

The Lemonade War Study Guide

The Lemonade War by Jacqueline Davies

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Plot Summary

The Lemonade War by Jacqueline Davies directly addresses the complex relationship between brothers and sisters, as well as how arguments can spiral out of control when people quit communicating with one another.

As the story opens, Evan Treski has a problem that involves his sister. She's been promoted ahead an extra grade and will be in the same grade as her older brother when school starts in five days. Evan is certain that her presence will cramp his style. Jessie, his sister, finds Evan and tries to get him to play a game with her. He ends up screaming at her: "You ruin everything. You ruined my summer and now you're going to ruin school I hate you."(page 9)

The next day Jessie finds a letter from the school in the mail and takes it to their mother to open. It is a note stating that both Evan and Jessie will be in the same class at school. Evan is now convinced that his life is truly over. Understanding how upset this has made her brother, Jessie tries to make things better by offering to help him do the sorts of activities that he likes. Evan refuses to be consoled. Later, she discovers Evan and Scott Spencer constructing a lemonade stand. Jessie offers to help them when she notices that they've misspelled lemonade. Thinking that she's laughing at them, the boys tell her to go away.

In anger, Jessie decides that she's going to have a lemonade stand of her own. Meanwhile, both Scott and Evan discover many problems involved with running one's own business, including keeping track of the money, overspending on the product, and the consequences of drinking all of their inventory. The boys quarrel. Not for the first time Evan wishes that he'd taken Jessie up on her offer to help them with the stand as her ability in math could have come in handy.

Later, the boys discover that Jessie has teamed up with Megan Moriarty from Evan's class to set up their own lemonade stand, and they are doing much better than the boys. Jessie's plan has been to show her brother that she wasn't a baby and can do a lemonade stand so well that he'll want to include her, or join her. But, just the opposite occurs. At dinner that night brother and sister have a huge argument in which they both taunt each other and promise to sell more lemonade by the time school starts.

The next day Evan invites three of his friends over and puts a large Keep Out sign on the garage door. When Jessie goes over to meet up with Megan she sees that another girl, Carly, is there. Both of the girls are a year older and they seem to look down their noses at Jessie. Jessie is afraid that the girls are going to be mean to her like some of the girls in her class the past year who had formed the WHJ club (We Hate Jessie).

Evan decides that in order to beat Jessie he needs to make at least fifty dollars. In order to do this he has to find a better location. He ends up going to the town center and setting up the stand there, but after a short while a police officer makes him take



everything down and go home because it is illegal to sell lemonade there without a license.

Meanwhile Jessie and Megan are having issues of their own. Jessie knows that having to split the money with Megan, while Evan's friends have offered to let him keep all of the profits for himself, is going to put her at a huge disadvantage. Doing some math she determines that what they need to do is franchise their lemonade stands. Determined, and with other girls offering to work a franchise stand in each of their neighborhoods, soon Jessie has brought in a lot more money.

Early the next morning, while Evan is in the garage getting his stand ready, Jessie sneaks into his room and counts the money that he's gathered. She realizes that he is ahead of her. Upset at his earlier words, (that he hated her), she determines to do anything it takes to win. When the boys leave to go make their lemonade stand sign, Jessie sneaks into the garage where they have their lemonade and she dumps flies into the coolers. Then she throws in dirt, just for good measure.

Predictably, when Evan's customers begin finding bugs in their lemonade and complain, Evan's mother comes by to see what is going on. They pull the cover off of the cooler and his mother shuts down his operation. On his walk home he begins to put two and two together. He figures out that his sister is responsible for the polluted lemonade. Angered he finds her money box and takes all of her lemonade stand earnings. He doesn't plan to keep it, but plans to give it back after the contest is over.

Evan tries to play a game of basketball with his friends but he is so upset about taking the money that he can't concentrate. then things go from bad to worse when he realizes that he's lost Jessie's money (which he'd shoved into his shorts before playing ball). Realizing that he's lost the money that he took from Jessie's lockbox, Evan is miserable contemplating what her reaction will be. Later that evening, Evan tells Jessie that he's willing to call it a tie if she is. She is not willing to call it a tie and asks him what his final total is. He tells her that he doesn't have any money at all.

She opens her lockbox and there's only a handful of bills there. It is Evan's money that he's put in there and ends up confessing to taking the money and losing it. Jessie loses her temper and throws things at Evan, who doesn't try to deflect them at all. Jessie realizes that he's not defending himself and stops. Coming together to try and figure out who has taken their money, the two siblings realize that they've been acting very badly and that it isn't worth doing if it damages their relationship. Both brother and sister talk openly about why they were so mean to each other. They agree to call it a tie and to work together to try and find a way to get Megan's share of the stolen money back to her. In the end, both Evan and Jessie have learned that working together is better than working against one another.



Chapters 1-3

Summary

Chapter 1

Evan Treski is upset because his summer is coming to an end, the air conditioner in his home is broken, and his sister has just been promoted into the same grade as him. Life, as he knows it, is over. To make matters worse, he has decided to hide from Jessie, his sister, in the family's basement. Nonetheless, Jessie finds him and asks him to do something with her. They are both bored and Jessie attempts to entice him into doing something - anything - like they used to only last year. But Evan is growing up (he's going into the 5th grade) and it is no longer cool to hang out or play games with your kid sister, even if she is in your same grade. The confrontation ends when Evan, who has been throwing a baseball up in the air and catching it, misses the ball and it cracks him on the nose. Though it doesn't bleed, it is the last straw and he screams at his sister, saying that he hates her. Jessie runs from the room in tears.

Chapter 2

Told from Jessie's point of view, this chapter sees Jessie confused about Evan's reaction toward her. She thinks that it must be connected to a letter that had arrived a few days prior. They had been putting together a lemonade stand together, but when the mail had arrived and the mysterious letter from the school showed up, everything stopped. Later, their mother had opened the letter and shared its contents. The school was going to place Jessie in Evan's same classroom at school. Jessie is excited, thinking that he can help show her the ropes. Evan is devastated. Not only is his kid sister being

jumped forward a grade, but she's in his class.

Jessie determines to make amends with her brother and to offer him some sympathy over the situation and goes looking for him, only to find him and some of his friends working on something in the garage. It is the lemonade stand. Jessie asks if she can help, but they tell her to go away and call her a little baby. Upset, she leaves, but later determines angrily that she'll build her own lemonade stand.

Chapter 3

Evan has enlisted the help of his friend, Scott. Scott is not the best friend in the world, but Evan's other friends are away on vacation. They set up their stand and begin to sell their lemonade, but it is hot and Scott begins to drink up all of their product. Evan tells him to cut it out, but Scott ignores him. He lets Scott handle the money, but later regrets it when he realizes that Scott most likely has taken a five dollar bill that they made. Since he can't prove it, there's nothing he can do. He regrets not having his sister help them since she's so very good at math.



When he goes back home to get more lemonade mix, he finds that all of the cans and mixes are gone, except for one grape concentrate can and some ginger ale. Nonetheless, they decide to mix up what they have and continue their sales. Unfortunately, no one is coming their way anymore, and those that do come by, aren't buying all of a sudden. Evan goes to investigate and discovers that Jessie has set up a booth and is selling her lemonade for less money. She has also enlisted the help of a friend, Megan.

Analysis

In Chapter 1 the reader is introduced to the story's two main characters, Evan and Jessie Treski. Evan is upset because he's just learned that his sister has been bumped up a grade and, worse yet, will be placed in his class. This upsets Evan because he's certain that his sister, who is better in academics, will outshine him and make him look stupid in front of his friends. He doesn't want everyone comparing them, and he certainly doesn't want her to tag along with him everywhere. As a result, though Jessie has done nothing to him, he has a great deal of resentment toward her, which is evident in the way that he speaks to her, even telling her that he hates her.

Chapter 2 shows the animosity escalating as Jessie discovers that the lemonade stand that she and Evan were going to do together has been taken over by Evan and his friends, who exclude her. Jessie can't understand why Evan would be upset and why he would view her being in his class as a bad thing. The reader learns about a terrible incident that occurred at Jessie's school the previous year where her classmates had formed the WHJ club, which stood for the We Hate Jessie club. When Jessie had learned about it, she'd been humiliated. While she's very good with schoolwork, socially she is underdeveloped. She wishes that she were more like Evan, who gets along with everyone.

Meanwhile, in Chapter 3, the boys are enjoying some success selling their lemonade. Evan regrets partnering with Scott and the reader can see why. Scott is selfish and is obviously using Evan, leaving poor Evan to do all of the work. Scott even helps himself to the product, and later, to some of the money. When they run out of lemonade (mostly because Scott continues to drink it all) Evan goes back to the house to get more cans of mix, but finds most of them gone. When Evan returns, Scott reports that there have been no new customers, which makes Evan curious. Evan goes around the corner to discover Jessie has set up her stand ahead of theirs and is charging less. Evan determines to up his game because to him this is just another incident where his sister is besting him. If he loses to his sister now, he is afraid that it will set up a terrible precedent in the future.

Discussion Question 1

When Evan heard his mother moving the air conditioner, where was he hiding and why?



Discussion Question 2

What does Scott say and do that makes Jessie feel badly? Why might he say and do that?

Discussion Question 3

When Evan discovers Jessie's lemonade stand, what are his reactions and how do they contrast with Jessie's?

Vocabulary

slump, installed, complicated, fizzles, breakup, dissolution, puny, peered, joint venture



Chapters 4-5

Summary

Chapter 4

Jessie tries to figure out why Evan would react the way that he did. She misses how close they used to be and can't figure out what she can do to make things right between them. Even having Megan be her partner, someone that she knows is nice and that Evan likes, hasn't helped matters. In fact it seems to have made things worse. She plays over the events in her mind and her conclusion is that Evan is just being mean to be mean. She determines that she will make him take notice of her.

In Chapter 4 we see the theme of sibling rivalry beginning to emerge. Refusing to talk about the real problem, which is Jessie being promoted and placed in Evan's classroom for the year, brother and sister opt to continue to harbor hurt feelings and anger toward one another. It is clear to see that if they do not honestly discuss their problems soon that this will escalate and their once close relationship will suffer.

Chapter 5

That night at dinner both Evan and Jessie are giving each other the silent treatment. Unfortunately, one of the chores that they must do each night involves doing the dishes together. Finally Jessie tries to break the ice by asking Evan how much money he'd managed to make that day. Evan explodes at her and asks why she decided to do her own lemonade stand, saying, "Why'd you do it, huh? Why'd you have to ruin the one thing I had going?"(page 59).

The argument escalates with both kids thinking that the other is acting meanly. Both vow to make more money with their respective lemonade stands. Their mother, who is a public relations worker, comes downstairs to find out what the noise is all about. The kids tell her that they were goofing around. Once she leaves, Jessie snaps, "Let's make a bet. Whoever earns a hundred dollars wins. And the loser has to give all their earnings to the winner"(page 65). Both agree to the terms.

Analysis

Chapter 4

Jessie is perplexed and disappointed in Evan's reaction to her lemonade stand. Her attempt to show her brother that she is worthy to be his partner has backfired and he's angrier than ever. She had reasoned that if she made friends with someone Evan's age, who was nice, then Evan would come over to make up. She chooses Megan Moriarty, a girl from Evan's class and a neighbor. She reaches out to Megan to see if she would like to do the lemonade stand with her, and Megan agrees. But this doesn't work as planned



and it is clear to the reader that while Jessie may be book-smart, she is not people-smart at all. She doesn't understand how humiliated Evan is, nor can she empathize with his situation. She also doesn't see the entire incident through his eyes, that he thinks she's waving the money in his face, that Megan is laughing at him, or that she's gone about things badly.

In Chapter 5 the reader sees the problem between brother and sister getting worse and worse. This is because neither is willing to admit to how hurt they are at the other's actions. Neither seems to be able to see that they are both at fault, and that they both should work together. This refusal to see things through anyone else's eyes, or perspective, makes tempers flare and the stakes raise. The author introduces the notion of the flies being around the house. This is going to come back later to be an important part of the story. It is clear that both are close and both are now considering using trusted information to hurt the other. Jessie contemplates ratting Evan out for a broken toaster, and Evan brazenly tells her that he knows where she keeps her 'secret' money.

Again, here in Chapter 5, the theme of sibling rivalry begins to escalate when each begins to threaten the other with disclosure of previously held secrets. What the reader can take from this exchange is that instead of opting to work out their problems, the brother and sister have opted to continue on with their feuding, going so far as to begin bringing others in on their plans. The feud takes on a life of its own and sibling rivalry is shown to be destructive, divisive, and the last few remaining days of summer break, which should have been spent in enjoyment, are now spent upset, angry, and disappointed.

Discussion Question 1

When it comes to people and how they interact with one another, what becomes quite clear about Jessie? What doesn't she get right? What should she do about this?

Discussion Question 2

What do you think about the bet that Jessie and Evan had made with one another?

Discussion Question 3

How do you think the flies might come back into the story? What could they represent?

Vocabulary

partnership, impress, deflating, charity, showstopper



Chapter 6-7

Summary

Chapter 6

The next day finds Evan acting suspiciously. He asks Jessie if he can borrow some old foam core from her room. She isn't about to share anything with him, and tells him no. Evan has three friends over who are all carrying paper bags full of something. They go into the garage and put a large Keep Out sign on the door. When she goes into the kitchen to make herself lunch she sees a dozen empty cans of lemonade mix. She becomes worried when she realizes that the boys have all brought the cans from their homes, instead of having to buy it from the store like she had. She goes over to Megan's house to tell her.

Here, in Chapter 6, the theme of 'war' emerges. Both Jessie and Evan have refused to speak about the greater issues and see every little action on the other's part as further proof of their 'meanness'. Each has developed their own false narrative in their minds and are acting as if this narrative is the truth. Thus, war is shown to be destructive, separating people who should be working together, instead of apart.

When she arrives at Megan's house another girl, Carly, is there. She looks down her nose at Jessie and Jessie is reminded of the girls in the second grade who'd formed a club called the WHJ club (We Hate Jessie). Now, anytime someone is nice to her she wonders if they are just pretending and aren't really nice. Carly leaves and together Megan and Jessie figure out by reading Jessie's mother's book on promotion that they need to have something that is value-added in order to attract customers. They decide to offer free chips on their stand, and to add music.

This doesn't end up being their best idea as they learn later on in the day, after dismal sales, that Evan has undercut them by quite a bit, offering their lemonade at 10 cents a cup as opposed to Jessie's 50 cents a cup.

Chapter 7

Evan realizes in this chapter that he still has a long way to go to beat Jessie. He only has three days to do it, too. He does some quick figuring and realizes how much he needs to earn each day in order to beat Jessie to the 100\$ mark. In order to make his business more portable he decides to convert and use the cooler with wheels that they have in the garage.

In this chapter the imagery of pests, flies in particular, are mentioned. Flies, as used in this novel represent small problems that if left unchecked can swarm into a larger problem. In this chapter they are a mere nuisance and Jessie noticed them buzzing around some fruit in a bowl in her home. This indicates that while things are not great,



that they have not escalated into a full scale swarm. The foreshadowing here is also clear....flies are going to be in the proverbial ointment if things don't end soon.

Later that day, before starting up his lemonade stand, he stops at the convenient store a few blocks away, near the town center. He finds out that the convenient store was selling glasses of lemonade for three dollars, more than he had considered asking at his stand. He decides to set up in the town center and sell his lemonade for less than \$3. This doesn't last, however, as a police officer comes by and tells him that he can't sell without a permit in town. Disappointed, he returns home with little to show for his hard work. But it's been enough. He counts his money from all of the days together and realizes that he now has 103\$, enough to win.

Analysis

Jessie hates feeling shut out and excluded. It dredges up old feelings of when she was alienated by her entire classroom the previous year in school. When Paul is nice to Jessie, one word from Evan causes him to shut Jessie out, too. This hurts Jessie's feelings further. Jessie asks how they did and when they tell her she remembers something from her mother's book about 'goodwill' and how people will tip a higher amount when they believe that they are doing something worthwhile. Jessie tries to hurt Evan back by saying that it might be well and good that he's made a lot of money but that since he had to split it with the other boys that he won't end up with much. Jessie is shocked and hurt when Evan says that all of his friends have agreed that he should keep it all. Evan offers one last parting shot at his sister before he leaves her standing forlornly in the driveway: "In case you didn't know, that's what it's like to have friends " (page 86).

In Chapter 7, Evan, in figuring out how to beat Jessie, is also proud to realize that he can do math when it counts. It gives the reader insight into Evan's insecurities in that up until this point he's believed himself to be a terrible mathematician. This shows him that he can do it. Evan also shows problem solving skills when he decides to innovate and use the cooler with wheels. Even though he has to leave the town center after only a few hours, it has been enough to get him the money that he needs to beat Jessie. He feels as if he has truly accomplished something and the reader can see how he sees himself in his sister's shadow most of the time. He's going to parade this win in her face, the reader can be sure.

Discussion Question 1

Why do you think the author has written this story?

Discussion Question 2

What does Officer Ken tell Evan about selling lemonade in the town center?



Discussion Question 3

How else could both brother and sister have handled the entire situation?

Vocabulary

exchanging, value added, goodwill, location, global, vat



Chapter 8-10

Summary

Chapter 8

Jessie finds herself exhausted after her previous day of selling lemonade. She and Megan had offered face painting, nail polishing, and other value added incentives for people to buy the lemonade, but in the end, they hadn't really made more money than they had before. It just wasn't worth it. Jessie does some calculations and realizes that unless they sell their lemonade for more money that there's no way she will win the contest against Evan. There are only a couple of days left. She determines that their profit margin needs to be higher, so they determine to develop a franchise and enlist the help of several of Megan's friends. Megan makes Jessie feel better about herself when she creates a comment card that tells Jessie nice things about herself.

Jessie begins to worry when she goes downstairs to find Evan not even planning on going out to sell lemonade that day. She theorizes that the only reason he would take a day off is if he already had the money or was very close. This makes her more determined to do well. They end up recruiting nearly 13 other girls to set up lemonade stands. The girls end up making 104\$ a piece for the day. Jessie is ecstatic. She and Megan decide that after Jessie has won her contest with her brother that they will donate the money to the Animal Rescue League in town. Megan asks if she'd like to go to the beach with her the next day instead of selling lemonade. Jessie agrees, as she's sure she's just won the 'war'.

Chapter 9

Evan begins to suspect that Jessie has earned more money than him when she comes downstairs declaring that she's going to the beach with Megan that day instead of selling lemonade. He is playing by himself in the front room and finds himself wishing that he were doing something as awesome as going to the beach. Just about the time that he's about to apologize to his sister and call off the entire thing, he takes something she says wrongly and believes that she's told Megan (someone he's interested in) about the war. This makes him even angrier. Waiting for her to leave, Evan races up the stairs into her room and gains access to her lock box. He counts all of her money and realizes that she has more than enough to win....she's stomped him.

Chapter 10

This chapter sees Jessie and Evan's mother trying to make sense of the fighting and the lemonade stands, but Jessie tells her that it is nothing. This time her mother doesn't buy the excuse and Jessie ends up telling her everything. Her mother offers this advice: "You're never going to stop being mad at each other until you both understand what the other person is feeling. Don't you think it would be a good idea to find out what he's mad



about?"(page 135). Jessie remembers the agreement she made with Evan to keep the lemonade war a secret and says that she and Evan will work it out on their own. She gets her things ready to go to the beach and notices Evan with a large backpack. He's going back out to sell lemonade. Jessie is infuriated and the two argue some more. Jessie decides that she will win at all costs. Sending her brother on a diversion she sneaks into the garage where Evan has mixed up the cooler with lemonade for the day. She takes the top off and dumps flies and dirt into the lemonade.

Analysis

In this chapter the reader sees Jessie's excellent problem solving capabilities, but conversely the reader sees that she has self-esteem issues when it comes to making friends. She asks Megan to gather the girls together to help do the lemonade stands because she knows the other girls know and like Megan. Despite Megan telling Jessie that she is likable, Jessie doesn't believe her. In an act of kindness, Megan creates a comment card, something that they did in her previous school year. It is a card that says something nice about someone. Jessie reads it and realizes that some people can actually be nice and mean it. This indicates that at some point Jessie will learn how to make and keep friends. She does wonder if Megan knew about the lemonade war if she would still be on Jessie's side. After all, Megan and Evan had been in the same class at school.

In this chapter the theme of friendship is explored. There are many instances that have been offered where people have not been good friends, such as Scott, or the girls on the playground at Jessie's school. Contrasting Megan with these examples of bad friends shows clearly that a good friend is one that not only makes you feel good about yourself and likes doing some of the same things, but that they are supporting of someone when they are upset or in trouble.

When Megan invites her to the beach, Jessie realizes that she has really and truly made a good friend. This takes the sting out of her estrangement from her brother, slightly. The reader gets the idea that up until this point Jessie's only friend has been her brother.

When Jessie goes with Megan to the beach the reader sees Evan reacting in much the same way that Jessie had when Evan had taken a day off. Of course, Evan goes one step further and invades Jessie's privacy, by opening her lock box and counting her money. This indicates that Evan has taken the competition too seriously and that he might be willing to do worse things to his sister in order to win. This is a bit of foreshadowing for the reader as in the next series of chapters, both children escalate and do things that they ordinarily would never have done to the other.

The reader also sees that he's beginning to regret the 'war' that they have going on. He misses his sister and the fun that they used to have together. This is short-lived when he learns that Jessie is going to the beach with Megan. It is clear that Evan cares for Megan because he is especially upset when he believes that Jessie has told Megan



about the lemonade war. When Jessie isn't looking, Evan sneaks into her room and counts her money. She's earned more than him and he feels resentment on a major level. She's always besting him and this time she's done it again.

Jessie isn't acting any better and readers see her make the very bad decision to pollute the lemonade so that Evan can't possibly sell lemonade while she's away at the beach. Both brother and sister are still acting very much from a place of anger and hurt, neither willing to give the other the benefit of the doubt.

Discussion Question 1

What did Jessie discover at Sally's that made her so happy?

Discussion Question 2

What are likely outcomes for this lemonade war?

Discussion Question 3

What does Evan immediately assume about Jessie in this chapter? Why does he assume this? What does this tell readers about Evan?

Vocabulary

profit margin, inspected, franchise, negotiation, comment card



Chapter 11-14

Summary

Chapter 11

Later that day, when people begin tasting the 'new and improved' version of the lemonade, Evan's mother is called to the scene by the neighbors. She takes the lid off of the cooler and makes him dump everything out and give back everyone's money. As he walks home he realizes that Jessie must have done this to him. He runs up to her room while she's still at the beach with Megan and empties her lock box. He counts it and almost faints. It is way more than he has. Angrily, he takes all of the money. He tells himself that he will give it back after he's won the war. He shoves it into his pockets and then goes over to his friend, Scott's house to play basketball and go swimming.

Chapter 12

Jessie has been unable to fully enjoy herself at the beach. She knows that she's won the war and yet it doesn't feel like a victory. This puzzles her and she wonders why it should be.

Chapter 13

Meanwhile, Evan is having the same thing happen to him. Earlier in the day he's gone back up to his sister's room, opened her lockbox and taken her money. He justifies this action by saying he is teaching her a lesson. Shoving it into his shorts pockets he decides to go play with his friends in the neighborhood. But when he should be enjoying his basketball game and the swimming, he can't. He feels guilty about taking his sister's money. He decides that he should go home and put it back. He is resigned to having lost the war after all. Unfortunately, when he goes to get dressed he realizes that all of the money is gone. Correction...all of his sister's money is gone. He panics and runs home.

Chapter 14

Evan waits for Jessie to come home and tries to get her to agree that it is just a tie and to end the war. He is worried about what will happen when she discovers that the money is all gone. She asks him how much he has made and he tells her nothing, and turns his pockets out. He lies and tells her that he ended up spending it all. Triumphant, she opens her box to discover that there's only sixty dollars or so in there. She freaks out and begins accusing him. He tells her that the money in the lock box is his and he has given it to her because of what he did. He tells her everything but she's furious. She begins throwing things at him and hitting him. When he doesn't try to defend himself, she relents.



Evan and Jessie have the conversation that they should have had days before and all is better between them. They begin to wonder who could've taken the money. Both of them agree that the lemonade stand had been a good idea and they agree to work together in the future. At the end of the book, before they go to the Labor Day fireworks show, Jessie tells Evan that she has an idea for getting their money back.

Analysis

In Chapter 11 the reader can see the consequences of the bad decisions that both children have made. The lemonade is bad and a lot of people are angry with Evan. His mother has to come and shut down his stand. This is just another bad thing that is happening to him and instead of accepting the responsibility that some of the problems existed because of him, he instead tries to push the blame off on anyone but himself. His favorite target, of course, is his sister.

With the double symbolism of the flies and the bad lemonade, the reader is urged to consider how far this has come from the beginning of the book and that if they do not stop soon, someone is likely to get hurt in some way. In Chapter 11, the symbolism of the flies, and of lemonade, are demonstrated. First, the flies have been placed into the lemonade by Jessie, which represents the hostilities reaching critical and potentially harmful mass. At the point where Jessie puts the flies in the lemonade she is not thinking of anything else but harming Evan. She doesn't stop to think about people potentially getting ill from her actions. Secondly, lemonade, in and of itself should be a sweet, refreshing drink, much like their relationship with one another. However, the way the children engage in open warfare using this as the vehicle for the war, sours their relationship, the lemonade, and eventually ends up having to be poured on the ground.

In Chapter 12 and 13, readers see both children upset and not able to enjoy their activities for the day. Megan can't stop feeling terrible about what she's done to Evan, and Evan regrets taking her money. Both are worried about the fall out that will occur when everything is discovered.

Finally, in Chapter 13, everything comes to a head when both of them discover the other's deception. The reader learns that if they had had this conversation a week ago that none of this would have happened. The opening of the lock box is symbolic of the lid coming off of all the deception that they've been engaged in with one another. And, in chapter 14 they reconcile and plan to find out who has taken their money.

Discussion Question 1

What does the author mean by the phrase: "Sometimes in the dark, dark thoughts come."



Discussion Question 2

What could have been the consequences of what Jessie did to Evan's lemonade?

Discussion Question 3

What did Evan tell himself when he takes Jessie's money? What rationale does he give?

Vocabulary

charity, earning, pulverize, gusty, reassuring, philosophers



Characters

Evan Treski

Evan Treski is going into the fourth grade, and having to share a class with his younger sister Jessie who skipped a grade. Evan is upset that he cannot have the teacher he wants, and that he is now going to have to share a classroom with Jessie. For Evan, Jessie has ruined his fourth grade year by being so smart. Evan starts up a lemonade stand with his on-again off-again friend Scott Spencer.

Evan is very good at making friends with people, something that his sister can't do well. He is also a nice person, deep down, and cares for his family. Readers learn that his father has left the family, though readers don't know details. This has to also play into his decisions that occur in the story.

Jessie Treski

Jessie Treski is the younger sister of Evan. She is smart and good with math, which upsets Evan because he is not. However she is not good with understanding people's feelings and how to handle them. Being so smart, she skipped the third grade and now will be in fourth grade. Jessie is excited and doesn't understand why Evan is not. Her brother has hurt her feelings by making a lemonade stand without her, so she decides that she is going to start one herself with Megan Moriarty.

Overall, Jessie is a nice person and likes to be useful to people. However, her inability to understand emotions, or to empathize with others is at the heart of the problems that begin between her and her brother.

Megan Moriarty

Megan is a former classmate of Evan. She is fairly new to town and the only person Jessie could think of that was nice and would make a lemonade stand with her. Evan has a crush on Megan, but Jessie doesn't have the maturity to understand that. Megan treats Jessie kindly, even when one of her other friends, Carly, does not.

Scott Spencer

Scott is Evan's on-again off-again friend. He makes fun of Evan's little sister, Jessie. Scott only thinks about himself, and does not like to help. Evan only reaches out to him because all of his other friends are away on vacation. This is a decision that will come back to haunt him as the author suggests that Scott is the one that takes the money at the end of the story.



Mrs. Treski

Jessie and Evan's mother plays a very secondary role in the story. However, she functions as the peace keeper and the one that offers an anchor to both children when they are able to spiral off into even worse decisions. The reader learns that she has to work very hard and it seems that it is due to the father leaving. She has a hard time adjusting to life alone as is evidence by her trying to move the air conditioner by herself.

Officer Ken

Officer Ken is the police man at the town center who tells Evan that it is illegal to sell lemonade without a permit. He gives Evan \$5 and sends him home.

Carly

Carly is a girl that is friends with Megan. They are in the same grade as Evan and have had Evan in their classroom. It is evident that Carly and Megan both are interested in Evan and that Carly, on the day that Jessie comes over, has been hoping that Evan would come along. She is not nice to Jessie at all, referring to her as a 'baby', even though she knows that Jessie will be in her class next year. She refuses to hang out or help Megan or Jessie with the lemonade stand.

Girls in the Second Grade

These characters are a group of unnamed girls who were in Jessie's second grade class. They played a cruel joke on Jessie by letting her think that she was organizing a club for writers, but instead, it was the We Hate Jessie club. Though no one comes out to say so directly it is to be inferred that Jessie is highly intelligent and most likely outshone most of her fellow classmates, breeding contempt and resentment. Jessie was so naive about social situations that it was Evan who pulled her aside and told her what was going on. When Jessie learned of this, she was heartbroken as she thought that at last she was able to have some common ground with the other girls.

Mr. Treski

Mr. Treski does not make an appearance in the novel, but is mentioned by Evan in passing. Evan's references to his father would seem to indicate that he is no longer living with them and that their situation may have been one of a divorce, since there is no mention of a death. Evan misses his father and wishes that he could ask his father's help in dealing with the lemonade situation.

Mrs. Soren

Mrs. Soren was Jessie's second grade teacher. When she found out what the other little girls were doing to Jessie in creating the WHJ club, she put an end to it quietly. However, since Jessie has been moved forward a grade, one can infer that Mrs. Soren most likely didn't want Jessie to be placed in the same classroom as these girls, again, the following year.

Scott and Megan

Scott and Megan are 'foils' for both Jessie and Evan. Scott is selfish and lazy, and Evan is not. Megan is outgoing and liked, and Jessie is awkward socially. Both Scott and Megan serve as catalysts for moving the plot forward when they encourage Jessie or Evan to take action.



Symbols and Symbolism

Summer

The story's setting takes place in the summer, which represents the hot tempers that will flare during the course of the story.

Lemonade

Not only is this the product that both brother and sister decide to sell, but it is also represents their relationship. It can be bitter, but is best served sweetened and enjoyed with friends.

Flies

Flies show up in the story many times. At first they are mentioned as fruit flies that cloud up when Jessie is in the kitchen. Because these flies are small, at that time, they represent that the problems that she's having with her brother are still quite small. Later, she finds a number of house flies, much larger in size. These are the flies that she uses to pollute Evan's lemonade with. This indicates that their relationship has been polluted by this problem that they have going on between them.

The War

Both Jessie and Evan declare a war when neither of them are willing to see things from the other's perspective. Because neither of them have any empathy, though they do love one another, they are not able to see what has caused the other person to act as they have. As a result, a war begins.

The letter

Evan and Jessie's school sent a letter the last week of summer. The letter was to let their mother know that Evan and Jessie would be in the same fourth grade class. Evan was not happy about this because he didn't want to have to be in the same classroom as his little sister.

The Marble Raceway

Evan has a favorite toy that is a raceway that can be constructed in many ways, and then a marble released to run along the track. He laments the fact that Jessie isn't helping him build the raceway because of their feud. He fully acknowledges that she



has abilities and skills that he doesn't and it is through his interaction with the raceway marble track that he realizes how much he stands to lose and how much he misses his sister's friendship.

Red Nail Paint

One of the key aspects that Jessie notices about all of the girls that have been mean to her on the playground, is that they all wore red nail paint. Later on, when Carly treats Jessie so badly, she notes that Carly wore freshly painted red nail paint. This seems to be the literal version of a 'red' meaning stay away.

The Broken Air Conditioner

At the beginning of the novel Mrs. Treski is trying to move a large, broken, air conditioner to the curb. It is very heavy and she is not able to accomplish the task, no matter how hard she struggles with it. Since Mr. Treski is not mentioned, but in only one instance, it can be deduced that the air conditioner is representative of a large burden that Mrs. Treski is struggling with. The fact that it was previously used to make their home more comfortable and livable is also part of the symbolism that points to a divorce situation.

Evan's Baseball

In Chapter 1 Evan is throwing his baseball up in the air and catching it while lying on his back in the cool darkness of the basement. This represents and parallels the many thoughts that he is tossing around and catching in his mind in regard to the news he's learned about for the new school year. When he misses catching it, because his sister has distracted him, this is indicative that his thoughts turn toward blaming his sister for the situation that he is in and how much she's hurt him.

Settings

The Treski House

This is where the book begins with Evan in the basement. When Evan or Jessie gets frustrated, they go to their rooms to think it out.

