

TEACHER LESSON PLAN

Duh Bruh 1: Three is NOT a Crowd

By Maria Rinaldi Hueseman

Social-Emotional Learning | Grades 3–5

AT A GLANCE

OVERVIEW	DETAILS
Book	Duh Bruh 1: Three is NOT a Crowd
Author	Maria Rinaldi Hueseman
Grade Level	3rd – 5th Grade (Ages 8–11)
Subject Areas	ELA / Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) / Health
Lesson Duration	5 sessions (45–60 min each) — can be condensed to 3
Core Theme	Inclusion, friendship, jealousy, empathy, and conflict resolution
Materials Needed	Book, journals/notebooks, pencils, whiteboard, printed S.O.A.R. template (optional)

STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

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CCSS ELA	RL.3-5.1 – Ask/answer questions; RL.3-5.3 – Character traits & responses; RL.3-5.6 – Point of view; W.3-5.1 – Opinion writing; SL.3-5.1 – Collaborative discussion
CASEL SEL	Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, Responsible Decision-Making
Health/Wellness	Emotional regulation strategies, stress management, healthy peer relationships

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

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1	Identify the emotions characters experience and connect them to their own experiences with friendship and jealousy.
2	Analyze how Paisley, Poppy, and Pat each respond to conflict and evaluate whether those responses are effective.
3	Practice at least two breathing/calming strategies introduced in the book.
4	Use the S.O.A.R. framework to work through a real or imagined social problem.
5	Write a journal entry reflecting on a time they felt jealous or left out, applying the book's strategies.
6	Demonstrate empathy by role-playing a difficult social scenario from another character's perspective.

KEY VOCABULARY

Pre-teach these words before or during reading. Encourage students to use them in discussions and writing throughout the unit.

WORD	STUDENT-FRIENDLY DEFINITION	FROM THE BOOK
Jealousy	An uncomfortable feeling when you think someone has something you want, or fear losing someone important to you.	Paisley admits she gets "pretty jealous" when Poppy has playdates with others.
Empathy	Being able to understand and share how another person feels — walking in their shoes.	Paisley tells Poppy: "She needs to put herself in Pat's shoes."
Conflict	A disagreement or argument between people.	Poppy and Paisley's fight at recess is the main conflict.
Brainstorm	To think of lots of ideas quickly without judging them right away.	Paisley steps away and brainstorms how to fix the situation.
Vow	A very serious promise you make to yourself or others.	Poppy makes herself a vow never to act meanly again.
Comfort Zone	The familiar, safe space where you feel at ease — things you already know and do.	The book encourages readers to "get out of your

		comfort zone" to grow.
Resolution	The way a problem or conflict is finally solved.	The three friends working things out at recess is the story's resolution.
Regulate	To manage or control your feelings so they don't take over your actions.	Breathing exercises help characters regulate their emotions.

SESSION-BY-SESSION PLANS

SESSION 1: Let's Meet Paisley & Talk About Friendship (45–60 min)		
Hook (5 min)	Ask: "Who has a best friend? What makes them YOUR person?" Give students 60 seconds to write one word that describes their BFF. Share out.	
Read Aloud (15 min)	Read from the beginning through "My BFF is Poppy" and the sections on jealousy and journaling. Stop to ask: 'Why do you think Paisley gets jealous even when she does the same thing?'	
Discussion (10 min)	Q1: Is it normal to feel jealous of your best friend? Q2: Why might it be hard to admit you're jealous? Q3: What do YOU do when a big feeling won't go away at night?	
Activity (15 min)	FIRST JOURNAL ENTRY: Students write about a time they felt jealous or left out. Prompt: 'What happened? How did it feel in your body? What did you do?' Use the book's journaling tips on the board.	
Wrap-Up (5 min)	Share: The author says journaling helps 'get the noise out of your head.' Homework: Notice one BIG feeling this week and jot it down.	

