

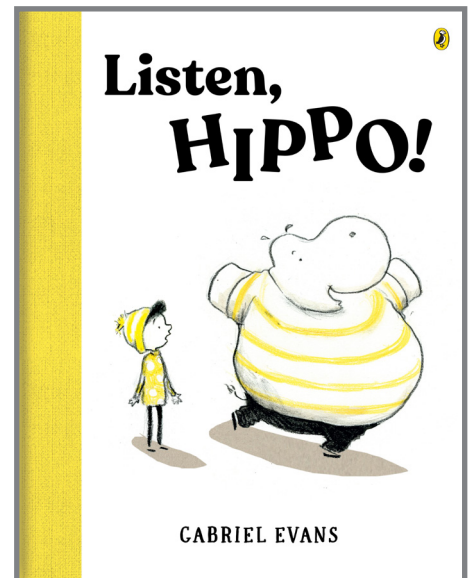
Listen, Hippo!

AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR
GABRIEL EVANS

SCIS: 5486012

ISBN: 9781761341700

RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower Primary



SYNOPSIS

When Billy is feeling sad, he wishes he had someone to talk to. He thinks what he needs is someone to listen. But his best friend, Hippo, believes he knows exactly what Billy needs!

Playing dress-ups will cheer Billy up, and dancing in the cherry blossoms, or maybe a pirate adventure?

No? Then how about a magic carpet race?

What fun!

Ready, set, GO!

Hippo just wants to make Billy happy, but it's only when he finally listens to what Billy wants that he can help his friend.

A wise and beautiful picture book that explores with gentle warmth and humour the nature of feelings and the importance of being heard.

ABOUT THE CREATOR

Gabriel Evans is a Western Australian children's book author and illustrator. Working primarily in watercolour and pencil, he creates books from a small studio on a big hill. Gabriel's books are published internationally in more than twelve countries, have been reviewed in the *New York Times*, shortlisted in the CBCA Book of the Year Awards, translated into ten languages and read on ABC-TV's Play School.

Blue Flower by Sonya Hartnett, his first picture book with Penguin Random House, was shortlisted for the CBCA Picture Book of the Year in 2022. His second picture book with Penguin, *A Friend for George*, was published in 2023, followed by *Listen, Hippo!* released in 2024.

THEMES

- **Feelings**—Looking at the book's illustrations and text, identify how Billy is feeling. Using the illustrations in the book, children can identify parts of the story to link to their own experiences of expressing their feelings. They can talk about the use of different colours, techniques and other things of interest in the art and also talk about the artist and his techniques.
- **Friendship**—Hippo is a special friend and does his best to cheer Billy up. What things do students do for their friends when their friends are feeling the way Billy does?
- **Listening**—Using the illustrations in the book, children can identify parts of the story to link to their own experiences

of listening and being listened to.

STUDY NOTES

BEFORE READING

- Look at the front cover of the book and read the title together. Can you see what the title is referring to? What do you think the story will be about?
- Open the book flat and explore the front and back cover as one large image. How does the choice of colours and the scene that is illustrated make you feel?
- Read the blurb at the back of the book. What do you feel about it? What kind of things are you now expecting to see inside the book? What questions do you have?
- Just inside the cover, before the title pages and the start of the story, are some illustrated pages. These are called 'endpapers'. What do the endpapers, in the front of the book, show you? What do they add to what you've already guessed about the story?
- Read the story aloud as a group, pausing to take in Gabriel Evans' artwork and observe all the detail and difference you can find on each page.

AFTER READING

Literacy, Language and Storytelling

- How many characters are in this story? Do you think creatures other than people can be characters in a story? Can you think of other stories that have non-human characters?
- Can you find three words in the book that are new to you? Try to work out what they mean from the context (the way they are used and what surrounds them).

Friendship, Feelings and Listening

- Write a story about your own experience of friendship. Include a time you listened to your friend and something you did to help them. Include a time you were feeling sad and happy.
- What do you think is the most important message in this book? What does it teach us about friendship and feelings?
- What do you notice about the very first page of the story? (Hint: what can you see?) What does it tell you about the characters in this book?
- What does it take to listen well?
- In what ways does Hippo listen to Billy?
- Write a sentence about a time someone listened to you on a piece of paper. Place all of the pieces of paper inside a box anonymously. Your teacher will share with the class the experiences that have been listed and ask the students to write a story about the importance of listening to our friends.

Visual Literacy

- How much of the story is told through the text and how much through the illustrations?
- How do the illustrations help to establish the setting and mood of the story?
- Consider the amount of detail in every illustration. How does the detail help to add to the story?
- How does the illustrator manage to include emotion in his illustrations?
- Choose your favourite illustration and explain to the class what it is that you like about that page. How did you react to that page as a reader?