

*Saturday at the Food Pantry*  
**Discussion Guide**  
Grades Pre-K – 3rd

**Before Reading: to activate schema, build background knowledge, and set a purpose.**

- Ask: What is a food pantry? Why might someone go there?
- Show images or a short video clip of a food pantry in action. Discuss the different reasons people of all backgrounds might need to use a food pantry, such as sudden financial difficulties or unexpected expenses.
- Ask: How do you feel when you need help with something?
- Create a class chart listing different situations where students have needed help, linking personal experiences to the broader concept of community assistance. This prepares them to relate personally to the story's themes.

**During Reading: to engage students, check for understanding, and make connections.**

- How do you think Molly feels when she sees her classmate at the food pantry?
- Why might someone feel embarrassed about going to a food pantry?
- What are some ways Molly tries to make Caitlin feel better?
- Have you ever helped someone feel better? What did you do?
- Why is it important to have places like food pantries in our community?
- How does the story help us understand that it's okay to ask for help?

**After Reading: to summarize, question, and reflect.**

- Ask: What does Molly's kindness teach us about how to treat others who might be in a tough situation? How can we support friends or classmates who might be going through difficult times like needing food assistance?
- Role-play scenarios where students can practice showing kindness and support to peers who might be facing challenges, such as not having enough to eat, like how Molly supports Caitlin.
- Have a class discussion on the impact of kindness and support. Ask students to share how they felt during the role-play and what they think might be the feelings of someone receiving help.
- **Extension:** Start a "Kindness Campaign" in the class where each student commits to one act of kindness each week. They could write about or share their actions and the reactions they observed, creating a culture of empathy and support within the classroom.

If your students enjoyed this book...

- Encourage them to continue to discuss it and refer to it in other lessons and conversations.
- Let them explore more about the topic by reading other books with similar themes, structure, characters, or content.