

THE ENGLISH ROSES

By Madonna

The English Roses are a group of girls who do everything together, including snubbing Binah – a neighbourhood girl they envy because she appears to live a charmed life. As the girls soon find out, however, appearances can be deceiving. A fairy godmother offers them the opportunity to see inside Binah's home where they discover her life is much harder than they ever expected.



WITS LEADS Connection: Explore points of view

Questions



PRE-READING QUESTIONS

1. The author of this book is Madonna. Who is Madonna? Has anyone heard of or read any other books by this writer?
2. Take a look at the cover of the book. What is the setting? What are the nonverbal messages we can "see" by looking at the cover?
3. Who do you think the English Roses are?



POST-READING QUESTIONS

Understanding Others' Feelings

1. What does the expression "glued together at the hip" mean? Are they actually glued together? *No, this is a metaphor for inseparable.*
2. What does it mean to feel jealous?
3. What might cause the English Roses to be jealous? *They may worry about others liking them and feel insecure or dissatisfied with their own appearances.*
4. What kind of behaviours might feeling jealous generate? *Exclusion, isolation, shunning, covert aggression, bullying.*

Literary Devices

1. On page 12, it says: "Her skin was like milk and honey." What qualities of milk and honey are compared to her skin? *Colour.* What figure of speech is this statement? *Simile.*
2. What does "green with envy" mean? Do other colours symbolize feelings? What are some examples? *Black=rage, red=love, blue=depression, yellow=happiness.*
3. On page 14, it says: "Now stop interrupting me." Who is the writer talking to? *The audience.*



IMPORTANT IDEAS: What is relational aggression?

Relational aggression involves the manipulation of relationships through hurtful measures such as rumour spreading, intentional social exclusion and the threat of withdrawing one's friendship if the friend does not comply with the instigator's demands. [Crick, N.R., & Bigbee, M.A. (1998). Relational and overt forms of peer victimization: A multiinformant approach. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 66, 337-347.]

Explaining Types of Bullying

1. On page 17, it says the English Roses "wanted to be friendly but they could not bring themselves to be nice." What was stopping them from being friendly and causing them to isolate Binah? *Thoughts of themselves, one point of view, no understanding of her feelings.* How is it possible to feel more than one way about one thing? *By seeing it from multiple perspectives.*
2. On page 17, it says: "Let's push her into the lake." Are the English Roses bullying Binah through this pretending action? Why or why not? *Yes, ignoring, isolation, relational aggression, covert bullying.*
3. How do the actions of the English Roses make Binah feel? *Lonely.*

Understanding Relational Victimization

1. What reasons do the English Roses give for excluding and isolating Binah? *They said she thought of herself as "God's gift" and "stuck up."*
2. Why do you think the English Roses excluded Binah? *The girls may have been unhappy about themselves.*
3. To effectively solve problems, we must gather all the information and evaluate it. How skilled were the English Roses at doing this? What evidence have they gathered to support their claims? *Not much: judged by looks instead.*
4. If you were Binah, what would you say to the English Roses' accusations of being stuck up and full of yourself?

Conclusions

1. The English Roses looked at Binah from a certain perspective before the visit from the fairy godmother and then changed their view afterwards; yet, Binah's circumstances and character remained the same. How might the girls have changed their view of Binah without the visit? *They could have talked to Binah before judging her on her appearance and what others said about her.*
2. What was the symbolism of the English Roses dreaming the same dream? *Perhaps their consciences were reminding them they should not judge others so quickly and without all the information. They were envious until they had all the information and realized their envy was unfounded.*
3. How did the solution make everyone feel? What lessons did the girls learn?

Activities



1. WORDS, FEELINGS AND THOUGHTS FROZEN TABLEAU

Discussion

Before reading the book, explain to students that you are going to do an activity to help them understand the characters' thoughts. Remind them that the characters' internal thoughts or feelings may match what they say or could be different from or even opposite of what they say publicly.

Exercise

- Show the cover of *The English Roses* and point out the four girls standing under an umbrella together while Binah stands under an umbrella by herself.

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Discussion

- What is the difference between saying something and thinking something?
- Can you say something and think something else?

- Distribute the [Speech and Thought Bubble](#) *handout* to students.
- Have students write down an example of when they might say something different from what they are thinking.

