Poppy's Best Babies
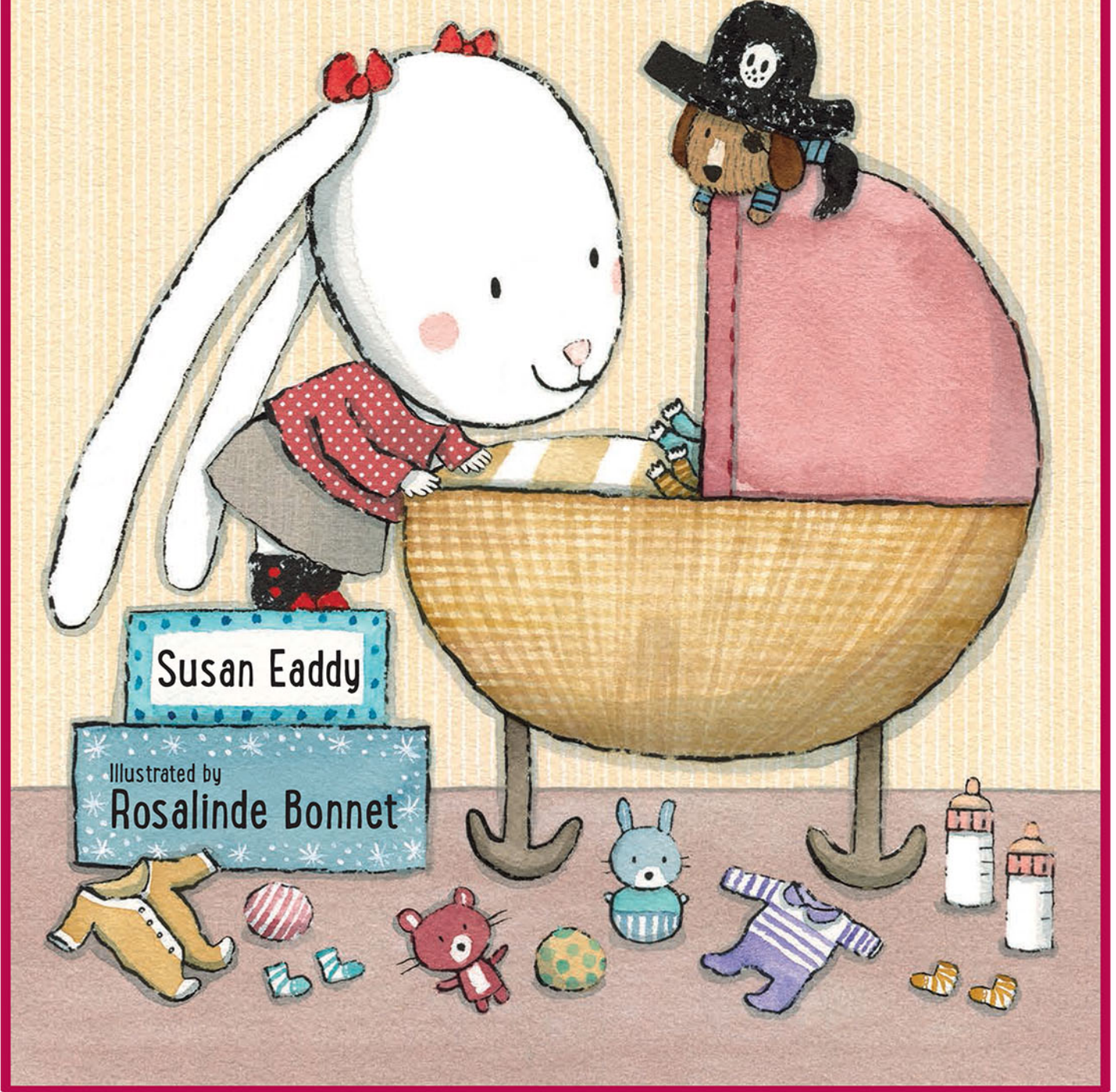
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Teacher's Guide

Story Basics

Most stories have a beginning, middle, and end.

Characters

Most stories have a problem or conflict that the main character has to overcome or solve.

What is Poppy's problem?

How does she solve it?

Idea

What is the main idea in Poppy's Best Babies?
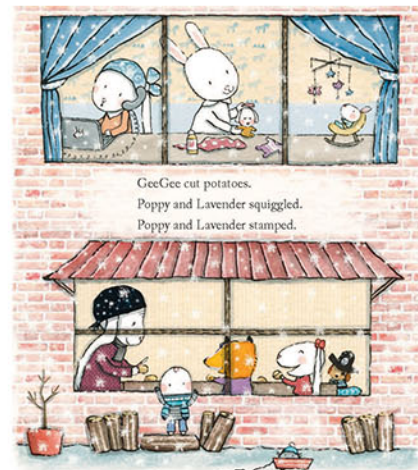
Plot

Plot is the cause-and-effect relationship between events in a story.

According to E.M. Forster, "The king died, and then the queen died", is a story, while, "The king died, and then the queen died of grief", is a plot."

How would you describe the plot of Poppy's Best Babies?

Setting

What are the main settings in Poppy's Best Babies?

What time of year is it?

Character

🌸 Who are the main characters in Poppy's Best Babies?

🌸 Writers try to avoid is using stereotypes for their characters.

What is a stereotype? How is GeeGee different from most grandmother stereotypes?

What can you tell about GeeGee's character from these illustrations?

