



**ABOUT THE BOOK:**

Mr. Cooper’s class gets a snake as a class pet. They name the snake Bob and learn that he eats live toads. Gross! Then Mr. Cooper lets his students bring their own pets to school, including a skunk that smells so bad everyone has to leave the building. When Andrea brings her dog, Cupcake, to class, it looks like Cupcake might have scared Bob to death. Don’t worry! It turns out Bob the snake was only playing possum.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Do the kids in Mr. Cooper’s class have a class pet? What pet do they have? What other pets come to visit Mr. Cooper’s class? What happens to each pet when it comes to school? *Common Core State Standards (Reading: Literature): RL.K.1., RL.1.1., RL.2.1., RL.3.1.*
2. What did you learn about the kids in Mr. Cooper’s class? How are they like the kids you know? How are they different? Which character in the story is the most like you? *Common Core State Standards (Reading: Literature): RL.K.1., RL.K.3., RL.1.3., RL.1.7., RL.2.1., RL.2.7., RL.3.3.*
3. The words and illustrations in this story tell us about Mr. Cooper. What can you tell about him by looking at the illustrations? What do you learn about him by reading the words? Do you think you would like to be in Mr. Cooper’s class? Explain why or why not. *Common Core State Standards (Reading: Literature): RL.K.7., RL.1.7., RL.2.7., RL.3.7.*
4. “No fair!” “Tough luck.” “Fat chance.” “Bummer.” “Back off.” “Not on your life.” These are all expressions used in this story. What does each of these expressions mean? What are some other expressions you know? *Common Core State Standards (Reading: Literature): RL.K.1., RL.1.1., RL.2.1., RL.3.1.; (Language): L.K.6., L.1.6., L.2.6., L.3.6.*

*Common Core State Standards (Speaking and Listening) that discussions might also address: SL.K.1.a.–b., SL.K.2., SL.K.6., SL.1.1.a.–c., SL.1.2., SL.1.6., SL.2.1.a.–c., SL.2.2., SL.2.6., SL.3.1.a.–d., SL.3.6.*

**EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:**

**The Best Pet:** Would you rather have a snake or a bunny for a class pet? Or would you rather have a different animal as a pet in your class? Think about the kinds of animals that make good class pets. Choose the animal you think makes the best class pet. Then make a poster to convince others that your pet is the best pet. *Common Core State Standards (Writing): W.K.1., W.1.1., W.2.1., W.3.1.*

**Fiction and Fact:** This is a fictional (made-up) story, but it does contain some facts (true statements) about hognose snakes. Make a Fiction and Fact chart, and write or dictate examples of each kind of detail from the story in the correct section of the chart. *Common Core State Standards (Reading: Literature): RL.K.1., RL.1.1., RL.2.1., RL.3.1.; (Writing): W.K.2., W.1.2., W.2.2., W.3.2.a.–d.*

**Funny Business:** Author Dan Gutman and illustrator Jim Paillot have each helped to make this book funny. How do the words add humor to the book? How do the illustrations add humor? Maybe you will make people laugh for a living when you grow up! Try it out now by writing or dictating a funny story, then draw a funny picture to go with it. Or draw the funny picture first and then write or dictate a funny story to go with the picture. Either way, see if you can make someone smile! *Common Core State Standards (Reading: Literature): RL.K.7., RL.1.7., RL.2.7., RL.3.7.; (Writing): W.K.3., W.1.3., W.2.3., W.3.3.*

**It’s Ella Mentry:** Dan Gutman has written other books about Mr. Cooper’s class at the Ella Mentry School. Read some of these books, and then decide which book you like the best. Draw a picture from that book, and write or dictate a paragraph explaining why that book is your favorite. *Common Core State Standards (Reading: Literature): RL.K.9., RL.1.9., RL.3.9.; (Writing): W.K.1., W.1.1., W.2.1., W.3.1.a.–d.*

*Common Core State Standards (Writing) that writing activities might also address: W.K.5., W.K.6., W.1.5., W.1.6., W.2.5., W.2.6, W.3.4., W.3.5., W.3.6.*

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