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# The Three Ninja Pigs

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a teacher's guide

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Created by marcie colleen

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## **Corey Rosen Schwartz**

### **Author, *The Three Ninja Pigs***

After publication of her first book, *Hop! Plop!*, Corey longed to write a fractured fairy tale. But coming up with a clever twist wasn't easy. Then one day, when her son was three, someone asked him if he spoke Spanish. He answered, "No, but I speak a little karate." Instantly, the idea hit her- the three little pigs could go to ninja school! KIYA!

Corey is the author of *Hop! Plop!* (Walker, 2006), *The Three Ninja Pigs* (Putnam, 2012) *Goldi Rocks and the Three Bears* (Putnam, forthcoming) and *Ninja Red* (Putnam, forthcoming). Corey has no formal ninja training, but she sure can kick butt in Scrabble. She lives with three Knuckleheads in Warren, NJ.

Learn more about Corey at [www.coreyrosenschwartz.com](http://www.coreyrosenschwartz.com).

## **Dan Santat**

### **Illustrator, *The Three Ninja Pigs***

One day a year he is Santa Claus, but the other 364 days Dan Santat writes and illustrates children's books. He is also the creator of Disney's animated hit, "The Replacements". Dan graduated with honors from the Art Center, College of Design. He lives in Southern California with his wife, two kids, a rabbit, a bird, and one cat.

Visit Dan at [www.dantat.com](http://www.dantat.com).

## **Marcie Colleen**

### **Curriculum Writer, *The Three Ninja Pigs***

Marcie is a former teacher with a Bachelor's degree in English Education from Oswego State and a Masters degree in Educational Theater from NYU. She also writes Picture Books and, like Pig Three, hopes that practicing a lot pays off for her someday. She lives in Brooklyn, NYC.

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## **How To Use This Guide**

This classroom guide for *The Three Ninja Pigs* is designed for students in preschool through third grade. Teachers are free to pick and choose activities based on their own classroom's needs and abilities.

It offers activities to help teachers integrate *The Three Ninja Pigs* into English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies curricula. Art and drama are used as a teaching tool throughout the guide.

All activities were created in conjunction with relevant New Jersey content standards in ELA, math, science, social studies, art, and drama.

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## Reading Comprehension

Before you read or listen to *The Three Ninja Pigs*, look at the cover.

- What do you think the book will be about? Why do you think so?

Look at the first full spread.

- Where does this story take place? Can you find clues in the picture? Do you think this takes place where you live? Or someplace far far away?

Now read or listen to the book.

- Who is the main character(s)? Why do you think so?
- Who are some of the other characters?
- What is the main problem?
- How do The Pigs try to solve this problem?
- What happens to Pig One's training? How about Pig Two? Pig Three?
- What happens when the wolf comes to Pig One's House? Pig Two's house? The house of Pig Three?
- What happens at the end of the story? Does anyone learn a lesson?

Let's talk about the people who made *The Three Ninja Pigs*

- Who is the author?
- Who is the illustrator?
- What kind of work did each person do to make the book?

Compare the illustrations during each encounter with The Wolf.

- What is happening in each illustration?
- How are the illustrations alike?
- How are they different?
- What are some details that the illustrator added to tell the story?

As a class, read *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs* as told by Jon Scieska

- How is it similar to *The Three Ninja Pigs*
- How is it different?

- Who do you side with? The Pigs or The Wolf? In which story?

## Rhyme Time

*The Three Ninja Pigs* is written in rhyme. Here are some activities to help introduce rhyming to your class.

### **Engine and Caboose**

Introduce the concept of producing rhyming words with train engines and caboose pictures or objects. Explain that when you make rhyming words, the caboose will always stay the same but the engines will be different. Pick a sound for the caboose (e.g., "at") and place many different engines in front to make rhyming words (e.g., h-, m-, c-).

### **"I Spy"**

Start the activity by sitting with the children in a large circle. Provide the children with a sentence containing two rhyming words, e.g. "I spy a chair and a bear." The first object name is something in the room and the second object name doesn't have to be visible in the room. Have the child on your right create her own "I Spy" sentence. You may want to place objects around the room that are easy to rhyme so you can point them out to the children if they need suggestions.

