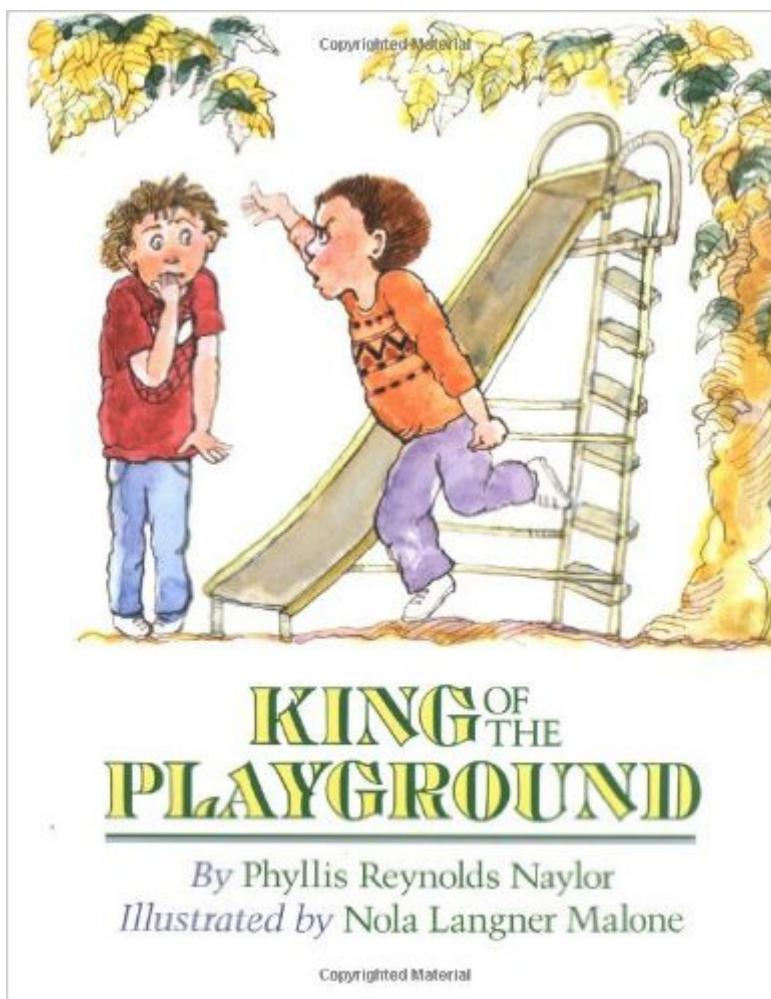


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# King Of The Playground



## **Synopsis**

Kevin loves to go to the playground, but not when Sammy is there. And Sammy, who boasts that he is King of the Playground, is there most of the time. If he catches Kevin on the swings or the slide or the monkey bars, Sammy says, he will do awful, terrible things to him. Kevin tells his dad what Sammy says and they talk it over. And then one day Kevin gets his courage up and goes to the playground even though Sammy says he can't come in. Even though Sammy tells him to go home. Even though Sammy says he will put Kevin in a cage with bears in it. Will Kevin stay, or will he go home? How will he deal with Sammy?

## **Book Information**

Lexile Measure: 310L (What's this?)

Paperback: 32 pages

Publisher: Atheneum Books for Young Readers; Reprint edition (January 1, 1994)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0689718020

ISBN-13: 978-0689718021

Product Dimensions: 8 x 0.2 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 starsÂ  See all reviewsÂ  (23 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #118,000 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #29 inÂ  Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Dysfunctional Relationships #68 inÂ  Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Abuse #187 inÂ  Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Bullies

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## **Customer Reviews**

As a Kindergarten teacher I make a point to read this book every year to my students, to show them that a scary or seemingly hopeless situation can result in a good friendship with a little perservernce and creativity. I like the fact that the Dad was a good source of support for the child, and that the Dad is shown working outside and inside the house in some non-traditional roles. Buoyed by his father's support, Kevin returns to the playground, always trying new ways to secure a spot on the playground. Children need more tools like this for resolving conflict in a non-violent manner.

This book will definitely appeal to many children, especially those who may be dealing with a bully. Everyday Kevin walks to the neighborhood playground in hope of having great fun. But each day, without failure, a boy named Sammy is there. Whenever Kevin approaches a piece of equipment, Sammy will say he can not go on it because he is the "King of the Playground" then threatens to hurt Kevin if he does not listen. Together, Kevin and his father discuss what Sammy is doing to Kevin, and they work through the difficult situation. Soon Kevin gains enough confidence to stand up for himself, and does with remarkable results! I enjoyed seeing how Kevin could open up to his father and how they, together worked out the problem. The understandable text and colorful illustrations flow together smoothly, and add a great deal of feeling to the plot.

Kevin yearns to play on the playground equipment in his neighborhood, but a bully named Sam won't let him. He proclaims himself "King of the Playground" and threatens Kevin with bodily harm if Kevin dare use any of the play equipment. Kevin wisely takes his problem to his father. I like the way father and son interacted and I like the bond between them. That made a good story even better. Kevin's father makes gentle suggestions to the boy about what he thinks might work with Sam; he tells him that "words are stronger than fists." By using his analytical and reasoning skills, Kevin in time befriends Sam and the boys as well as other children enjoy the playground in peace.

I like this book because it helped my son to recognize a bully before he hit the kindergarten playground. It opened the door to discuss how to deal with kids that are less than nice when there is no grown up around.

In the course of this story, the author and illustrator graphically depict a series of terrible acts of violence that the bully is threatening to carry out against his victim. Given the high numbers of child victims of violence in schools today, this book serves as more of a trauma trigger about past acts of violence than as an aide to learning. If we were teaching teens in a dating violence prevention program, would we demonstrate the steps involved in acts of assault? Obviously not. This is not an appropriate strategy to use in teaching young children about bullying either. I strongly question the developmental appropriateness of this book for any children of elementary school age or younger, and it is especially inappropriate for child victims of violence. Given the statistics on child witnesses to violence, let alone victims of abuse/neglect, in the U.S., this book is completely inappropriate to be used in school settings. Instead of this book, I would highly recommend the following anti-bullying books: *My Secret Bully*, *Just Kidding*, *Sorry!*, *Simon's Hook; A Story About Teases and*

## Put-downs, Our Friendship Rules, Say Something.

This book really held my kids' attention all the way through, and the lesson was terrific. Since I have all boys, I have to give lots of talks about them treating each other kindly and with respect, and to stop fighting so much (all that testosterone drives me crazy at times!). Books like these really help show them how to treat others, but also how to handle a situation if mom/dad are not around.

I bought the book because my 4-year-old son had been on the receiving end of some of the unfriendly behaviors that are the basis of the book. My son loves the book. Aside from the fact that he gets the author's premise (reasoning rather than reacting), he just genuinely enjoys it. He laughs out loud at some of the situations in the book. It didn't trigger the meaningful discussion I'd hoped we'd have about bullies (unbridled parental optimism on my part there!), but it's made for a lot of fun bedtime reads.

King of the Playground, by Phyllis R Naylor, hits the nail on the head for younger children (grades K-3) who are bullied on the playground at recess time. This happens far too often, and far to few students report. And, if they do, teachers don't always have the right words to assist them. Using this as a read-aloud, early in the school year promotes just the right conversations that you can revisit throughout the year when necessary. I lent mine to a colleague, never got it back, so I purchased a second one! Naylor helped lots of children in my classes over the years.

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