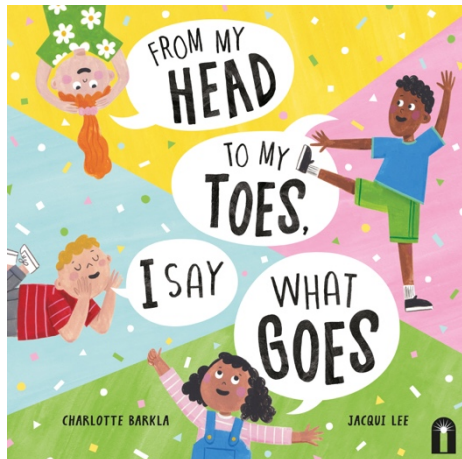


Teacher's Notes



From My Head to My Toes I Say What Goes

Written by Charlotte Barkla

Illustrated by Jacqui Lee

Teacher's Notes by Bec Kavanagh

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

RECOMMENDED FOR

3+ aged readers (grades: Foundation – 1)

KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- Learning areas: English
- General capabilities:
 - ACELA1428
 - ACELA1437
 - ACELT1586

THEMES

- Consent
- Choice
- Being assertive
- Saying 'no' (and saying 'yes')
- Respectful relationships

SYNOPSIS

Who gets to decide what happens to your body? Do you have to say 'yes' when someone wants to give you a hello hug? What's the best way to say 'no' without hurting someone's feelings?

In *From My Head to My Toes I Say What Goes*, Charlotte Barkla reminds children (and the adults who read this book with them) that it's okay for them to be in charge of what happens to their bodies. It's even okay to want a hug sometimes, and not others!

With clear, straightforward language, this book encourages children (and their adults) to practise consent – whether it's a 'yes', a 'no' or a 'stop' – in all kinds of situations.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR

Charlotte Barkla is an Brisbane-based writer who has worked as a civil engineer, physics teacher and full-time butler/chef/servant (to her two young children). She now writes children's books. As well as dreaming up funny stories over a cup of coffee, Charlotte's favourite things include autumn leaves, family bike rides and travel. Her first three children's books were published in 2020, including her debut picture book *All Bodies Are Good Bodies*.

Jacqui Lee is an illustrator and designer currently working in London. She's an alumna of the Alberta University of the Arts and originally from Canada. Her illustrations are focused on storytelling and are inspired by the world around her – cityscapes, street scenes, people, animals and food are all frequent subjects. Her work is fun, cheerful, and aims to bring a smile to people's faces.

THEMES

From My Head to My Toes I Say What Goes is unashamedly about consent and choice. Its lively, conversational tone and bright illustrations normalise talking about consent, and demonstrate all of the ways that we already use it in our lives (as well as providing ways to practise saying 'yes' or 'no' in various situations). Elements of consent that arise in the story include:

- How to say 'no' to a friend or family member
- Normalising changing your mind
- Recognising that different people might say 'yes' or 'no' to different things
- How to react if someone says 'no' to us

WRITING STYLE

Charlotte Barkla uses easy rhyme and simple language to make a complex theme accessible even to small children. She contrasts the 'yes' and 'no' in the two halves of the story, but keeps the scenarios similar, showing that saying 'no' doesn't need to be overly serious or difficult. The repetition encourages children to use the book's two key words (yes/no) to come up with situations that are relevant to them, testing scenarios in the classroom to see what works for them and practising until they feel comfortable.



COMPREHENSION

- What kinds of things do the characters in the book say 'yes' and 'no' to? Are these similar or different to the things you say 'yes' or 'no' to?
- What does **consent** mean? What does it have to do with the title of the book?
- What kind of things can we consent to? Are we ever allowed to change our mind?
- What can we say if we don't feel like saying 'yes' to something?
- What's the right way to react when someone says 'no' to us?

WRITING EXERCISE

Write about something that you love to say 'yes' to. Share this with the rest of your class and talk about the different things you like. Is there anything your classmates enjoy that you don't?

ILLUSTRATION STYLE

Jacqui Lee's illustrations, like the text, are fun and simple. The bold, colourful backgrounds create a sense of fun, while the scenes of playing on the playground, sharing food at a party, or walking the dog are all familiar scenarios that help to normalise acts of consent. Notice that on the second to last page of the book, Lee removes all background illustrations except for the main character, enlarging the speech bubbles to draw attention to the various ways that readers can say 'no' to something. Readers might also like to consider the way that the words 'yes' and 'no' appear in bold throughout the book, and are larger than the other words, emphasising their importance, and to discuss the other ways that these words appear throughout the story.

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

- Write about a time when you said 'yes' to something but wish you'd said 'no'. Write two versions, where the first is the way that it happened, and the second is what you would say if you could do it again.
- In small groups, turn one of the scenes in the book into a script to act out in class to practise saying 'no'. Perform your scene to the rest of this class, and take turns playing the person saying 'no' to something.
- Do you know anyone who doesn't take 'no' for an answer? What examples from the book could you use next time you see them?

RELATED READING

All Bodies Are Good Bodies by Charlotte Barkla