### **Pigs in the House game**

One child is "it" and wears a picture of a Wolf. Her job is to catch a pig that is not in its house.

The rest of the children are divided into two groups. Half of the group are houses and are given pictures of things that rhyme with another picture that is worn by the other half of the group, the pigs. The houses are stay put in various parts of the room and the pigs must find their matching house before the wolf catches them.

The leader starts the game by saying, "The wolf is coming, you should go to your house!" The pigs begin to run and then the leader says, "The wolf is here!" The wolf then runs to catch any pigs not in a house. If she catches one, that pig is the wolf for the next game. Houses become pigs and vice-versa and the game is played again.

- Tip: Use clothespins to attach pictures to shirts. Simple rhyming words can be used (hat, cat) and can be reviewed before the game.

### **Fill in the Blank**

Re-read *The Three Ninja Pigs* aloud. When you get to the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> sentence of each stanza, pause and have the children raise their hands and give the correct rhyming word to complete the sentence.

For example:

*"Once upon a dangerous time,  
a wolf loved to huff and to puff.  
He'd go around town,  
and blow houses \_\_\_\_\_,  
til three little pigs cried ENOUGH!"*

Offer opportunities for the children to make up silly sentences using other words that rhyme but don't make sense. Continue with the rest of the book until all the children have had opportunities to rhyme.

This can be done with other rhyming books, as well.

## New Vocabulary

### **Ninja! the game**

This is a game to teach the new vocabulary taught in *The Three Ninja Pigs*, and listed in the back of the book.

Ninja! is a game based on commands that the Teacher or Leader shouts out while the kids move about the room. Each command requires the kids to strike a certain pose or do a certain action. Any kid who does not do the appropriate command for each word will be held in the Wolf's Lair until the Teacher shouts Breakout! and they can rejoin the game.

It is best to introduce only a few of the commands at a time so kids can learn both what the vocabulary word means and its action without getting overwhelmed.

<b>Command</b>	<b>Action</b>
Ninja	freeze until the command "Kiya" is given to move about again
Kiya	move about
Dojo	2 people make a building with their arms ala London Bridge
Sensei	Bow
Pig One	Lay down and go to sleep until the command "Wolf" is given
Wolf	run around the room blowing
Karate	Kick and yell KIYA!
Jujitsu	Two people get on all fours and one person sits on their backs
Aikido	Two people hold eachother's wrists
Gi	motion like tying on a belt
Sayonara	Hide from view until the command KIYA is given.

You can trick the kids by saying Ninja but instead of saying KIYA, say Wolf and if the kids move they are out - they go to the Wolf's Lair and they stay in the Wolf's Lair QUIETLY UNTIL you say Breakout then they quietly sneak back into the game.



## Haiku

What is a haiku?

The haiku originated in Japan and is a verse (poem) written in three lines. The haiku does not rhyme. Instead, the haiku sets a mood or portrays a feeling or scenery.

The entire haiku is composed in 17 syllables. The first line contains five syllables, the second line has seven syllables, and the third and final line has five syllables. 5-7-5.

Most haiku is written about nature.

Using a picture of Japanese landscape (mountains, Mt, Fuji, cherry blossoms, etc) write a haiku.

Example:

*Cherry Blossoms fall  
From the pretty pink white trees  
The air smells like spring.*

Also try writing haiku about your own neighborhood landscape. What kind of nature do you have near your school? Outside your house?

Write your haikus in a book and illustrate them.

## Math

**Word Problems** *For younger students, the use of pictures or props might be needed to figure out word problems.*

- 1) Sensei teaches 6 students at the dojo. The 3 pigs ask Sensei to teach them. How many students does Sensei have at the dojo?
- 2) Pig Three tries to catch 4 flies with chopsticks. One (1) of the flies gets away. How many flies did she catch?
- 3) There are 8 houses. The Wolf blows down 4 houses. How many houses are left?
- 4) Pig One decides to practice aikido for 5 hours. He falls asleep for 2 hours. How many hours does he have left to practice?

