

Weezie and the Moonpies

by Bill Harley

"Weezie and the Moonpies" is the story of a boy's ingenuity in protecting himself, his friend, and most importantly, his younger sister. In the story Bill's friend Sheldon uses Weezie's penchant for telling the truth to their advantage, creating a bizarre turn of events.

"Weezie" is based on a traditional story structure. There is a common Mexican variant of the story "The Day It Snowed Tortillas" found in many folktale anthologies. In "Weezie", Bill places the story in his neighborhood.

Several points are worth highlighting in discussing the story. Bill's emphasis in the story is on people's characters - what makes them do what they do and what happens when they do it. In building a story, character - the way people are bound to behave by their nature - is what causes events to occur. Weezie, Sheldon, Francis, and Bill himself are not stick figures but people driven by their nature. While Francis is the most "cartoon like", even he shows a roundness in his character - we see a slight change in who he is at the end of the story. We can look at characters for their "flatness" or "roundness" in all story - whether they have many facets and are capable of change ("round"), or stay the same throughout the story ("flat").

"Weezie" may lead to productive discussions about sibling relationships, bullies, and alternative ways of dealing with conflict. Questions might include:

- 1) What is it about Weezie that makes her seem real? Why is she funny?
- 2) Bill said "Sheldon was the smartest kid in class, but he didn't always get A's". What does he mean? How do different people show their intelligence?
- 3) Bill uses exaggeration in describing characters. Give some examples. Why do you think he does that?
- 4) Either through writing or as a series of pictures, plot the structure of the story - what happens and when. Everything in this story is placed there for a particular reason, even though it doesn't seem so at the time. Talk about that.
- 5) Why did Sheldon have to "use his brain?" Can you think of a time when you or someone you know solved a problem in a different, unique way?
- 6) Are there members of your family like Weezie who do the same thing, over and over, no matter the situation? Are you like that? How?

Available on "Weezie and the Moonpies"