

By Cara Mentzel and Idina Menzel
Illustrated by Jaclyn Siquett

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

CARA MENTZEL's debut memoir, *Voice Lessons: A Sisters Story*, about her relationship with her superstar sister, Idina Menzel, was a Goodreads Choice Award nominee in 2017. Cara currently resides in Los Angeles with her husband but raised their Brady Bunch of boys in Boulder, Colorado, against the beauty of the Rocky Mountains. She has a master's degree in elementary education with an emphasis on children's literacy, and though she currently spends most of her time writing, she enjoyed teaching elementary school for well over a decade and can occasionally be found back in the classroom talking about books she loves. *Loud Mouse* and *Proud Mouse* are her first picture books.



IDINA MENZEL is a powerhouse: actor, singer-songwriter, philanthropist, entrepreneur, and now writer. She was Tony-nominated for her Broadway performances in *Rent* and *If/Then*, winning the prize for *Wicked*'s green girl. People around the world know her as Elsa in Disney's Oscar-winning *Frozen* and *Frozen 2*. She has performed at the Oscars and the Super Bowl, and is the cofounder of A BroaderWay Foundation, whose mission is leadership development to amplify young women's voices through the arts. *Loud Mouse* and *Proud Mouse* are Idina's latest endeavors to build on the messages of empowerment and finding our voices. Idina's greatest gift is her son, Walker.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

JACLYN SINUQUETT grew up playing in her dad's garden and tossing french fries to seagulls at the Jersey Shore. She still lives in New Jersey and spends her time painting with her little girl, singing too loudly in the car, and illustrating books for children. See her artwork at www.JaclynSinquett.com.

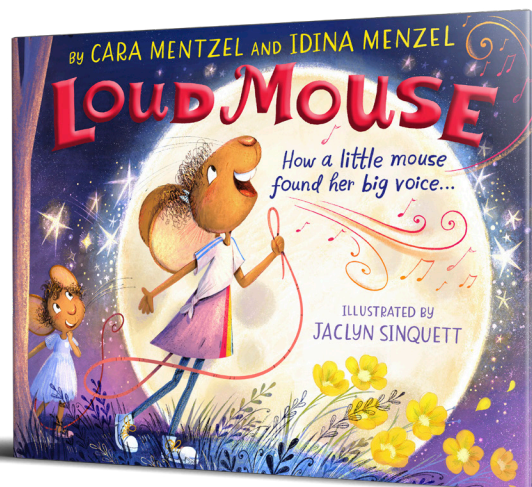


ABOUT THE BOOKS

From writer and teacher Cara Mentzel and her sister, Tony Award winner Idina Menzel, comes these stunning picture books about two little sisters. Complete with gorgeous illustrations and filled with humor and heart.

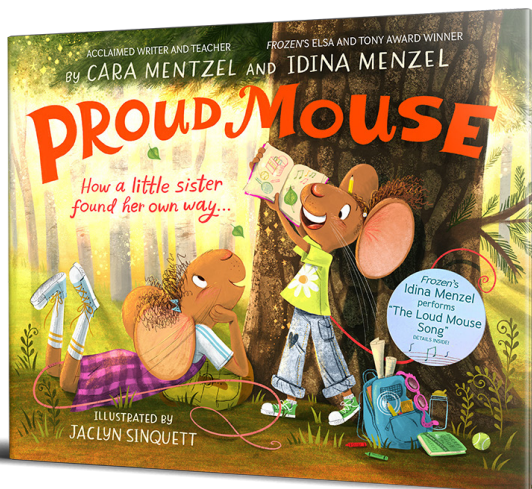
LOUD MOUSE

Dee loves to sing. She sings during her morning yoga. She even sings while practicing her math facts. She usually sings to herself. But when her teacher asks everyone to share something with the class, Dee knows just what to bring: a song. And as Dee sings la, la, la, la, LOUDly in front of her class for the first time, something extraordinary happens. . . . *Loud Mouse* is a clever tale about learning that sometimes your best self is big, brave, and, yes, loud!



PROUD MOUSE

Cara Lee is a proud mouse. She is proud of her big sister Dee. She is proud of her specially decorated journal. And now she's proud to become what she's always wanted to be: a student. But her first day of school is different than she imagined. Everyone keeps comparing her to Dee. But who is Cara Lee? When you have a big sister with such a LOUD talent, how can you find room to shine in your own way?



TEN *LOUD MOUSE* COMPANION LESSONS

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

1. **Puppets** (Grades PK–2)

There are many ways to be kind. In *Loud Mouse*, Dee has kind friends and family that help her when she is confused. In this lesson, students use self-made puppets of characters from *Loud Mouse* to practice the language of kindness. Go to page 5.

2. **A Tail's Tale** (Grades K–3)

If we pay attention, we can find clues that help us understand how others feel. We can notice their facial expressions or their body language. Are they smiling? Are they hunched over or standing proud? In *Loud Mouse*, the characters are animals, so there are other clues, too. In this lesson, students observe Dee's tail for clues about what Dee is feeling. You might say Dee's tail has its own way of telling her tale. Go to page 12.

3. **Take a Seat** (Grades K–3)

When Dee sits in the big chair for the first time, she feels special. But at snack time, in the same chair, she feels lonely. In *Take a Seat*, students try out different chairs—the teacher's chair in front of the class, their usual chair at the table or desk, a friend's seat in the classroom, or a cozy spot on the floor—and take notice of how they feel inside in the different places. Go to page 14.

4. **Zoom In, ZooMouse** (Grades K–5)

Cameras have lenses that zoom in and zoom out so photographers can focus on what they deem most important in an image. In *Zoom In, ZooMouse*, students use the illustrations in

Loud Mouse to experiment with their personal lenses. Students explore the value of looking at a situation “close up” and looking at “the big picture.” Older students may also draw parallels between zooming in for greater self-awareness and zooming out for greater social awareness. Go to page 17.

LITERACY

5. **Pre-reading**

Book introduction. Go to page 19.

