

First Day Jitters

Amanda Bryans: Hey, everybody. My name's Amanda, and I work for Head Start. I'm going to read you a book today. But first, anybody see what I have on my face? Do you know what this is? That's right. I'm wearing a mask. And I happen to have drawn a rabbit on my mask. I like rabbits. Do you know why I'm wearing a mask? Have any of you worn a mask? Yeah, a lot of people are wearing masks, especially grown-ups, but lots of other people, too, because we're worried a little bit about a kind of germ that causes coronavirus, or you might have heard it, "COVID-19." And the mask helps keep us safe and it helps keep other people safe, too. So sometimes we wear a mask. Now, I'm not actually here in the room with anybody, and I'm just talking to you guys, so I'm going to take my mask off to make it a little easier to understand me. I think I just wanted to show it to you.

Alright. So, the book we're reading today is called – Ta-da! – "First Day Jitters." Do any of you know what jitters are? That's right. Jitters can be feeling kind of worried about something, nervous. Sometimes people call it "butterflies in your stomach." Not quite sure what's going to happen. Do you have any memories of a time when you had jitters? Yeah. When you go to the doctor, sometimes you feel jitters. Sometimes when you start something new, maybe you meet somebody new. Oh, some people might have had jitters on the first day of Head Start. Well, this one is called "First Day Jitters," and let's see what happens.

The book is by Julie Danneberg. She wrote the words, so she's the author. And it was illustrated by Judy Love. Do you know what "illustrated" means? Some people know "illustrated" means Judy Love made the pictures, and let me tell you, these are some fabulous pictures. Here we have a cat jumping off a table, where everything is spilling, a dog looking worried about a cat jumping off the table. I think that's what's happening. You might think something different. Then I see this lumpy bed covers, hands clutching a pillow, feet sticking out! Let's see what's happening.

"Sarah, dear, it's time to get out of bed," Mr. Hartwell said, poking his head through the bedroom doorway. "You don't want to miss your first day of school, do you?" "First day of your new school." There's Mr. Hartwell. He's peeking in. Guess that lumpy thing under the covers is Sarah.

"I'm not going," said Sarah, and pulled the covers over her head. "Of course you're going, honey," said Mr. Hartwell as he walked over to the window and snapped open the shade." Now, hmm. What do we have here? The lump, lumps, under the covers. Kitty-cat looked kind of annoyed, probably because what is the dog doing? Pulling the covers off the bed – trying.

"No, I'm not. I don't want to start over again. I hate my new school," Sarah said. She'd tunneled down to the end of her bed." Oh. There she is, tunneling down. You see a big mountain at the end of the bed with the cat sitting on top, looking happy. Poor Mr. Hartwell. How does he look? He's like, "Oh, no! What am I going to do?! What am I going to do with Sarah?"

"How can you hate your new school, sweetheart?' Mr. Hartwell chuckled. 'You've never been there before. Don't worry. You liked your other school. You'll like this one. Besides, just think of all the new friends you'll meet.'" There are – There's what Mr. Hartwell is imagining, all those children sitting in their desks, looking friendly and alert.

"That's just it. I don't know anyone, and it'll be hard. I just hate it, that's all.'" And this is what Sarah is imagining – people teasing each other, throwing things, blowing gum. Ew. Looks like one person might be knocking their desk over. Wildness.

"What will everyone think if you weren't there? We told them you were coming.'" So what will they all think? Look at that. What are they doing? I think – Oh, they're looking for Sarah. They were expecting her, and she's not there. One child's looking under the chair for her. They've made "missing" posters for – try to find her.

"They will think that I'm lucky, and they will wish that they were at home in bed, just like me.' Mr. Hartwell sighed. 'Sarah Jane Hartwell, I'm not playing this silly game one second longer. I'll see you downstairs in five minutes.'" Now look at this. First of all, Mr. Hartwell used her whole name – Sarah Jane Hartwell – even her middle name. And he's – I think he means business. What do you think? Yeah.

"Sarah tumbled out of bed. She stumbled into the bathroom. She fumbled into her clothes." So now she's getting ready 'cause she knows Mr. Hartwell did mean business.

"My head hurts,' she moaned as she trudged into the kitchen. Mr. Hartwell handed Sarah a piece of toast and her lunchbox." Okay. There's Sarah, coming into the kitchen, holding her kitty. The dog still looks worried. Oh, now her dog doesn't look worried over here, though. What does her dog look? Like he wants to eat Sarah's toast. Hmm!

"They walked to the car. Sarah's hands were cold and clammy. They drove down the street. She couldn't breathe." Do you think she really couldn't breathe? No. I think she just felt funny. Her breathing felt funny 'cause she felt so worried. Sometimes it makes your breathing fast. It's a good time to slow down. Take a deep breath. [Breathes deeply] That can help it feel, like, better, like you are able to breathe just fine.

"And then they were there. 'I feel sick,' said Sarah weakly. 'Listen,' said Mr. Hartwell, you'll love your new school once you get started. Oh, look! There's your principal, Mrs. Burton!" Sarah slumped down in her seat." Okay, there's the new school. Looks like a nice place. Lots of steps. And the principal's coming to see Sarah.

"Oh, Sarah,' Mrs. Burton gushed, peeking into the car. 'There you are. Come on. I'll show you where to go.'" Look at that. She came right to the car to see Sarah, who's still slumped down and looking like those jitters haven't left her yet.

"She led Sarah into the building and walked quickly through a crowded hallway. 'Don't worry. Everyone is nervous the first day,' she said over her shoulder as Sarah rushed to keep up." Now,

you will see that is indeed a crowded hallway. When you go to kindergarten, your hallway won't be that crowded this year.

"When they got to the classroom, most of the children were already in their seats. Look at this. Look at the children. They mostly look, you know, pretty nice. Some of them look like they might have some jitters, too. Maybe it's their first day in a new school, or maybe it's just they feel jitters on the first day every year.

"The class looked up as Mrs. Burton cleared her throat." [Clears throat]

"Class, class, attention, please," said Mrs. Burton. When the class was quiet, she led Sarah to the front of the room and said..." There's a surprise coming. That's not what she said. I said that.

"...class, I would like you to meet..." What do you think she's going to say? Think she's going to say, "I would like you to meet Sarah"? That's a good guess.

"...your new teacher, Mrs. Jane Hartwell." That – That – is Sarah Jane Hartwell. She's not a kid. She's a grown-up teacher. Did you know teachers could have jitters, too? They sure can. Everybody can have jitters when we start something new. But the good thing is, once you get started, you usually find out that things are going to be just fine, and I have to tell you something important. You guys all went to Head Start, and you learned lots of things, and you are so ready for kindergarten. You've got this. You can – It's okay to feel jitters. You tell yourself it's okay. But you're going to do great, and you're going to have lots of fun.

Thanks for letting me read the story to you. Bye-bye.