



Polly and Buster The Wayward Witch and the Feelings Monster

Written and illustrated by Sally Rippin

Chapter One

- What are the ways that Polly struggles when she is trying to do a spell?
- Look at the picture on page four. Can you tell how Polly feels by looking at this picture? What are the clues in the picture that make you think this?
- Why doesn't Polly ask Valentine for help?
- When has feeling embarrassed stopped you from doing something?

Chapter Two

- Why do Polly and Buster pretend not to be friends with each other?
- What is Polly and Buster's secret call? Have you ever had a special call or code that you've used to communicate with friends?
- What makes Buster notice that something's wrong with Polly?
- What happens to Buster when he feels happy or sad? Could his reactions be a metaphor for how big you feel when you're happy or sad? (You may need to explain "metaphor" first, if students are unfamiliar with this literary device.)
- How does Buster make Polly feel better?
- How are Polly and Buster the same? How are they different?

Chapter Three

- How does Winifred make Polly look bad? Why do you think she does this?
- Why doesn't Polly's mom want Polly to play with Buster?
- How do you think Polly feels around her family?

Chapter Four

- How is Buster's house different from Polly's house? How does this make her feel?
- What does Buster's mom say about unlovable monsters?
- Do you think monsters (at least in this book) are thought to be bad? Why do witches feel ashamed of being seen with them?

Chapter Five

- When Polly gets home from Buster's house, what is on the television? What does this tell you about Polly's mom and sister?
- How does watching *Nastiest Witch on the Block* make Polly feel? What is unusual about this?
- Have you ever felt different from everyone around you? Did it feel bad, or good?
- Should Polly try harder to fit in with other witches?

Chapter Six

- What makes Polly think that this will be a good day? What other things make you think of a good day?
- What words does the author use to show how Polly is feeling?
- What is the first bad thing to happen?
- What do you think a monsters' "place" is in the sentence: "After all, a monster must always know their place?"



Chapter Seven

- Why do you think no one ever sits next to Polly on the bus? How does this make her feel?
- What is Polly good at?
- Why does Polly think she's bad at spells? What does Miss Spinnaker think will help?
- What does Polly learn about Miss Spinnaker that surprises her?
- What are the rules for Polly's field trip? What rules do you have when you go on a field trip? Why do we have these rules?
- Why do you think Miss Spinnaker puts Polly and Malorie together at the head of the line?

Chapter Eight

- Who is on the new bus? Why does this make Polly anxious?
- What does Miss Spinnaker say about monsters?
- What does Polly notice in the painting? What is unusual about this?
- How do Malorie and Polly work together?

Chapter Nine

- Why does Polly want to go upstairs when she sees the monsters?
- What makes Buster shrink?
- Do you think that Polly is right to be angry with Buster?
- Why are the other monsters teasing Buster? What does Polly do when she sees this happening?

Chapter Ten

- Why is Polly afraid of her power? What does Miss Spinnaker say about it? Where do you think it came from?
- How does Miss Spinnaker feel about monsters mixing with witches?
- Who did Malorie think Polly's spell was to protect? Who was it really for?
- How does Miss Spinnaker define "being a hero"? Can you think of other qualities that would make someone a hero?
- What will the Committee think about the unsupervised monsters at the gallery? What could this mean for Polly and Buster?

Chapter Eleven

- How did Buster look when Polly pretended not to know him?
- Why does Winifred suddenly take an interest in Polly?
- Is Winifred being mean to Polly? Why?

Chapter Twelve

- Why does Buster come to check on Polly? How is this visit different from when Winifred checked on her?
- What is Buster being called at school? What does it mean? Is it a nice name?
- Why is Buster disappointed?
- Is Polly being a good friend to Buster?

Chapter Thirteen

- How does Polly feel about seeing Doctor Firestone?
- What is Samba?
- What instructions does Doctor Firestone give Polly to make her feel better?



Chapter Fourteen

- Who is Polly's visitor?
- Which parts of the newspaper article about Polly are not true?
- What does Malorie give Polly as a gift?
- Is Malorie Polly's best friend?
- How does Malorie act when she realizes that Buster and Polly are friends? Is this the way a best friend would act?
- What does Polly say to make Malorie still like her? Why is it so important to her to be friends with Malorie?

