

A Teacher's Guide to
TOO PURPLEY!

Written by Jean Reidy
Illustrated By Geneviève Leloup



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Bloomsbury USA Children's Books

PRAISE FOR TOO PURPLEY!

“This fun book has lots of descriptive words that tickle the ear, great colors and patterns, and a charming protagonist.” ~*School Library Journal*

“Fussy dressers, this one's for you! Clothing-decision screamers and their caretakers will relate and laugh.” ~*Kirkus Reviews*

“Children and parents are sure to identify with this girl's sartorial issues, and Leloup's whimsical watercolors highlight the absurdity of her choices.” ~ *Booklist*

STORY SUMMARY

“Too purpley, too tickly, too puckery, too prickly—our young fashionista can’t find a single thing to wear in this hip and adorable picture book sure to be a hit with parents and kids alike.”

~Bloomsbury & Walker Books for Young Readers Winter Catalog 2010

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

JEAN REIDY writes from her home in Greenwood Village, Colorado where she lives with her husband, Mike. She has four children and hordes of nieces and nephews who provide her endless inspiration. *Too Purpley!* is her first picture book.
www.jeanreidy.com.

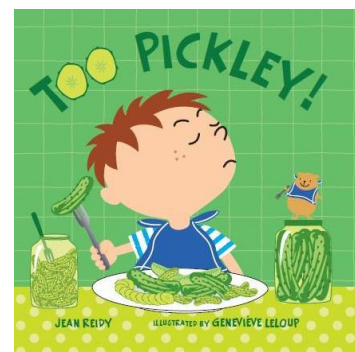


ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

GENEVIÈVE LELOUP studied graphic arts, animation, and printing in Belgium, where she was born. Her whimsical illustrations have highlighted editorial articles, paper products, ads, children’s furniture, and textiles (including lots of children’s clothes), but this is her very first picture book. Her travels have taken her to China, Easter Island, Patagonia and Marrakech. She has lived in Brooklyn, New York since 1992.



ALSO BY JEAN REIDY AND GENEVIÈVE LELOUP!



PRE-READING

Purpley Poll

Poll your students about their favorite outfits. Keep track of their answers on a chart, such as the one shown below.

My favorite outfit is _____	because_____.
my velvet dress	I look fancy
my soccer uniform	I can run fast in it
my pajamas	they are comfortable

Analyze: Do their favorites have anything in common? Do some children like the same clothes for different reasons? Does more than one kind of clothing serve the same purpose? Display the results of the Purpley Poll with a pictograph.

- *Students will construct, read, and interpret displays of data including pictographs.*
- *Students will analyze and make connections between reading and what they already know.*

Take a Book Walk

Point out the title and names of the author and illustrator. Ask: What does the title mean? What is the girl doing? How does she feel? Why does she feel this way?

Turn the pages and ask why the girl seems so upset on each page. Before you reach the last page, ask what kind of outfit the girl will finally choose.

- *Students will use comprehension skills such as previewing, predicting, and inferring.*
- *Students will identify the cover, title page, and author of a book.*

Vocabulary

Your students may be unfamiliar with the following words. Encourage them to use picture clues to infer meanings.

PUCKER	PRICKLY	STITCH	STRAP	LEATHER	POLKA-DOT
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- *Students will read literature to understand vocabulary.*
- *Students will use comprehension skills such as inferring.*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is the girl in the story upset? (*knowledge*)
2. Who is carrying the pile of clothing on the first page? (*comprehension*)
3. Which outfit in the book do you like best? Least? Take a class poll and graph the results. (*application*)
4. How does the turtle feel in each scene? Do the turtle's emotions always match the girl's emotions? (*analysis*)
5. Design an outfit that would be just right for the girl in the story. (*synthesis*)
6. Do you like the last outfit in the story? Why or why not? Why do you think the girl likes it? (*evaluation*)

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Invented Words

Make a list of the invented words in the story: purpley, tickley, puckery, stitchy, matchy, stripey, taggy, strappy, dancey, and polka-dotty. Why might the author have used these words? How would the story sound if it had been written in a traditional way? Try changing the invented words to traditional phrases, such as:

TOO TAGGY → MY DRESS HAS TOO MANY TAGS.

or

TOO POLKA-DOTTY! → MY OUTFIT HAS TOO MANY POLKA-DOTS!

Reread the story with the “translations.” Is the story as much fun to read? Why or why not?

- *Students will identify and create rhyming words.*
- *Students will use a full range of strategies to comprehend rhymes and poems.*
- *Students will identify the author's purpose.*

Turtle Time

Direct students' attention to the turtle in each scene. What do they think the turtle might be thinking? What do real turtles wear on their backs?

