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Activity Guide

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Julius, Baby of the World

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ABOUT THE STORY

Lilly has a new brother, Julius. Everyone adores Julius; they call him the baby of the world. Lilly knows better, though. She thinks that Julius is disgusting, slimy, and smelly — until Cousin Garland comes to visit. When she points out that Julius is disgusting, slimy, and smelly, Lilly comes to her baby brother's defense, realizing that in fact, Julius is the baby of the world.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR

Kevin Henkes lives with his wife and son in Madison, Wisconsin. He is the acclaimed author and illustrator of *Chrysanthemum*, an ALA Notable Book, and *Owen*, a Caldecott Honor Book. He has also written another book about Lilly, *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse*, and *Wemberly Worried*, both Live Oak Readalongs.

INTRODUCING THE STORY

Ask children if they have had the experience of welcoming a new baby brother or sister to the family, or if they know someone who has. Talk about the feelings this experience produces. Then tell them that the book they will read is about a little girl who has some very strong feelings about her new baby brother.

READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- “What did Lilly do before Julius was born?”
- “How did Lilly's feelings change after Julius was born?” (*Compare and Contrast*)
- “Why do you think Lilly was mean to Julius?” (*Drawing Conclusions*)
- “What did Cousin Garland think of Julius?”
- “How did Lilly react to Cousin Garland's thoughts about Julius?”
- “Why do you think Lilly's feelings about Julius changed again?” (*Making Inferences*)

Vocabulary

Write these adjectives from the story on the chalkboard. Have children divide them into two groups, “Good Feelings” and “Bad Feelings.” Then have them work in pairs to find definitions for each word. After they have defined the words, they can check to be sure each word is in the right category.

uncooperative

glorious

festive

extraordinary dazzled

ghastly

nifty

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Science: How Babies Grow

Have children work in small groups to find out what Lilly can expect as Julius grows by learning how babies grow after they are born. Ask them to make a time line labeled One Month through Twelve Months. Using books about babies, they can find out what babies learn to do at each month in their development. They can write each milestone at the correct place on the time line. Display completed time lines around the room.

Language Arts: Dreams and Nightmares

Have children look back at the illustrations showing Lilly's dream and nightmare about Julius. Ask them to write a description of what is happening in the two dreams. Encourage them to think about why Lilly is having these two dreams. What do they show about her feelings for Julius?

Health: Feelings about Siblings

Ask children to write a description of how they felt when a younger sibling was born. For only or youngest children, have them imagine how they might feel if a new sibling were born. If children's feelings have changed over time, encourage them to describe the change and the reasons for it.

Language Arts: A Letter to Julius

Ask children to imagine that they are Lilly and to write a letter to Julius to be read when he is older. In the letter, they should explain why Lilly behaved the way she did and why her feelings changed. Letter writers can include an apology from Lilly if they want.

INTERNET ACTIVITY

Before you send children to do research using any of the keywords listed below, you may wish to try them yourself to be sure the sites are suitable.

Kevin Henkes' Website

Have children go to the author's website at <http://www.kevinhenkes.com/meet/fun.asp>. There, they can find games to play. Encourage children to click on “With Lilly.” There, they can choose a coloring page or a dot-to-dot to complete.