### **"What Time is it, Mr. Wolf?" game**

*"What time is it Mr. Wolf?", also known as "What time is it Mr. Fox?", is a classic version of tag that helps kids work on listening skills, counting skills and coordination required for running while also enjoying being outside and playing with friends.*

Select one person to be Mr. Wolf to start off the game. This person needs to stand, facing away from the group, at either the other end of a small field or a cleared area suitable to run around. Determine the size of the playing area based on the age and ability of the kids playing.

Line all the other children up at the other end of the area. Make sure there is a distinct line or markers to note the starting place.

Call out as a group "What time is it Mr. Wolf?"

Have Mr. Wolf respond with a random time, such as "five o'clock" or "eleven o'clock."

Step forward, with the kids, as many spaces as Mr. Wolf said it was time. So if Mr. Wolf said it was three o'clock step forward three spaces.

Repeat this asking, answering and stepping pattern.

Beware that at any time Mr. Wolf can answer "lunchtime," when asked the time. When this happens, the child playing Mr. Wolf with face the other children and chase them back to the original start line.

Become the next Mr. Wolf if you were the first person tagged before returning back to the original starting line.

## Science

### **Japan's Geography**

Study a map topographical of the island nation of Japan. Study the opening spread of *The Three Ninja Pigs*.

Japan is known for its steep mountains, active volcanos, rice paddies, cherry blossoms, and forests.

Almost 75 percent of Japan's land is mountainous, and about two-thirds of it is forested. Japan's most famous mountain and the highest in elevation is snow-capped Mount Fuji.

Can you find Mt. Fuji in *The Three Ninja Pigs*? What else do you see?

Spend some time looking at pictures of Japan and its landscape. Many pictures can be found online.

## **Volcanos** *"Once upon a dangerous time..."*

*Kids are always fascinated by volcanos. Here are some ways to study and demonstrate volcanos in the classroom.*

### **Quick Volcano**

Attach a paper cup with scotch tape to a large paper plate right side up. Leave a hole at the top before you cover the rest of the cup and plate with aluminum foil. Secure it with tape. Place your volcano in a pan or tray. Poor 1 tbsp. of baking soda into 2 tbsp. of water until it dissolves in your volcano. Poor 2 tbsp. of vinegar into the volcano and watch what happens.

### **Play Dough Volcano**

Put a paper cup, right side up, onto a tray and cover both of them with tin foil. Make sure to leave the top of the cup open to pour in your lava mixture. Fold the remaining tin foil over the rim of the cup, so you can make a mountain shape. Roll out play dough and cover the foil of your mountain. To make your volcano erupt, pour 3 tbsp. of baking soda into the cup. Pour in ½ cup of white vinegar mixed with red food coloring in the volcano cup to make your volcano erupt.

### **Bottle Volcano**

Place an open 20 ounce bottle in the middle of a baking pan. Mix a bit of water with 6 cups of dirt around the bottle to form a mountain. Pour 1 tbsp. of baking soda into the bottle, and then pour in a mixture of red food coloring and 1 cup of vinegar. Another kind of volcano can be made by molding play dough around a baby bottle to make a mountain. Pour warm water in the bottle until it is half full. Add two drops of red food coloring, six drops of detergent and 2 tbsp. of baking soda into the water. Add vinegar.

### **Cardboard Volcano**

Mold clay into a volcano shape on a piece of cardboard. Leave a hole at the top of the volcano. Place a paper towel roll into the center of the volcano, making sure it is the same height as the top of the hole. Let the clay dry. Paint the volcano so it resembles a real one. Pour baking soda into the paper towel roll and then add some vinegar.

### **Dirt Volcano**

While outside, form a volcano in the dirt or sand. Leave a hole at the top of your volcano. Add two tablespoons of baking soda. Mix red food coloring in ½ cup of vinegar. Pour vinegar, food coloring mix into the volcano.