Chapter Fifteen

- What new club has Malorie started? What kinds of things do you think the club will do?
- How do you think it will make Buster feel if he sees Polly wearing a badge?
- Are monsters dangerous? Why do Malorie and her friends believe they are?

Chapter Sixteen

- Why does Polly feel lucky? Is she really lucky?
- When does the attention start to make Polly feel uncomfortable? Why do you think this is?
- How does Polly feel when she gets tagged as a monster in the game? Is it really just a game?

Chapter Seventeen

- What makes someone a true friend? Why is Malorie not a true friend? Has Polly been a true friend to Buster?
- What does Polly do to show that she is a true friend to Buster?
- How do other students show Polly that she isn't alone?

Chapter Eighteen

- What happens when Polly calls Buster? Why doesn't he come?
- Why does Polly feel that the meeting at the Town Hall is her fault? Is there anything she could do to make things better?
- What is the special gift that Polly's father left her? What makes it so precious?

Chapter Nineteen

- Why is Buster in trouble?
- Why does Winifred want Polly to help Buster?
- What does Polly think will happen if the witches see the bite on her arm?
- Where do you think Polly's magic comes from?

Chapter Twenty

- What does Polly notice about Buster when she opens her eyes? What does this mean?
- How does Polly know that Buster has forgiven her?

Chapter Twenty-One

- What do Polly and Buster need to keep them afloat?
- How did Polly and Buster rescue each other?



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- Why is Polly glad when Miss Spinnaker shows up? What do you remember from earlier in the book that helps Polly know she is safe to trust?

Chapter Twenty-Two

- Why is Miss Spinnaker angry that Mrs. Halloway pointed a wand at Polly?
- How many spells has Polly done outside of school? What will happen if she does any more?
- Can you guess what the special thing Polly's father gave her was?

Chapter Twenty-Three

- What are the stones that Polly's father gave her?
- What does Polly realize when she holds the stones?
- What is special about Polly and Buster?

Teacher Tips adapted from Teachers Notes, written by Bec Kavanagh, with thanks to Hardie Grant Egmont AU



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Feelings flow chart:

In Chapter One, Polly feels embarrassed at the thought of having to ask Valentine for help, she feels a fiery rage when Malorie laughs at her, and she feels ashamed at having let Miss Spinnaker down again.

- Make a list of the ways the author describes these feelings in the text. Look for clues about how Polly feels physically and the kinds of words used to describe her feelings.
- For each of these three feelings, make a cause-and-effect flowchart using the prompts below:
 - What happens?
 - How does it make Polly feel?
 - What does she do in response to her feelings?
 - What impact do her actions have on the way others feel?
- Think of a time when you've felt the way Polly has felt. Make a cause-and-effect flowchart of what happened. Use this to write a scene as if you were the author telling a story. Think about the way the author of Polly's story has described Polly's feelings.
- Share your stories with your classmates and talk about how you could have handled your feelings differently to change what happened afterwards.

Create a body map of your feelings:

In Chapter Two, the author writes that Polly cares "secretly, deep down in that small place at the bottom of her tummy ..."

- On a large piece of paper, draw the outline of your body. Make a list of ten feelings, using a different color to write each one.
- On your piece of paper, color in the part of your body you feel each feeling in, using the same color you used to write them.

Keep a feelings journal:

- Make a list of the feelings you read about in the book. Write each feeling at the top of a new page.
- Whenever you feel one of the feelings, write (or draw) the memory into your feelings journal.
- At the end of the project, choose one example from your feelings journal that you would like to illustrate and share with the rest of the class.

Story through pictures:

In Polly and Buster, we can see what Buster looks like when he is sad in the pictures, or we can imagine the night sky when the writing becomes white on a black page.

- Choose another scene from the story and illustrate it, thinking about the hints in the text that tell you what the picture should look like.
- What can you add to your picture to make readers understand what's happening in the story by looking at it?

Magic:

Witches and monsters might not exist in real life, but we feel a connection to Polly and Buster because we have similar experiences in our own lives.



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- Talk about empathizing with others in class, and about the importance of being able to imagine yourself in someone else's shoes.
 - Think of something that's happened in your life, and try to turn it into an imaginary story like Polly and Buster – the characters could be animals, you could include magic – just use your imagination!

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