6. **Read-Aloud**

Suggested prompts to help students construct meaning throughout the story. Go to page 23.

7. **Shared Reading** (Grades PK–1)

Enlarged copy of Dee's refrain and concepts of print instructional suggestions for use with early and emergent readers. Go to page 25.

8. **A Loud Letter: Interactive or Independent Writing**

Writing response where students use friendly letter format to write a letter to their favorite *Loud Mouse* character. Go to page 25.

9. **Word Work** (Grades K–5)

A range of activities target letter-sound recognition, phonological awareness, suffixes, syllables, and compound words. Go to page 26.

10. ***Loud Mouse*: A Readers Theater Musical**

A readers theater script for grades 3–5 to build reading fluency and entertain younger reading buddies. [Click here to access the script](#) and [click here to access the music!](#)

PUPPETS

MATERIALS

- Reproducibles of *Loud Mouse* characters
- Dee puppet
- Scissors
- Crayons/colored pencils
- Tongue depressors (or brown lunch bags)
- Glue sticks

*Be sure to make extra copies of reproducibles as a follow-up activity for students who finish early.

OBJECTIVES

Students will create a puppet of a character from *Loud Mouse*. Students will use their puppet in role plays that focus on kindness.

INTRODUCTION

There are many ways to be kind. In *Loud Mouse*, Dee has kind friends and family that help her when she is confused. In this lesson, students use self-made puppets of characters from *Loud Mouse* to practice the language of kindness.

ACTIVITY

PART I – Puppet Design

1. Students will be responding to Dee, played by the teacher's puppet, in role plays. Other than Dee, students can choose which character they would like to be (Ren, Manny, Miss Pink, or Cara Lee).

2. Set up stations with all necessary materials. Instruct students to color their puppet first, *before* cutting and gluing.
1. COLOR 2. CUT 3. GLUE 4. CLEAN UP
3. “Today we are going to make puppets of some of the characters from *Loud Mouse*. Then we are going to use our puppets to role play parts of the book and practice kindness.”
4. Model how to make a puppet. Briefly COLOR the reproducible, CUT it out, GLUE the puppet onto the tongue depressor, and then CLEAN UP.

PART II – Role Plays

1. Sing the refrain as Dee. “With my tail in my hand . . .”
2. Time to act! Have students hold their puppets. “Let’s practice together. ‘I’m Dee.’ Say, ‘Hi, Dee!’” Students use their puppets to say, “Hi, Dee!”
3. “After Dee sings and grows into a big, big, BIG mouse, what are some things she might like to hear you say?” Let students make suggestions:
 - “That was great!”
 - “You have a beautiful voice.”
 - “You’ve grown into a very big mouse. Are you feeling okay?”
4. Students try out one of the suggestions with their neighbors.

5. *"At snack time, Dee feels lonely. What could your character say to show her kindness?"* Let students make suggestions:

- *"We can make room for you over here."*
- *"Dee, what did you bring for snack today?"*
- *"That's a cool chair."*

6. Students try out one of the suggestions with their neighbors.

7. *"When Dee gets home, she is crying and her whiskers are soggy. What could your character say now to show her kindness?"* Let students make suggestions:

- *"You look sad. Is there anything I can do to help?"*
- *"Let me take your backpack for you while you dry off."*
- *"Would you like a hug?"*
- *"It looks like you had a hard day."*

8. Again, students try out one of the suggestions with their neighbors.

9. *"Sometimes, the best way to be kind is not to say anything at all. Instead, just keep your friend company, or be a listener."*

10. *"Let's look at what Dee's friends do the next day at school." Reread a couple pages: the Wonder Wheel, the wall mural. "We've talked about ways to be kind to Dee. Now let's look at how Dee's friends show her kindness in the book."*

- *"They include her."*
- *"They play with her."*
- *"They cheer for her."*

REFLECTION

"How does it feel when you are kind to someone else? How does it feel when someone else is kind to you? Before we finish, find someone you haven't spoken to yet today and tell them about a time you were kind or someone was kind to you."

AT HOME

Extra copies of Dee's reproducible can be made for homework folders if students want to make a Dee puppet at home.



DEE PUPPET



CARA LEE PUPPET



MISS PINK PUPPET



REN PUPPET



MANNY PUPPET



A TAIL'S TALE

MATERIALS

- Individual whiteboards and dry-erase markers or
- Clipboards with paper and pencil for doodling

*Can also be done without materials, just “imaginary pencils” in the “sky.”

OBJECTIVES

Students will study what feelings look like and how they can tell what someone might be feeling.

INTRODUCTION

If we pay attention, we can find clues that help us understand how others feel. We can notice their facial expressions or their body language. Are they smiling? Are they hunched over or standing proud? In *Loud Mouse*, the characters are animals, so there might be other clues. In this lesson, students observe Dee's tail for clues about what Dee is feeling. You might say Dee's tail has its own way of telling her tale.

ACTIVITY

PART I

Reread *Loud Mouse* or do a picture walk of *Loud Mouse* that focuses on how Dee's tail changed throughout the story.

“As we reread Loud Mouse today, we are going to look for answers to three questions:

1. *How does Dee use her tail?*
2. *How does Dee's tail change throughout the story?*
3. *What can we learn about how Dee feels from observing her tail?”*

PART II

Give students individual whiteboards and dry-erase markers (or paper and pencil). Let them try to draw Dee's tail at different stages of the story (1–7 below are options). Hold up the book on preselected pages and let students practice drawing the singing tail, the curly tail, the soggy tail, the zigzag tail, and so on. Have them lift up their boards to show each other as they practice. (Alternatively, have students draw the tail with their imaginary pencil in the “sky” or on the floor in front of them.)

1. Anywhere in the beginning
2. Day 1: Snack time
3. Day 1: Music class
4. Day 1: Recess
5. Day 1: On her way home
6. Day 1: At the Buttercups
7. Day 2: Art Mural



PART III

Students are tasked with a team-building exercise to put themselves in a line that looks like Dee's curly tail.

