

The Lemonade War by Jacqueline Davis
(Houghton Mifflin, 2006)

Evan Treski is horrified when he learns his younger sister, Jessie, is skipping third grade. Now his really smart sister will be in his fourth grade classroom.



Discussion Questions

1. What kind of a person is Evan?
(Good with people—natural salesman p. 31)

How about Jessie?
(Good in Math—has difficulty “reading” people)

Aren't boys supposed to be the ones who are good at math and girls are better at reading people's feelings? How are Jessie and Evan's personalities the opposite of the more stereotypical roles of boys and girls?

2. When they receive the letter from the school indicating that they will both be in the same class, Evan and Jessie have very different reactions? How did they react?
(Jessie is relieved, it will be fun. Evan is angry; it won't be fun (p. 15))

Evan is so angry he says: “Part of him wanted to stuff a sock in his mouth, and part of him wanted to deck his sister.” (p. 7) Why do you think he is so ambivalent? Another time he says: “The words felt like disgusting spiders running out of his mouth. They were horrible. But it felt so good to get rid of them.” (p. 61)

Does it help Evan to say nasty things to Jessie?

3. Jessie and Evan's mother remains in the background of the book for the most part. Jessie and Evan have taken a “split vow”—what do they mean by this? (p. 64)

What, if any, influence does the mother have in the story? Is it sometimes better to work differences out without a parent, or with a parent?

4. Jessie and Evan are very different people—how do they use their skills to make money?
(Jessie—mother says she's persistent. Good business person. Thinks up the franchise concept.)
(Evan—social—has his friends help him)

Sometimes in a war, people resort to some pretty underhanded tactics. What things did Evan and Jessie do to win their side of the war?
(Sneaking into rooms to count money, stealing money, putting flies, bugs, and dirt in the lemonade)

Did these tactics help them win the war, or did it just escalate the war?

5. There are really two wars going on here—the Lemonade War and Evan and Jessie’s personal war.

Evan is the first to reach out to ask Jessie: “Do you want to call the whole thing off? Nobody wins and nobody loses.” Why does he want to end the war?

When Jessie learns that Evan has stolen her money she physically attacks him, but he doesn’t hit her back. “He was done fighting.” Why didn’t Evan want to fight anymore? Who won the war? How do Jessie and Evan finally resolve the conflict? (pp. 166-167)

6. There are good kids in the book and some pretty nasty kids—the girls in Jessie’s class “used their eyes to pass secret messages.” (p. 72) Why does Jessie have such a hard time dealing with them? Evan is pretty sure Scott Spencer stole the money. Why didn’t Evan go after Scott Spencer and confront him? Why did the author leave this part of the book unresolved?
7. Each chapter has tips on running a business, and there is further information on being successful in business throughout the book. Which piece of advice did you think was the most effective? Would you use any of these tips?

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