- *Students will recognize that an organism (animal) is a living thing that has physical characteristics that help it to survive.*
- *Students will make inferences about the content of the text using pictures.*

Fashion Show

Invite students to wear their absolute favorite clothes (even pajamas!) to school. Ask students to share why their duds are divine, then let them strut down the catwalk.

Variation: Throw a 100th Day of School fashion show and invite children to wear 100 objects, such as stickers, coins, barrettes, fabric stamps, buttons or bows. Practice grouping objects into ten groups of ten.

- *Students will read and write whole numbers and know place-value concepts and numeration through their relationship to grouping.*
- *Students will create simple movement phrases through improvisation.*

All Dressed Up

Help students trace their bodies onto mural paper. Let them add facial features, hair, and favorite outfits with paint or colors. Cut out the figures and attach them to the wall in a fashion parade. Ask students to write or dictate signs with their names and a short description of why their outfits are “just right” for them. Have students place their signs under their own cut-out figures.

- *Students will write and speak for audiences such as peers, teachers, and the community.*

Community Helpers

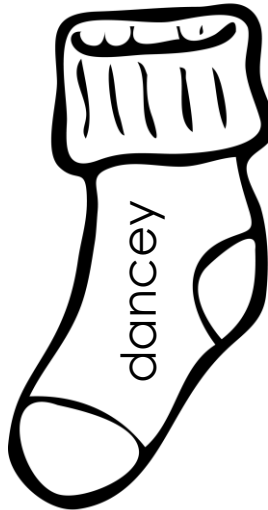
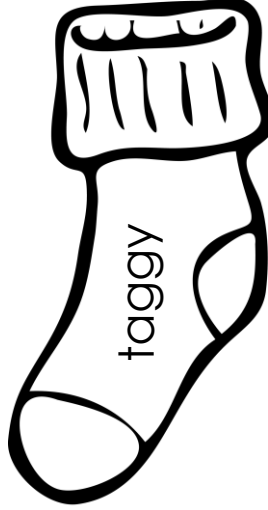
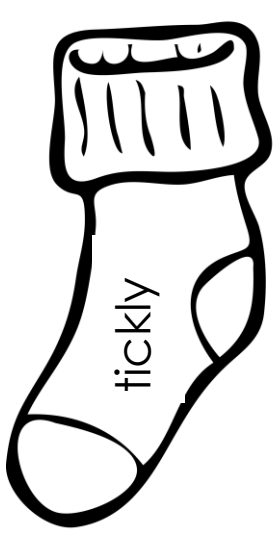
Brainstorm a list of jobs where people wear uniforms: workers at a fast food chain, doctors, road workers, soldiers, etc. Discuss why each group wears a particular uniform. Invite community helpers (firefighters, police officers, etc.) to speak to your class about their uniforms and the functions they serve.