Construct a T-chart with one side labeled "Helpful" and the other "Hard." *"A team-building activity is a challenge you have to work together to complete. Today, you are going to work together to form a line that looks like Dee's tail. Before we do that, let's talk about working together as a big team. We're going to make a chart with two sides. On this side, we will list ways that working together is helpful (more ideas, more fun). On the other side we will list ways that working together can be hard (too many people talking at once, no one listens)."*

After there are a few items on the chart, ask the students to picture how they will participate. How much will you talk? How much will you listen? Do you picture yourself moving around a lot? A little? What might be helpful to you? What might be hard for you?

Begin the exercise. Check in with students midway. Make a couple observations. Be sure to include what you notice that they are doing well. It's okay to let them struggle a little. But if they need help, you can also offer them a long piece of yarn, a bin of unifix cubes, masking tape, or chalk (if the activity is taking place outside on concrete). *"Is there a way this yarn could help you?"* Students can set the prop on the floor where people should stand.

When they complete the task, celebrate by having them walk in their line to an early recess or to some place they need to be: Library? PE, Art, or Music?

REFLECTION

Revisit the activity after a break. *"Let's reread our T-chart. As we read, if there's anything you think we should add or remove or change, put your thumb up so I can see it."* What is helpful about working together as a team? What is hard about working together as a team? Was there something that could make the experience better? Would you do anything differently next time?

EXTENSION

After reflection, ask students to apply what they've learned from the first exercise and try to form Dee's zigzag tail, this time SILENTLY. Let them know they can use hand gestures (thumbs-up), facial expressions, head nodding or shaking (yes or no).

AT HOME

In their reading that evening, students are encouraged to make observations about characters' feelings. How might the character feel, and what clues did they use to figure it out? Clues can be in the text or in the pictures.



TAKE A SEAT

MATERIALS

- Writing utensils, crayons, or colored pencils
- One sheet of paper folded into fourths per student
- One clipboard per student

OBJECTIVES

Students will develop self-awareness, empathy, and a foundation for emotional regulation.

INTRODUCTION

When Dee sits in the big chair for the first time, she feels special. But at snack time, in the same chair, she feels lonely. In Take a Seat, students try out different chairs—the teacher’s chair in front of the class, their usual chair at the table or desk, a friend’s seat in the classroom, or a cozy spot on the floor—and take notice of how they feel inside in the different places.

ACTIVITY

1. Begin by stating how you feel inside as you sit in your chair in front of the class. (For example, “I feel warm/calm/tired/comfortable/excited/proud”). Then model using words or pictures to describe that feeling. For example, “CALM,” or a picture of small waves for water. Next tell the class, “Notice how *YOU* feel right now where you are seated.” Remind them to simply notice the feeling(s) and if it changes.
2. Think-pair share: After a moment, have them pair-share their experience with neighbors and then call on students to share with the class.
3. As students answer, ask, “What words or pictures could you write to describe that feeling?” Begin a list (on the whiteboard, chart papers, etc.) of feelings the students share and/or the pictures they suggest (a sun, a happy face) that represent those feelings. Be sure to use their exact words and include visual clues for emergent readers (you could make the word “cold” look like ice). If a student uses a vague word like “good” ask them to say more, to explain “good.” Perhaps they can describe another time when they felt the same way. For example, “When my cat falls asleep on my lap” or “When my dad tucks me in at night.” Reassure students: *“Feelings can be hard to describe or label, but it’s important to notice how you feel inside even if you can’t find the perfect words.”*
4. Choose a student to help model the Take a Seat exercise for the class. Have that child share how they felt in their original seat. Then have the student come take *your* seat. Give them a moment to feel the difference and ask them to explain what has changed. *“Sometimes we don’t notice we’re feeling anything, until the feeling changes. For example, you might not know how comfortable you are right now until you have to take a seat here, in front of the whole class.”*
5. Have that student pick another place in the classroom to sit, perhaps in a corner or under a table, at a friend’s desk. *“Isn’t it weird how changing where we sit can change how we feel, sometimes in big ways, sometimes in teeny-tiny ways? We might not even notice our feelings change if we’re not paying attention!”*
6. Hand out clipboards with drawing paper that has been folded in half twice to yield four boxes. Ask students to (1) write their name on the edge somewhere and (2) put their finger in the first box. When everyone is pointing to the first box, tell them to use words or pictures to describe how they felt/feel where they are sitting right now. They might be able to copy something off the chart you created together earlier.

7. Before you let all students move around the room and try the exercise, clarify the specific steps and expectations.

- Step 1: SIT
Sit some place in the room for a few moments.
- Step 2: FEEL
Notice what you feel when you sit there.
- Step 3: DRAW
In one of the four squares, draw a picture or write a word that will help you remember what you felt in that spot.
- Step 4: SIT
Try another spot (each student should have at least two spots, in addition to the one they started in at the beginning of the lesson).

*Troubleshoot in advance if there will be very popular places in the classroom that will require students to wait their turns. Instruct students to do their note-taking elsewhere so other students can have a turn.

8. Check in with the class at a halfway point. Do they need additional direction? Has anyone noticed something particularly interesting? Let them know how much time they have left to complete the task or that they have time for one more spot.