🌸 If Poppy made a card for GeeGee listing 10 things she likes about GeeGee, what would she say?

What would GeeGee say about Poppy?

🌸 What does it say about GeeGee that she makes up nicknames for Poppy and her siblings?

Why is Poppy so distressed when GeeGee calls her Poppy J. Thistleberry?

Writing Basics

Writers are encouraged to "show, don't tell" in their stories. What does this mean?

> The next day on the bus, Lavender asked, "Are you having fun with GeeGee?"
>
> "Yes," Poppy fibbed. "Want to come over and make potato prints with us?"
>
> "Sure," said Lavender.
>
> "Too many babies around there for me," said Petunia.

What can you tell about Poppy's and her friends' personalities by these sentences?

In this scene the text says "GeeGee tugged Poppy's ears".

What does this action mean to GeeGee?

What does this action mean to Poppy?

> "Geegee, let's make puppets!" said Poppy.
> GeeGee tugged Poppy's ears.
> "Oh, PoppyDrop, I need to help with the babies," she said.

What emotion is the author showing here?

> Poppy was not in the mood for a lullaby.
>
> MWAHHHH!

Why didn't the author just say, "Poppy was mad, or defiant or uncooperative?"

Imagine that your character is frustrated, or mad, or excited. How can you say that without using those words?

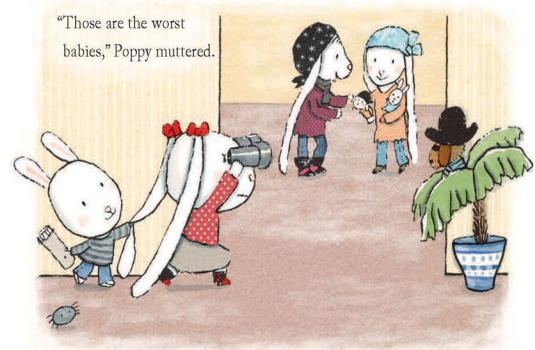ELA standards: RL1.3, RL 2.3, RL3.1, RL 4.2, RL5.1

Author and Illustrator Roles

Who is the Author? Who is the illustrator?
How does the illustrator tell the story without the author's words?

What can you tell about Poppy's family though this picture?
Does the text describe their personalities?
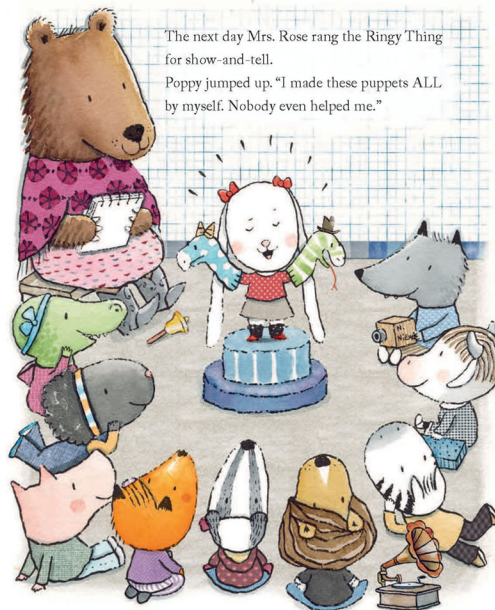Describe the personalities of GeeGee, Herb, Mama & Daddy, by what you see in the pictures.

They're so cute I could eat them up.

Hello, Ivy Noodle. Hello, Iris Tootle.

劍道

Whose point of view tells the story? Can you retell this scene from Herb's point of view?

"Those are the worst babies," Poppy muttered.

How do illustrations set the mood for the story?

Compare and contrast the mood in these two scenes.

The next day Mrs. Rose rang the Ringy Thing for show-and-tell.
Poppy jumped up. "I made these puppets ALL by myself. Nobody even helped me."

"Because everybody was too busy with those babies," said Petunia.
Poppy scowled.

Told you.

Writing Process Activity

The author revised Poppy's Best Paper over fifty times to get to the final book.

The author's writing process looks something like:

1. Think of ideas/brainstorm

2. Write first draft

3. Revise- changing big things first, then littler things

4. Let the story sit and revise again

5. Get help from writing friends

6. Repeat steps #3-5 as many times as needed

7. Get final revision feedback from editor

8. Revise again

Mrs. Rose's Story Starters

1. What kind of big sister or brother would I be?

2. Everything would go wrong if _____ happened.

3. This was going to be the best show & tell ever!

4. How to plan a party

5. Write a day-in-the life story about your pet, or favorite toy.

OPINION PIECES

Choose a topic from the first three story starters. Write an opinion piece with reasons to back up your ideas. In groups, students compare and contrast their opnions.

PROCEDURAL

Create a procedural paper with steps that can be followed in the classroom.
Explain the steps in detail.
Break into groups and following directions EXACTLY, complete the steps.
Use a phone or video camera to film the process. As a group, evaluate what works, and what leads to unintentional results.

NARRATIVE PIECE

Use topic # 5 to write a narrative recounting a sequence of events, with details to describe actions, thoughts and feelings.

poppy is verrryyy excited

when her grandmother comes to visit. She and GeeGee always make puppets and kazoos together. They read pirate books and bake Crispy Monsters.

But when the new twins keep GeeGee too busy to play, Poppy starts to get mad. GeeGee is there to see *her*—isn't she?

Write your own flap copy!

* Short- 4 to 6 sentences
* Active- use strong verbs
* Include settings and or characters
* Describe plot but don't give away the ending

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____