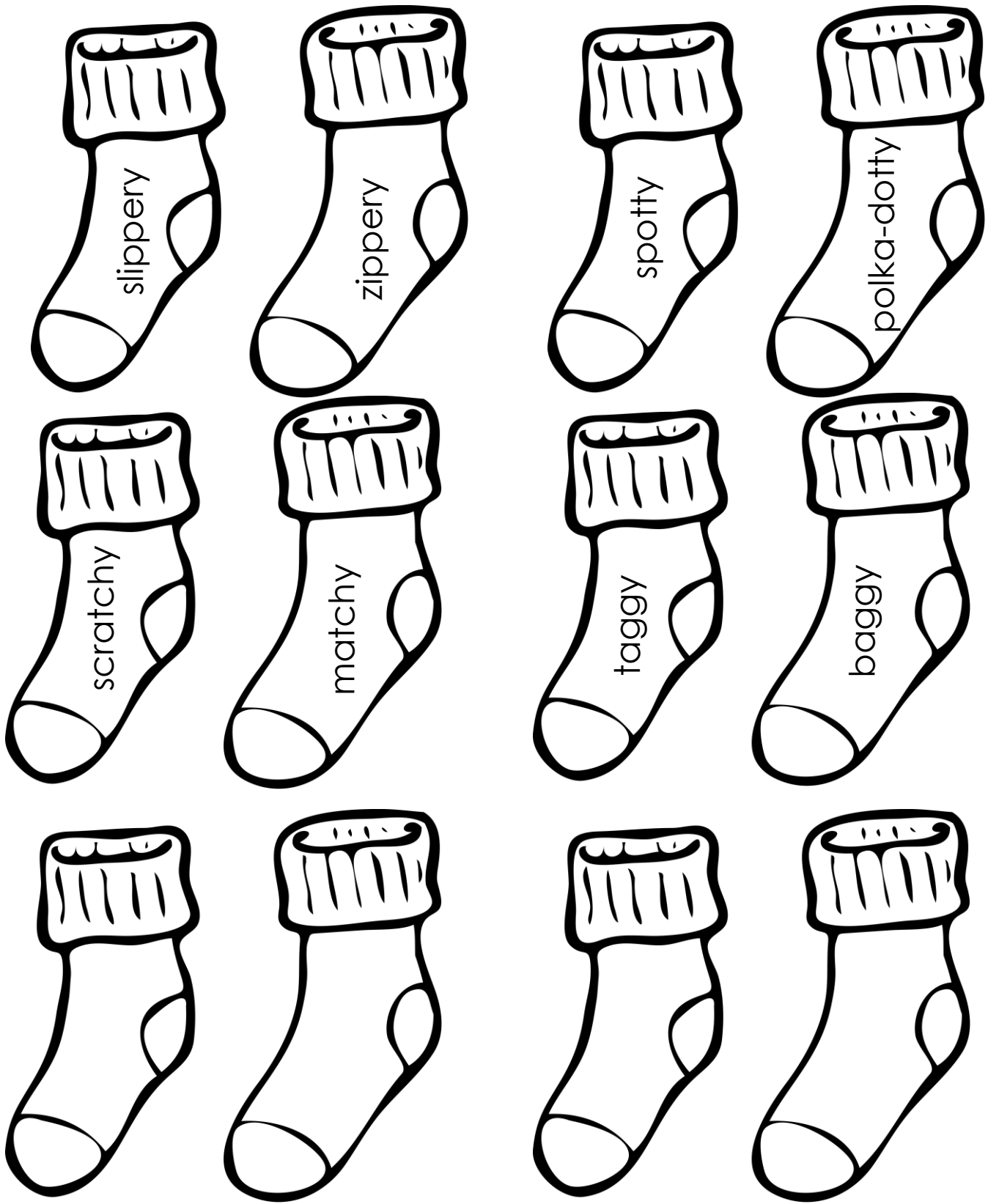
- *Students will refer to a group of human beings viewed as members of a community; a structure system of human organization for large-scale community living that furnishes protection, continuity, security, and identity for its members.*

It's a Match!

Rhymes help children to predict and decode new words. Copy the following two pages onto colored cardstock and cut out the socks (there are additional blank socks to add your own rhyming words). Challenge children to pair the rhyming socks.

- *Students will use a full range of strategies to comprehend materials such as rhymes.*
- *Students will use word recognition skills and resources such as phonics.*





Dress Code

Cut out the cards below and let children choose one. Read each child's card and ask what kind of clothes would be appropriate for that scenario and why.

BUILDING A SAND CASTLE	DINNER AT A FANCY RESTAURANT	BEDTIME	WALKING IN THE RAIN
BUILDING A SNOWMAN	PLAYING A SPORT	SCHOOL PICTURE DAY	PLAYING AT A FRIEND'S HOUSE
RIGHT OUT OF THE BATHTUB	IN THE SWIMMING POOL	ON A FARM	PLAYING DRESS-UP
FLYING A KITE ON A WINDY DAY	FINGER- PAINTING	BAKING COOKIES	ON HALLOWEEN
ON A PICNIC	CLEANING YOUR ROOM	WASHING THE DOG	AT A SCHOOL RECITAL

- *Students will apply thinking skills to their listening.*
- *Students will use a variety of devices such as precise vocabulary to convey meaning.*

Catch the Rhythm

Once children have heard the story a few times, hand out musical instruments such as bells, triangles, wood blocks and sticks. Guide students in using the instruments to keep time to the rhythm of the words. Suggested program:

1. Begin on the title page with the word NOOOOOOOOOO coming from the house. Let students drag this out by making loud noises together on their instruments.
2. Point out the size of the letters on the next page and the exclamation point (“Not these clothes!”), and explain that they’ll need loud voices for this line. Show them how to make one instrumental sound per word.
3. From there, you can direct students to make three beats per phrase, or use one beat per syllable. Children can play all together, or you can assign different instruments for each phrase.
4. When you get to the pages at the end of each sentence, have students hold their instruments still and just say the words. Model how their vocal expression should match the ending punctuation and reflect the facial expression of the main character. For example:

...Too Prickly.	ends with a period; use a normal tone of voice
...Too Matchy!	use a louder voice; the girl is still unhappy
...Too Stripey—	heed the pause with the hyphen; the girl looks frustrated
...Too Baggy?	voice rises in a question; the girl looks confused
...Too Fancy.	ends with a period; children can use their fancy, “proper” voices (point out the girl’s facial expression on this page and have children mimic her as they say these words)
Polka-Dotty!	ends with an exclamation point, but now the girl looks happier
So Comfy! Just Right.	the girl looks relieved and happy

- *Students will create simple, rhythmic patterns.*
- *Students will voice/print match punctuation.*

Fashion Inventions

List the reasons why the girl in the story did not like her clothes. Add to the list by asking children what they don't like about some of their own clothes. Using a chart like the one below, brainstorm inventions that solve clothing pet peeves. Add some not-yet-invented ideas, too!

