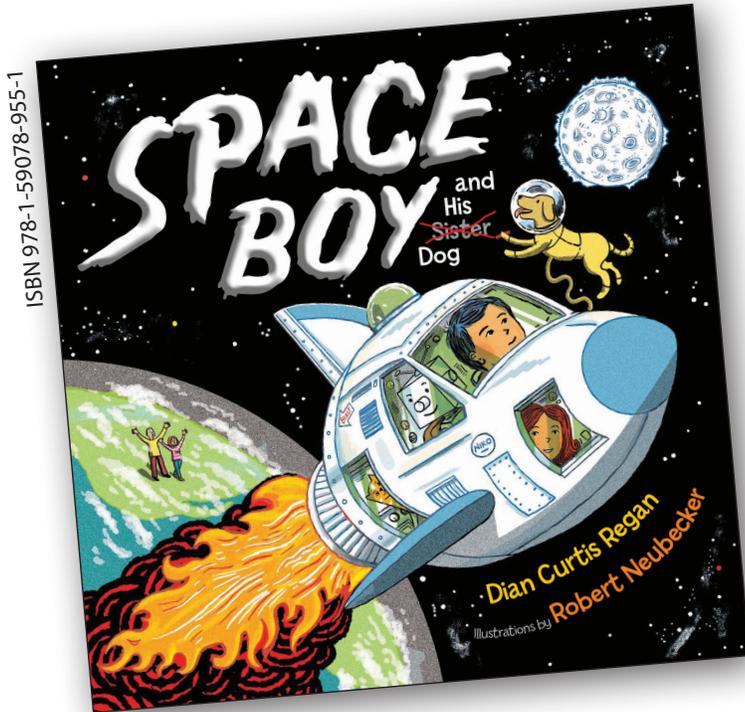


# Curriculum Guide



## SPACE BOY and His Dog

BY  
Dian Curtis Regan

ILLUSTRATED BY  
Robert Neubecker

**N**IKO MAY LIVE ON boring old Planet Home (Earth) with his family, but that doesn't stop him from having big adventures in outer space. With a box from his backyard and a little imagination, Niko blasts off in his homemade spaceship, accompanied by his robot, Radar, and his dog, Tag. Who's not invited on this voyage? His annoying sister, Posh, who seems to pop up at the most inconvenient times. In this first (mis)adventure, Niko and trusty crew (and possibly a sisterly stowaway) fly to the moon in search of a lost cat.

Children in the early primary grades will enjoy blasting off with Space Boy in veteran author Dian Curtis Regan's exciting and imaginative new series.

"The themes of imaginary play and sibling rivalry provide good-natured support for a lighthearted, easy-to-read adventure." —**Kirkus Reviews**

"Regan takes readers inside the head of a very imaginative child, honoring Niko's desire to control his story while affectionately spoofing it. It's a funny and fresh spin on sibling conflict . . ." —**Publishers Weekly**

"A good read-aloud to highlight strong female characters and discuss sibling rivalries." —**School Library Journal**

[diancurtisregan.com](http://diancurtisregan.com)

[spaceboybooks.com](http://spaceboybooks.com)

[boydsmillspress.com](http://boydsmillspress.com)

Common Core State Standards addressed by the materials in this guide are noted throughout. For more information on the Common Core, visit [corestandards.org](http://corestandards.org).

Highlights

BOYDS MILLS PRESS

# Discussion Questions



There are two settings in *Space Boy and His Dog*. What are the settings for this story? What clues are in the illustrations that help you identify the settings?

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7**



Who are the main characters in the story? List them and tell one thing about each character.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.3**



Why do you think that Niko doesn't want his sister Posh to be part of this story?

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1**



What is the problem that Niko and his crew are trying to solve?

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1**



How is Posh involved in solving the problem in the story?

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1**



How does Niko react when he discovers his sister has played a role in solving the problem? What do his feelings about Posh's involvement cause him to do next?

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1**



When Niko is in the spaceship heading home, he feels lonely. What happens on the spaceship that causes him to feel this way?

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1**



Why do you think that Niko "heads back to the moon?" What feelings did he have that might have led to this decision?

