

# Because of Mr. Terupt

Recommended for Grades 4-8

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## **Book Summary: Because of Mr. Terupt**

Seven kids at school get a new fifth grade teacher—Mr. Terupt—who teaches them how school can be fun. Each kid brings their own narration to the story, allowing for multiple views on the same event. Though the year, Mr. Terupt encourages them to work out their problems like dealing with the mean girl Lexie, partnering their class with the Collaborative Classroom for special needs kids and getting them enthused about school.

As a reward for good class days, Mr. Terupt allows the class to choose what they would like to do for a day and they request to play outside in the snow. When they go outside Mr. Terupt tells them no snowballs, but Peter, the class troublemaker ends up on making one and throwing one at his classmates when they gang up on him. His snowball misses its target and instead hits Mr. Terupt, knocking the teacher unconscious.

## **[SPOILER]**

While everyone initially blames Peter for the accident, it is revealed that Mr. Terupt's past history of wrestling and multiple concussions had weakened his skull. He remains in a coma until the doctors attempt surgery to fix the damage.

All the kids end up in the waiting room on the day of Mr. Terupt's surgery. Together, they stay together for the eight hours and share their favorite memories with each other. Each kid blames himself or herself for the accident but Jessica's mom says that it was Mr. Terupt's fault. He gave the class too much responsibility, allowing them to act like adults when they shouldn't have and thus failed to stop the kids from roughhousing before the snowball was thrown.

On the last day of school, Mr. Terupt returns. He forgives Peter. The class is overjoyed to learn that they will have him as their teacher for sixth grade.

## **Author Biography: Rob Buyea**

Rob Buyea was born September 12, 1976 in Oneida, NY. When he was growing up, he enjoyed sports the most in school rather than reading and writing. While teaching third and fourth graders, he realized that he first needed to read and write more if he were to teach it well. Six years later, he moved to Massachusetts with his family and began teaching high school biology. *Because of Mr. Terupt*, his first novel, has received acclaim and the E.B. White Read Aloud Award in 2011. It currently has two sequels.

Rob Buyea currently lives in North Andover, Massachusetts with his wife and daughters where he continues to write as well as coaching wrestling.



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## Discussion Questions: Because of Mr. Terupt

1. How is Mr. Terupt welcoming to each of his students? Is your teacher like Mr. Terupt? How?
  2. According to Luke, Mr. Terupt trusts his class too much. How? Is this really a bad thing? Why or why not?
  3. How did Anna and Danielle become friends? Have you ever made a friend because you were partners together? Do you think Mr. Terupt knew what would happen when he paired the girls together? Why or why not?
  4. When Mr. Terupt assigns them the project of helping out the kids in the Collaborative Classroom, Jeffrey surprises his group by enjoying spending time with the special needs children. Did this revelation about Jeffrey surprise you? How? Do you know anyone like Jeffrey?
  5. Alexia spends most of the school year tormenting both Jessica and Danielle, even though Danielle was formerly her friend. Why do you think Alexia treats her friend like this? Do you know anyone like Alexia? How did you confront them?
  6. When Mr. Terupt notices Alexia bullying her holiday group, he pulls her away and then lectures the rest of the group for not standing up to Alexia. What would have happened if one of them had stood up to her? Why was Mr. Terupt so disappointed in them for doing nothing?
  7. When Peter throws the snowball, each following chapter gets shorter until part two. What effect do these short chapters have on the story? Whose fault is it when Mr. Terupt gets hurt? Why?
  8. What positive effects did Mr. Terupt have on all the kids? Why do you think he was he able to connect so well with each one of them? Who did he make the biggest impact on? How?
  9. Jessica considers how there are reasons for everything happening. How have you seen this proven in the book? Can you think of some of the reasons for things happening in your life?
  10. Why does Peter's narrative seem to disappear after his snowball hits Mr. Terupt? Does the reader miss out on any valuable information without his narrative? Why or why not?
  11. Whose narrative do you find the most informative? Whose was your favorite? Why?
  12. According to Jessica's mom, the accident was Mr. Terupt's fault. Why? How could he have prevented it from happening? Is there anything else he could have prevented? If so, what?
  13. Why did Mrs. Williams let the class have Mr. Terupt as their teacher for sixth grade?
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