Clothing problems...	...solved!
sock seams that don't line up with my toes	seamless socks
pesky tags	stamps instead of tags
mittens that get wet when I build a snowman	waterproof mittens
not having clean clothes that match	clothes that could change color on demand!

- Students will organize written and oral presentations using strategies such as lists, cause/effect relationships, and problem/solution.
- Students will identify a significant problem they are trying to solve.

Culture and Clothes

How do children dress from around the world? Share the photographs from the book *Children from Australia to Zimbabwe: A Photographic Journey Around the World* by Maya Ajmera, Anna Rhesa Versola, and Marian Wright Edelman (Charlesbridge Publishing, 2006).

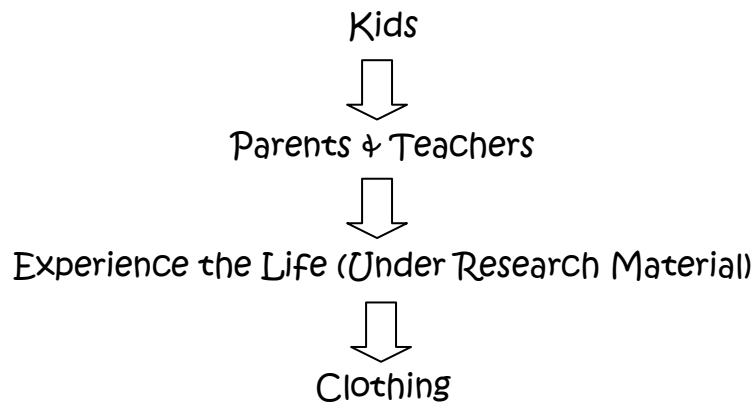
Ask students:

1. In which countries do children dress the way we do?
2. Which country's citizens have the most unusual clothing?
3. Do children from the same country ever dress in different ways?
4. How does a country's climate affect the kinds of clothing people wear?

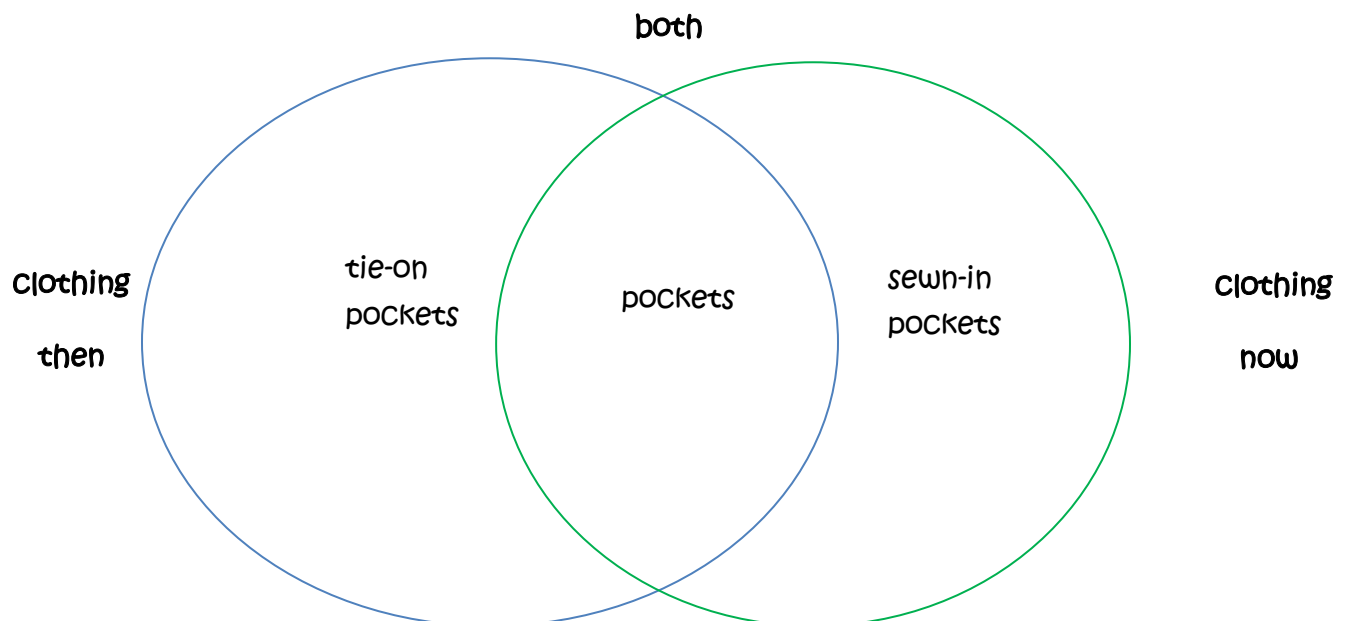
- Students will give examples of how the beliefs of people are reflected in the celebrations and practices of their community.
- Students will recognize that there are families and cultures around the world.
- Students will identify how people adapt to the physical environment.

