

**Background Knowledge:**

Many students and young children struggle with controlling emotions due to a wide variety of reasons. This book offers simple teaching tips about one of the most powerful strategies for behavior control—a simple breath.

Brain research has revealed that the neural pathways of stress and learning are actually the same pathways. No learning can take place when these pathways are blocked. Incorporating simple breathing exercises into every day life can be a difference maker in the life of students or other young children.

In addition to this, teaching about the brain can open up conversations about learning, behavior, and goal setting for students about each main part of their brain.

Besides the brain research, this book is full of teachable moments and cross curricular connections. This teaching guide offers some ideas about incorporating academic standards in before, during and after reading activities.

I hope you enjoy reading the book as much as I enjoyed writing it!

-Beth

**Author:** Beth Bean

**Illustrator:** Jeremy Lytle

**Book Summary:**

Petunia Skunk's smelly tail is out of control! Mrs. Whooo, her wise teacher, swoops in and teaches her about the reason why she sprays so often. Armed with knowledge, Petunia begins to practice a simple strategy to get her stinky tail under control.

**Before Reading:**

- **Talk about the name of the book, The Stinky Thinky Tale.**

Discuss the rhyming words stinky and thinky. What is a rhyming word? Can you think of any more rhyming words?

- **Predict:**

What do you think the story will be about?

Have you ever seen a skunk?

What do you know about skunks?

Looking at the cover illustration, do you think this is a fiction or non-fiction story?

- **Preview illustrations:**

What materials do you think the illustrators used to create the pictures?

What other materials can be used to create book illustrations?

Note: The illustrations of the book are purposefully designed to be very kid-friendly, non-computer generated images using markers, colored pencils, and regular pencil. The idea is to make young readers aware that illustration is accessible to them immediately with the materials they have on hand now!



## **During Reading:**

The book can be used as a tool to discuss/review the following English Language Arts examples:

- Alliteration

Many of the names (Beth Bean, Buster Buzzard, Ramble Raccoon, Patrick Possum are all examples of alliteration). Students could make their name into an alliteration example by placing an adjective in front of their first name!

Teaching tip: For younger children, you would talk about the first sounds being the same as a foundational skill for alliteration that comes in older grades.

- Critical Thinking

Have children come up with other ways a pineapple, pig, and peach are alike. You might be surprised by the answers!

- Similes

The comparison of a brain to a pineapple, pig, and peach is a simile because it uses the word as to compare the objects directly. Challenge older students to come up with their own similes for the brain. They might need to do a little research to complete the task!

- Personification

The book is full of examples of personification. For older students, they can list examples. For younger students, discuss how the animals in the story act like humans.

## **After Reading:**

### **Responding to Text Through Writing**

Story Starter Ideas:

What could the animals have done to make Petunia feel connected at school?

Out of the animals introduced in the book, which one would you like to be your friend?

Would you like Mrs. Whoo to be your teacher? Why or why not?

Which of the animals do you think should be featured in the next book in the series?

Why do you think Petunia thought this was going to be the best year of school ever?

Write about a time you felt out of control. How did you get back in control?

What are some things you can do to help your brain grow?



## **Guided Writing Practice**

Younger students need practice simply getting words on paper. Using the “Can, Have, Are” format guide students into completing the provided template (pg. 4 of this guide). Using this as a guide, they can practice conventional writing standards in a scaffolded environment to feel writing success.

Teaching Tip: To encourage excellent handwriting, provide the incentive of tracing best handwriting in Sharpie after you evaluate it. Encourage the practice of best handwriting from the very beginning in order for bad habits not to form.

## **Social/Emotional Learning**

- The five core competencies of social/emotional learning, according to Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) are:
  - Self-awareness
  - Self-management
  - Social awareness
  - Relationship skills
  - Responsible decision-making
- Self-management is a core social-emotional competency addressed in this book. Discuss with students the importance of controlling impulses and self-discipline. Use the strategies found in the back of the book to start incorporating this vocabulary into every day classroom life.
- Recognizing emotions is important in the core competency of self-awareness and social awareness. Discuss the Petunia felt in the book and have students complete the “Emotion Comprehension” template found on page 5 of this guide. Emotional connections students make to text can lead to better comprehension and summarization of the story. On the left side of the page, encourage students to draw pictures of Petunia's emotions from the story. Then, summarize the story using the lines on the right. Teaching tip: Older students might enjoy creating Petunia emojis instead of drawing pictures from the story.
- Petunia's classmates did not treat her very well. This part of the book can lead to a discussion about the core competency of relationship skills and social awareness. Everyone is different, and differences are what makes people unique. This can also be a stepping stone to discuss how differences can lead to bullying and different ways her classmates could have acted. Introduce the concept of empathy.
- The teaching strategy introduced by Mrs. Whooo was one way Petunia could begin to make responsible decisions when she realized she was in charge of herself. Discuss with the students about possible problems they may face, and brainstorm solutions to some of the problems. You may also consider introducing a journal to students as a reflection tool, depending on the dynamic of your classroom.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



# Brains



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**have**

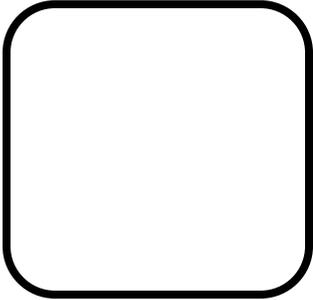
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**are**

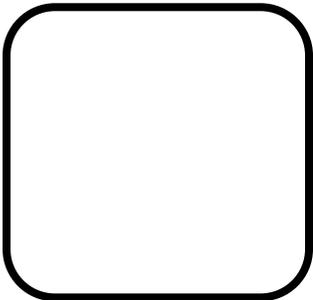
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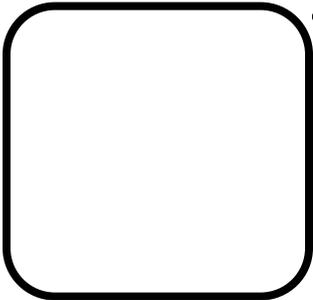
# Emotion Comprehension



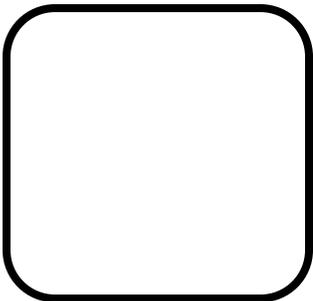
**First,** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Next,** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Then,** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Finally,** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Coming Soon...**

**\*Math Connections**

**Featuring a Petunia the Skunk Glyph!**

**\*Art Connection**

**Featuring goal setting involving the prefrontal cortex, hippocampus, and amygdala.**