## Social Studies

### **Map Making**

Young childhood is a stage of curiosity and exploring but with a focus on self. For 3 – 6 year old children, simple mapmaking activities promote thinking about the world around them.

Start with building blocks or other objects and as a class create a model of the classroom. Be sure to include any tables or chairs, walls, windows, doors, etc.

Then with crayons and paper, do the same. Without giving too much guidance as the children to now create the classroom on their own paper. Some children will draw a view from above as we usually think of maps, while others may draw from other directions. Give the children space to be creative.

If children are a little bit older, try applying the activity to a map of the neighborhood, their bedroom or home.

Discuss what a map is and how it helps someone find their way around a space.

Next, create a map of the village in *The Three Ninja Pigs*. Be sure to include all three pigs' houses and the dojo. Also take note of the mountains or trees in the illustrations to add to the maps. Next, children can mark out the pathway of the wolf.

## Martial Artists

Martial arts have been proven to provide physical, mental and social benefits. Everyone has their different reasons for studying, whether they need self-defense against a bully, they want to gain discipline and self-esteem, or they need a way to calm aggression.

- Action stars and martial arts figures like Bruce Lee, Tony Jaa, Chuck Norris, Jet Li, Jackie Chan, Steven Seagal, Cynthia Rothrock, Jean-Claude Van Damme are without a doubt martial arts celebrities. Still, these people are obvious and well known. But did you know the Madonna, Michael Jackson, Kobe Bryant and Abraham Lincoln have all studied martial arts? Even Todd White, the person behind the design of the TV show version of the cartoon character 'SpongeBob SquarePants' is allegedly a black belt in jiu-jitsu!

You can research more information about celebrity martial artists at [www.your-martial-arts-resources.com](http://www.your-martial-arts-resources.com).

- Invite a martial artist from a local dojo to come talk to the class. Learn about what they study and why.

## Culture and Setting

- Read through *The Three Ninja Pigs*. Have kids list all of the pieces of the story that make it a unique Japanese ninja story. What did Corey Rosen Schwartz add or take away when she changed the setting?
- Also read *The Three Hawaiian Pigs and the Magic Shark* by Donijee Laird and *The Three Cajun Pigs* by Berthe Amoss. What elements were changed in each of these stories?
- Lastly, as a class or individually, have the students re-write the classic Three Pigs story with a setting of their choice. (Ie. Underwater Adventure, on the Moon, in the Old West, etc)

## Origami Ninja Stars

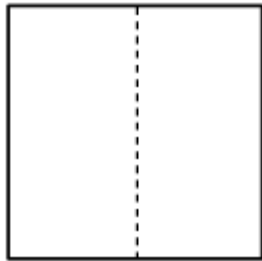
*Origami is Japanese paper art which creates through various folds of paper, never cutting.*

*The Ninja Star is a well known weapon or tool used by ninjas.*

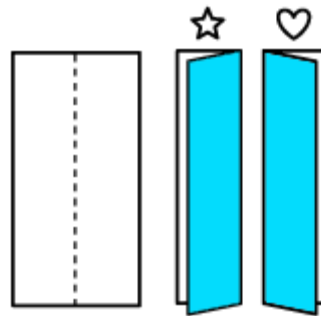
Lead the class through making their own ninja star.

Once completed, ask each child what they would like to be a "Ninja" or expert at. What do they want to practice and practice til they are very good? Have them write or the teacher can write their answers on their stars and display on a bulletin board in the classroom as a reminder of the lesson in *The Three Ninja Pigs*.

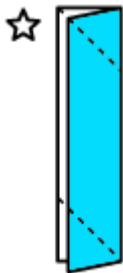
1. Cut Square in half to make two pieces of paper.



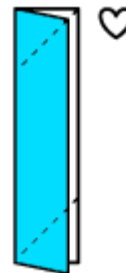
2. Fold both lengthwise.