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1**



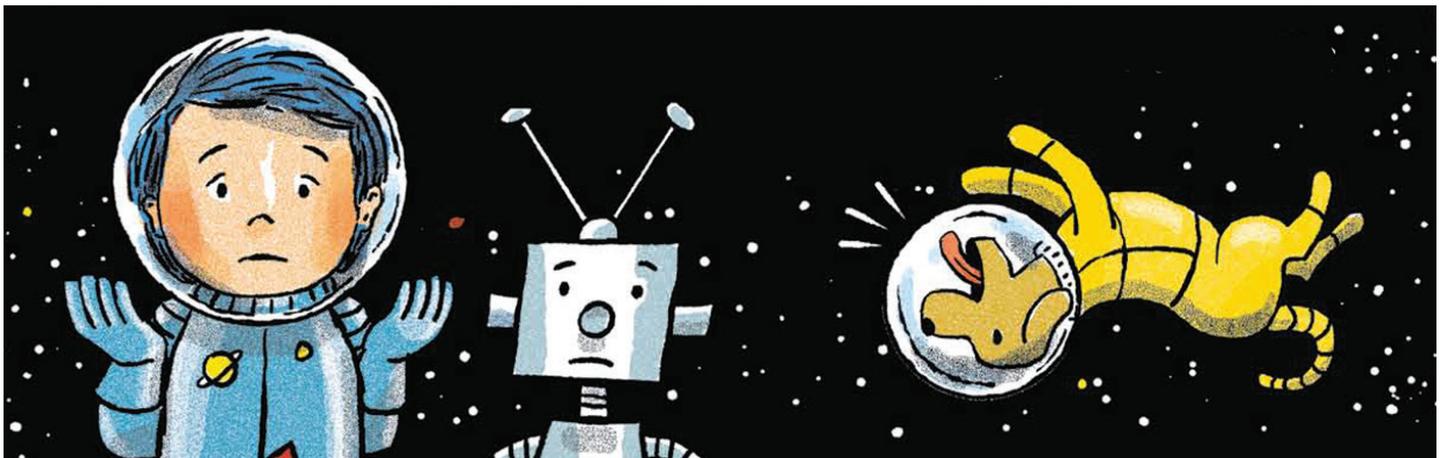
What is the setting in the chapter titled "Home in Time for Dinner?" What information in the illustrations lets the reader know the real events of the story?

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7**



Why do you think the author uses an illustration without words to end the story?

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7**



# Activities



Niko is in search of a mission at the beginning of the story. What other missions might Niko find to complete in his neighborhood with the help of his trusty copilot and spaceship? Create a three-panel comic strip to show Niko's new mission. Show the setting in the first panel, the problem in the second panel, and the solution in the third panel. Add speech bubbles to show what the characters are saying.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.3**



Niko does not want his sister, Posh, to be a part of his adventure story, even though she keeps popping up during the telling of his tale. What would the mission to rescue the cat be like if it were told from Posh's point of view? Write the story of finding the neighbor's cat with Posh as the main character. Include what she might think of her brother and his spaceship.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.2**



The final page of the story is an illustration of Niko, Posh, and Mrs. Jarabaldi without any text. Study the illustration and imagine what the three might say to each other. Write the conversation they might have had when Niko and Posh returned the lost cat.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7**



Pretend that you have an imaginary spaceship like Niko. Who would you bring along with you on an imaginary voyage? Where would you and your copilot go? What adventures would you have together? Create an illustration of your copilot and your voyage. Include a caption describing where you go and what happens on your adventure.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.3**



Niko tells the story of taking his spaceship to the moon to find the neighbor's lost cat and getting back home in time for dinner. At the end of the story, the illustrations show the sandbox in Niko's backyard and a spaceship built from cardboard. Imagine that Niko's mom was looking out the window into the backyard at her children playing. How would she describe the scene in the backyard? Write several sentences from the point of view of Niko's mom as she describes Niko and Posh's spaceship adventure in the backyard.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.3**



The discussion questions and activities in this guide were created by Leigh Courtney, Ph.D. She teaches in the Global Education program at a public elementary school in San Diego, California. She holds both masters' and doctoral degrees in education, with an emphasis on curriculum and instruction.

