

Discussion Guide for "Stinky Stern Forever"

Michelle Edwards

www.michelledwards.com

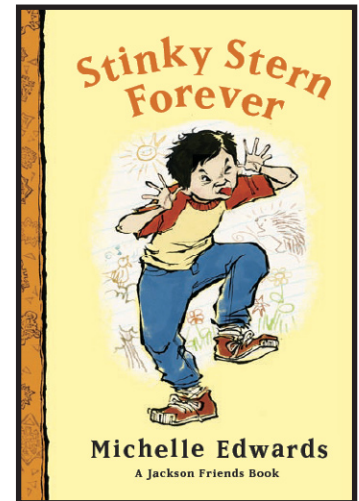
Stinky Stern Forever

Michelle Edwards, Author and Illustrator

Teachers, librarians, and parents, feel free to choose from the questions below, all of which prepare the readers for the ideas brought forth in the book.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. Does it snow where you live?
2. Do you ever pick up snowflakes or capture them on your mittens and see how they are made? Do you know that it is said that no two snowflakes are alike?
3. Have you ever cut snowflakes out of paper? [You can look at some snowflakes online.](#) This website shows you how to fold the paper so you can cut snowflakes out by hand. You can also read about [Snowflake Bentley](#), a man who photographed snowflakes.
4. Does your class ever laugh together? Are you ever silly together? Does it feel like a family sometimes?



While Reading the Book

1. [At the bottom of page 15]: If you've read the other books in the Jackson Friends series, do you have your own memories of Stinky?
2. Do you think Stinky Stern was always mean?
3. If Stinky Stern were in your class, do you think he would be your friend?
4. What would you do if Stinky Stern ruined your snowflake or called you a mean name?

After Reading the Book

1. Why do you think Stinky Stern put glue on Pa Lia's snowflake?
2. Stinky's accident in the book is a terrible one. Pa Lia saw it happen. Have you ever seen something horrible like this? Was someone there with you so you could hug someone soft and warm? Did you talk about what you saw with someone who could help you understand?
3. Pa Lia likes art very much. She likes to draw. When people start talking about Stinky, she draws pictures of what they are saying. Why do you think she does this?
4. Some of the things Stinky said were mean and some of them were silly. Can a person be both at the same time? Can we like a person most of the time and not some of the time? Is it possible to find nice things to say about every person?
5. Why do you think Mrs. Fennessy joins the class in saying, "Stinky Stern forever"?
6. Will Hobart didn't like it when Stinky called him fatty pig face. And yet Will is crying when he realizes that Stinky won't be there anymore, that he won't go to third grade. Why do you think Will feels sorry about that?



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7. Read the dedication for this book. “To kids and stinkers everywhere, wear your helmets when you ride your bikes. And always stop, look, and listen before you cross the street.” Stinky Stern ran into the street without looking first. Pa Lia remembers this when she thinks about him. Why do you feel this bothers her?
8. Why do you think Michelle Edwards used snowflakes to talk about and honor Matthew Velvel Stern, a real stinker?
9. What do you think the next day in Room 201 was like?

About the Illustrations (visual literacy)

Michelle Edwards not only wrote the Jackson Friends series, but she also illustrated and designed the series. We can learn more about the feelings in Mrs. Fennessy’s class by looking at the pictures.

1. On page 6, Ms. Edwards drew strong crosshatch lines and bold jagged lines around Stinky and the white van. What does this tell us? How do the strong lines make you feel?
2. Ms. Edwards has Pa Lia draw a picture of outer space and Stinky going to the moon on page 29. What does this tell us about how Pa Lia is feeling?
3. On page 42, there are swirly lines coming out of Pa Lia’s body and a bird is flying out the window. What does this mean?

Learning about the illustrations from Michelle Edwards

Can you tell that the illustrations for this book were done on the computer? If you compare Stinky Stern Forever to the other books in the series, can you spot any differences in the artwork?

“I drew the images in Adobe Photoshop and I used a special pen called a Wacom pen and tablet which allows me to draw on the computer. This time I designed all of the book on the computer from start to finish and I even sent all of the pages to my publisher in a computer file. They used those files to print the book that you’re holding in your hands.”

Unfamiliar illustration terms?

Adobe Photoshop Computer software that is used to make change to photos and drawings.

Wacom Pen and Tablet A computer mouse that looks and acts like a pencil so you can draw or write on the table, much like you would on a piece of paper.



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About Michelle Edwards

Michelle Edwards writes and illustrates children's books. Her newest books are *Stinky Stern Forever* and *Papa's Latkes*, the fourth book in the Jackson Friends series. Michelle turned fifty years old on January 25, 2005. She was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut and grew up in Troy, New York. Michelle has studied, lived, and worked in Jerusalem, Israel. Her children and her children's books were born in Saint Paul, Minnesota. Michelle now lives in Iowa City, Iowa with her husband Rody and their three daughters Meera, Flory, and Lelia.

Stinky Stern Forever

is a part of the *Jackson Friends Series*



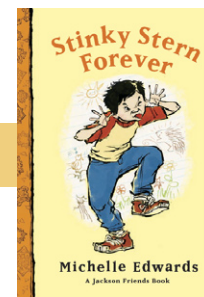
Pa Lia's First Day
Harcourt 1999
ISBN 0-15-205748-X



Zero Grandparents
Harcourt 2001
ISBN 0-15-205754-4



The Talent Show
Harcourt 2002
ISBN 0-15-205760-9



Stinky Stern Forever
Harcourt 2005
ISBN 0-15-216389-1



Michelle Edwards is available for school visits and conference presentations. For more information please visit her website at www.michelledwards.com or send an e-mail to michelle@michelledwards.com.



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