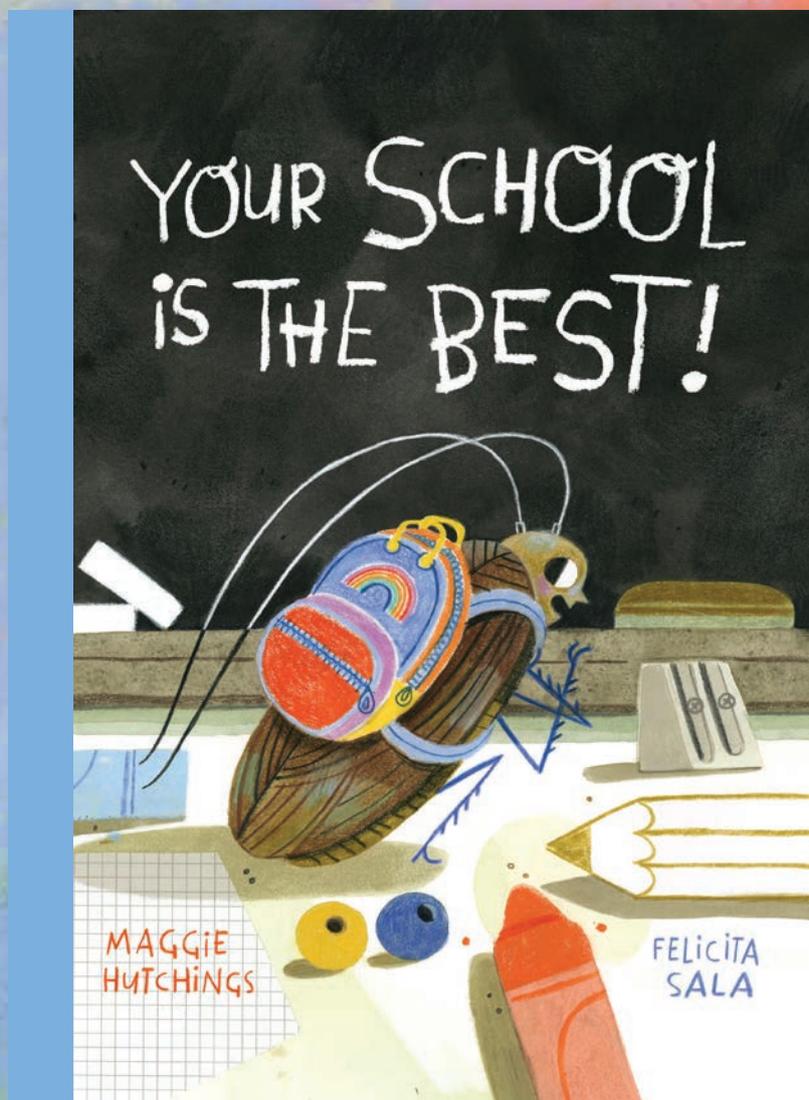


Teachers' Notes and Activities



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Suitable for
Ages 3-7

Themes

Humour

Having a positive attitude

A day at school

Contents of this pack

- Overview of *Your School Is the BEST!*
- Key themes
- Questions to ask before we begin reading
- Discussion points in key curriculum areas
- Questions to ask after we finish reading
- Three activities

Description

Everyone's favourite cockroach is back, and this time he's going to school! From show-and-tell to arts and crafts, this little stowaway can't wait to try it all ... and maybe become the new teachers' pet!

Charming, hilarious and just a tiny bit disgusting, this is a back-to-school tale with a twist, from the all-star cast behind *Your Birthday Was the BEST!*

About the author

Maggie is a counsellor, writer and artist who spends her weekends covered in paint! She is also a famously mad aunt, nanna and mother who talks to herself out loud and falls over a lot in the garden. Maggie writes stories with heart and soul for children and adults that encourage kindness, hope and resilience. With Affirm Press, Maggie has published *Your Birthday Was the BEST!*, *I Saw Pete and Pete Saw Me*, and the *Magic!* series.

About the illustrator

Felicita is a self-taught illustrator. She graduated in Philosophy from the University of Western Australia. She has worked on several animation projects along with her husband, Gianluca, but her passion is making picture books. She lives in Rome with Gianluca and their daughter, Nina.

Questions to ask before we begin reading

- Have a look at the front cover; what do you think this book will be about?
- Where do you think the cockroach is standing?
- Look at the size of the pencils. What does this show about the size of the cockroach?
- Do you think this book will be funny or serious? Why?

Key themes

Humour

This is a hilarious story about a cockroach who is blissfully unaware that their first day of school has been full of funny misadventures. This book's sense of humour is also multi-layered: readers are invited to view the story from the cockroach's earnest perspective while being amused by artwork which shows a very different narrative to what the cockroach believes is happening. The different readings of what is happening on each page could be a great conversation-starter about the book, in addition to talking about the various funny moments depicted.

