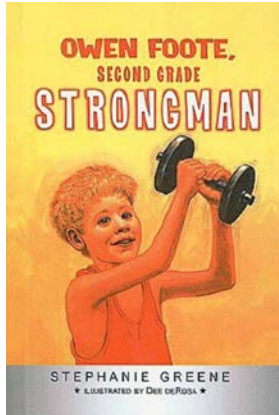


**OWEN FOOTE, SECOND GRADE STRONGMAN****CURRICULUM TIE-INS:**

Loyalty  
 Friendship  
 Conflict Resolution  
 Self-image  
 Consequences

**PLOT SUMMARY:**

Owen dreads height-and-weight-chart day at his school because he's small for his age. When he discovers that his best friend, Joseph, dreads it too, Owen decides to stick up for Joseph in front of the school nurse and gets sent to the principal's office.

**SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION:**

1. Why is Owen so excited about the fact that his grandfather was a professional strongman?
2. Owen and Joseph both dread height-and-weight-chart day at their school, but for different reasons. What are their reasons? How do you think it would feel to be weighed and measured in front of your whole class?
3. Owen and Joseph are best friends even though they're very different. Do you have a best friend? How are you alike and how are you different? Why are you willing to put up with your differences?
4. Lead a discussion about the scene in the nurse's office. When Owen suggests to Mrs. Jackson that she should keep her voice down, he gets sent to the principal's office. Do you think Owen was rude to do that? Do you think it was fair for Mrs. Jackson to send him to the office? What other way could Owen have chosen to say what he wanted to say? How do you feel about the way Owen stood up Joseph? What would you have done to defend your friend? When Owen's parents find out about it, they get mad at Owen. Do you think they should? Have you ever gotten in trouble for something you felt you had to do?
5. Why did Clyde slap Owen on the back when he came out of Mr. Mahoney's office? How do you think you would have felt?
6. Owen's father tells him that good manners matter because people are going to judge him by his manners all his life. What is he talking about? What are good manners? What are bad manners? How does it make you feel when someone is polite to you? How about if they're rude to you?
7. Do you know about the food pyramid? What kinds of food are at the top and what kinds are at the bottom? Why do people say you should eat more of those that are at the bottom?

8. Why did Mrs. Jackson's son say that Owen had guts?
9. In her letter to Owen, his grandmother says that the strongest thing about Owen's grandfather wasn't his muscles. What was it? What does it mean: to have character? What is the dictionary definition? Can you name someone you know who has character?

**WORD HUNT:**

It's fun to discover new words. See if your students can find the words below on the pages in the book where they're used. Then see if they can figure out what the word means by reading the sentence it's in. Let them choose several of the words to use in sentences of their own.

1. Ectomorph (ek . toe . morf) ..... p. 6
2. Endomorph (en . doe . morf) ..... p. 6
3. Pip-squeak..... p. 14
4. Tactful ..... p. 17
5. Civilized..... p. 25
6. Blabbed ..... p. 35
7. Pep talk ..... p. 40
8. Opinion ..... p. 51
9. Pounce..... p. 56
10. Daring ..... p. 62
11. Trance..... p. 65
12. Guts ..... p. 69

**CREATIVE ACTIVITY FOR STUDENTS:**

When Ben keeps accusing Owen of being a pipsqueak, Owen uses the bending fork trick to make Ben think he's strong. Tell the children to read the instructions for the fork trick found at the back of the book. After they practice, let them demonstrate it to the class. Then let the class brainstorm about how they could use the trick in another way in a story. If they know of any other tricks, let them write those into stories of their own.