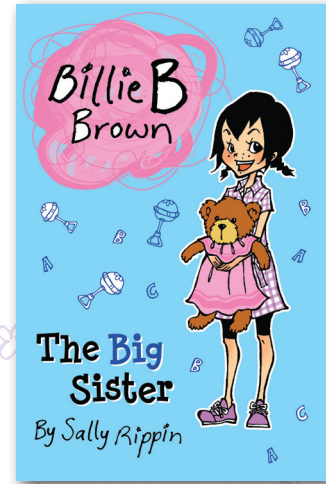


Billie B Brown: The Big Sister

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- Write a short story
- Explore ways of managing negative emotions
- Design and label a toy
- Re-write a segment of the story from an alternative perspective



About the story

Billie is excited about becoming a big sister and she's gathered some of her baby things to pass onto the new baby, including her favourite teddy, Mr Fred. But when the time comes for the baby to arrive, Billie suddenly feels all jumbled up inside and not so sure that she is ready to part with Mr Fred. But one smile from her baby brother puts some of those jumbled feelings to rest and Billie comes to the conclusion that being a big sister may well be fun after all. Billie also learns that being a big sister doesn't mean that she can't keep some of the baby things that give her the comfort she still needs.

Before you read the story

Read the title of the book aloud. Survey students about their position in the family and to those that are big brothers or sisters, ask how they felt when their sibling was born. Invite students to comment on the good and bad aspects of being a big brother or sister. Now turn to the back cover and read the blurb aloud. Direct the question asked in the blurb to students – is it true that big brothers and sisters don't need teddies? Invite students to elaborate on their answer.

Questions and activities

Chapter One

Billie is going to be a big sister. How does she feel about that?

Why does Billie plan to give the baby her favourite teddy?

What else does Billie have ready to pass on to the baby?

Activity

Return to page 3 and review some of the things that were kept from when Billie was a baby. Ask students whether they have any baby items in storage? Send a request home with students to find a baby photo and a keepsake and talk about it with their parents. At school, students share their baby keepsakes. Student then use their baby photos as inspiration to write a short story in response to the sentence starter, When I was a baby ...

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Questions and activities

Chapter Two

The baby is arriving but Billie has decided that she doesn't want a silly baby anymore. Explain why Billie feels this way.

Who does Billie stay with while the baby is being born?

Lying in Jack's dark bedroom, what does Billie suddenly want and why?

Activity

Observe that Billie relies on Mr Fred as a source of comfort. Ask students if they have a toy like Billie or something else that they like to go to when they need some comfort. Now list some negative emotions on the board including, sad, scared, worried, hurt, angry and ask students to comment on how they manage that feeling. With the title, *When I am ...*, students create a book about how they manage their feelings. Encourage answers such as, When I am scared I hug someone I love; When I am angry I go for a long walk; When I am hurt I talk to a friend. Invite students to share and discuss their responses.

Chapter Three

Billie tummy feels a bit like a milkshake. What are some of the things Billie feels right now?

Billie has misplaced Mr Fred. Do you remember where he is?

Billie tells her dad she wants to be a baby rather than a big girl. Why might Billie feel this way?

Activity

Note that at this stage of the story, Billie can't find Mr Fred anywhere. Ask students if they can help Billie come up with an alternative present for her baby brother. Make a brief list of some ideal baby toys before assessing the qualities and features of these toys that make them ideal baby toys. With these qualities and features in mind, invite students to design a baby toy for Noah. Instruct students to label their design and provide a brief description on how it 'works'.

Chapter Four

When Billie first arrives at the hospital, what is she most interested in doing?

What is Billie's first impression of baby Noah?

As Billie leaves the hospital, she whispers goodbye to Noah. What happens next that makes Billie feel so proud?

Why does Billie decide not to give Mr Fred to her baby brother?

Activity

Ask students to consider the events in the story from Mr Fred's perspective. Help students to identify the events that may have been relevant to Mr Fred. Events might include: When Billie decided to give him to the baby; When Billie left him in the garden; When Jack found him; When he was reunited with Billie; When Billie decided to keep him for herself; When Billie gave him a well-deserved wash or; When Billie bought baby Noah a bear of his own. Choose one of these events and model how to re-write that event from Mr Fred's perspective.