Clothing Then and Now

How did kids dress a long time ago? To find out, visit Colonial Williamsburg's interactive site at www.history.org. Click on:



After exploring the site, compare clothing then and now with a Venn diagram like the one below:



- *Students will pose and answer questions about the past.*
- *Students will gather historical data from multiple sources (for example, photographs and available technology).*

Cloth Collage

The illustrations showcase fabrics of different colors and textures. Collect swatches of a variety of fabrics for children to touch and describe (silk, velvet, burlap, vinyl, corduroy, terrycloth, lace, etc.). Which is their favorite? Least favorite? Brainstorm a list of adjectives that describe how each one feels. Put the swatches in a bag and see if children can distinguish one from the other by feeling them—no peeking! Give children small squares of fabric, paper and glue to create a cloth collage.

- *Students will apply elements of art and principles of design to create works of art.*
- *Students will identify, describe and use different materials to make works of art.*

Clothes Pins

Draw a large version of the child in the story. Reproduce copies of clothing that would “fit” the child and put tape on the back of each. Let students take turns “pinning” the article of clothing in the right place while wearing a blindfold. If they miss, help them to describe the location of the clothing—is it too far to the left? To the right? Too high? Too low?

- *Students will understand the concept of direction.*
- *Students will develop and refine specific perceptual motor abilities and selected perceptual skills, including directional awareness.*

