

A WEEKEND WITH WENDELL

By Kevin Henkes

Sophie and her parents count the hours until Wendell's weekend visit is over. Not only does he wreck Sophie's toys and dominate their games, but he also messes up the house and is generally a troublemaker. However, once Sophie manages to turn the tables, she decides Wendell may not be so bad after all.



WITS Connection: Talk it out

Questions and Activities



PRE-READING QUESTIONS

1. If you've read other Kevin Henkes books with your students, such as *Chrysanthemum* or *Owen*, ask them if they recognize the author on the book's cover. What else has he written? What were the stories about? Are the characters similar? What WITS strategies did you discover in the books?
2. Kevin Henkes books are about animals who act like people. What is the literary term for this? *Personification*.
3. What problem do you think Wendell may face in the story?



POST-READING QUESTIONS

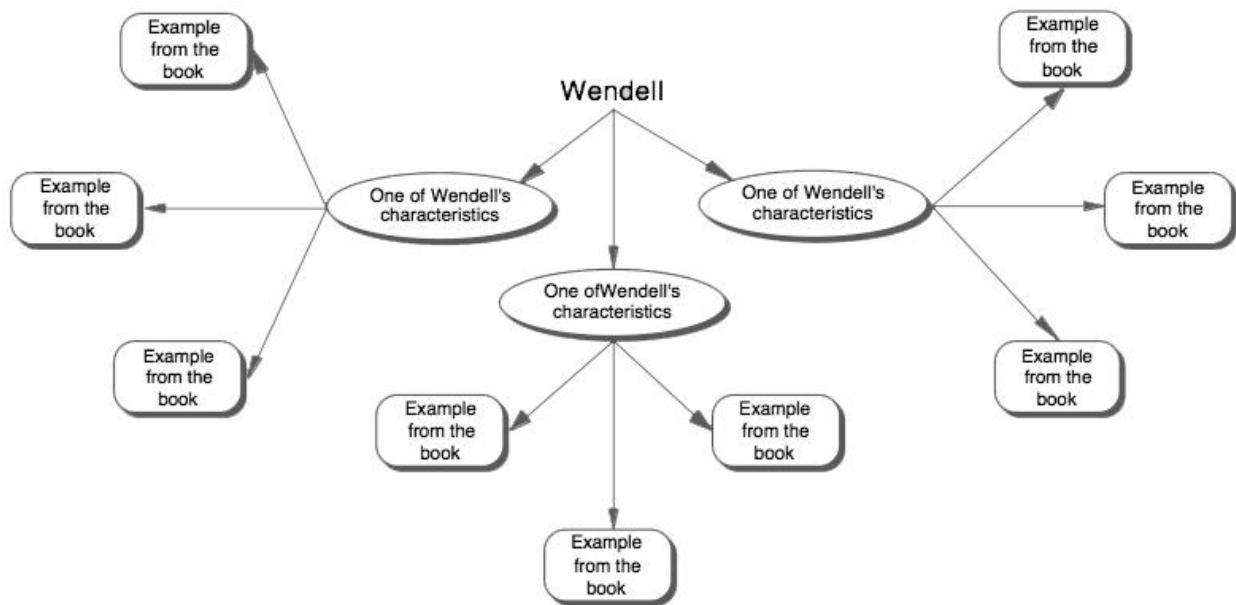
1. On the first page of the book, Wendell says "Oh boy." What feeling do you think he is experiencing? Sophie does not speak, but can you read her body language to guess what she is feeling? *Remind students to read pictures for information.*
2. What words would you use to describe Wendell?
3. How does Sophie respond to her own feelings? *She uses her WITS and ignores her feelings.*
4. Did Sophie change? What impact did that have on Wendell's feelings? *He realized what bullying felt like.*
5. What was the end result? *They shared and became friends.*
6. Did you ever play with someone like Wendell? How did you handle problems that arose?
7. What should Sophie do to prepare for Wendell's next visit?
8. What kinds of things do you think Wendell can learn from Sophie?



POST-READING ACTIVITIES

- Have children dramatize a day at the bakery in the classroom. Work with students to paint a bakery backdrop on a large white sheet. Have children in the class take on the roles of the baker, customer and pastries in the bakery showcase, including sweet rolls, doughnuts, cookies, and cakes. *You might suggest students represent sweet buns by curling up on the floor or crullers by stretching their bodies.* Provide baskets that can be used as shopping baskets, play money, a cash register and any other props that could be used in the dramatization.

- Ask students to create invitations for a make-believe overnight adventure. Encourage children to make their invitations exciting and interesting and allow them to share their invitations with one another.
- As a class, complete a character map of Wendell describing his characteristics and supporting them with examples from the book. See example below:



- If you've read other Kevin Henkes books with your students, review the characteristics of Henkes' writing. *He uses repetition, personified mice as characters and humour in language and illustrations. He writes about feelings, anxieties and relationships.*
- Ask students to write a story using Henkes' writing style that includes characters using a WITS strategy.

Notes: