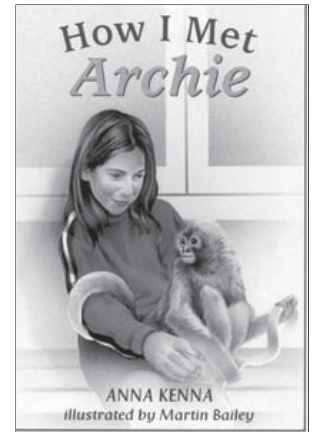


# How I Met Archie

by Anna Kenna

illustrated by Martin Bailey



## Book Summary

When Alice's mother gets a job as a newspaper reporter, Mrs. Lilly comes to take care of Alice after school. But Alice doesn't like the fact that her mom is working, and she makes things very difficult for Mrs. Lilly. Things change when Alice meets Archie, Mrs. Lilly's pet monkey.

## Features of the Book

- Six short chapters
- The theme of conflict
- Punctuation – ellipses, long dashes, parentheses
- The use of italics for emphasis
- Similes – *like a very dead rat*; *howling like a werewolf*
- Illustrations that support the text
- The slang used by Alice – *no way*, *gross*, *take it easy*, *stink*, *cool*

## Purpose

*How I Met Archie* can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- S** relating ideas and events in the text to students' experiences;
- S** supporting interpretations with examples from the text;
- S** interpreting and analyzing characters' feelings, relationships, and actions;
- S** exploring the author's choice of language.

## The Guided Reading Lesson

- S** Relating ideas and events in the text to students' experiences
- S** Supporting interpretations with examples from the text
- S** Interpreting and analyzing characters' feelings, relationships, and actions

## Introducing the text

Discuss with the students any events or situations at home or school when they have been unhappy with a decision, such as a family vacation they haven't wanted to go on or their mom or dad going out and leaving them with a baby-sitter.

- *How did you feel when that happened? What did you say/do?*
- *How did you feel later on? Did your feelings change?*

Look at the front and back cover of the book and discuss the illustrations and the blurb with the students.

- *What can you predict from the cover pictures and the blurb on the back cover?*
- *Who do you think Archie might be?*
- *Where might the story be set for a monkey to be one of the characters?*

Discuss the students' predictions, including how the problem involving Alice and Mrs. Lilly might develop.

## Reading and discussing the text

Ask the students to read chapter 1 independently.

- *As you read, think about how Alice might be feeling.*
- *What do her actions and speech tell you?*

When discussing the story and characters in chapter 1, encourage the students to relate what happens to Alice to a similar experience of their own or to a situation discussed earlier. Encourage them to talk about feelings such as anger and sadness and wanting to change a situation.

- *What made Alice feel the way she did?*
- *Why didn't she want her mom to have a new job?*
- *How do you feel about the way she treated Mrs. Lilly?*

As a group, the students could share what they did when they met a new word in the first chapter. This provides the opportunity for reviewing and extending the strategies that the students employ when using context to solve unfamiliar words.

The students can now read the rest of the story independently.

- *Think about how Alice's feelings changed. When did Alice begin to feel that things weren't as bad as she first thought?*

When the students have finished reading, encourage discussion of the purpose-setting question above.

- *Have you ever been in a similar situation? What happened?*
- *Did things get better for you as they did for Alice?*

Reread Alice's discussion with Mom on page 31.

- *How do you think Alice felt when she realized that she was wrong in her feelings about Mrs. Lilly?*

Ask the students to support their answers by showing words and phrases or illustrations from the text.



## Revisiting the Text


The suggested activities below can be used immediately after the guided reading lesson if appropriate or could be taken as a mini-lesson at a later time.

### **S** Interpreting and analyzing characters' feelings, relationships, and actions

Discuss the ways that the characters in the story show their feelings, for example, in the last paragraph of page 10.

- *How is Alice showing how she feels here?*  
(She pretends she is uninterested and pulls the covers up. She is shutting her mother out, telling her to go away.)

Discuss how communication can be verbal and nonverbal – we use body language as well as the things we say.

 Look through the story again together. Ask the students to locate and note other examples of characters using actions to show how they feel, for example, Alice rolling her eyes on page 4, slamming the car door on page 5, or putting on her Walkman on page 9 and Mr. Styles standing with his hands on his hips on page 26.

- *What do these actions mean? Can we show them in other ways?*

Ask the students to choose three examples of actions and to use them to complete the blackline master on page 69.

### **S** Exploring the author's choice of language

One of the ways that an author can make a story more real is to use informal language. This can help the reader to relate to the situation and characters more readily and makes the story more believable.

- *What do you notice about the way Alice speaks?*
- *Can you find some examples of things she says that you might say yourself?*

 Ask the students to record their suggestions.

- *How would you explain what these words mean to a person from another country or generation?*

Encourage the students to compare the ways in which these words are used in the text with their literal meanings. Discuss how the use of words changes and how different words get used for the same purpose in each generation.