. Some writers get depressed when they finish.

If you could change anything about your writing, what would it be?

That's a hard one to answer. It's best not to dwell on what you've written, wishing it could be different. We all write what we can. We do the very best we can. You might think, *oh, I wish I could write like so-and-so*, but you have to write like yourself.

What are some editing strategies that you use?

The very best for me is to read aloud, to listen carefully. You'll find you really want to edit as you go. I always tell writers when they've finished a book, put it away. Take it out in a month and read it aloud. A funny story: I was recording one of the Fudge books and as I read I kept changing things and the engineer kept stopping me and saying, "You read that wrong." And I said, "I know, but it's better this way!" But it was too late to edit. I had to read it as it was.

Do you have a special place to go when you get writer's block?

Writer's block, what's that?! There are good days and less good days, but I refuse to acknowledge writer's block. Although, for really good thinking, I do like to go to the water to just sit at the ocean or the pond. I like my kayak for thinking, too. And my bicycle. We all have some days that are better than others. If it's a bad day, if it just won't come, get up and walk around, do something else. Tomorrow it will come.

How do you feel when an editor tells you to change a part of a story that you feel is just fine?

It hasn't worked that way for me. An editor would question something rather than say change it. A good editor can explain why something doesn't work, and sometimes you have to argue your point. You should, if you're really convinced you're on the right track. I've done that a couple of times. Mostly I've had excellent relationships with editors. I need a good editor. Who doesn't? A good editor brings a fresh eye to your manuscript. I would never want to publish without working with a good editor.

Does anyone else in your family write?

My husband, George Cooper, has a nonfiction book coming out this spring—*Poison Widows*. And my daughter, Randy Blume, has a novel coming out called *Crazy in the Cockpit*. I'm a proud wife and mom!

What was your favorite subject when you were in school?

English. Drama. I was always dramatic! My aunt called me "Camille."

Did your parents read to you a lot as a child?

It's funny, I don't think my parents read to me very often. But they were book lovers. I read to my children and now to my grandson. He loves being read to at bedtime, even though he's just learned to read. You should never stop reading aloud.

Do people treat you as someone famous or as a regular person?

I can't relate to people who treat me as a "famous person." I only like to hang around with people who treat me as a regular person because that's what I am. All people are really just regular.

As a child, did you daydream a lot? If so, is that where your story ideas come from?

Yes, I was a great daydreamer. You know what I worry about? I worry that kids today don't have enough time to just sit and daydream. I was a great pretender, always making up stories inside my head. Stories and stories and stories, but I never told anyone.

Judy, do you have any final words for the audience?

You've been the most exciting audience with the best questions! Thank you all so much for being here with me. I think you've inspired me. I think I may have to write another book after all.

Name: _____ Date: _____

This Is Your Life

Directions: Complete the interview questions in the spaces below. Then pair up with a classmate, choose your roles (interviewer and student), practice the interview, and perform it for an audience.

Interviewer: Hi there. Please tell us your name and where you are from.

Student:

Interviewer: What would you like people to know about you? Do you have any special talents that you can share with us?

Student:

Interviewer: If you could change one thing about school, what would it be and why?

Student:

Interviewer: When you're finished with school, what would you like to be or do as an adult?

Student:

Interviewer: Thank you very much for speaking with me.

The Early Bird Catches the Worm

Directions: With a partner, choose your part and practice the script individually and then together. Be sure your expression matches what is happening in the exchange!

Bird:	I fly and stretch and look for you.
Worm:	I wiggle and squirm and watch for you, too.
Bird:	You strut your stuff and look so fat.
Worm:	You fly around to avoid the cat.
Bird:	I must find you and fill my belly.
Worm:	You should leave me alone and go find a deli!
Bird:	But you are my favorite, perfect and gooey.
Worm:	Find someone else to be your chewy-chew-chewy.
Bird:	I will come get you one day soon.
Worm:	Then I will hide from night 'til noon!
Together:	The early bird catches the worm!

What does the proverb mean?

Those who are timely and prepared are usually successful.

The Pen Is Mightier Than the Sword

Directions: With a partner, choose your part and practice the script individually and then together. Be sure your expression matches what is happening in the exchange!

Pen:	My power lies on the inside, wrapped up in ink.
Sword:	My power lies on the outside, a sharp blade to cut anything.
Pen:	I will always be stronger than you, because my power is limitless.
Sword:	But I can cut you, hurt you, shave you, stab you!
Pen:	Do you know my value? Mine comes from within, where it really matters. My words are my power, and I can unleash anything I need.
Sword:	But I can cut through your power with force that you do not have, because I am strong!
Pen:	I may not be strong, but I can change “strong” to “robust” or “tough” or “strapping” or “durable.” Can you change yourself so quickly?
Sword:	No, but I am sharp!
Pen:	I may not be sharp, but I can change “sharp” to “jagged” or “clever” or “pointed.”
Sword:	Then you win. It must be true that
Together:	The pen is mightier than the sword.