Discussion

Exercise

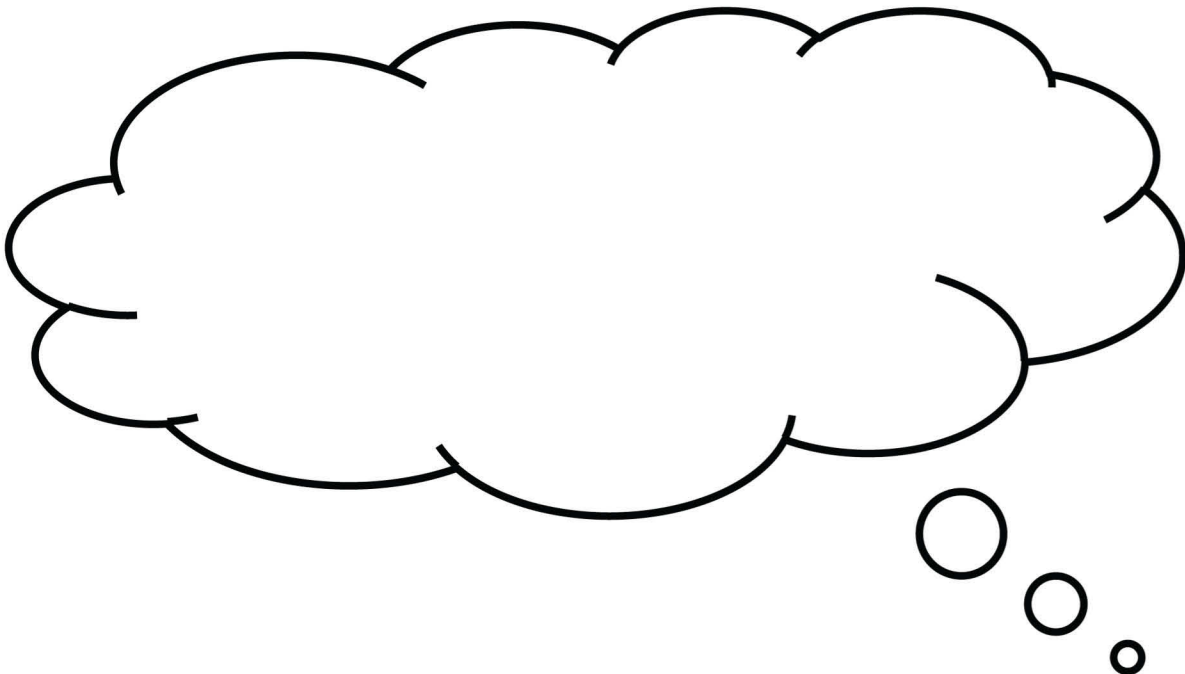
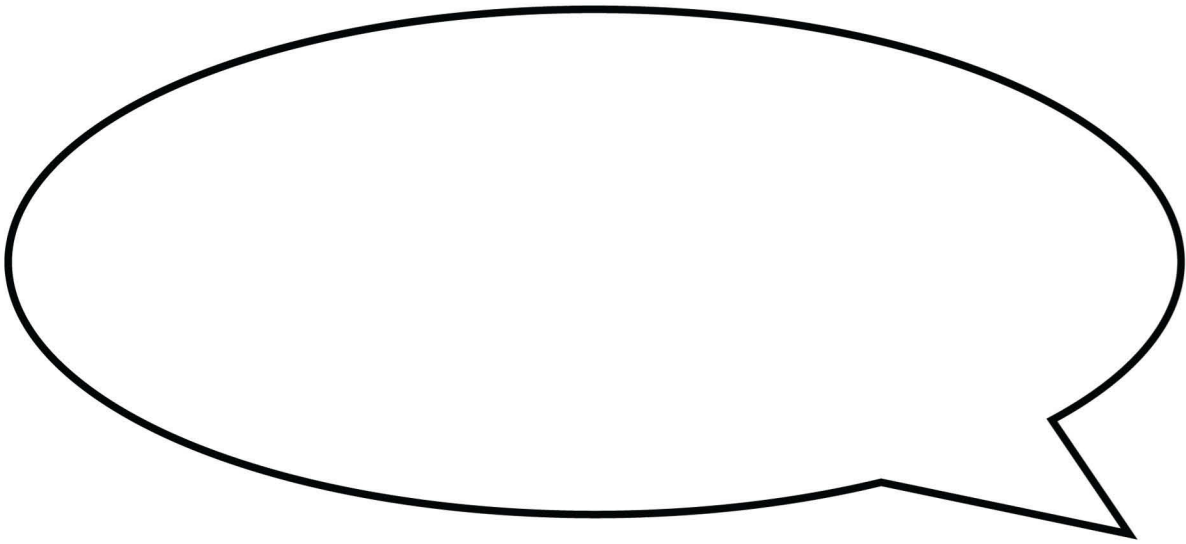
-
- OK BACK THERE? FINE!
- I'M SCARED, I'M SCARED, I'M SCARED!
- I'M SCARED, I'M SCARED, I'M SCARED...
- SURE AM! I'M SCARED, I'M SCARED, I'M SCARED, I'M...
- WE'RE UP!!!
- REALLY SMOOTH, HUH! WONDERFUL!
- YOU'RE PRETTY COOL, LIZ ... OTHER PEOPLE I KNOW WOULD BE TERRIFIED!
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The English Roses: Speech and Thought Bubbles Handout

Name: _____

Speech and Thought Bubbles

What is the difference between SAYING something and THINKING something? Can you say something when you are thinking something else? Give an example below of how what you say and what you think might be different.



The English Roses: Comic Strip Handout

Name: _____

Make Your Own Comic Strip

Make a comic strip that tells a story using speech and thought bubbles. The speech bubbles could be telling us one story while the thought bubbles could be showing us more information about what is going on. Put the story in a sequence.

1	2
3	4