



Baz and Benz

By Heidi McKinnon

Baz and Benz are friends, but Baz wants to know if they'll always be friends. So, Baz tries changing his appearance, making silly noises and even disappearing to see if Benz will still be his friend. A fun story about one little owl exploring the boundaries of love and friendship. The simple illustrations appeal with personality and humour



Key Message for Parents | The Brain Develops Through Use

Stimulating experiences will help your child's brain to grow.

- Children learn in playful ways.
- Children enjoy learning when they have the opportunity to explore ideas in their own way.
- Encourage your child to join in with songs, stories and finger rhymes.
- Support your child to see and make connection between the things they already know about and things they discover in books

Australian Early Years Learning Framework | Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners

Children are naturally curious. We can support this natural interest in learning by allowing children to explore concepts in different ways such as readings, singing, talking, miming, imagining and making.

Children are naturally creative. When children are supported to express their creativity in a variety of ways (such as making things, drawing things, talking about things and acting things out), without feeling there is a 'right or wrong way,' they feel powerful, valued and confident:

Welcome

Ask carers to write nametags for themselves and their babies. Welcome everyone, introduce yourself, remind adults to turn their mobile phones off and that there will be time for adults to chat after the story and songs.

Find booklists, tip sheets, nursery rhymes and activity and learning time sheets @

thelittlebigbookclub.com.au     



Welcome Song (or your preferred song)

Have the words available as a handout or written on a board or butcher's paper for the adults to read and join in.

Welcome song - Come Along

Come along and sing with me, sing with me

Come along and sing with me, It's time for story time

Repeat and replace 'sing' with bounce, rock, clap etc.

Come along and bounce with me, bounce with me, bounce with me

Come along and bounce with me, it's time for story time

Encourage parents to sing facing their baby so that baby can watch their mouth move as they sing and talk – this helps babies learn to speak themselves.

Songs - Two Little Friends Finger Rhyme

- Two little friends met in the lane* (Hold up two thumbs)
- Bowed most politely* (Bend your thumbs towards each other to bow)
- Bowed once again* (The thumbs bow again)
- How do you do?* (Wiggle one thumb at the other one)
- And how do you do?* (Wiggle the other thumb)
- And how do you do again?* (Wiggle the first thumb again)

Repeat for each finger using different adjectives e.g.

- Index finger - Two happy friends* (upbeat voice)
- Pointer finger – Two sad friends* (Pretend to be crying voice)
- Ring finger – Two noisy friends* (Louder voice)
- Pinkie – Two quiet friends* (soft voice)

Before Reading

- Show the children the cover of the book and ask them what they can see.
- Ask the children to touch the top of their own head to see if they can feel a little owl on their head.
- Ask the children to make owl eyes by making 'glasses' by joining their thumb and first finger in a circle and holding the 'glasses; up to their eyes.
- Count the eyes on each of the owls on the book's cover.
- Count the owls on the front cover and ask the children to guess what the names of the owls might be.
- Reveal the characters' names by reading the title of the book.
- Read the name of the author/illustrator and begin the reading.



During Reading

Point to each of the words as you read them.

On the first page, talk about the colour of each of the owls.

Throughout the book talk about other colours you can see. (Orange feet, white eyes, blue branch)

When Baz says, “Meep! Meep! Meep! Meep!” encourage the children to join in. “Meep! Meep! Meep! Meep!”

As you read, talk about Benz’s feelings (annoyed, sad, afraid, happy) and ask children to make a face to match the feeling.

On the second to last page, the two owls are snuggled up together. Offer the children and their carers the opportunity to give each other a little hug too!

After Reading - Song Finger Rhyme

Two Little Owl Friends

(to the rhythm of Two Little Dickie Birds).

Two Little Owls Friends

(Hold up 1 finger on each hand)

Sitting on a wall

One named Pearl

(Wiggle one finger)

One named Paul

(Wiggle the other finger)

Fly away Pearl

(Make one finger ‘fly’ and disappear behind you back)

Fly away Paul

(Make the other finger fly and disappear behind your back as well)

Come back Pearl

(Hold up one finger again)

Come back Paul

(Hold up one finger on the other hand as well)

Repeat the rhyme again

Let’s be a tree

The illustrations show us that Baz and Benz live in a tree. What else might live in a tree? Talk about animals and insects that live in trees. Children might have other ideas too, such as fairies.

- How do the animals get up on the branches? (Fly, climb, crawl).
- Why do things like to live in trees?

Actions and mime – Ask the children (and their carers) to crouch down and pretend to be a little tree (and adult can demonstrate). Ask the children to ‘grow’ like a tree and reach up to the sky – hold out your ‘branches’ (arms) for creatures to live on. Ask the children to sway like a tree in the wind and wriggle their fingers like the leaves. Can repeat with gentle music playing.

Extension ideas - Friends

Baz and Benz are friends. Initiate a discussion about what the children like to do with their friends and offer examples as prompts.

Ask the children if they have any animal friends? People friends? Toy/teddy friends? What do they like to do with their different friends?

Drawing and mark making – help the children to draw owls. If provided with a circle, children may be able to make marks for eyes, beak and legs with support from their carers. Remind the adults to let the children try and not to do all the drawing for them.

Children can also paste feathers onto a circle shape to create an owl.



STEM FOCUS (for Toddler and Preschool)

Mathematics and Engineering (Shapes, sizes, symbols, special orientation, design, construction)

Consider shapes to design and construct an owl sculpture.

- Oval – body
- Circle – eyes
- Triangle – beak

Talk about shapes and the shapes in the illustrations.

Look for shapes in selection of natural and recycled junk materials with your child. E.g.

- Oval – margarine tub or tub lid
- Circles – bottle tops/lids
- Triangle – cut from paper
- Wings - Leaves

Support your child to find appropriate components and place them together. Look at the pictures in the book to help guide your child in what the owl might look like and what else you might need. Help your child to glue the parts into place using craft glue.

Allow your child to be creative and add extra artistic details, such as stickers and sparkles, should they wish. A string can be added to the owl for the owl to dangle from to make the owl 'fly'.

Goodbye

Conclude the session with some suggestions of books that parents might want to share with their children.

An Activity Time for this book is available to download for FREE from our website. This is a great resource to share with families, you are welcome to print and distribute as necessary.

For more stories to share, we recommend the following titles and if your library has copies, make them available for families to borrow or include them in your story time session:

- **I Need a Hug** by Aaron Blabey
- **Spot Goes to the Park** by Eric Hill
- **Piglet and Papa** by Margaret Wild & Stephen Michael King

Goodbye Song

Depending on the size of your group, you may wish to insert each child's name in the place of 'you' as it develops a more personal relationship between yourself, the child and the family.

Sung to the tune of (*Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush*) **or** your preferred choice.

Goodbye

This is the way we say goodbye (use a waving action)

Say goodbye, say goodbye

This is the way we say goodbye

To all our library friends (or) (to our friend.....)!