What does the proverb mean?
Words can be used as a weapon to conquer others.

One Person's Trash Is Another Person's Treasure

Directions: With a partner, choose your part and practice the script individually and then together. Be sure your expression matches what is happening in the exchange!

Trash:	I was thrown away because I broke.
Treasure:	I can put you back together!
Trash:	I was discarded because I got too old.
Treasure:	I can make you new again!
Trash:	I was scrapped because I was useless.
Treasure:	I can use you in a completely different way!
Trash:	I was disposed of because I was dirty and worn.
Treasure:	I can clean you up and make you beautiful again!
Trash:	I was ditched because I had already been used.
Treasure:	I can recycle you and use you again!
Together:	One person's trash is another person's treasure.

What does the proverb mean?

Items that some people consider useless can be valuable to others.

Tower of Death

Directions: Choose a partner. Read the script below and decide who will be Reader 1 and Reader 2. Practice your part on your own, and mark the script in ways that will help you read it with expression. Be sure you know how to pronounce each word. When you're comfortable reading your part, practice reading aloud the whole script with your partner.

Reader 1:	Are you ready to get on the Tower of Death?
Reader 2:	No!
Reader 1:	You promised you would do it this time ... you have to do it!
Reader 2:	I know, but now that I see the roller coaster up close, I'm way too scared to do it.
Reader 1:	C'mon, just close your eyes and get on. It will be over in no time.
Reader 2:	I can't believe you are talking me into this. What if I get hurt? What if it's too scary? What if ... ?
Reader 1:	You can't live your life by asking "What if?" all the time. Sometimes, you just have to go for it!
Reader 2:	Okay, here we go!
Reader 1:	Buckle up!
Reader 2:	I'm buckled! I'm buckled!
Reader 1:	Woo-hoo! Off we go! This first turn is easy, then it drops down 100 feet, so be ready!
Reader 2:	100 what? How am I going to get ... AAAAAHHHHHHHHH!
Reader 1:	(Laughs) Wasn't that fun?
Reader 2:	No! I never want to go on another roller coaster again as long as I ... AHHHHHHHHH!
Reader 1:	Oh yes, that was the other drop! Wasn't it fabulous?
Reader 2:	Okay, I have to admit that was fun ... but only a little. (heavy breathing)
Reader 1:	Thanks for going with me, even though you didn't want to. It's only fair that you get to pick the next ride. What do you want to do?
Reader 2:	TOWER OF DEATH!
Readers 1 and 2:	Wooo-hooo!

Superpowers

Directions: Choose a partner. Read the script below and decide who will be Reader 1 and Reader 2. Practice your part on your own, and mark the script in ways that will help you read it with expression. Be sure you know how to pronounce each word. When you're comfortable reading your part, practice reading aloud the whole script with your partner.

Reader 1:	Hey there, little brother, what are you playing with?
Reader 2:	I got a new toy today. It's a race car with a lightning bolt on it!
Reader 1:	Wow! Cool! Can I see it?
Reader 2:	No, it's just for people with superpowers, sorry.
Reader 1:	But I have superpowers.
Reader 2:	I've never seen them before, so I don't believe you. What can you do that's a superpower?
Reader 1:	I can see things in the back of my head.
Reader 2:	What? You can? What's behind you, then ... but no peeking!
Reader 1:	Well, behind me is ____ (fill in the blank with something behind you).
Reader 2:	Wow! I didn't know you could do that! You really ARE a superhero!
Reader 1:	When you get to be older, you can be one too.
Reader 2:	It's okay, I already have a superpower.
Reader 1:	Oh, what's that?
Reader 2:	Pretending to believe my older brother when he pretends he has a superpower. I can see RIGHT through you, mister!
Reader 1:	(laughs) Okay, okay, you got me. But can I still play with you?
Reader 2:	Sure!

Name: _____ Date: _____

Write Your Own!

Directions: Choose a partner to work with. Together, write a short script with two parts. Then practice and perform the script for the class!

Reader 1:	
Reader 2:	
Reader 1:	
Reader 2:	
Reader 1:	
Reader 2:	
Reader 1:	
Reader 2:	
Reader 1:	
Reader 2:	

It's for You

Directions: Find a partner and read the script in the voice of the person you're assigned. Then read the script again in a different pair of voices.

First read:

Person A: a teacher accepting late work

Person B: a student turning in late work

Second read:

Person A: a spy needing spy equipment

Person B: a spy who found spy equipment

Person A:	What is that?
Person B:	Oh, this? Well, it's for you.
Person A:	Me? Why?
Person B:	Because I wanted to.
Person A:	Well, it's too late.
Person B:	Sorry, I couldn't help it.
Person A:	Okay, I understand.

Gone

Directions: Find a partner and read the script in the voice of the person you're assigned. Then read the script again in a different pair of voices.

