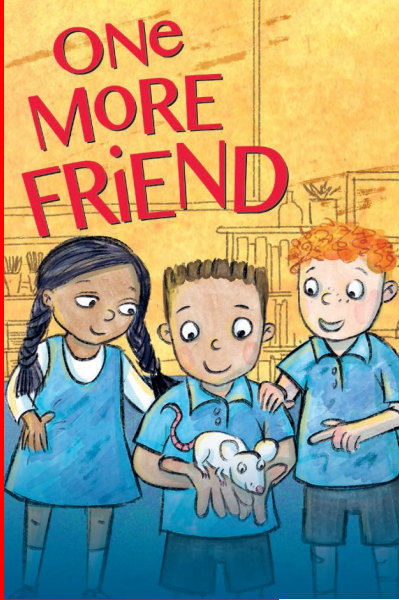


# ONE MORE FRIEND

BILL CONDON | LUCINDA GIFFORD (Illustrator)



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*I've been at the new school five minutes and already the Principal thinks I'm crazy!*

Starting at a new school is scary. It's lucky then that Jack know how to make people laugh.

But not everyone finds him funny. Jack will have to think of another way ...

**About the author:** Award-winning Bill Condon has written several titles in the Mates series for Omnibus Books. When not writing, Bill plays tennis, snooker and Scrabble, but hardly ever at the same time. His dream is to receive a wildcard invitation to play tennis at Wimbledon — if nothing else, his knees would provide great comic relief for the spectators. He lives on the south coast of New South Wales with his wife, the well-known children's author Di Bates.

**About the illustrator:** Lucinda Gifford is a children's book illustrator/author based in Melbourne, Australia and becomes cranky and clumsy when she can't draw. She works from a small studio at home, full of books, plants and IKEA shelving. She is not very good at getting her photo taken, even when it is a 'good hair day'.

Study notes written by  
Jacqui Shilson-Josling

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**NOTE:** Educators should note that **One More Friend** contains references to and themes of school bullying. Please ensure sensitivity is taken when discussing these elements with students.

## STUDY NOTES

- The illustrator has made a border design for the top and bottom of each page. What do you think it represents? Choose 6-8 items that you feel represent your everyday life. Use coloured pencils, watercolours or pastels to draw or paint them into your own page border design. By scanning them, they can be used to decorate a short story or another piece of writing.
- In **One More Friend**, Jack has trouble fitting in on his first day at a new school. Have a class discussion about the first day of school. Why do people often find it quite hard? What are some of the problems one might face on the first day at a new school? Ask each student to write down their memories of their first day at school. What were their favourite and least favourite aspects? Looking back at the experience now, what do they think can be done to make the 'first day' experience easier for new students? **Extension activity:** In small groups, put together a 'first day' welcome pack for new students. If your school has an orientation booklet, you might use it as a starting-off point. Include important information about the school, such as what time to expect recess and lunchtime, teachers' names and the location of different classrooms, but also include more informal information, such as which toilets smell bad, where in the playground different groups of students hang out and what the best food from the canteen might be. Compare your different welcome packs as a class. What did some groups think was important information that

you might not have included in your own pack? What does this suggest about the different needs of different students when starting at a new school?

- Throughout **One More Friend**, Jack does things which he finds embarrassing — dribbling, falling over, getting soaked by the sprinkler. Think about your most embarrassing moment. What happened? Did everyone laugh? Draw a picture of this moment. How did you overcome the embarrassment?
- In Jack's class, an author comes in to talk about Gallipoli. Research Gallipoli online. Create a poster or report about it, including the geography, people who live there and why it is an important place to Australians.
- The author, Mrs Brown, also talks about mateship, and Tim describes it as 'being a good friend' (p 36). What does mateship mean to you? Write an acrostic poem using the word MATESHIP. Use each letter to start a word or phrase that represents mateship.
- Who is your best mate? Write them a letter, telling them three things about why you are glad to have them as your best mate. Exchange the letters amongst your class. What characteristics do people have in common when they value their friends? Answers could include things like loyalty, kindness and funniness. What characteristics are different among different pairs of friends?
- Mark is not nice to Jack. He pushes and chases Jack in the playground. Do you think Mark is a bully? Why/why not?
- Turn to p 40, where Mark is asked to read the play. How do you think Mark feels when he struggles to read out harder words? People learn to read at different paces and often use very different



techniques to learn how to read. Learning challenges are actually very common, but there are many different approaches to overcoming them. Why do you think literacy is so important? As a class, with sensitivity to students' personal circumstances, discuss why some people have a hard time learning to read (for example, dyslexia) and what strategies can be used to help them learn to read, such as phonetic reading, predictive reading, paraphrasing, reading aloud and listening to audiobooks.

- Use a paper dictionary to look up the words that Mark has trouble reading: shrapnel, bayonet, infantry, battalion. Look at the definitions of these words, think about them, then write down definitions for them in your own words.
- Jack's dad says that he and Jack both have a special gift — making other people laugh. Do you think you have a special gift or talent? This could be playing an instrument, telling jokes, kicking a ball, writing poems, drawing, or anything else you are good at doing. Each student can take turns demonstrating their talent to the class.

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