



Mr. Lincoln is the coolest principal ever! He knows how to do everything, from jumping rope to leading nature walks. Everyone loves him . . . except for Eugene Esterhause. “Mean Gene” hates everyone who’s different. He’s a bully, a bad student, and he calls people awful, racist names. But Mr. Lincoln knows that Eugene isn’t really bad—he’s just repeating things he’s heard at home. Can the principal find a way to get through to “Mean Gene” and show him that the differences between people are what make them special? - *Philomel*

RIG IDEAS BIG IDEAS To Reinforce



Tolerance, Citizenship,
Doing Your Best,
Welcoming All People,
Learning from Mistakes

Build Background

Write the word “bully” on chart paper. Ask students what comes to their mind when they hear this word. Write a list of their responses on the chart paper.

Key Vocabulary

bully	pg 4
atrium	pg 8, 12, 14
coax/coaxing	pg 29, 32

Student-Friendly Learning Target



I can write a character analysis of the main character the story.

Discussion Starters



1. How did the students react to Eugene when he was a bully?
2. List the ways Eugene changed?
3. At the end of the story, how did the other students feel about Eugene?
4. Mr. Lincoln accepted all of his students. What can we do to make sure that we accept others?

Writing Prompt



Then & Now On one piece of chart paper write, “Eugene Then” and on another piece write, “Eugene Now.” Ask students to tell about some of Eugene’s characteristics in the beginning and the end of the story. Discuss some of the events that contributed to this change. Have students complete the graphic organiser using the chart to help. Then, ask students to create a final copy of their character analysis. [PRINTABLE](#)

Activities



Identify Unique Qualities On chart paper brainstorm words that describe characteristics that make students feel unique. Examples would be: hobbies, dreams, heritage, eye-colour, hair colour, talents...etc. After the list is created students will create a bird (any colour, size shape) out of construction paper. When the project is completed students will write some of their personal characteristics on the bird. Take some time to discuss what students think make them unique. *Display Idea:* Create a Classroom aviary by stapling the birds on to the bulletin board, entitled “A Flock of Unique Students” or hang the birds throughout the classroom.

More Resources

- Accelerated Reading Quiz: 53459
- Question and Activities from the Author at www.patriciapolacco.com

Core SKILLS

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Detail the events and feelings that Gene experienced in Mr. Lincoln's Way.

Describe Gene at the **beginning** of the book

Event 1 → Gene Feels...

Event 2 → Gene Feels...

Event 3 → Gene Feels...

Event 4 → Gene Feels...

Event 5 → Gene Feels...

Event 6 → Gene Feels...

Describe Gene at the **end** of the book