REFLECTION

- *“Where was your favorite place to sit?”*
- *“Why do you think you liked that place/feeling best?”*
- *“Was there any place you didn’t like?”*
- *“Did everyone feel the same way, or did you have different experiences?”*

- *“Does the way you feel in a chair change depending on where your classmates are or what they’re doing?”*
- *“How might you feel standing alone on top of the play structure if everyone else is playing together on the ground.”*
- *“What connections can you make to Dee and how she felt in Loud Mouse?”*

EXTENSION

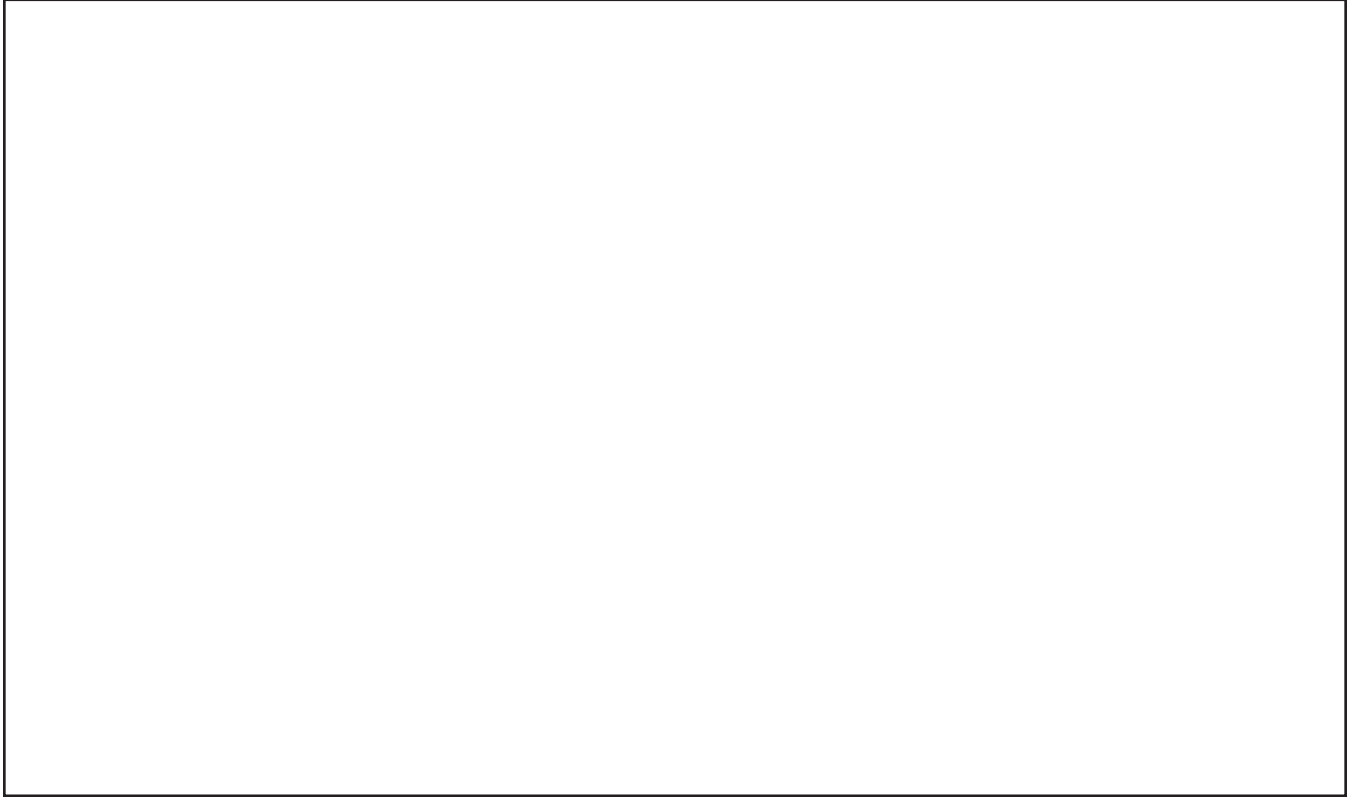
Similes to Describe Feelings

1. “We can use objects, colors, or other experiences to describe our feelings. For example, I feel light, like I’m floating in the pool, or I feel calm, like when my dog sleeps next to me.”
2. Provide sentence stems for simple similes (e.g., I feel sad like _____. I feel excited like _____.)
3. Have students fill in the blanks.
4. Have students choose their favorite simile. Using the reproducible activity sheet provided on the next page, have students draw a picture to illustrate the simile and include the sentence underneath the image as a caption.

AT HOME

Students are encouraged to replicate the exercise with their family at home. Offer the following as examples, but encourage students to come up with their own ideas that apply to their individual homes: How does it feel to sit where another family member usually sits at the dinner table? Or at your big brother’s or sister’s desk? How do you think your cat feels when she sits on the counter?

TAKE A SEAT



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ZOOM IN, ZOOMOUSE

MATERIALS

- Scissors
- Two 11x17 pieces of cardstock or construction paper. In Sheet 1, roughly in the middle, cut out a circle (or square) the size of an Oreo cookie. In Sheet 2, cut out a circle the size of a doughnut.

OBJECTIVES

Students will “Zoom In” and “ZoomMouse” on different illustrations from *Loud Mouse* and *Proud Mouse*—discuss the different information they are able to gather. Students will draw inferences and discuss how zooming in and out not only helps them read pictures, but can be helpful in their own lives. Older students will discuss how zooming in and out can be applied to focusing on “self” and “other,” self-awareness and social awareness.

INTRODUCTION

Cameras have lenses that zoom in and zoom out so photographers can focus on what they deem most important. In Zoom In, ZooMouse, students use the illustrations in *Loud Mouse* and *Proud Mouse* to experiment with their personal lenses. Students explore the value of looking at a situation “close up” and looking at “the big picture.” Older students may also draw parallels between zooming in for greater self-awareness and zooming out for greater social awareness.

ACTIVITY

1. This activity can be done in a read-aloud format where the teacher sets Sheet 1 or Sheet 2 over a page as he or she holds up the book in her other hand. Or it can be done with a document camera or projector. Options for pages to zoom in and out on are specified below.
2. Using Sheet 1 and the title page from *Loud Mouse*, set the cutout over Dee’s face so the class can only see Dee, Cara Lee nowhere in sight.
3. For younger students: “Today we are going to learn how to read pictures. That’s right, you can read more than words, you can read the pictures!” For older students: “Today we are going to adjust the lens we use to view pictures.” Then: “Take a look at this picture of Dee, from *Loud Mouse*. What do we know from this part of the picture?”
 - “Dee is happy.”
 - “Dee likes to be outside.”
 - “Dee likes flowers.”
4. Zoom out on the image to include Cara Lee. “I’m going to zoom out on the image. What do we know now?” When “zooming out” you can use Sheet 2 and/or no sheet at all.
 - “Somebody, maybe a friend, maybe a sister, likes to be with Dee.”
 - “There are two characters who are related in some way.”

5. Have everybody turn around and count to five. (The “turning around” is an important part of the lesson because it requires movement and it’s engaging. Without this part, students may not be able to sit for the whole lesson.) Turn to the page with the close up of Dee singing (“her voice filling the room”) and set Sheet 1 over the page to focus on Dee’s teeth. The class will only be able to see white. Have the class turn back around and ask, “What do we know now?”
 - “Nothing!”
 - “There isn’t any picture.”
 - “It’s too close to see anything.”
6. “Sometimes, if we look too closely at something, we have trouble seeing anything at all! Let’s zoom out a little and then you can make some guesses.” Have everyone turn around and count to five while you zoom out a little by setting Sheet 2 over the picture. As more of Dee’s face is visible, students have students predict the rest of the image.
7. **Think-pair-share:** Have students turn to a partner and talk about what they are noticing about zooming in and zooming out.
8. **Share out:** Have students share their observations. Maybe explain that in the previous image, the illustrator already decided it should be close up so they didn’t need to zoom in. The artist did the zooming in for them!
9. Have everybody turn around and count to five. Turn to the page of Dee singing to the class and everything blowing all over the place. Don’t zoom in at all. Don’t cover any of the illustration. Have the class turn back around and ask, “What do we know from this picture?”
 - “Dee’s voice can blow things around.”
 - “The class is having fun.”
10. Students will likely make observations about all the details, and not about Dee’s experience or how she feels. If they need help, direct them to some of the action or some of the facial expressions of Dee’s classmates. Then, using Sheet 2 and then Sheet 1, zoom in on the image so fewer students are visible. “Do you notice anything new this time?” Finally, zoom in to focus on Dee and ask, “How about now? What do we notice now that we’re close up that we may not have noticed before?”
 - “Dee is happy.”
 - “Dee doesn’t seem to notice the effect her singing is having on the class or the room.”
11. “It was important to take in the **WHOLE** picture in order to fully understand what was happening in the story.”
12. **Optional:** Have the students turn around one more time and count to five. This time turn to the two-page spread of Dee singing on her way to school. Using Sheet 1, zoom in on the smallest Dee so that we can’t see the evergreens. Ask, “Do we know how big Dee is in this picture? Why not?” Using Sheet 2, zoom out so the class can see the evergreens. “How did zooming out help our understanding of the story?” Then, Using Sheet 1, zoom in on the bigger image of Dee, but leave out the ants. “Do we know how big Dee is in this picture? Why not?” Zoom out again until the class can see the ants. “How did zooming out help our understanding of the story?”
13. **Proud Mouse:** Find the page where Cara Lee and Dee are walking home from school. (Dee is in front of and much larger than Cara Lee in this illustration.) Zoom in on, or cover, everything on the pages except Cara Lee’s face. What can we tell about Cara Lee in this picture?
14. Zoom out, or uncover, the rest of the picture so we can see Dee singing and that Cara Lee is in her shadow. Why do you think Cara Lee is feeling this way?
15. **Think-pair-share:** Have students turn to a partner and talk about how zooming in and out might be important not only in picture books, but in real life.

REFLECTION

Share out from above think-pair-share.

- *“In books, but also in our lives, we need to zoom in on our own experience and we also need to zoom out, to take in what’s happening around us.”*
- *“To be self-aware, we need to zoom in on ourselves. To be socially aware, we need to zoom out, to pay attention to others (or our impact on others).”*

EXTENSION

Students can take out their writing notebooks or journals and draw a picture for one of their stories. Before they draw, instruct students to think about how much they’ll zoom in or out on the scene they’re drawing. Why?

AT HOME

Students can practice getting nose-to-nose with a loved one. They talk about what they notice when looking at each other this closely. Then they take a baby step back and see how their view has changed. *“Do I notice anything new now?”* And repeat until they can see the whole person. This activity can be done the opposite way, too. Students can begin at a distance from their partner and keep moving forward until their noses finally touch. *“How have things changed? Do you notice different things than you did at first?”*



PRE-READING

Pre-reading engages students in the reading process and lays the groundwork for comprehension.

Spoiler alert: When you pre-read or introduce *Loud Mouse*, DON'T let students do a complete picture walk. DON'T give away the surprise ending.

“Look at the cover, what do you see?” To help students respond in complete sentences, offer the sentence stem *“I see . . .”* As students name what they see, place vocabulary preview cards on the board or easel. *“Say ‘mouse.’ Say ‘moon.’”* Some other words you might hear in *Loud Mouse* are “sister,” “star,” “tail,” “sing,” “loud,” “little” and “big,” “solo,” “chorus,” “concert,” “mural,” “evergreen”/“tree,” “buttercup”/“flower,” “anthill,” “queen”/“throne,” and “tetherball.” Based on your class’s needs, choose five or so high-leverage vocabulary words for students (and especially for learners of English) to preview.

“The book’s title is Loud Mouse. Why do you think the authors titled it Loud Mouse?”

Connections: *“Loud Mouse loves to sing.”* Read through the first couple pages, then ask, *“What is something you love to do as much as Dee loves to sing?”*

Predictions: Read, *“But today would be different . . .”* and ask, *“How do you think today will be different for Dee?”* Offer sentence stem: *“I think Dee will . . .”*

“Let’s read and find out what happens for Dee!”

WOULD YOU RATHER . . .

MATERIALS

Would You Rather question list

Would you rather . . .

1. Be as tall as the towering evergreens or as small as an ant?
2. Jump into a lake with all your clothes on or climb a tree?
3. Would you rather sing in a group or by yourself?
4. Would you rather be loud or quiet?
5. Would you rather play tennis or swim (or something else)?
6. Share a bedroom or have your own?
7. Draw with crayons or markers?
8. Sleep on a boat or in a tent?
9. Read to someone or have someone read to you?
10. Be a land creature or a water creature?

OBJECTIVES:

Students will thoughtfully answer a series of questions to learn more about themselves, their classmates, and their new class as a whole.

INTRODUCTION

Proud Mouse takes place on Cara Lee's first day of school. The beginning of school is an exciting time to learn more about yourself and others. In this activity, students move around the room to play a giant game of Would You Rather based on experiences featured in *Proud Mouse*.



ACTIVITY

PART I

1. *"It's fun to have things in common with our friends and family. It's also fun to be unique, or different than others. In Proud Mouse, Cara Lee learns a lot about how she is like others and how she is different. Today, we're going to play a game of Would You Rather to explore how we are alike and how we are different from each other."*
2. Set expectations for the activity. Instruct students to think about their answer before moving anywhere. Then, *"When I say 'Go', walk carefully to your corner."* Direct students to move to one corner of the room if they prefer the first option and the opposing corner of the room if they prefer the second option.
3. After students arrive at their chosen corner, ask one student from each corner to explain their thinking.
4. **Options:**
 - Designate a place for students who don't want to choose or encourage everyone to make a choice—for fun!
 - Allow students to change their minds after the sharing stage in the event a student who has explained their thinking is particularly convincing.

5. At some point during the activity, teach the class a word Miss Pink would love: “similar.” “Sim-i-lar. Clap it. It has three parts or three syllables. It means to be like someone or something else, to have something in common.”

PART II (Optional)

6. Pose a couple Would You Rather questions that the students have to answer from the mouse perspective, by pretending they are Dee or Cara Lee. For example, “At recess, do you think Cara Lee would rather play four square or soccer? Do you think Dee would rather have Wednesday’s pizza from the school lunch menu or Friday’s burrito?”

REFLECTION

“What are some things you learned or noticed during this activity today?”

- “Sometimes it’s hard to make choices.”
- “I have things in common with _____.”
- “It’s okay to change your mind.”
- “A lot of friends would rather be big than small or prefer swimming to tennis.”
- “I am similar to _____ because we both like _____.”

“Does anyone think they are like Dee? How?”

Does anyone think they are like Cara Lee? How?”





OH, THE PLACES CARA LEE GOES!

MATERIALS

- Art supplies

OBJECTIVES

Students will explore how a place can affect how they feel. Then students will choose a place where they feel safe and strong—real or imaginary—and construct a visual art piece.

INTRODUCTION

We all have places where we feel especially safe and strong. In *Proud Mouse*, Cara Lee visits some of these places so she can stand alone and see herself more clearly. In this activity, students vividly imagine places that evoke feelings of safety and strength in their own lives and then create a visual representation of one to share with the class.

ACTIVITY

1. *“Sometimes we feel different in different places. Some places make us feel safer and stronger than others. For example, I feel safe and strong in this classroom, but I also feel safe and strong*

when I hike to the top of a hill. I love standing on the top of a big hill that I’ve just climbed.”

2. *“In Proud Mouse, Cara Lee feels safe and strong in the aspen grove. Does anybody remember other places she visits that make her feel this way?”*
3. *“What are some places where you feel safe and strong?”*
4. Briefly lead the class in a visualization of one of their safe places. Ask students to close their eyes if they’re comfortable. Explain that the place they imagine can be real or imaginary. Prompt them to use all their senses to add details. *“Look around. How bright is it? What do you see? What do you feel? How warm or cool is it? Where do you sit? Or do you stand? What do you do there? What do you hear? Are there any smells?”*
5. *“If you’d like, tell a partner about your place. Listen as they tell you about their place.”*

REFLECTION/SHARE

What is it about the place you drew that makes you feel good?

INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUD *LOUD MOUSE*

Read-alouds help students construct meaning during the reading process.

PAGE DESCRIPTOR	PROMPT
So today Simone brought . . .	<p><i>"Simone brought a soccer ball. What do you think she loves to do? Manny brought a drum. What do you think he loves to do?"</i></p> <p><i>"Before I turn the page, let's make some predictions. What do you think Dee has brought to symbolize what she loves to do?"</i></p>
Close-up of Dee singing	<i>"This page says, 'Dee felt her voice filling the room and everyone in it, the way blue fills the sky.' How does blue fill the sky? How does Dee's voice fill the room?"</i>
Dee in the big chair at snack time feeling lonely	<p><i>"Why do you think Dee starts to feel lonely in her big chair? How else could you describe how Dee probably feels in this picture? Why do you say that?"</i></p> <p>(The other friends are smiling, talking, and eating snack together, but Dee is separate from them.)</p>
Music Class	<i>"Fortissimo is an Italian word. Based on the clues in the story, what do you think it means?" (Very loud!)</i>
Two-page spread at recess: "Look out!"	<i>"Take a look at this picture. There's a lot happening here. What do you notice?"</i> Talk about what's happening in the picture BEFORE you read it. AFTER reading, point out what additional information was learned from the text.
Dee fitting "once again, in her usual chair" with the squiggly over her head	<i>"When Dee could fit, once again, in her usual chair, there was a squiggly line over her head. Why do you think that is? What is the illustrator trying to show you?"</i>
Two-page spread of Dee walking home sobbing	When Dee walks past the anthill, the buttercups, and the evergreens crying, reflect back to the earlier spread of Dee walking to school. Ask, <i>"What do you notice about these drawings in these two parts of the story? How are they similar? How are they different? What is happening to Dee's size?"</i>
Two-page spread: Dee arriving home crying and Cara Lee greeting her	<i>The book says Dee is afraid of change. Why would someone be afraid of change? Can you think of a way you have changed, even just a little bit? Losing your teeth. Sleeping in your own bed. Getting a baby brother or sister. Did it take some getting used to?</i>
Dee in her mother's arms on the couch	<i>"When Dee says she feels like the best me I've ever been, what do you think she means by that? Can you think of a time you felt like the best YOU you've ever been?"</i>
Two-page spread of mouse sisters under the stars	<p><i>"The authors devote two pages to this moment between the sisters. That could mean it's important. Why might it be important?"</i></p> <p><i>Do YOU think a star can choose not to shine? Why? Why not?"</i></p>
Dee singing her solo (second-to-last page)	<i>"Before you flip to the last page, any predictions about what's on the last page. Any predictions about how Loud Mouse ends?"</i>
Final page	<i>"What happens? Why? What do you think of the ending?"</i>

INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUD *PROUD MOUSE*

Interactive read-alouds help students construct meaning during the reading process.