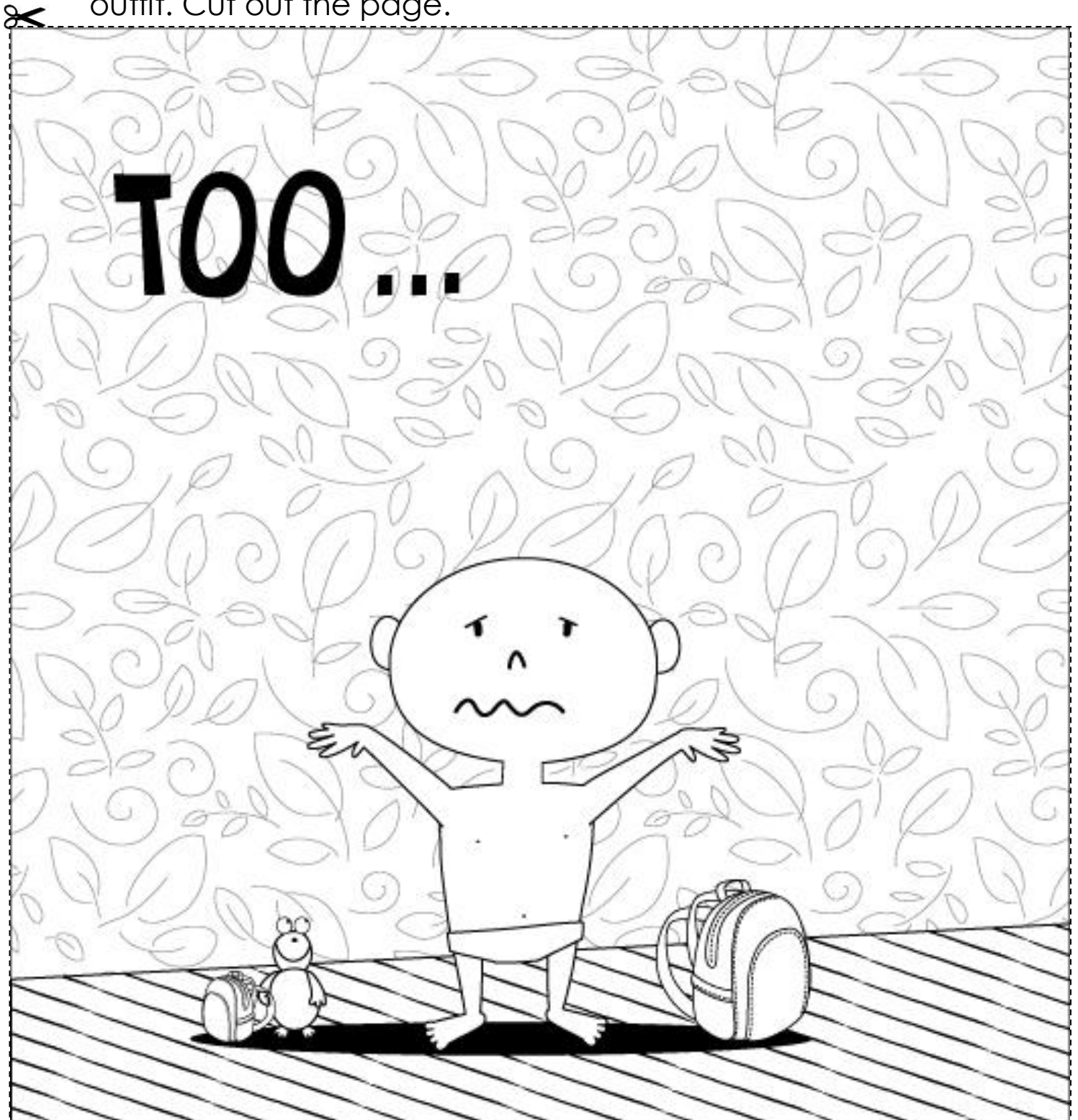
Class Book

Using the illustrations on the following pages, let children draw their own hair and outfits on each page. Create a bulletin board display or assemble them into a class book.

Variation: Give each child several copies of the “TOO...” page and one copy of the “So Comfy, Just Right!” page. Let children illustrate their personal versions of TOO PURPLEY! to share with classmates and family members. Help them brainstorm invented words to describe their outfits.

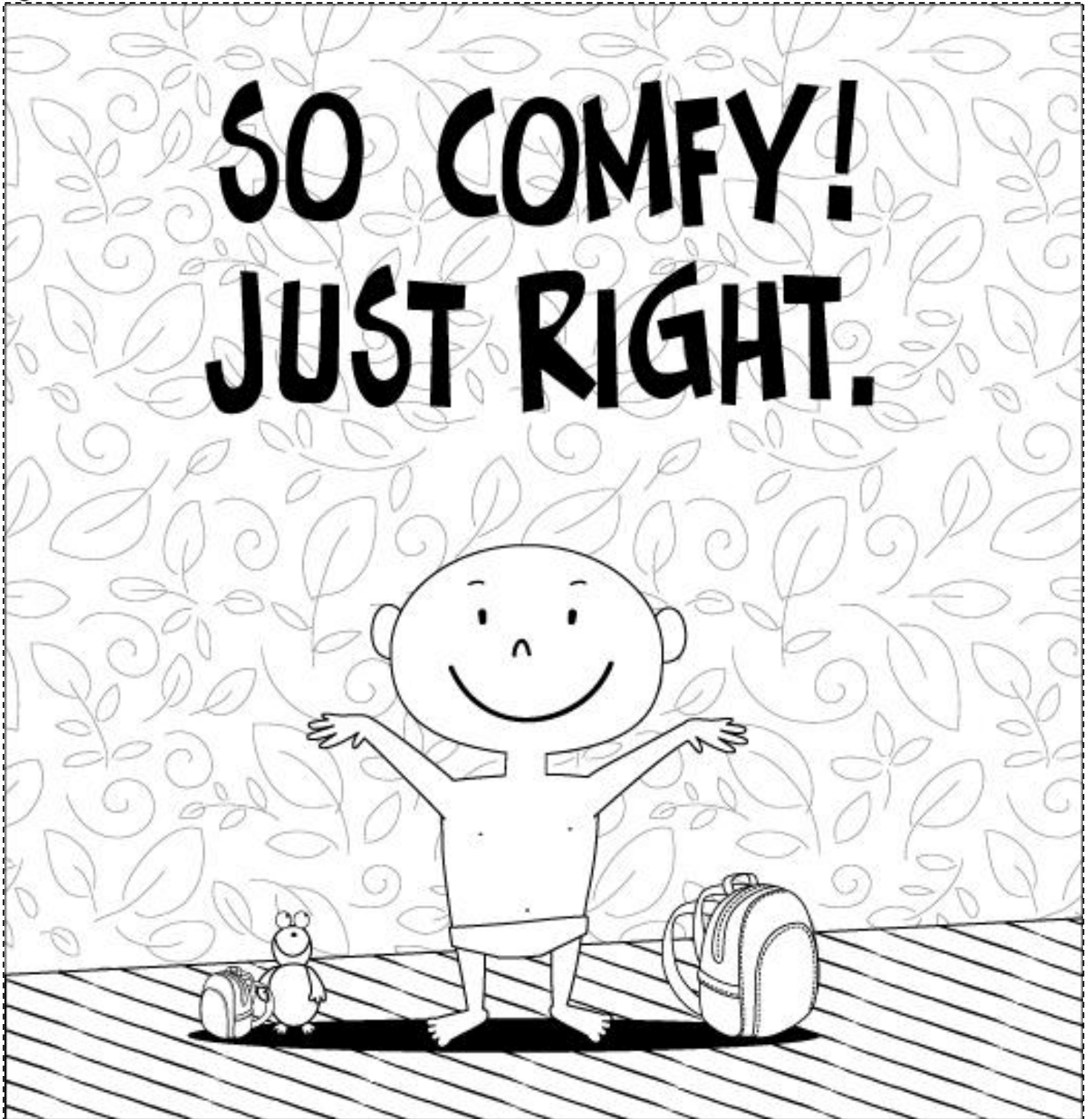
- *Students will use pictures, labels, and familiar words to communicate information and ideas.*
- *Students will recognize that printed materials carry meaning.*

