

I'm In The Front¹

Family conflict

A "Come on kids into the car,
It's time we were going out."
B "It's my turn to sit in the front,"
D Sam hears Amanda shout.

C "Nah, you sat there last time
When we went for a swim."
B "No Sam have you forgotten
I had to get out for Uncle Jim.

So that means it must be my turn
You know that I am right.
You always try to sneak in the front
Then you start a fight.

I can see you sniggering Sam
And I know you're telling lies.
Quickly Mum look at his face,
You can see it in his eyes."

D Sam gives his sister a cheeky grin,
C "It seems I'm in the front."
B "Samuel! You know it was my turn.
That's such a childish stunt."

D Mum had stood there watching us.
Now it was her turn to talk -
A "No one's sitting in the front,
Get out, you both can walk."



¹ ©2015 Judi Billcliff, Rainbow Poetry 'Granny Goes To Hip Hop'

I'm In The Front²: Suggested activities

Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write down the different emotions Amanda feels during the poem. • Write some texts Amanda would send to her friends about Sam. • Find at least two synonyms for the word sniggering. • Write a description of Uncle Jim. • How do you think Sam and Amanda felt when they were told to get out of the car? • In groups, discuss what you think happened next. • Looking at the picture of the children in the car, make up a different story about it. • What ways can families avoid having arguments about who sits in the front?
Drama based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readers Theatre: In groups of four read the poem. Change characters and read it again. • Using four chairs, read it again and act it out. • Play the “Persuasion” game. Amanda tries to bribe Sam to let her be in the front. Does it work? • Do the poem as a slide show. • “Shared Story”: Take a family conflict as a topic, e.g. doing the dishes; going to bed; feeding the animals. • Find another poem or story about family conflict and share it with the class.
Extension work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Set the Scene”: Divide the class into groups of no more than ten. Think of a location for a family outing, e.g. a forest. Once all the students are in place, say “action” and they must add dialogue and movement. • Do again using a different scenario. Write emotions onto cards, each child has to choose a card, and use that emotion as they enter the stage area. Have the students come up with the emotions. • Invite someone in from a reputable family counselling organisation to talk about conflict resolution.
Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even if you don't have many lines you can still act out the emotions, and react to what other characters say. • Remember to use expression to make it interesting. • Remember a poem needs rhythm. • Whatever emotion you choose, be that emotion.

² ©2015 Judi Billcliff, Rainbow Poetry ‘Granny Goes To Hip Hop’