PAGE DESCRIPTOR	PROMPT
"Dee had a little sister named Cara Lee."	<i>"What does it mean to be proud? Who are you most proud of?"</i>
"And sometimes she wished she could be just like Dee."	<i>"Is there anyone in your life that you want to be just like the way Cara Lee wants to be like Dee? Who do you look up to?"</i>
"Dee walked her sister right into Miss Pink's classroom."	<i>"What do you remember about your very first day of school? What were you feeling? Based on the words and pictures on these pages, how do you think Cara Lee is feeling about her first day of school?"</i>
"But then things changed."	<i>"Why do you think Cara Lee is confused?"</i>
"When Principal Hummingbird dropped by the classroom,"	<i>"Cara Lee shouts 'I DON'T KNOW!', What emotion might she be feeling? How do you feel when you are asked a lot of questions that you don't know the answers to?"</i>
"The rest of the day, Cara Lee felt odd."	<i>"Have you ever felt the way Cara Lee does on this page, not sad or bad, but not yourself? What do you do at times like this? How could you help a friend who is feeling this way?"</i>
Two-page spread of Cara Lee & Dee walking home	<i>"What does it mean to walk in someone's shadow?"</i>
"Cara Lee tightened her ponytail"	<i>"What do you think will happen when Cara Lee goes to 'stand alone', is there a special place that you like to stand alone to think?"</i>
"Cara Lee knew the perfect spot."	<i>"What does she mean by 'She was just Cara Lee'?"</i>
"In the aspen grove, Cara Lee settled into tree pose."	<i>"Cara Lee is doing yoga to help her clear her mind. What kind of activities do you do to help you clear your mind? Or to help you when you are worried?"</i>
"That night, the two sisters"	<i>"The author devotes two pages to this moment between the sisters. That could mean it's important. Why might it be important? Do YOU think a star can choose not to shine? Why? Why not?"</i>
Dee singing her solo (second-to-last page)	<i>"How do you think Cara Lee felt when Dee said 'I sure hope so'?"</i>
	<i>"Before we go on to the next page, what do you think will happen when Cara Lee goes back to school the next day now that she has taken time to stand alone and think?"</i>
"The next day, Cara Lee and Dee walked"	<i>"How are Cara Lee's face and body language different on her way to school today than they were on her way home from school the day before?"</i>
"In Music, Cara Lee walked right up"	<i>"Does Cara Lee still look confused? What words would you use to describe how she is acting now?"</i>

SHARED READING

Shared reading offers early readers experience with print and concepts of print (directionality, return sweep, spacing), builds a community of readers, and gives access to high-frequency words.

MATERIALS

- Enlarged text version of Dee's refrain (or project the text from the document camera)
- Highlighter tape
- Pointer

With my tail in my hand
My whiskers out proud,
I sing it big
I sing it la, la, la, la LOUD . . .

1. **High-frequency word practice:** “I,” “my,” “it”
2. **Letter recognition:** “This is a ‘W.’ Its sound is /w/, (NOT /d/). To remember its sound, some people call it a wubble ‘u’ double ‘u.’”
 - Who sees a wubble ‘u’ double ‘u’?
 - The word ‘with’ begins with /w/.
 - The word whiskers begins with /w/.
3. **Rhyming:** “Does anyone know which two words in this song rhyme?”
4. **Voice-print matching:** Practice the song while a student points to each word.

A LOUD LETTER: INTERACTIVE OR INDEPENDENT WRITING

Interactive writing allows for differentiated and targeted writing instruction whereby the teacher writes what is known and calls upon students to participate based on their individual learning goals.

This lesson can be conducted as a whole-group interactive writing lesson, where the students and teacher “share the pen,” or as an independent writing activity. In either case, students construct a letter to their favorite character. Where developmentally appropriate, the lesson is also an opportunity to review a friendly letter format including letter greeting, body of letter, and letter closing.



WORD WORK

The following activities offer a range of options for varying levels of reading development, from early and emergent readers to transitional and fluent readers.

LETTER-SOUND MATCHING

- *"The name Dee actually begins with the letter 'D' and the sound /d/. Does anyone else have a name that begins with D? Does anyone else have a D in their name? What other words start the same way? 'Dog,' 'day,' 'door.'"*
- Note if anyone is confusing the /d/ sound with /t/ or /j/ sounds.
- Using whatever verbal cues your school uses, help students draw D's (d's) on the carpet in front of them and then in the air in front of them. For example, *"Pull back, around, up, and down."* (Lowercase or uppercase depending on student readiness.)
- Challenge: *"The word 'loud' ends with the /d/ sound. What other words end with /d/?"*

RHyme WITH DEE

What words rhyme with Dee? Rhyming words have the same ending sound or rhyme, i.e., "Dee," "me," "see," "three," "bee," "tree." Go around the room and have students pitch in words that rhyme with "Dee." In pairs, students make silly sentences using as many of the rhyming words as possible. For example, *"I see a bee in the tree," said Dee.*

COMPOUND WORD CHALLENGE

"A compound word is formed when two complete words are joined to form a new one: 'ant' and 'hill' join to form 'anthill.' When you recognize the words that make up a compound word, you are more easily able to read the compound. There are a lot of compound words in Loud Mouse and Proud Mouse! See how many you can find. Can you find more than ten?"



