

Lilly's Big Day

ALA Booklist Editors' Choice
School Library Journal Best Book
Publishers Weekly Best Book

About the Book

"It will be the biggest day of my life," says Lilly the day her teacher, Mr. Slinger, announces he's planning to marry Ms. Shotwell, the school nurse. Lilly practices being the flower girl, even though Mr. Slinger hasn't asked her yet. Realizing how much she yearns for the job, Mr. Slinger offers her the chance to be the assistant to the official flower girl, his niece Ginger.

Themes

In this companion book to *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse*, readers will discover a funny, poignant tale about facing life's disappointments and celebrating happy surprises.

Getting Ready

Children will be excited to see that Lilly is back, as boisterous and impetuous as ever. Don't tell them what Lilly's big day is. Just read the title and have them surmise what would constitute a big day for Lilly. Go around the room, have everyone hazard a guess, and make a list of their responses to see if anyone comes up with the actual answer.

Questions for Discussion

- Why did Lilly want to be the flower girl at Mr. Slinger's wedding?
- When her parents tried to explain to her why she couldn't be his flower girl, why did Lilly misunderstand what they were trying to tell her?
- Why did Mr. Slinger make Lilly an assistant flower girl?



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- How did Lilly hide and then show her disappointment at not becoming the real flower girl?
- Have you ever been terribly disappointed at something you could not change? What happened, and how did you handle it?

ACTIVITIES

Making Connections

Lilly thinks that being the flower girl at Mr. Slinger's wedding will be the biggest day of her life. What has been the biggest day of your life so far? Draw and write or tell about it.

About Lilly

Once again, Lilly segues through a gamut of emotions. As you read the story aloud, stop to ask your students to listen to her words and read her changing expressions. Ask them, "How is Lilly feeling now?" Record their list of adjectives on a chart.

Lilly has a larger-than-life personality. Ask your group what they think she would be like as a friend. If they

could spend a whole day with Lilly and could go anywhere and do anything with her; what activities would they choose to do? What would Lilly most enjoy? Mock up a Daily Action Plan page using the format of a Day Planner, with the hours listed on the left-hand side and two lines for recording the events of each hour. Children can fill in the page with their schedule.



Self-Portrait

At the Lightbulb Lab in the back of her classroom, Lilly draws a portrait of herself as "The World's Best and Most Famous Flower Girl!" She says, "This is the best drawing I've ever done in my entire complete life!"

Have children look in the mirror and draw self-portraits depicting themselves doing something important. Make a bulletin board of their finished portraits and see if they can identify each other from the drawings.

Down the Aisle

In the story, we see Lilly practicing for the wedding, and the next thing you know, she's heading down the aisle, toting the terrified Ginger. But what happens at an actual wedding? Have you ever seen a wedding? Have you ever been in a wedding? What does a flower girl do? How about a ring bearer? Stage a mock wedding with your class to answer those questions.

Wedding Plans

There are so many things to consider when you're planning a wedding. Go to www.weddingchannel.com to get an idea about invitations, flowers and decorations, the ring, fancy clothes, the ceremony, photographs, food, and the reception.

Make mock wedding invitations using paper doilies, bits of ribbons, and other glittery materials.

Make tissue paper flowers. Accordion-fold six pieces of tissue paper. Cinch the flower in the middle with a pipe cleaner and fold it in half. Then wrap the pipe cleaner around the fold and use the rest of it as a stem. Carefully separate the twelve sheets of tissue paper, and voilà—a flower.

The Ceremony—Assign parts: a couple of flower girls and ring bearers, the parents of the bride and groom, the best man and groomsmen, and the maid of honor and the bridesmaids. This way, everyone will get to walk down the aisle as Lilly did, very slowly, heads held high. Sing "Here Comes the Bride," or play a recorded version.

The Reception—Take a group picture with a digital camera, and celebrate with wedding cake (cupcakes with icing) and champagne (apple juice). Or, serve cheese and crackers and mouse-sized food like grapes, blueberries, and tiny crackers. At www.kevinhenkes.com/meet/fun.asp, there are recipes for lots of lovely, luscious cheese-based snacks, including Lilly's Luscious Cheese Bites, and even one for Mr. Slinger's Zinger Punch. Finally, put on a CD so everyone can do Lilly's Interpretive Dance, the Flower Girl.



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