Having a positive attitude

No matter what happens to our plucky cockroach, they always look on the bright side. Whether it's being 'forgotten' for school show-and-tell, not being included in the game of hide-and-seek, or finding the crayons too heavy, the cockroach approaches every problem with a positive mindset and ends up finding an ingenious solution. Positivity helps the cockroach to view all the events of the day as a success, even when others around them may not have thought so, which provides great discussion points around making the best of every situation.

A day at school

This is the cockroach's first ever day of school and they are very happy to be there! The book is an excellent example of the fun activities that kids experience at school, including show-and-tell, art class and lunchtime games, and the cockroach's joy to be there also shows the school experience in a positive way. This would be a fantastic book for kids who are nervous about starting school or going back to school.

Discussion points in key curriculum areas

Comprehension

- Who is the main character of this book?
- At the start of the book, we see children in a classroom. Can you describe some of the things that the children are doing in their classroom? Which child looks like they're paying the most attention to the teacher?
- On pages 8 and 9, we see the cockroach participating in all the activities that the little boy is doing. Is the cockroach having fun? What kinds of things are they doing? Did any of this make you laugh?
- On page 11, the cockroach does a dance on the teacher's head. Look at the cockroach's face: how might they be feeling? Now look at the teacher. How do you think she feels about this?
- Twice in this story, the cockroach says 'You cried. Everyone did!' Why do you think everyone cried? What else are they doing while they're crying? Does the cockroach view crying as a bad thing?
- On pages 18 and 19, the cockroach says the teacher is having 'a little rest'. Is the teacher really resting? If not, then what is happening? Why has this happened?
- Describe what the little boy is drawing on pages 20 and 21. Why is he drawing this? Read the words on these pages again. Does the cockroach know what this drawing shows?
- Why did the cockroach eat the crayons?
- On pages 26 and 27, the cockroach has just made 'rainbow paint'. Is this really 'paint'? Why is it rainbow-coloured?
- On pages 28 and 29, the children and teacher are looking at the artwork that the cockroach has created. The cockroach thinks they are proud. Have a look at the children and describe the emotions they might be feeling in this moment. What is the teacher feeling? Can you guess what might happen next?
- Compare the classroom on pages 30 and 31 to the classroom on pages 2 and 3. Are the children having more fun or less fun at the end of the book compared to at the start?



Literacy

- Which character is telling us the story?
- Is the main character talking to us? What makes you think this?
- The writing in this story looks like handwriting. Why do you think this could be?

Numeracy

- The cockroach has a big family! How many family members do they have, and what are their names?
- How many children are in the cockroach's class?
- How many children are in the school playground? Can you spot any children from the classroom?
- On page 17, we see the cockroaches hiding in the teacher's lunchbox. How many bananas are in there?
- How many times does the teacher faint?
- How many colours of crayon are there?

Questions to ask when we've finished reading

- How did the story make you feel?
- What was your favourite picture in the book? Why?
- Which part of the book did you find the funniest? Why?
- If a family of cockroaches were in your classroom, how would you react? How would your friends and teacher respond?
- Has this book made you think differently about cockroaches?
- How would you describe this book to a friend?
- Would you read this book again?



Activity: What happened next? Write a story about it!

Using this book as inspiration, write a short story about what happened next for the cockroach characters. Does the cockroach family stay at school but find another classroom to try out? Do they go to the park to play with the kids after school? Do they join in at after-school care club? Maybe they go to the shops to get an after-school snack? Perhaps you can think of something else that they might do, too!

Whatever the cockroaches end up doing in your story, make sure that you write a beginning, middle and end. And you can write as many jokes in there as you like!

You can write from the cockroach's perspective, just like in this book, which means you will need to use words like 'I' and 'me'. Or you can describe the cockroaches using words like, 'he', 'she', or 'they'. The main cockroach does not have a name in this book; perhaps you can think of a name for this character in your story?

Activity: Create an insect character

With the permission of an adult, take a walk outside to see if you can spot any interesting bugs. If you can't go outdoors, then have a think about an insect, like an ant or a butterfly. Once you have a bug in mind, think about it as a character in a book. Think of a name for your insect character and the things that your character might like to do and say. Be as absurd as you like! And if you love the sound of your new character, why not draw them or write a story about them? Here are some tips to get you started ...

NAME:

LIKES:

DISLIKES:

FAVOURITE FOOD:

FAVOURITE SAYING:

BEST FRIEND:

Activity: This drawing is the BEST!

Follow the cockroach's example and draw or paint your best friend (or family member, or sibling, or anyone you like!) using rainbow-coloured pencils, crayons or pens. You can draw them in the space below and give the drawing as a gift if you like!

DEAR _____

**I THINK YOU'RE THE BEST!
FROM** _____