SYLLABLE APPLAUSE AND SORT

A syllable is a word or word part with one vowel sound. Clap the syllables for Miss Pink's long words, Mr. Dimple's Italian words, and/or Principal Hummingbird's short words. Using the reproducible activity sheets titled Syllable Sort, have students sort the following words from *Loud Mouse* and *Proud Mouse* by syllable.

- One syllable: Dee, tail, hand, butt, big, loud, proud, tip, top, wow, school, things, good, spot
- Two syllables: whiskers, silver, bigger, lonely, softly, little, mistake, humble, little, migrate, confused, question, alone, crickets, pinecone
- Three or more: spectacular, enormous, symbolize, towering, evergreen, buttercups, frustrated, reflection, dignified, benissimo, principal



SYLLABLE SORT

Directions: Cut out the words on the following page to sort them into the correct column based on the number of syllables.

[illegible]

SYLLABLE SORT

whiskers	tail	hand
fortissimo	cozy	silver
butt	spectacular	loud
bigger	big	softly
symbolize	lonely	evergreen
proud	towering	top
wow	tip	mistake
humble	little	unprecedented
school	classroom	buttercups
little	things	reflection
Cara Lee	frustrated	odd
pinecone	invigorating	good
dignified	stand	confused
spot	question	benissimo
Min	alone	principal
crickets	migrate	Val

SUFFIX SORT

The suffix -ed is added to the end of a word to put it in the past tense. The -ed suffix can make three different sounds: /d/ as in “played,” /t/ as in “passed,” and /ed/ as in “farted.” Using the reproducible activity sheets titled Suffix Sort, have students sort the following words from *Loud Mouse* by the sound their -ed suffixes make. Read the words aloud with the group or class before they begin the sort.

Remind students that they should say the word aloud prior to placing it in the appropriate column.

- /d/: loved, detailed, confused, empty-pawed, happened, changed, climbed, joined, snuggled
- /t/: passed, closed, looked, asked, stopped, erased, walked, practiced, noticed, stepped
- /ed/: started, needed, excited, faded, painted, illustrated, unprecedented



SUFFIX SORT

Directions: Cut out the words on the following page and sort them into the correct column based on the sound their -ed suffix makes.

/d/	/t/	/ed/
loved	passed	started

SUFFIX SORT

empty-pawed	detailed	confused
asked	closed	looked
faded	needed	excited
climbed	happened	changed
walked	stopped	erased
stepped	painted	illustrated
unprecedented	joined	snuggled
practiced	noticed	

SUFFIX SEARCH

A suffix is a letter or group of letters attached to the end of a word to change the function of the original word. In *Loud Mouse*, we learned about the suffix -ed. Let's take a look at some of the suffixes that can be found in *Proud Mouse*!

- /ed/ added to the end of a word to put it in the past tense ("walked").
- /ing/ added to the end of a word to make it a present tense action (laughing).

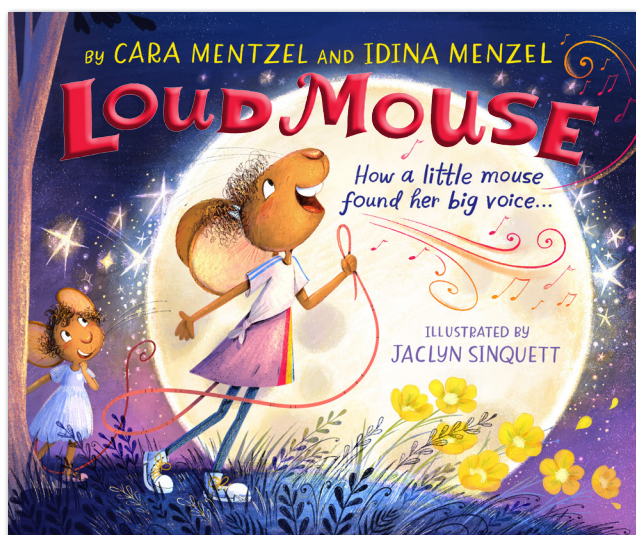
- /ly/ added to a descriptive word to tell how something is done ("slowly").
- /ful/ added to the end of a word create a new word meaning "full of" ("cheerful" means full of cheer).

Write the words with suffixes you found in *Proud Mouse* using the template below, then create some new words with the suffixes -ed, -ing, -ly, and -ful.

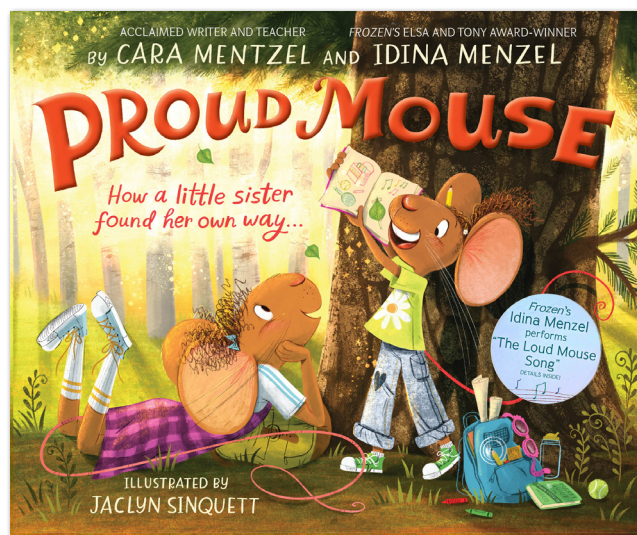
/ed/	/ing/	/ly/	/ful/
walk ed	laugh ing	slow ly	cheer ful

This guide was written by Cara Mentzel. She has a master's degree in elementary education with an emphasis on children's literacy, and though she currently spends most of her time writing, she enjoyed teaching elementary school for well over a decade and can occasionally be found back in the classroom talking about books she loves.

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