

# THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE SCHOOL

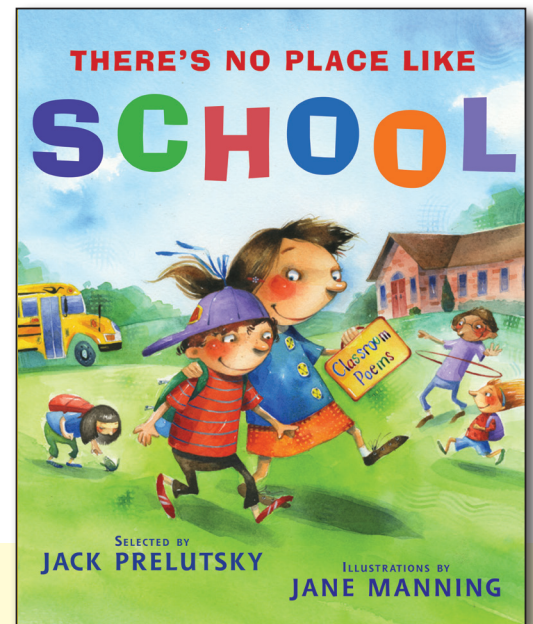
CLASSROOM POEMS

SELECTED BY

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## ABOUT THE BOOK

From suspicious hot lunches (yuck!), to pop quizzes (oh, no!), to recess and best friends (hooray!), everything you love—and love to hate—about school is front and center in this collection of eighteen poems by thirteen celebrated poets. One thing's for certain: there's no place like school!

## CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

### There's No Place Like School: The Sequel

Encourage students to write their own poems about school, challenging them to replicate the rhyme pattern and structure of either Nina Payne's "Going to School" (p. 5) or Yolanda Nave's "Don't Ask Me" (p. 11). Students should create accompanying illustrations for their poems that incorporate humor, whimsy, or fun details, as Jane Manning did by including the toad's name, Lester, for Kalli Dakos's "Why the Frog in Our Class Is Purple" (p. 17) and making the pencil a classic #2 for David L. Harrison's "Cursive Writing" (p. 18). Compile your students' original works in a class book.

### Repugnant Refreshments

Jack Prelutsky's "Grasshopper Gumbo" celebrates alliteration with such lunch items as "boiled bumblebee," "steamed centipede skins," and "cracked crocodile crunch" (pp. 20–21). Review this literary device with your students and then challenge them to come up with three of their own hilarious (and disgusting!) alliterative foods. On a piece of butcher paper, create a class menu of cafeteria offerings, asking each student to add one of his or her ideas to the list.

### Don't Change the Subject

*There's No Place Like School* includes poems about various school subjects, including language arts, math, music, physical education, and social studies. Have each student choose his or her favorite subject and compose an ode (a poem that praises) in honor of it. Before students begin writing, ask them to think about what they like best about their favorite subject and why they feel that way.

### Before, After, and Between Classes

In addition to poems about what goes on during class, *There's No Place Like School* has poems about recess, lunch, and even the bus ride to school. Have small groups of students work together to craft poems about something that happens at school *outside* the classroom. To get started, students may borrow the first lines of "Lunchroom Magic" by Charles Ghigna for their creations: "Of all the magic I have seen / My favorite . . ." (p. 19).

### Show-and-Tell Surprise

In David L. Harrison's "Show-and-Tell," Billy brings a snake to school, and despite his claim that "it wouldn't hurt a flea," the snake swallows him (p. 9)! Have pairs of students craft original poems about someone who brings in an unusual item for show-and-tell and the unexpected twist that results. Then host a poetry show-and-tell where student pairs share their poems with the class.