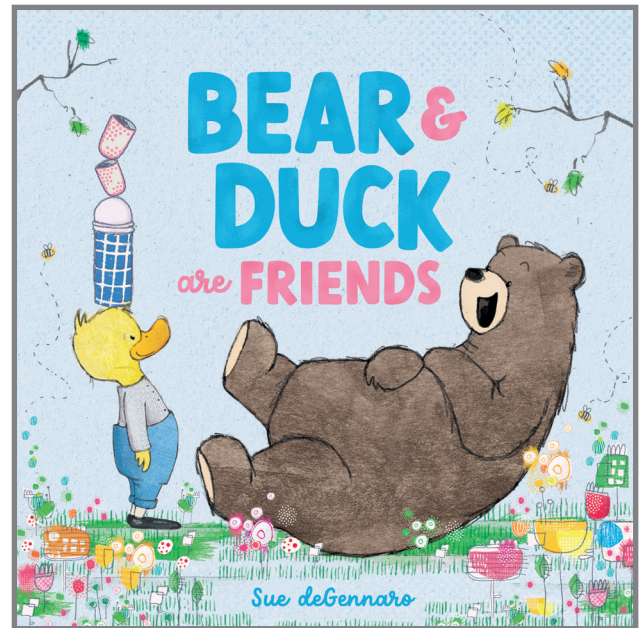


Bear & Duck are Friends

AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR
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SYNOPSIS

Bear and Duck are best friends, but they are very different. Duck likes to try new things, and Bear . . . well, Bear likes not to.

When Duck needs a friend for her dance class, Bear reluctantly agrees. Bear's big size causes problems at first, but he soon discovers that he might just be a very good dancer.

ABOUT THE CREATOR

Sue deGennaro is a bestselling author and illustrator. She has worked with top calibre authors such as Ursula Dubosarsky and Jackie French, as well as writing and illustrating many of her own critically acclaimed titles, including *The Pros and Cons of Being a Frog*, which was shortlisted for the CBCA Early Childhood Book of the Year in 2013. *The Tomorrow Book*, written by Jackie French, won The Environment Award for Children's Literature in 2011.

Sue's illustrations are lively and fun—often imbued with humour, but also a wonderful softness. She spent years working as a trapeze artist in the circus, plus a stint in a lolly shop, so she knows all about what kids like. She's held many highly successful workshops with school children through Booked Out, and also teaches writing and illustration to adults.

THEMES

- Friendship
- Difference
- Nervousness
- Support
- Bravery

STUDY NOTES

- *Bear & Duck are Friends* acknowledges that trying new things can be scary. What if we fall, or get it wrong? What if people laugh at us? Ask readers to share some of the fears they have about trying new things.
- Sometimes fear makes us miss out on trying really fun new things. When we've got friends who support us and make us feel safe perhaps we can be brave enough to overcome our fears and try something new, just like Bear does in the story. Invite readers to share a time they've overcome their fear and to think about where they found strength or support.

- *Bear & Duck are Friends* is a simple story, but the author, Sue deGennaro, uses dialogue to bring these characters to life for readers. Discuss the way that the writer uses question marks to show Bear's uncertainty. At first, Bear keeps his fears to himself, but when he tells Duck how he's feeling, Duck is able to offer support and help Bear to feel brave. What do Bear and Duck say in this moment?
 - Write a short conversation between two people in which one reveals that they're afraid of something. How does talking about their fear help them to overcome it?
- Write about (or draw) a time that you've felt embarrassed or worried about doing something new. Now rewrite the scene, but imagine that Duck was with you—what do you think he'd say? How might things happen differently?
- Sue deGennaro uses simple sketches to bring Bear and Duck to life. Her illustrations capture many of the differences between the two characters—their size, shape, the way they move, the clothes they wear—what other differences are visible in the pictures?
 - Discuss Bear's expression in each of the scenes. What do people's facial expressions tell us about how they're feeling? How does Bear feel? How else can we see how he's feeling in each scene?
- Sue DeGennaro has chosen to use two very different animals—a bear and a duck—to tell the story of friendship. Imagine that you are going to write a story about one of your best friends. What kind of animal would each of you be? Draw a picture of the two of you as your animals and explain why you've chosen the animals you have.
- *Bear and Duck* is all about finding the courage to try something new. Think of something you've always wanted to do but have been too afraid to try and plan to try it with a friend. Share your experience with the class—did it meet your expectations?
- Think of an activity that Bear might do next, and draw a picture of him doing it.
- Duck tells Bear that he's right there with him to make him feel better. What are some other things you could say to a friend to help them find their courage?

Comprehension

- Look at the illustrations on the first two pages of the story. What can you see in the pictures that shows you that Bear and Duck are friends?
- What are some of the differences between Bear and Duck? What are some of the similarities and differences between you and your friends?
- Find three rhyming pairs in the story—'wriggled and giggled' is one!
- When Bear says he 'can't' dance, is he right? Why does he think this?
- How does Bear feel when Duck chooses to take him to dance class? Why?
- What does Duck say to Bear to make him feel good about dancing?
- How does Bear feel when he stops being embarrassed and starts to really dance freely?
- How is Bear different at the end of the book? What do you think he'll do next?