

Suprise! (Hello Twigs #1)

AUTHOR

ANDREW MCDONALD

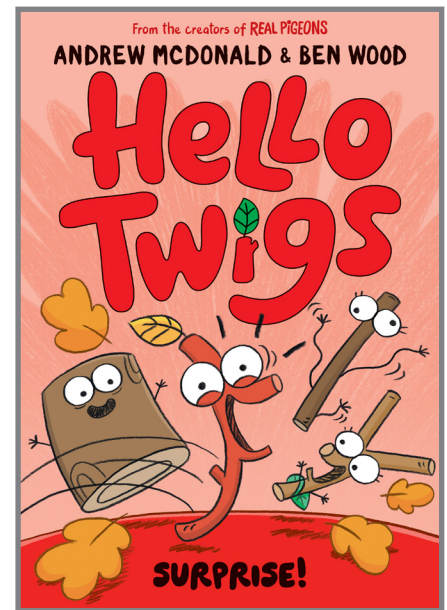
ILLUSTRATOR

BEN WOOD

SCIS: 5455702

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower Primary



SYNOPSIS

Meet the Twigs—Noodle, Ziggy, Stump and Red. Hello Twigs! These funny, simple stories are perfect for children developing their confidence in independent reading. Each book introduces a simple problem for the twigs to overcome and explores issue like friendship, adventure, problem-solving and feelings.

Red wants to be a wild twig, but when he tries to surprise the others he just ends up scaring them. Can he come up with a surprise that won't upset his friends?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Andrew McDonald is the author of Hello Twigs and Real Pigeons. He lives on Wurundjeri Country, in Melbourne, where he makes up stories and writes them down. He loves writing books that make kids laugh, gasp and wonder about the world. His books have been shortlisted for prizes such as the Australian Book Industry Awards, the Readings Children's Book Prize, and the YABBA, KOALA and KROC children's choice book awards. In his spare time, Andrew likes to read books, eat cake and jump on the bed. Sometimes, all at once!

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Ben Wood is not a woody twig, even though his name implies it. He is actually the illustrator of Hello Twigs and Real Pigeons. Fun! He has illustrated many other books and is drawn to stories that are funny and heartfelt. When not drawing Ben likes to read, eat overstuffed burritos, swim, run and walk his energetic dogs. Ben's books have been included on the Children's Book Council of Australia's 'Notables' lists, and shortlisted for the Readings Children's Book Prize and the Australian Book Industry Awards. When not in the studio, Ben speaks in schools and runs workshops about illustration. He lives in Naarm/Melbourne.

THEMES

- Imagination
- Feelings
- Friendship
- Problem-solving

STUDY NOTES

WRITING STYLE

- The author, Andrew McDonald, introduces familiar themes to readers using simple language to help young readers build their confidence in reading independently. The stories are written mostly in dialogue—we learn what’s happening in the story through what the characters say to each other. What isn’t dialogue?
- Imagine a scene where one of the twigs is trying to convince the other twig to give them something. Can you write a conversation between the two twigs that show what’s happening in the story? What other information do you need to include as the writer?
- The writer also uses adjectives (describing words) to make the story more interesting. Underline five adjectives in the books that you think make the story more interesting—why? Come up with three adjectives to add to your own story.

ILLUSTRATION STYLE

- The illustrator, Ben Wood, uses simple shapes (such as squares, circles, rectangles and triangles) to draw the twigs and their home. Explore the book and try to identify some of the basic shapes used to bring these characters to life—can you use them to draw your own Twig?
- The Twigs are more than just outlines though—they’re characters in the story who do things and have feelings. What lines in the illustrations show movement? Do different lines show different types of movement?
- The Twigs don’t have human faces, but we can still tell what they’re feeling because of the expressions they make. Discuss some of the ways you move the parts of your face to show how you’re feeling. What kind of expressions do the twigs make to show how they’re feeling?
 - Can you combine these three elements—shape, movement and expression—to draw a scene of your favourite Twig from the series?

COMPREHENSION

- Who are the Twigs? Write down one fact that you learn about each of them as you read the books.
- What phrase is repeated throughout the story?
- What kind of twig is Red Twig? What do wild things do?
- Why is Red trying to surprise the other Twigs? How do the other Twigs react to his surprises?
- What does Red learn about surprises? How does he make it up to the other Twigs for scaring them?

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

- Find an interesting stick outside and give it a name and personality. Give it a costume and turn it into a new character for the books.
- What do you notice about where the Twigs live? How would you describe their habitat? Make a diorama that shows their habitat based on one of the scenes in the book.
- Many words in *Hello Twigs* will be familiar to you, but you might find some that are new. Make a list of any new words that you find—write down the meaning of each of them, and practise using them in a sentence.
- Sometimes we can use stories to help us work out how to overcome problems we’re facing in our own life. Choose a problem the Twigs face and compare it to a problem you’ve faced—describe the similarities and differences between your story and the Twigs’.
- Stories are interesting because they have characters who want things, and obstacles that stand in their way. Imagine a story where the character got everything they wanted—would it be very interesting?
- Think about *Surprise!* and think about who the book is about, what they want, and what’s stopping them from getting it. Enter your findings into a table below using the following headings:
 - Who is the book about?
 - What do they want?
 - What’s standing in their way?

Now, create a story idea for your own Hello Twigs story, and use the headings to come up with a plan for your own

Hello Twigs story. What will you call it? Who is the story going to be about? What do they want? And what's standing in their way? Now comes the hard part—how are they going to solve the problem to get what they want? Write a possible ending to your story that shows your twig solving their problem in order to get what they want.