SESSION 2: Enter Pat — The Problem Begins (45–60 min)		
Warm-Up (5 min)	Share homework feelings. Ask: 'Did anyone notice a big feeling this week?'	
Read Aloud (15 min)	Read from "The New Kid: Pat" through the recess fight. Use voice changes for Poppy's whispered rude comments vs. Paisley's internal thoughts.	
Discussion (10 min)	Q1: Why do you think Poppy reacted so negatively to Pat? Q2: Was Poppy being a 'mean girl' — or was she scared of something? Q3: Should Paisley have left with Pat? Why or why not?	

Activity: Freeze Frame (15 min)	In groups of 3, students act out the recess scene. Freeze at the moment Poppy says 'I'm so annoyed.' Each person says ONE word about what their character is feeling. Debrief: 'Whose perspective was hardest to play?'
Wrap-Up (5 min)	Quick write: 'If you were Pat, what would you be thinking right now?'

SESSION 3: Breathing, Brainstorming & Solving It (45–60 min)

Warm-Up: Breathe Together (10 min)	Teach all 4 breathing techniques from the book: Balloon Breathing, Star Breathing, Snake Breathing, Box Breathing. Have students vote on their favorite. Post results on board.
Read Aloud (10 min)	Read from 'Getting Some Air' through 'Mission Accomplished.' Pause at 'Why am I acting like there's only room for two?' — let students respond.
Discussion (10 min)	Q1: How did stepping away help Paisley think more clearly? Q2: What does it mean to 'take sides' — and why does it feel like there has to be a winner? Q3: What made Poppy finally change her mind?
S.O.A.R. Activity (15 min)	Give students the S.O.A.R. template (or draw it). Apply it to Paisley's situation together: Situation (recess fight), Ownership (what could each person have done differently?), Actions (what Paisley actually did), Results (what she hoped for). Then students fill in their OWN S.O.A.R. for a real or made-up problem.
Wrap-Up (5 min)	Share out one S.O.A.R. from a volunteer.

SESSION 4: Pat's Sketchbook & The Soccer Connection (45–60 min)

Read Aloud (10 min)	Read from 'Pat's Sketchbook' through 'Three is Not a Crowd.' Include the 'Duh Bruh De-Brief' list at the end.
Discussion (10 min)	Q1: What changed Poppy's mind about Pat? Q2: What does it mean that Poppy 'connects the dots from Art Club and gets feels about earlier'? Q3: The book says 'making new friends while keeping old friends is simple if you let it happen.' Do you agree?
Creative Activity (20 min)	CHOICE BOARD — students pick ONE: A) Draw a comic strip showing the recess conflict and its resolution. B) Write a diary entry from Poppy's point of view the night after meeting Pat. C) Design a 'New Friend Checklist' of what YOU look for in a new friend vs. a best friend. D) Write a short sequel: What do Paisley, Poppy, and Pat do the next weekend?
Share (10 min)	Gallery walk or partner share of creative work.
Wrap-Up (5 min)	Read aloud the 'Duh Bruh De-Brief' list together. Students circle the ONE tip they most need to work on personally.

SESSION 5: Reflect, Write & Celebrate (45–60 min)

Warm-Up (5 min)	Revisit: 'What is the main message of this book in ONE sentence?' Students write it, share with a partner.
Opinion Writing (25 min)	WRITING TASK: 'Was Poppy's jealousy understandable, or was she just being mean? Use evidence from the book to support your opinion.' Introduce claim, 2 pieces of text evidence, and a conclusion. Students draft independently.
Peer Response (10 min)	Swap papers. Readers write: 'I agree/disagree because...' and give one specific piece of feedback.
Closing Circle (10 min)	Each student completes ONE of these sentence starters aloud: 'Before reading this book I thought... but now I think...' OR 'One thing I'm going to try when I feel jealous is...' OR 'The character I related to most was ____ because...'

DISCUSSION QUESTION BANK

Use these questions across sessions or for small group reading circles:

Comprehension

- Why does Paisley want to befriend Pat even though Poppy is reluctant?
- What does Poppy say about Pat behind his back? How might Pat have felt?
- What strategies does Paisley use to calm herself down before talking to Poppy again?
- How does the soccer connection help Poppy and Pat bond?

