

**Lesson Plan: Stepping Stone Ideas, Possible Open Questions and Feelings**

**Idea #1** Jessie, James and William have a complicated relationship.

1. What do you think about William, the cat?
2. What is the difference between Jessie's and James's relationships with William?
3. Why does Jessie try to be nice to William?
4. Why did William want to please Jessie?

**Feeling:** loved, left out, craving, misunderstood, appreciated, unappreciated, tolerant

**Stop/Talk** End of third paragraph "Stop that dreadful caterwauling!"

**Idea #2** William and James have a close relationship.

1. What else have we learned about William?
2. How do we know that William and James are the very best of friends?
3. How did James show his appreciation for William?

**Feelings** content, useful, appreciated, loved, accepted, grateful, welcomed

**Stop/Talk** End of sixth paragraph, "James said he was better than a hot-water bottle any day."

**Idea #3** James dies suddenly and Jessie and William are alone.

1. How did the death of James affect Jessie?
2. Why does William wait for James?
3. Why do you think Jessie stopped caring for William and put him outside?
4. What did William think and feel about the changes in his life?
5. Why does William try to get Jessie's attention?
6. What doesn't Jessie seem to hear or see William?

**Feelings** depressed, lonely, abandoned, desperate, grieving, sorrowful, numb, angry

**Stop/Talk** End of ninth paragraph, "But Jessie didn't seem to hear him or see him."

**Idea #4** Jessie realizes that William has changed.

1. Why did William become mean and lean?
2. How did Jessie's rejection affect William?

3. What happened inside of William to change his so dramatically?

**Feelings** wild, unloved, transformed, hurt, abandoned, angry

**Stop/Talk** End of eleventh paragraph, "He didn't look a bit like James's cat anymore."

**Idea #5** **Jessie and William become friends.**

1. Why did Jessie suddenly realize how William had changed?
2. How did Jessie react when she realized what has happened to William?
3. Why was William slow to accept Jessie's friendly invitation?
4. How has Jessie changed her mind about William?
5. What caused her to change her mind?
6. How did Jessie and William build a new relationship?
7. What role do you think that love had in bringing them together?
8. How do you view their relationship at the end of the story?

**Feelings** awakened, apologetic, compassionate, angry, suspicious, surprised, trusting, affectionate, loved

**Stop/Talk** End of story, "Jessie says he is better than a hot water bottle any day."

### **Big Ideas**

1. Close, loving relationships bring joy and healing.
2. Grief can close our eyes and hearts to what is good in life.
3. Rejection and abandonment can cause hurt and negative actions.
4. People need each other's love and attention to survive.