Garage

This is where Jessie finds Evan and Scott making their lemonade stand without her, and make fun of her.

The Neighborhood

The neighborhood is where the war between the siblings takes place. They both situate their lemonade stands on the corners of the streets and see who can bring in more business.

Town Square

The Town Square is where Evan has the great idea to sell his lemonade for a dollar less than the convenient store, but at least 2 dollars more than he was charging in his neighborhood. Unfortunately, Officer Ken tells him that while in the neighborhoods it is okay to sell lemonade without a permit, inside the Town Square a person has to have a permit to sell anything.



Themes and Motifs

War

Throughout the story the notion of war is referenced and discussed. At first the War is a friendly competition, at least to Jessie. Both brother and sister view what has happened to them only in as much as it affects them. At the onset neither child realizes what their actions is doing to the other, and rationalizes that the other person must deserve to be treated badly. This rapid escalation and justification of bad actions propels the theme of war throughout the novel. It asks the reader to pause and ask the big question: When is war justifiable?

Though it is not evident to Evan and Jessie, the reader may consider what some alternative actions might have been. What would have happened if Jessie or Evan had told Mrs. Treski about their lemonade war? What would have happened if Evan had told his mother how upset he was about his sister being placed in his same classroom?

The Lemonade War illustrates how each person in the conflict comes to the conflict from differing perspectives, and all disagreements stem from miscommunication and lack of direct discussion about things that have upset the other. It is only when both participants in the 'war' realize what there is to lose, and that neither is willing to pay that cost, that they cease hostilities. Once both children understand this they are able to put aside their differences and focus on the large problem....the missing money.

Family

Throughout the novel the importance of family ties are reinforced. The first time is Evan discussing his sister and how he admires her abilities in school, even though he's depressed that she's been promoted ahead a grade. Likewise, Jessie admires Evan because he makes friends easily. Later, when the other boys are saying disparaging things about Jessie, Evan defends her, as he did on other occasions (such as the WHJ club incident). Of course both children are miserable when they are at odds with one another and no longer have that close relationship that they once did. It is only when they realize what they truly have to lose that they are willing to work things out.

Through various spots in the story, it is evident that, despite Mr. Treski not being in the picture, they are a close family and often spend time together. While Mrs. Treski works very hard and is often not there to play referee, the other actions that she takes, for example, asking why the children are fighting, shows that she is very much involved and cares about keeping her family together and happy. When she finally lends a supportive ear to Jessie, who breaks down in tears and tells her about Evan 'hating her' Mrs. Treski is able to offer some comfort and to guide Jessie toward reconciliation.



Friendship

Throughout the book there are instances of having friends and making friends. A critical component to growing up is the ability to have friends and to keep them. This is something that, clearly, Jessie hasn't mastered and Evan has. It is only when Megan stops to explain to Jessie that she is a good person and worth being a friend to that Jessie begins to understand what it means to truly have a good friend. Likewise, both Jessie and Evan realize that friendship is an important part of living a happy life, as both brother and sister had been close friends as well.

The Lemonade War chronicles friendship, both between family members and those not in the family, and how the dynamics between people in these situations can be very different. Examples of good friends and bad friends, what the characteristics are for a good friend, as opposed to a bad friend, are exemplified and discussed. What emerges is that friendship is a necessary part of the human existence and attempting to live without it can make a person very unhappy.

Sibling Rivalry

The initiating conflict in the novel is the trouble that is caused when two siblings (Evan and Jessie) have a difference of opinion, perspective, and instead of opting to communicate their problems with one another, opt to take actions that will directly upset or offend the other. The novel explores the often complicated and complex relationships between siblings and the dynamic between brothers and sisters, as well as older to younger siblings. For example, Evan feels belittled when his younger sister is promoted into the same grade as he is. While he does well at school, academic success and high achievement have always been his sister's forte. Now, confronted with her talent as compared to his, he resents her and her abilities, whereas before, he was proud of her.

The dissension that occurs between brother and sister is also shown to be a series of escalating division. Often the author will have a character reflect with sadness back toward a time in the past when the siblings had been closer, and how they really longed for a return to this closeness. Pride, anger, and misunderstandings compound the problems inherent with siblings to bring the misunderstandings into a 'war' that they declare amongst themselves, bringing others into their competition.

In the end, sibling rivalry is defused when each realizes what they stand to lose and end up choosing each other rather than allowing the feud to continue any longer. Evan realizes this when he loses Jessie's money and finally understands that the competition has gone too far. Jessie realizes it when she starts to fight Evan and he doesn't even put up a fight. They realize that together they are stronger and they plan to get to the bottom of who might have taken Jessie's money from Evan's pockets.



Good Friends/Bad Friends

The theme of good friends and bad friends is explored in *The Lemonade War*. Jessie and Evan have both experienced bad friends; Evan with Scott, and Jessie with the girls in the second grade. Comparing and contrasting Megan to Scott the reader can see the characteristics of a good friend and the characteristics of a bad friend, which can lead to discussions and self exploration by the reader to see if they might fit into either category. The book suggests that someone who is supportive in the bad times, understanding in the down times, fun to be with during the happy times are what makes for a good friendship. Conversely, it is shown that a person who only thinks of themselves, how they look, or what they can get from someone is not a good person. A bad friend is someone that tries to put someone else down in order to make themselves look better or bigger. Both Evan and Jessie begin to understand this when they must deal with Scott and, for Jessie, Carly.

Styles

Point of View

The Lemonade War by Jacqueline Davies is told from two points of view, both of them third person, limited. First Evan's point of view is offered, and then in alternating chapters, his sister Jessie's viewpoint is explored. This allows the reader insight into both sides of the ensuing conflict. Both are strong primary characters, but if one had to pinpoint who the main character would be, one could make a good case for Evan. However, Jessie is such a strong secondary character that it is difficult to definitively categorize.