Directions: Draw yourself wearing clothes that you don't like. Add a word that describes what you *don't* like about this outfit. Cut out the page.



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Directions: Now draw yourself wearing your favorite outfit!
Cut out the page.



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AN INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR JEAN REIDY



1. TOO PURPLEY is your first published picture book. Was it the first book you ever wrote?

This is my first published book. But it's not the first book I've written. As a kid, I wrote lots and lots of stories and poems and I even bound a few into my own homemade books. Then as an adult, I wrote a children's novel and another picture book before TOO PURPLEY! And since, I've written many more. But those first two manuscripts are still sitting in files waiting for a little more revision. Maybe then, they'll have a chance to be published. Or maybe they'll just be part of my process of learning to write.

2. How did you get the idea for TOO PURPLEY?

Well, years ago, when my niece Sarah was a little girl (Sarah now has children of her own) she complained that every article of clothing in her closet was either too itchy or too prickly or too taggy. Not being a mom at the time, I thought that was hilarious. Then I had my own kids, and they were tortured by too-tight turtlenecks and creepy jeans. Children of friends registered similar complaints. And it struck me how universal the theme was. Maybe the search for comfy clothes was as common as getting dressed.

3. Once the idea came to you, what happened next? Did you jot it down right away? Let it simmer?

I usually jot my first thoughts down in a list of ideas I keep. But when those thoughts evolve into more than a sentence, I start a document on my computer. With TOO PURPLEY! the idea blossomed into a list of funny, made-up kid words - which was what originally tickled me about Sarah's story. Then those words began to naturally group into couplets, because there were so many rhymers in the bunch, I never had to force the rhyme scheme. It just happened. I thought about growing that original rhyme into more of a narrative story - with more characters, like maybe animals or a mommy - but my first readers liked it best in its simplest form. They felt that with fewer words, my readers would have room to imagine.

4. How did the illustrations come about?

I'm not an artist, so I didn't have to illustrate the book. If I did, then TOO PURPLEY! would be filled with disproportionate stick figures and some scribbles of Crayola color. Thankfully, my publisher, Bloomsbury, works with some wonderful illustrators. When my editor called to tell me they were interested in buying the book, she mentioned she had this fabulous illustrator who was also a textile designer. I mean, who would be more perfect to illustrate a book about clothes? The editor actually e-mailed me a sample that Genevieve had worked up for the acquisitions meeting. When I saw it I knew she was going to do an amazing job. So Geneviève worked on the art over the course of several months, and I got to see hints of it here and there. It was always exciting to get those packages in the mail from Bloomsbury with the artwork. My family and I would "ooh" and "aah" over it for days.

5. What was the most challenging part of writing this book? The most rewarding?

I think the most challenging part of writing this book was to trust those original forty-nine words -- my first version of the story. I brought several versions of TOO PURPLEY! to my critique group. One involved animal characters. One had a more lengthy narrative - kind of a story woven through. I worried that I couldn't possibly catch an editor's eye with so few words. But my first readers loved the simplest version best. They felt that those 49 words left so much open to an editor's, an illustrator's and, ultimately, a child's imagination.

The most rewarding part was finding those few, perfect, fun words then seeing them come to life with Geneviève Leloup's illustrations.

6. Do you have a writing routine?

When I wake up, I usually throw on some sweats, pour myself a cup of coffee and then—even before breakfast—get to work. I have a thing about getting the tough stuff done first and planting rewards for myself throughout the day. I read a few emails then start writing. I write best in the morning because at night, when I'm tired, I love to read instead. Usually I take a break after about an hour or two and eat breakfast. Then it's back to my computer. I reward myself midday with lunch and a run or bike ride. It's amazing how many ideas—bits of narrative, strings of dialog—have come to me when I'm away from my computer. Running, walking, bike riding, and showering are the best cures for writer's block. Then usually I have to rush home to get my ideas down before I forget them.

