



Whispers and Roars

Educator Notes



Written by Patrick Guest
Illustrated by Jonathan Bentley

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Recommended for: ages 5+
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Plot Summary

'The voice that makes our worries grow and stops us all from trying. The voice that makes us doubt ourselves is almost always lying.'

We all have pesky voices inside our head that whisper mean, scary or gloomy things, but the loudest voice is always the one that's filled with love. *Whispers and Roars* creates a safe and loving space to talk about and normalise our inner critic, while fostering resilience and self-compassion in young readers.

Themes

- Self-doubt
- Imagination
- Anxiety
- Self-regulating emotions

Rich and interesting words: disaster, swirl

Key Curriculum Learning Areas

Early Years Learning Framework:

Learning Outcome 1.3 – Children develop knowledgeable confident self-identities, and a positive sense of self-worth

This story encourages children to reach out and communicate with trusted adults and peers for comfort, assistance and companionship. By reminding children they can turn to their community for support in moments of self-doubt, children are able to build a positive sense of self-worth and emotional intelligence.

Learning Outcome 3.1 – Children become strong in their social, emotional and mental wellbeing

Wellbeing is related to resilience, providing children with the capacity to cope with day-to-day stress and challenges. The readiness to persevere when faced with unfamiliar and challenging learning situations creates the opportunity for success and achievement. The overarching themes of this story relate to overcoming anxiety, and gently encourages children to persevere by providing a simple strategy – listen to the positive voices within yourself.

Australian Curriculum

Learning Area: English

Foundation

Language: Language for expressing and developing ideas	Explore the contribution of image and words to meaning in stories and informative text (AC9EFLE07)
Language: Language for expressing and developing ideas	Compare how images in different types of texts contribute to meaning (AC9E1LA08)
Literacy: Analysing, interpreting and evaluating	Use comprehension strategies such as visualising, predicting, connecting, summarising and questioning to understand and discuss texts listened to, viewed or read independently (AC9EFLY05)

Conversation Starters

Before Reading

- This book is called *Whispers and Roars*. You may like to offer the title to children before seeing the front cover, and get the children to discuss what the book could be about based on the title. Ask children to make a prediction.
- I wonder if the lion on the front is roaring? Can you think of anything else that roars?
- Use the book title to demonstrate the difference between a whisper and a roar. You may like to get children to whisper something quietly and then roar as a group. This will assist children in recognising the difference between the figurative whispers and roars later in the story.

While Reading

- “Hoping you’ll believe in them and hear them every day” Do you think the whispers are real or imaginary? Why would they hope you’ll believe in them?
- Do you think this lion is real, or imaginary? Why or why not? I wonder what it would feel like to ride on the back of a lion like that?

After Reading

- “There are people who believe in you, hear them more and more” who believes in you? Can you name anyone who helps you when you’re feeling low? This could lead to a discussion of who children can turn to for support – their friends, their families and trusted adults.
 - This story encourages hearing your inner “roar” as a strategy for overcoming self-doubt and anxiety. You may like to explore other strategies with children that they can use when they are feeling nervous or doubtful.
 - “Never have adventures, don’t trust anyone” This can link with existing child protection curriculum. This may open opportunities to explore what trust is. You may like to open an age-appropriate discussion around child safety and respectful relationships.
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About the Author

Patrick Guest was raised in the Melbourne beachside suburb of Seaford. He works as a physiotherapist by day and a best-selling children’s author by night. Patrick received huge acclaim for his story *The Second Sky*, which is illustrated by Jonathan Bentley, and the two went on to collaborate on *Windows*, the best-selling picture book that was adapted to screen by the ABC.

About the Illustrator

Jonathan Bentley is an award-winning illustrator and author of over fifty picture books. He has worked with some of Australia’s most loved authors including Margaret Wild, Shaun Micallef, Patrick Guest, Lian Tanner and Andrew Daddo. His books are enjoyed by children all around the world.