First read:

Person A: a mom who couldn't find her kindergartner who left home on his bike

Person B: a kindergartner who went on a bike ride without telling his mom and just came home

Second read:

Person A: a young girl

Person B: the young girl's puppy

Person A:	Where have you been?
Person B:	I wanted to go away for a little while because you wouldn't give me a treat!
Person A:	You had me worried sick. Don't ever leave like that again.
Person B:	Sometimes, I need my own time without you when I'm mad.
Person A:	You can't do that! It's not safe. Next time, I won't be so nice.
Person B:	It was still fun. I liked being on my own.
Person A:	Please just tell me next time.

Directions: Find a partner and read the poem together, with you reading the lines for one voice and your partner reading the lines for the other.

Gym Class

by David L. Harrison

Voice 1	Voice 2
What's that odor?	
Gag! Yuck!	Something rot?
What?	Ugg!
Pigs?	Muddy water?
Fish?	Skunk?
Worms?	Cabbage?
Sour milk?	Gunk?
Worse than that!	Garbage stew?
It's fouler than a litter box.	Oh phew!
It's our gym socks!	Save us!
	It's our gym socks!

Directions: Find a partner and read the poem together, with you reading the lines for one voice and your partner reading the lines for the other.

The Groanosaur Test

by David L. Harrison and Terry Bond

Voice 1	Voice 2
What do you call a dinosaur in a hurry?	A dino-scurry.
What do you call a dinosaur in a snowstorm?	A dino-flurry.
What do you call a dinosaur at a funeral?	A dino-bury.
What do you call a dinosaur who likes spicy food?	A dino-curry.
What do you call a dinosaur stuck in tar?	A dino-tarry.
What do you call a dinosaur pulling a wagon?	A dino-lorry.
What do you call a dinosaur who takes this test?	A dino-sorry!

Directions: Find a partner and read the poem together, with you reading the lines for one voice and your partner reading the lines for the other.

It's a Lollity Popity Day

by David L. Harrison

Voice 1	Voice 2
It's a lollity popity day	
It's a lollity popity hide-and-go-seekity read a good bookity day.	It's a lollity popity hide-and-go-seekity day.
It's a lollity popity hide-and-go-seekity read a good bookity roll in the grassity talk with a friendity day.	It's a lollity popity hide-and-go-seekity read a good bookity roll in the grassity day.
It's a lollity popity hide-and-go-seekity read a good bookity roll in the grassity talk with a friendity sit on a lapity play with your petity day.	It's a lollity popity hide-and-go-seekity read a good bookity roll in the grassity talk with a friendity sit on a lapity day.
Hooray!	It's a lollity popity hide-and-go-seekity read a good bookity roll in the grassity talk with a friendity sit on a lapity play with your petity happy-go-luckity day. Hooray!

Directions: Find a partner and read the poem together, with you reading the lines for one voice and your partner reading the lines for the other.

The Grump

by David L. Harrison

Voice 1	Voice 2
Perfect day!	I think not
Warm weather	Sticky hot
Smell the flowers	Makes me sneeze
Pet a kitty	No, I'll wheeze
Feed some birdies	Hate their litter
Pat a bunny	Nasty critter
Gentle clouds	Feels like rain
You're so gloomy	You're a pain
So much joy	So much rot
I think positive	I think not!

Directions: Find a partner and read the poem together, with you reading the lines for one voice and your partner reading the lines for the other.

The Farmer and the Raven

Voice 1	Voice 2
A farmer went trotting upon his gray mare,	Bumpety, bumpety, bump!
With his daughter behind him so rosy and fair,	Lumpety, lumpety, lump!
A raven cried croak! and they all tumbled down,	Bumpety, bumpety, bump!
The mare broke her knees, and the farmer his crown,	Lumpety, lumpety, lump!
The mischievous raven flew laughing away,	Bumpety, bumpety, bump!
And vowed he would serve them the same the next day,	Lumpety, lumpety, lump!

Directions: Find a partner and read the poem together, with you reading the lines for one voice and your partner reading the lines for the other.

If All the Seas Were One Sea

Voice 1	Voice 2
If all the seas were one sea	
	What a great sea that would be!
And if all the trees were one tree,	
	What a great tree that would be!
And if all the axes were one axe,	
	What a great axe that would be!
And if all the men were one man,	
	What a great man he would be!
And if the great man took the great axe,	
	And cut down the great tree,
And let it fall into the great sea,	
	What a splish splash that would be!

Directions: Find a partner and read the poem together, with you reading the lines for one voice and your partner reading the lines for the other. Both of you read the lines in the middle.

The Arrow and the Song

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Voice 1	Voice 2
I shot an arrow into the air,	
	It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight	
	Could not follow it in its flight.
I breathed a song into the air,	
	It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong	
	That it can follow the flight of song?
Long, long afterward, in an oak	
	I found the arrow, still unbroke:
And the song, from beginning to end,	
I found again in the heart of a friend.	