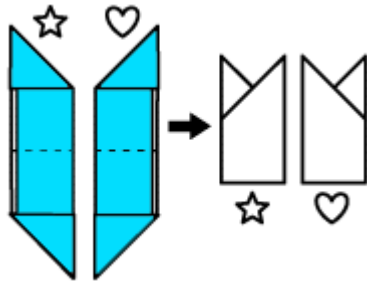
3. Hold folded side to the right.  
Fold top right hand corner over.  
Fold bottom right hand corner over.



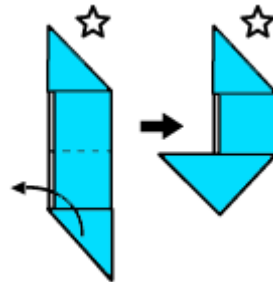
4. Hold folded side to the left.  
Fold top left hand corner over.  
Fold bottom right hand corner over.



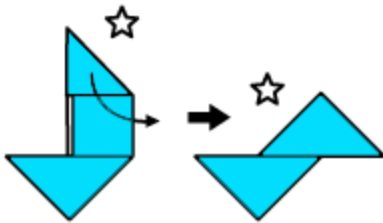
**5.** Fold each paper in half so that both points are at the top.



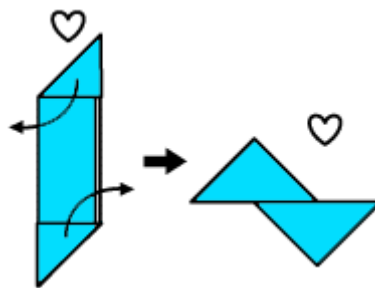
**6.** Open out and hold bottom point. Fold up and to the left so that right edge runs along fold.



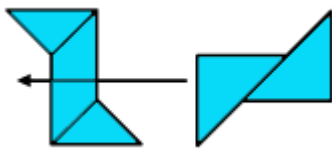
**7.** Hold top point and fold to the right so that side edge runs along fold.



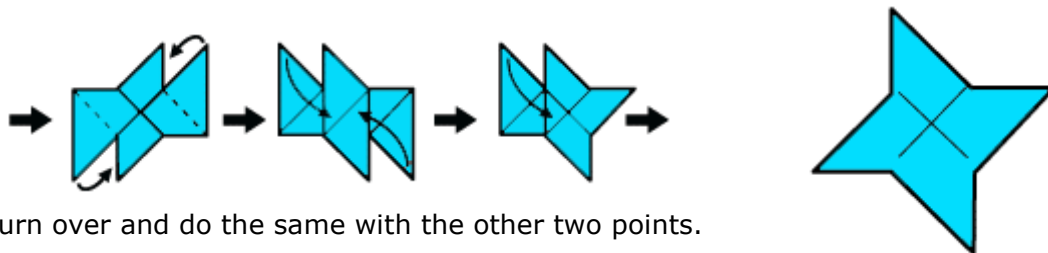
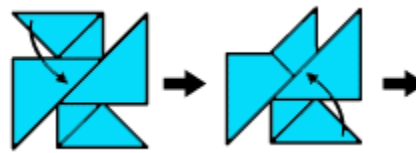
**8.** Do the same with the other paper.



**9.** Then face the two smooth sections together, one vertical and one horizontal.



**10.** Fold each point back over and into "pocket".



Turn over and do the same with the other two points.



