***Monkey & Robot, Friends & Neighbors*** by Peter Catalanotto

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GRL N, GLE 3, CCSS/Instructional strand: W.3, 3, 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, 4, 8, 10; SL.3.1, 1c, 1d, 4, 5, 6; RF.3, 3, 3b, 3c, 4, 4a, 4c; RL.3.1,3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9 10

Fantasy, graphic novel, early chapter book

How does the graphic novel format help you get a good sense of the characters right away? What is your first impression of Robot? Of Monkey? What do the drawings add to your sense of their personalities?

How does the author use the size of the pictures to give a sense of pacing? Notice when there are more small frames on the page, when there are fewer larger ones. How does that speed up or slow down the story?

Story elements: setting, plot, character development, problem and solution, illustrations enhance meaning and tone.

Describe the main characters, are the happy, sad, angry, careful, messy, mean, kind? Give examples of what shows their personalities.

Describe the settings for the stories. Do most of them happen at school, at an office, at home? What kind of home is it? Fancy, plain, cozy, uncomfortable? How does the kind of house make you feel about the characters? What if the house were a creepy dungeon? What if it were a palace? How would that change your impressions?

Each story has a problem, some kind of conflict between Robot and Monkey. Describe in just a sentence or two what each story is about, what the conflict is, how is it resolved.

Language:

Most of these stories take place through dialog, through people talking. How does Monkey speak differently from Robot? Give examples where Robot needs to explain words or things to Monkey. Give examples where Monkey explains things to Robot.

Notice when the language is conversational, figurative versus literal meanings, uses of idioms, humorous tone, word play.

Comprehension strategies: identify differences in point of view, characterization, and cause and effect relationships.

What does Robot think about surprise parties? What does Monkey think? What does Robot think about babies? What does Monkey think?

Every story shows Monkey and Robot seeing the same situation very differently. How do all these stories come together to give you a strong sense of each character?

Draw your own Robot character and give him/her three personality traits (for example, careful, responsible, logical).

Draw your own Monkey character and give him/her three personality traits (for example, playful, energetic, eager to please).

Themes: friendship, birthdays, adoption, manners, pets,

What kind of friendship would you say Monkey and Robot have? Are they close friends? Are they like family? Are they like roommates? How is their friendship shown? Give three examples from all the stories.

How are birthdays shown in the book? Are they exciting or stressful? Full of presents and candy or just the right present? What makes for a good present to Robot? To Monkey?

Does Monkey trick Robot about the birthday party? Does Robot trick Monkey? Is tricking someone a good or bad thing? When is it good? When is it bad? Are surprises good or bad? Give examples of how a surprise can make you happy. Give examples of how a surprise can upset you.

How is tricking someone like lying to them? Are all lies bad? What are “little white lies”? Give an example of telling someone a lie so that you don't hurt their feelings. Give an example of telling someone a lie so you can something special for them without their knowing about it.

How is adoption described in the book? Does it make sense to Monkey? Does Robot help Monkey understand babies better? Does Monkey help Robot understand better?

Robot and Monkey have different ideas about what makes good manners. Do you have your own ideas about how to be polite? List five ways you know to be polite? Five things you think are rude? Who would agree with you, Monkey or Robot?

There are a couple of pets in the book. Name the animals that are pets. Describe how Monkey and Robot care for them. Are Monkey and Robot good pet owners? What do they do right? What do they do wrong? What does the exterminator want to do to the mice? What does Monkey want to do? What would you do?

Draw a picture of the pet you want to have. Describe how you would take care of it. Make a cartoon using panels and speech bubbles like *Monkey & Robot* about your pet.