

## Parent & Daughter Book Club: Grades 2 & 3      November 2016

### *Keena Ford and the Second-Grade Mix-Up* by Melissa Thomson

Like many children, Keena Ford is prone to mistakes and misunderstandings. From leaving her homework out in the rain to losing her temper with a classmate, Keena's struggles make her relatable to young readers.

In our conversation with kids as we read this book, we can help them to remember that **making a mistake doesn't make a person bad**. Keena is a good person - caring, loyal, and creative - and the fact that she makes mistakes doesn't change that. The question is, **what does a person do after she has made a mistake?** Ignore it, or take responsibility?

In this story, Keena learns that her good intentions do not excuse her from taking responsibility for her mistakes. Her actions affect those around her, and the longer she refuses to acknowledge her mistake (in this case, incorrectly telling her teacher that her birthday was the next day), the more harmful those consequences are.

Keena eventually apologizes for her mistakes, but she worries that her relationship with her teacher might be permanently damaged. Miss Campbell's positive response teaches Keena (and reminds us all) that people who care about her will forgive her when she takes responsibility with a heartfelt apology. When you talk about this story in your book clubs, it might be a good time for members to share anecdotes about mistakes they've made, and how they've accepted responsibility.

Now that you're in your second meeting, participants will likely feel comfortable sharing their opinions. **If anyone in the group seems still feels shy or uncertain, make sure that other members reach out to purposefully include those people.** Girls should see their parents modeling this inclusive behavior. Adults can also coach and encourage girls to extend that inclusiveness.

**In the following pages, you'll find suggestions for how your second meeting could go.**

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### **Munch 'n' Chat, 20-30 minutes**

As parents and girls arrive, think about allowing some time for snacking and catching up. Snacks don't have to be fancy at all, it can be as simple as a picnic blanket in the backyard, or sitting around the coffee table eating popcorn and lemonade.

### **Ice-Breaker, 10-15 minutes**

Start with a check-in about leadership goals. Did anyone try public speaking over the past month? Give a few minutes to share experiences.

If there's time, pairs might ask each other questions, such as: **"Where do you like to read?"** Give five minutes for discussion. (These could be parent-daughter pairs, or you could decide to mix up pairs.) Then, give 5-10 minutes for sharing each other's answers.

### **Book Discussion, 30 minutes or so**

#### **Open-Ended Questions**

Open-ended questions are a good springboard to book talk because they allow readers to bring up any part of the book that made an impression, confused, delighted, or inspired them. If you started with an open-ended question in the first meeting, you might ask the same question this time or try a different one from the list below. Any question that gets parents and daughters sharing is a good question.

#### **Here are some useful open-ended questions:**

- What was your favorite part of the book? If you have the book with you, read a paragraph or two of your favorite part aloud. Why was that particular part so powerful or memorable?
- Which part of the book felt important or gave you a Big Idea?

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- Was any part of the book confusing? Was your confusion cleared up by the end of the book, or not?
- How is the main character like you, and how is she different? Would you have handled the situations in the story differently than she did?
- What did the main character learn in this story, if anything?

### Questions About *Keena Ford and the Second-Grade Mix-Up*

These questions about *Keena Ford and the Second-Grade Mix-Up* might help you begin your book talk. Some groups might have time to get to all of these questions, but many groups might pick one or two questions and spend the whole meeting discussing those. Feel free to write your own discussion questions.

- Keena starts her story by saying that she is writing in a journal. Do you write in a journal? How do you express your feelings?
- What are some of the behaviors for which Keena gets into trouble? Do you ever get into trouble without meaning to?
- Why does Keena think she will hate 2nd grade? Can you think of a time when you were sure you would hate something and you actually loved it?
- When Miss Campbell announces that the next day is Keena's birthday, why doesn't Keena correct her?
- Keena's original mistake (writing the date wrong) is an accident. What does Keena do to make the mistake worse? What *could* she have done to make it better?
- Keena apologizes by letter. What do you think about apologizing by letter compared with apologizing in person? Which is harder to do? Which is more effective?
- Who are the most important people to Keena? How do those relationships affect her life? Who are the people that affect and influence your life the most?

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### **Leadership Goals, 15 minutes**

When Keena knows she's made an awful mistake, she decides to write letters to apologize. What are some brave conversations people have, other than apologizing? Can you think of a brave conversation you have had recently, or one that you need to have? This could be bringing attention to a bad situation, disagreeing with someone else's opinion, or asking for something that you need. The other person might surprise you with a positive response, just like Miss Campbell did!

Participants can talk to each other in pairs or as a whole group. Think about setting a goal for the next month. For instance, you might try to find three opportunities to practice brave conversations. This goes for parents, too! Report back to the club next month.

### **Closing, 5 minutes**

Before everyone goes off their separate ways, make sure you've chosen a date for your December meeting. Happy reading!