

Awkward
by Svetlana Chmakova

Grade Levels:

- 6-9

Synopsis:

When Penelope “Peppi” Torres starts at her new school, she quickly learns that there are two rules for survival---“don’t get noticed by the mean kids” and “find people with similar interests and join their group”. She quickly crosses the line when she accidentally trips into a shy boy named Jaime in the hall and earns the nickname “nerder girlfriend.” Rather than apologize, she runs away. Peppi adapts by joining the art club, but still feels guilty about how she treated Jaime. Realizing that her art club and Jamie’s science club are rivals, she decides to do whatever it takes to survive middle school.

Author Website:

- <http://svetlania.com/>

Curricular Connections:

- English- Realistic Fiction, Character Analysis & or Word Analysis
- Writing-compare & contrast

Lesson Ideas:

- Compare and contrast your middle school experience with that of Peppi in the story. How are they similar? How are they different?
- Point of view: How has the author developed Peppi’s point of view in the story? Explain using text evidence.
- Discuss the meaning of the word “Awkward”. What examples of the text can support the definition of awkward?

Common Core Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.6

- Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.3](#)

- Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.4

- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone

Suggested Companion Titles:

- *Sunny Side Up* by Jennifer Holm
- *Drama* by Raina Telgemeier

- *How to Survive Middle School* by Donna Gephart
- Middle School series by James Patterson

Professional Reviews:

- *School Library Connection* starred, 04/01/16
- *School Library Journal*, 07/01/15
- *Voices of Youth Advocates* (VOYA), 10/01/15