Language and Meaning

The use of language in this book is geared toward what an average 1st-3rd grader (U.S. based) would encounter. It is also excellent reading for a reluctant reader as the language is, for the most part, lively and humorous. At times the word selection that the author is limited to makes some of the interaction between brother and sister unrealistic, but overall the language is accessible to all readers, and is an enjoyable story.

Structure

The Lemonade War is separated into 14 chapters with an average length of 8 pages each. There are illustrations sprinkled throughout the story and has as one of its purposes the desire to make mathematics useful in a real life situation. Each chapter is also given a title that corresponds to the main action of the chapter, giving the reader a chance to exercise prediction skills.



Quotes

It was like having a chestful of bats, beating their wings, fighting to get out.

-- Evan (Chapter 1 paragraph Page 4)

Importance: Evan is explaining how he feels when his sister comes down into the basement and won't leave. He's upset about the letter and is feeling very resentful. The fact that he's in the basement, the lowest part of the house, also parallels his mood, and ties into the analogy of bats struggling to get out.

Evan knew he was being mean, and he hated being mean, especially to her.

-- Narrator (Chapter 1 paragraph Page 7)

Importance: This quote is important because it establishes how Evan felt toward his sister. The quote shows that he would much rather be her friend and brother rather than someone who is at odds with her, or a classmate, even. He is so humiliated that he can't think straight and even while he's being mean to Jessie, some part of him is appalled.

This is a puzzle, Jessie told herself. And I'm good at puzzles. But it was a puzzle about feelings, and Jessie knew that feelings were her weakest subject.

-- Jessie/Narrator (Chapter 2 paragraph Page 11)

Importance: This quote is important because it gives the reader a glimpse into Jessie's mind and feelings. She knows that she is good at being logical and solving puzzles, so equating her problem with Evan to a puzzle makes her believe that she can sort out what the problem is. Unfortunately, she lacks the maturity and experience to solve her own puzzle, in particular, she notes, because feelings and relationships are not her strong suit.

Evan, you and Jessie are going to be in the same class this year. You'll both have Mrs. Overton.

-- Mrs. Treski (Chapter 2 paragraph Page 13)

Importance: This quote is important because it is the initiating conflict, the thing that causes Evan to become resentful and angry toward Jessie.

Evan knew he was just joking, but this was exactly why he didn't like Scott. He was always thinking of himself.

-- Narrator (Chapter 3 paragraph Page 34)

Importance: This quote is important because it is one of the first early examples of what a bad friend acts like. Evan realizes this early on, but feels that he's stuck with Scott because everyone else is away on vacation.

Jessie had been waiting for this moment —the moment when Evan would see their lemonade stand, see the wonderful decorations they had made, see the crowds of



people waiting in line, see Megan Moriarty standing by her side. He would see it all and be so impressed.

-- Narrator (Chapter 4 paragraph Page 41)

Importance: This quote is very important because it shows how different from Evan's perspective Jessie's perception of the events are. She believes that she needs to prove herself to her brother, and all he wants is to feel as if he is capable of accomplishing something on his own. The fact that she's included Megan in the endeavor further infuriates Evan, instead of having the intended effect that Jessie thought it would have.

People tell you things," Evan had told her once, "with their hands and their faces and the way they stand. It's not just what they say. You gotta pay attention, Jess. You gotta watch for the things they're saying, not with their words.

-- Evan (Chapter 4 paragraph Page 50)

Importance: This quote is important because it shows that at some point Evan has been aware that Jessie wasn't good with social situations. This quote shows him trying to help her learn about how to communicate with people, to understand what they are saying without words.

She was always ahead when it was her turn to clear, but tonight it felt like she was taunting him. To Evan, every plate-scraping sounded like "Can't keep up. Can't keep up.

-- Narrator (Chapter 5 paragraph Page 59)

Importance: This quote shows how even little things, normal things, are being taken out of context by Evan. A simple chore that they did every evening has now become just another way for Jessie to make fun of him and make him feel humiliated.

This was exactly what drove Jessie crazy about girls. They always said things halfway and then expected you to get the other half. And Jessie never got the other half.

-- Narrator (Chapter 6 paragraph Page 71)

Importance: This shows how Jessie realizes her shortcomings with social situations, in particular in dealing with other girls. She admits to not being able to 'read between the lines' and doesn't get the innuendo and subtle cues that she says other girls practice.

She couldn't. That was the problem. No kid could earn a hundred dollars in just five days by selling lemonade. The profit margin was too small.

-- Narrator (Chapter 8 paragraph Page 105)

Importance: This quote is important because it indicates Jessie's inner turmoil. She is quite capable of doing the math to figure out that she's got to change her tactics if she wants to win. This shows Jessie's thought processes.

She looked . . . happy. Really happy. Like she'd just gotten an A+. Or like . . . like she'd just won a war.

-- Narrator (Chapter 9 paragraph Page 122)



Importance: This quote is important because it shows Evan's fear that his sister is going to best him, yet again, in something. The reference to an A+ on a paper indicates that he harbors resentment, not only for the lemonade war, but for her abilities at school.

Jessie felt the loss of her hard-earned money like a death, and she ripped into Evan with all the power in her body. She punched him. She kicked him. She threw her lock box at him. She wanted to tear him up into little pieces.

-- Narrator (Chapter 14 paragraph Page 163)

Importance: This quote is from the portion of the book where both children realize that the greater problem is the missing money, that the war got out of hand, and they call a truce.