7. What's the best piece of writing advice you've ever received?

To allow myself to stink—at writing that is. When I was growing up and throughout college, all of my writing was done by hand and then typed on a typewriter.

Revision was a mess of whiteout and correction tape. So consequently there was heavy pressure to get it right the first time. Now using a computer, the pressure is off. And while I do have to get it right eventually, it's easier to sit down at the blank page if I know I can go back in and rework my words.

8. What advice do you have for young writers?

I love to read—especially in front of a cozy fire. And I'm a sucker for card games. Consequently, my kids have turned into some pretty savvy card players. Here in Colorado we're so lucky to have miles of amazing trails and, of course, the Rockies, so I take full advantage of this beautiful state. I love to hike, run, walk, ride my bike, and—um—ski. I'm also an ice skater. I grew up in Chicago across the street from an outdoor rink and spent hours teaching myself jumps and spins. I still wear my really old, broken-in, "just right" skates.

9. When you aren't writing, what are some of your favorite things to do?

I love to read—especially in front of a cozy fire. And I'm a sucker for card games. Consequently, my kids have turned into some pretty savvy card players. Here in Colorado we're so lucky to have miles of amazing trails and, of course, the Rockies, so I take full advantage of this beautiful state. I love to hike, run, walk, ride my bike, and—um—ski. I'm also an ice skater. I grew up in Chicago across the street from an outdoor rink and spent hours teaching myself jumps and spins. I still wear my really old, broken-in, "just right" skates.

10. What are your “so comfy, just right” clothes? Which clothes drive you batty?

I have a pair of sweatpants that are super-comfy. I love to wear those when I write. And I have a pair of striped pajama pants that my kids gave me. They're great too - but if I wear them to the grocery store I get funny looks. I absolutely hate clothes that are too taggy. Having a wash or size tag stabbing at my neck drives me batty.



AN INTERVIEW WITH ILLUSTRATOR GENEVIÈVE LELOUP

1. When did you begin to think of yourself as an artist?

As a child I always participated in artistically-oriented activities. Whether it was dance, drawing, crafts or music—that is just what I liked to do! I didn't think about it very much. But I suppose I had to start thinking of myself as an artist when I decided to go to Art school. It was an important decision that led me to really become a visual artist (although I still dance and play music!).

2. What media do you like working with the most?

I always used pen and ink, and I was a silkscreen printer for many years and still love to print. As a textile designer, I had to eventually switch to computer-generated design and I learned to love it and use it in my illustration work as well. I draw on the computer with a pen and tablet so it is not that different from the manual pen.

It is extremely fun to create patterns with that technique; you can play endlessly with the shapes and colors with the click of a button. I started to develop a style in that medium which is actually pretty close to what I was doing before on paper.

3. How did you break into the children's book illustrating profession?

I have been an illustrator for quite a while doing a lot of work for a very young market (my favorite audience!) in magazines, school books, packaging, clothes, etc. My agent was contacted one day by Bloomsbury—they had seen samples of my work and were interested in my style for Jean's text. I met with the editor and I was seduced right away by the concept and by the freedom that her writing left me to come up with the images.

4. How did you decide on an illustrating style for the book?

I wanted to keep the style that I use in my textile designs for children's clothes since the book is about clothing. I also wanted to keep the shapes graphically simple and colorful so it would be appealing to very young children. The little girl character came to me very quickly. She was almost my first sketch. She's like a little me!

5. You've added extra elements to the story, including the scream coming from the house on the title page and the turtle. How did you come up with those ideas?

I needed to create a bit of a context and story since the text is a list of adjectives (which was great because it left me so much room for creativity). So I made the scream come out of the window to make the reader want to turn the first page to see what on earth was going on! And I exaggerated the "not these clothes" line to really set the tone of the whole book. The turtle (her name is Shelley) came about out of the same desire to enrich the situation and have some kind of an inside story and interaction that might make each page more comical.

6. Pablo Picasso once said, "All children are artists. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up." Do you agree?

I think that if you are an artist, fundamentally, it is impossible to change that or forget it. You're going to be a creative person all your life! But yes, a lot of people forget to keep their imagination active as they grow up. It is never too late to reclaim that talent, though!

7. What do you like to do in your spare time?

I love to dance and play my accordion or piano. In New York, it is easy to always be artistically active! I go see plays and concerts and performances a lot. I also help organize some of them, as well. I like to cook and throw parties. I also love to travel and discover other cultures (and ways of cooking!); it is where I renew my inspiration.

8. What kinds of clothes drive you crazy?

I love clothes and can't really think of anything that would drive me crazy, except if it were a cactus sweater or a tickly boa! I don't really like turtlenecks, but in general, clothes don't drive me crazy—crazy clothes drive me...to wear them!