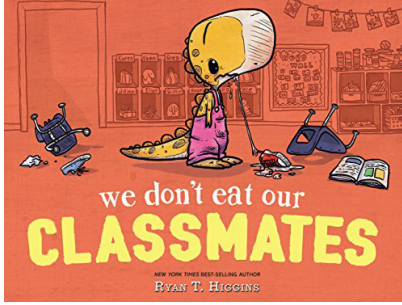


# Storytime Activity Guide

## We Don't Eat Our Classmates

by Ryan T. Higgins



Penelope is excited about the first day of school, but she has a hard time making friends. Her classmates are delicious humans and Penelope wants to eat them. With a little help from Walter, the class pet, Penelope learns to manage her impulses and behavior. After that, she is more successful at making friends.

### Did you know?

Managing impulses, recognizing the needs and feelings of others, and learning how to get along are all part of social emotional development. When you're sharing this book with your child, pause and ask questions about their experiences in school, or with friends. How are these experiences the same as Penelope's? How are they different?

### Talk about it!

- Penelope had a hard time not eating her classmates even after her teacher told her not to. Are there things you have a hard time NOT doing?
- What did Penelope learn from Walter, the class pet?
- When there is a new kid at school or the playground, what can we do to make them feel comfortable?

### Play:

Role play can help children experiment with social behavior, rules, and expectations. Children may need help from a grownup to work through pretend stories and situations, especially in the beginning.

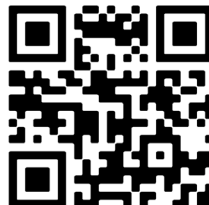
Ask your child to pretend that they are Penelope, and this is the first day of school. Invite them to think about the following questions:

- How do you feel?
- What do you have in your backpack?
- Who are your classmates? What do you say to them?

As your child responds to these questions, you can help them construct a story about the first day of school. You can also invite your child to extend the pretend play to other situations.

## Find More Online

Scan this QR code to find book recommendations, online activity guides, and other fun resources.



Scan this QR code with your phone's camera to see our Read Aloud of this book!



[qrco.de/DontEatClass](http://qrco.de/DontEatClass)

## Create!

*Penelope had to practice not eating her classmates even though she really, really wanted to. Managing our thoughts, behavior, and emotions is called “self-regulation”, a skill that is linked to children’s reading and mathematics learning.*

*Matching games are great for self-regulation because children practice holding several items of thought in mind, focusing attention, and following rules. This simple home-made game comes together in minutes, using objects you have around the house.*

### Materials:

- A collection of objects
- For toddlers, choose simple shapes like cookie cutters, blocks, puzzle pieces, and plastic cutlery. For preschoolers, look for more unusually shaped items that they’ll really have to think about before matching.
- A large piece of paper (like a recycled grocery bag)
- A marker or pen

### Directions:

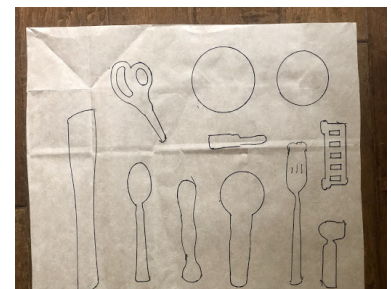
1. Gather up some items from around the house.

Choose items that are flat, easy to trace, and recognizable when traced on paper.



2. Lay the items on a large piece of paper. (A recycled brown paper bag from the grocery store is great for this purpose!)

Using a marker or pen, trace around each item until your paper is filled with shapes.



3. Place the items beside the paper.

Ask your child to match each item with the traced shape on the paper.