Inference & Analysis

- Why does Poppy get so upset — is it really about Pat, or is something else going on?
- The author says 'It was uncomfortable until it wasn't.' What does this mean? Can you think of a time that was true for you?
- Why do you think Poppy makes a vow to herself rather than just saying sorry to Pat?

Text-to-Self Connections

- Have you ever felt like Paisley — caught in the middle between two people?
- Have you ever judged someone before getting to know them, like Poppy did? What happened?
- Which of the De-Brief tips do you already use? Which is hardest for you?

Critical Thinking

- The book's message is 'the more the merrier.' Do you agree? Are there times when having a smaller friend group is better?
- Is Paisley a good friend? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
- If you could add one more tip to the 'Duh Bruh De-Brief' list, what would it be and why?

ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

ASSESSMENT TYPE	TASK	WHAT TO LOOK FOR
Formative	Journal entry (Session 1)	Personal connection to emotions; honest reflection; use of descriptive language
Formative	S.O.A.R. template (Session 3)	Accurate identification of situation; thoughtful ownership; realistic action steps
Formative	Discussion participation	Use of evidence from text; empathy in perspective-taking; respectful dialogue
Summative	Creative project (Session 4)	Depth of character understanding; connection to themes; creativity and effort
Summative	Opinion essay (Session 5)	Clear claim; 2+ text-based reasons; logical conclusion; conventions
Self-Assessment	De-Brief list reflection	Honest self-identification of an area for growth

DIFFERENTIATION STRATEGIES

SUPPORT (Below Grade)	ON GRADE LEVEL	ENRICHMENT (Above Grade)
Provide sentence frames for journal entries and discussions (e.g., 'I felt ____ when ____ because ____'.)	Standard activities as written in each session plan.	Research what psychologists say about jealousy in friendships; write a 'Dear Paisley' advice column response.
Use the S.O.A.R. template with pre-filled 'Situation' and guided questions for each box.	Complete all four S.O.A.R. boxes independently.	Extend S.O.A.R.: Add a fifth box — 'What I learned about myself in this situation.'
For the opinion essay, provide a graphic organizer with Claim / Reason 1 / Reason 2 / Conclusion boxes.	Draft and revise opinion essay with peer feedback.	Turn the opinion essay into a persuasive speech delivered to the class.

EXTENSION & ENRICHMENT IDEAS

EXTENSION IDEA	DESCRIPTION
Class Breathing Wall	Create a poster of all 4 breathing techniques with student-illustrated visuals. Post in the classroom as a calming resource.
Book Talk Video	Students record a 60-second 'book talk' recommending Duh Bruh 1 to a friend.
Friendship Pledge	Class writes and signs a collective 'inclusion pledge' inspired by Poppy's vow.
Duh Bruh 2 Preview	Read the back-cover description of Book 2 (Sticks and Stones) and predict: What new challenges might come up?
School Counselor Visit	Invite the school counselor to lead a 15-minute discussion on coping strategies and making new friends.
Family Connection	Send home the De-Brief list and S.O.A.R. template; encourage families to try them together.

TEACHER NOTES & TIPS

Sensitive Topics to Watch For

- Jealousy and friendship exclusion can be very personal. Some students may share painful experiences. Validate feelings without judgment and consider referring students to the school counselor if they share something significant.
- The term 'mean girl' appears in the text. Use this as a teaching moment: discuss how behavior — not people — can be 'mean,' and how anyone can make choices to do better.

Classroom Culture

- Establish a class agreement before beginning: what students share during discussions stays in the room (within safe limits). This encourages honest reflection.
- Model vulnerability: share your own age-appropriate example of jealousy or a time you had to step outside to calm down.

About the Breathing Exercises

- Practice the breathing techniques yourself before teaching them. Star Breathing (tracing the hand) is typically the easiest entry point for reluctant students.
- Consider making one breathing technique a daily classroom ritual during this unit — even 60 seconds at the start of class builds the habit.

The S.O.A.R. Framework

- S.O.A.R. is a powerful problem-solving scaffold students can use well beyond this book. Consider laminating copies for student desks or posting it in a classroom calming corner.

For more FREE activities, visit www.duhbruh.com | Lesson plan designed for classroom use.