# How to Catch a Cat



Niko's mission is to locate the neighbor's missing cat. Posh has a clever idea about how to catch the cat using her dog's treats. What other ways might a person find a lost cat? List your ideas below.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.K.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY. 1.3

1. \_\_\_\_\_

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2. \_\_\_\_\_

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5. \_\_\_\_\_

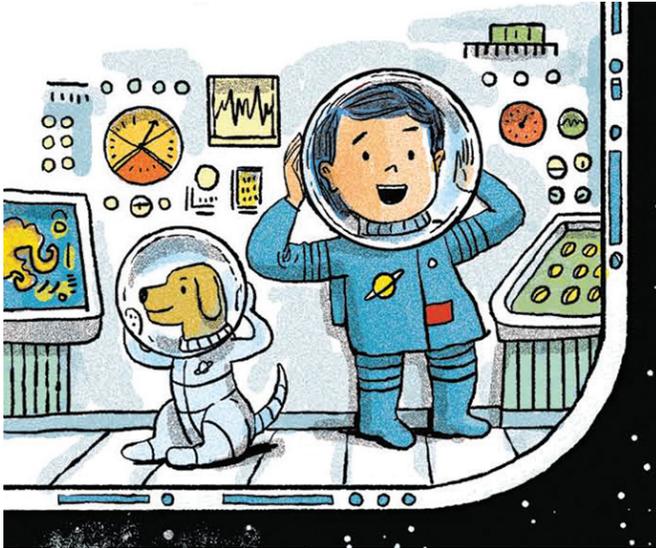
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# How Does Niko Feel?

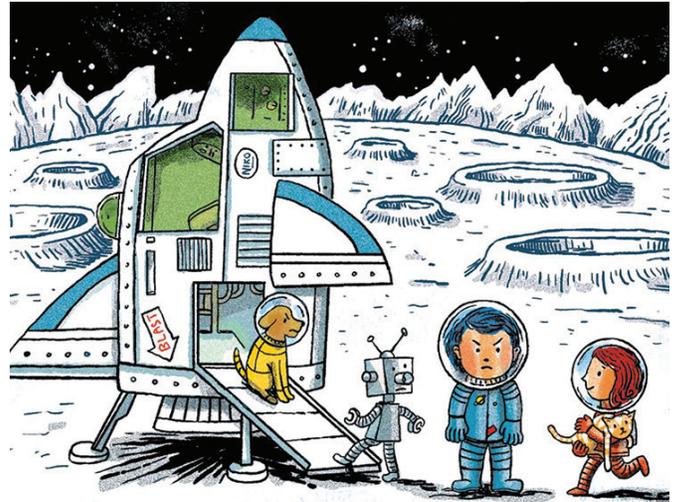
Niko's feelings change over the course of the story. Look at the images and story scenes below and write a word to describe how Niko feels in each situation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.9; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.9



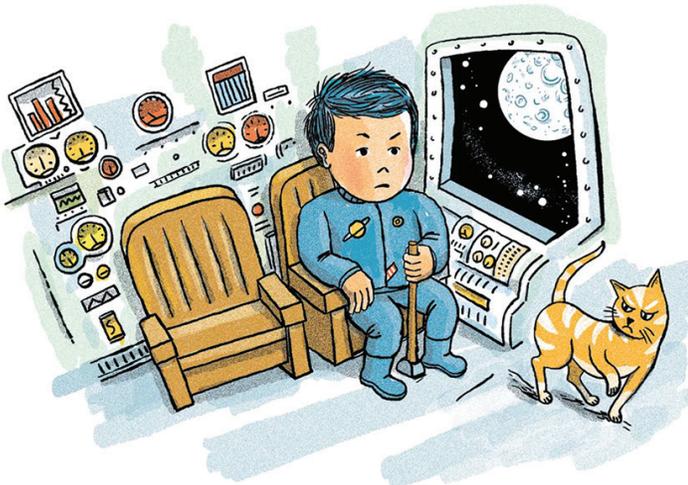
Niko and Tag embark on their mission to find the lost cat.

Niko feels \_\_\_\_\_.



Niko and his crew return to the ship after all their searching and Posh is ready to board—holding the lost cat!

Niko feels \_\_\_\_\_.



Radar and Tag are mad at Niko for leaving Posh on the moon. They won't sit with him. Even Mrs. Jarabaldi's cat won't let Niko pet him.

Niko feels \_\_\_\_\_.



Niko and Posh return the lost cat to Mrs. Jarabaldi.

Niko feels \_\_\_\_\_.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Where Does the Story Take You?

Niko is excited to go on an adventure in his spaceship. He goes on a mission to the moon to rescue his neighbor's cat. Create a map showing where Niko starts his adventure, where he visits, and where he ends his mission. Design symbols to show the places Niko visits and a key for your map that tells what each symbol means. Draw a line with arrows on your map to show the order in which Niko visited each place.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7**



**Key**