

INTRODUCING THE ASSEMBLY

Here is a suggestion for teachers and/or librarians to introduce the character, Bernie Jones, to students before author Sharon Bushell and piano-man Johnny B. visit your school.

During the school program, students will be hearing lots of music and, most important, a chapter from Sharon's book, The Trouble With Bernie, read by Sharon with Johnny B. adding music and special effects. Sharon will read Chapter Two, "The Beehive." Students will be delighted to hear this fun story in which Bernie brings an abandoned beehive to school only to find that, unfortunately, it is full of bees. Chaos erupts as the bees alight on the substitute teacher's beehive hairdo. Against all odds, however, Bernie ends up a hero.

Classroom discussions can cover the following topics, which play a part in the story:

- being prepared to give a report or presentation
- making good decisions about what is appropriate to bring to school
- respecting the property of others
- staying calm in an emergency
- everyday heroes

We recommend reading Chapter One, "The Initiation," before Sharon visits your school. This is another fun story in which Bernie and his best friend, Alex, want desperately to become members of the neighborhood big boys club, the Blazing Bandits.

Classroom discussions can cover the following topics, which play a part in the story:

- desiring something you'll likely never get
- the joy of being accepted
- the pain of being shunned
- initiations / when to say no
- showing compassion

Of course, these are mature topics, but they can easily be modified for any age level.

Sharon and Johnny B. will be asking the audience for "really good questions" about reading and writing.