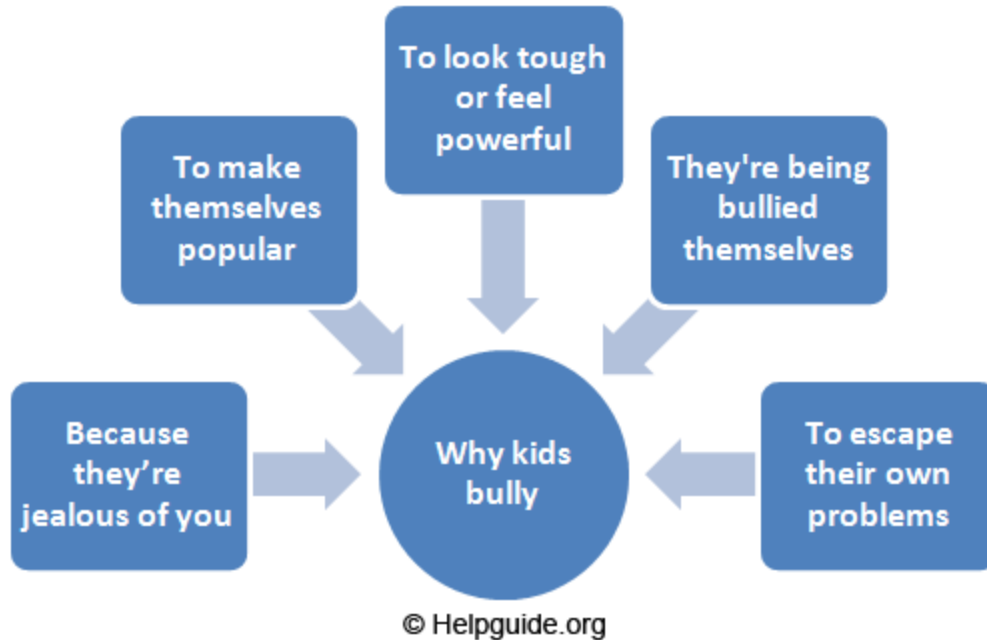
## **Bullying**

*There is no doubt about it that the Wolf is one giant bully! He goes around blowing houses down and being mean. But what about those bullies that your students face every day? Are they as easy to recognize?*

*Below is some information on bullies, along with some discussion questions and an activity.*

### Types of Bullying

- Physical bullying:
  - Hitting, kicking, or pushing someone...or even just threatening to do it
  - Stealing, hiding, or ruining someone's things
  - Making someone do things he or she doesn't want to do
- Verbal bullying:
  - Name-calling
  - Teasing, taunting
  - Insulting or otherwise verbally abusing someone
- Relationship bullying:
  - Refusing to talk to someone
  - Excluding someone from groups or activities
  - Spreading lies or rumors about someone
  - Making someone do things he or she doesn't want to do



### What to do if You are Bullied?

- Look at the kid bullying you and tell him or her to stop in a calm, clear voice. Say "I don't like that."
- If speaking up seems too hard or not safe, walk away and stay away. Don't fight back. Find an adult to stop the bullying on the spot.

There are things you can do to stay safe in the future, too.

- Talk to an adult you trust. Don't keep your feelings inside. Telling someone can help you feel less alone. They can help you make a plan to stop the bullying.
- Stay away from places where bullying happens.
- Stay near adults and other kids. Most bullying happens when adults aren't around.

## Activity for the Classroom

### Discussion

Ask the class if they have ever been "bullied"? What happened? What did they do? What could they have done differently? Perhaps have students draw pictures of their situation to share with the class.

### The Swarm

*This activity allows children to explore ways to diffuse a bully situation.*

A child puts on an old jacket or overcoat and "becomes" the wolf in *The Three Ninja Pigs*.

The child will act out what the wolf looks, sounds and feels like.

Another child is asked to play the "victim" who is being bullied by the wolf. (NOTE: *no physical contact should be allowed during this activity*).

The rest of the class are the "bystanders".

Once the bullying begins, ask the bystanders if they want to swarm over and rescue the victim. Ask, "Swarm?"

Gather the group together like they are a swarm of bees coming from a hive. Walk towards the victim and take his or her hand or lock arms and pull them into the swarm. Leave with them and pull them away from the ugly situation. Move to another part of the room. The surprise element will defuse the situation.

Then if they want, the group can do a Second Swarm. Ask, "Second Swarm?"

If they agree, go back in a group to the wolf and catch him or her up in the swarm! And several say, "No more of that stuff, get it?" or something to let them know that mean behavior is not acceptable.

*It is best to continue this practice until everyone has had the opportunity to be the wolf and be the victim.*

This is group power making a statement that people are to be treated with respect.

It's the group energy of the swarm that scatters the bullying behavior. People who try to intimidate others by mean words or actions fall apart when they face a force bigger than their own. Band together to make the school a safer place to be!