



Princess Angelica, Camp Catastrophe

Monique Polak

Illustrated by Jane Heinrichs

978-1-4598-1538-4 PB

About the Book

When Angelica goes to sleepaway camp and is mistaken for a princess, she could easily clear up the misunderstanding...but pretending to be royalty is way more fun, because having your bunkmates do your chores and roast your marshmallows is the best! Angelica, aka Jelly, wholeheartedly embraces her role as a modern-day princess, proving herself influential, capable and resourceful—not to mention a great storyteller. But what will she do when her best friend from home surprises her at camp?

About the Author

Monique Polak is the author of twenty-three books for young people. Monique is a two-time winner of the Quebec Writers' Federation Prize for Children's and Young Adult Literature. In addition to writing for kids, Monique has taught English and Humanities for more than thirty years at Marianopolis College in Montreal, Quebec. She is also a frequent contributor to the *Montreal Gazette*.

About the Writing of the Book

Long ago, when Monique went to sleepaway camp, she told her bunkmates that she was a princess. All that summer, Monique's bunkmates did her chores. In exchange, every night she told them make-believe stories about her life in the royal court. Out for dinner in Victoria, British Columbia, with her friends from Orca Book Publishers, Monique told editor Liz Kemp about that long-ago experience at summer camp. It was Liz who encouraged Monique to write the first book in the Jelly in a Jam series.

Teaching Ideas—Curriculum Connections

Prereading Ideas

- Jelly, the main character in *Princess Angelica, Camp Catastrophe*, likes to make up stories. You could also say that she is a bit of a liar. What is good about using our imaginations? What is dangerous about telling lies?
- Jelly tells her bunkmates that she is a princess. What is the role of a modern-day princess? How might a princess help to make the world a better place?

Discussion Questions

1. When a person tells a lie, they may be telling us something true underneath the lie. Why do you think Jelly wishes she could be a princess?
2. If you could imagine yourself being any other kind of person in the world, what kind of person would you choose? What do you think that shows about you?
3. Have you ever gotten into trouble for telling a lie? Have you ever gotten away with telling a lie? Tell us more!
4. In the modern world, people who come from royal families often engage in activities to make the world a better place. If you were royalty, what problems would you try to fix, and what would you do to improve the world?
5. Jelly has come up with various tricks to help her solve problems and access her creativity. What are Jelly's tricks? Do you have tricks of your own to come up with great ideas? Ask your friends and parents if they have tricks for creative problem solving that they can share with you.

Suggested Activities

- Make up the craziest, wackiest, most creative lie about yourself that you can think of. Begin with the sentence "My name is _____" and take it from there.
- Using our imaginations to solve problems is one of our best abilities as human beings. Make a list of three problems that you would like to solve (they can be at home, at school or in the world at large). Now try to come up with some creative solutions. Remember—be like Jelly, and think outside the box.
- Did you ever try to pull a prank on a friend, the way Jelly does when she tells Maddie there is an elevator in the house? If so, tell the story of what you did and what happened. Or perhaps a friend tried to pull a prank on you. (You know what else? Monique really used to fool her friends into believing there was an elevator in her house. Luckily, her friends forgave her for making up those crazy stories. In fact, she is still friends with one of the girls she fooled!)
- Discuss the following words from the book and have students look them up to be sure they know what each one means.

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| catastrophe | cover |
| royalty | ch. 2 (p. 11) |
| commoner | ch. 4 (p. 28) |
| lady-in-waiting | ch. 4 (p. 29) |
| imagination | ch. 4 (p. 31) |
| all-nighter | ch. 5 (p. 41) |
| pole vaulting | ch. 5 (p. 42) |
| deceiving | ch. 7 (p. 59) |
| rudder | ch. 8 (p. 65) |

- Choose one of the following scenes and have students dramatize it and then read it aloud as a play: opening scene, in make-believe elevator (ch. 1), scene in parking lot (ch. 2), scene when Maddie shows up at camp (ch. 3).

Other Titles and Websites of Interest

The Amelia Bedelia chapter book series by Peggy Parish—I used to read these books with my daughter when she was little, and I think they influenced me when I wrote *Princess Angelica, Camp Catastrophe*.

Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls. Elena Favilli and Francesca Cavalto. Timbuktu Labs, 2016.

The Imagination Tree: <https://theimaginationtree.com/>

StartsAtEight: <http://www.startsateight.com/life-skills-simple-home-repairs/>

Other Books by the Author from Orca Book Publishers

Leggings Revolt

Bullies Rule

121 Express

Forensics Squad

Unleashed

Reviews and Awards

Quebec Writers' Federation Prize for Children's and YA Literature for *What World is Left* (2009) and *Hate Mail* (2014)

“Polak writes with a nervy confidence” —*Booklist*

“As ever, Polak's narrative style is succinct and engaging.” —*Montreal Review of Books*

“Monique Polak's reputation as a highly respected author of young adult books grows with each book she publishes.” —*The West End Times*