

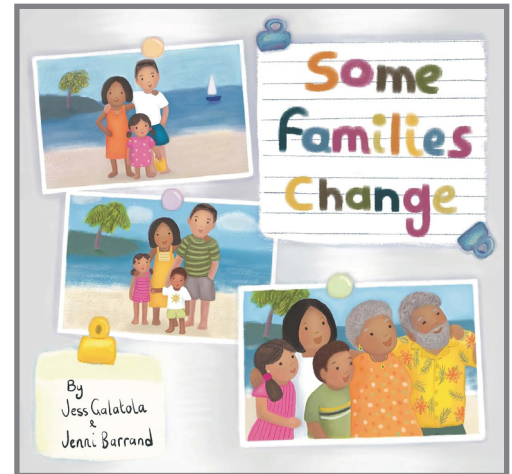
# Some Families Change

AUTHOR

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## SYNOPSIS

*Some Families Change* tenderly guides children through various models of changing families with gentle verse and inclusive imagery. 'You may not have thought much about it, but did you know that some families change? Some get bigger, others smaller and some completely rearrange!' Changes in the structure of a family can be joyful, turbulent, and especially confusing for little humans.

*Some Families Change* is a gentle and reassuring way of showing children that all families go through changes—it's completely natural, and they are not alone. The book candidly explores concepts such as split families, single-parent households, families with two mums or dads, families that join together, and more, always maintaining sensitivity and sincerity. Children grappling with these changes often harbour difficult feelings.

The book validates these emotions, emphasising that it's okay to feel upset or worried because adjusting to change takes time. By sharing this book, children and parents can embark on a journey of understanding and emotional healing together, reminding themselves that their feelings are normal, and it's healthy to express them. A timely and therapeutic resource, *Some Families Change* assists families in navigating their emotional journey together, amidst the inevitable changes that life brings.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jess Galatola, first and foremost, is the mother of two amazing boys. She has worked in the education sector for fifteen years, specialising in English and Drama Secondary teaching. Jess has a passion for helping young people to heal and build resilience and self-efficacy and believes that literature is a foundational and fundamental step in helping young people to understand the world and their place in it.

## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Jenni Barrand loves art and stories. She is a children's art teacher and loves helping kids learn all the amazing ways to create art. She loves walking and exploring in nature whilst listening to her favourite music and loves making art in her little studio. She lives on the Northern Beaches of Sydney with her husband, two kids, one cat and three guinea pigs.

## THEMES

- Family relationships
- Family dynamics

- Change
- Emotions

## STUDY NOTES

### BEFORE READING

- Ask students for their definitions of 'family'. What are the things they all have in common? (Eg. live in the same house, usually related, each member has a role, etc.)
- What makes families different?
- Ask students to turn and talk to a friend about their own family. Who lives with them? Are any families separated? Does anyone live with extended family members?
- Look at the cover of *Some Families Change*. As class, discuss the following questions:
  - What do you notice?
  - What kinds of families/family members can you see?
  - Why do you think the cover includes photos?
  - How does the cover make you feel?
  - Why do you think the title includes the word 'change'? How can families change?
  - Have you had changes to your family?
  - What do you think this story might be about? Do you think this book will be helpful? How?

### WHILE READING

- Discuss the first page and answer, 'Did you know some families change?' What kinds of families can you see in the picture?
- Can you give an example of a family:
  - Getting bigger?
  - Smaller?
  - Rearranging?
- What can you tell about the relationships/communication of families that live apart?
- What can you tell about the parents' feelings for their children in all the different situations?
- Do you think it's okay to feel different emotions when families change?
- Why might your heart need to heal?
- What's the most important thing to remember about your family?

### AFTER READING

- What is the story about?
- What is the main idea?
- How did it make you feel?
- Do you have a part that you relate to or enjoyed the most?
- What did you learn about different families?
- What did you learn about the way families change?
- Do you know other families who live with lots of people, or just one parent, or two dads or two mums, with grandparents, and so on?
- Do you know other families who have lost any family members?
- How might it feel when your family changes? What kinds of situations might make you feel joyful? Angry? Confused? Sad?
- What might be the enjoyable things, and the challenging things, about families separating and families joining together?
- What's important to know about your place in a family? Write down some words that describe how a family should make you feel. (Eg. loved, safe, belonging, appreciated, valued, etc.).
- What strategies can be helpful when your heart needs to heal from family changes?

- How can you describe the language used by the author? Who is it addressed to?
  - Does it sound like a fictional story, an informative text, a persuasive text or something else? Can you identify some of the rhyming words?
- What do you like about the illustrations? What kinds of colours, shapes, textures and perspectives has the illustrator used to express the different emotions and focal points of the story?
  - Look at each page, and discuss the visual cues that show us the different relationships and communication strategies, and how the family members feel about each other.
- Draw a timeline of your life showing the changes in your family from birth to now. This can include the additions, losses and/or rearrangements of siblings, parents, grandparents, pets, etc.

### English

- Locate in the book, the nouns, verbs and adjectives relating to families and feelings.
  - Students could add to these lists and create sentences using some of these terms. Illustrate sentences with pictures of a portrait of their own family or a significant moment of family change.
- As a class, ask students to match photos or draw the types of families described below. Students can discuss what each one means, and which one relates most closely to them.
  - Nuclear families
  - Blended or mixed families
  - Single-parent families
  - Mixed heritage families
  - Same-sex parent families
  - Extended families
  - Grandparent families
  - Foster families
  - Childless families.

Students can complete the sentence, 'My family is a—————kind of family.'

### Comprehension

- Who was in the story?
- What kinds of families were in the story? What was the main idea/focus?
- Where do the events take place?
- What emotions are mentioned in the story?
- How does the book show a family getting bigger?
- How does the story show a family joining together, or when Grandpa drifted away?
- What can you see in the last scene?
- What helpful strategies are shown in upsetting or challenging situations?
- Why does the author want readers to know how parents/carers feel about you?
- Why is it important to remember you are loved, no matter how your family changes?
- What are some of the features of a home or family?

### Visual Literacy

- Look at the ways the different families are represented in the book and the activities happening with each situation. Can students also identify any particular emotions in the pictures? What words would they use to describe the feelings felt by the different families/family members?
  - How do the colours, textures and characters, chosen by the illustrator, reflect the feelings and nature of the story (eg. warm colours, soft textures, diverse people, etc.)?

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

- What are some of the features of a home or family? Draw a labelled diagram of your favourite family space in your home, or your family.
- Compare how your feelings about a particular event (eg. new sibling, loss of a grandparent, etc.) has changed over time.

- ‘It takes time to get used to change, when you don’t know your future yet.’ Discuss this phrase and predict any possible future changes to your family and how you would manage your feelings.
- What ideas can you think of for designing a memory book, or a way for families to remain connected?
- Write a narrative story based around a changing family. This could be real or imagined, heartfelt or funny. Ask students to think about who (or what) their characters are, and what might be the conflict or problem to solve (ie. a new family member causing problems, a family member moving away, etc.). What events or situations might be experienced (real or imagined)? What is the tone of the story? What personal, emotional or physical challenges might need to be overcome? How will they be resolved?
- Students can write an acrostic poem for a special family member (or several) about what family means to them using the letters; F-A-M-I-L-Y.
- The illustrations in *Some Families Change*, have been created with a soft look for its sense of warmth and comfort. Using a medium, such as chalk, pencils or pastels, students can draw a family portrait surrounded by a frame. The frame could be drawn or made with other materials. Students can share what their family means to them, or how it has changed.