

READ★PRAY★WONDER★PLAY

A GUIDE TO SHARING STORIES WITH CHILDREN

Bruno's Hat

By Canizales

As you prepare to read this book with your child, you may want to read the note at the back of the book first. If you know or suspect that your child has been involved in a bullying situation (either as one who has been bullied or one who has been a bully), this book may be a useful conversation starter. For a bit of lighthearted fun, consider pointing out the book's title to your child and asking if they would like to find hats for both of you to wear as you read the book together. Before opening the book, spend a few moments looking at the cover together and making some predictions such as which character might be the narrator, which characters they think are friends, and a word that they would use to describe Bruno's hat.



★ ★ WONDER TOGETHER ★ ★

- How were Bruno's and Peter's reactions to Sergio bullying Bruno different?
- Although the story is called "Bruno's Hat," it is told from Peter's perspective. What things do you imagine Bruno might have said to or about Peter at different points in the story?
- When in the story did different characters show bravery?
- After the incident where Sergio bullied not just Bruno, but Peter too, Peter thought that if Bruno would stop wearing the hat, Sergio wouldn't bother him. What do you think?
- The story ends with Peter saying "Friends forever" to Bruno. What do you imagine the three other characters might say to one another as the story ends?

★ ★ EXPLORE THE STORY ★ ★

- At the center of the story is Bruno's hat. Although the "weird" hat is the thing that became the focus of Sergio's bullying, it was something unique about Bruno that he seemed to love. Discuss unique objects that you have that others might find different.
- Think about people you know, or characters from favorite movies, shows, or other books that may be similar to the four main characters in the story (Peter, Bruno, Sergio, and Leah). Talk together about what it is like to be in each of these different roles.
- *With Older Children:* By the end of the story, Peter and Bruno reclaimed the words "weird" and "weirdo." Discuss examples of words meant to be put-downs that have been reclaimed as good.

PRAY

God of the weird and wonderful, the ordinary and original, we're thankful for friends who like us just as we are. May we offer kindness and forgiveness, even when it's hard, and may we always strive to be a good friend. Amen.



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Bullying has, sadly, existed from the beginning of time. In recent years, however, it's been taken more seriously, and more resources are available. Every state has anti-bullying laws, and schools can work with families to address situations in which children are bullied or harassed. Talking about bullying raises awareness and keeps lines of communication open. Books like *Bruno's Hat* hopefully make it easier for children who are bullied to talk about what's going on. The more we hear stories like this one (real-life examples as well as those in books, movies, and shows), the more we can foster empathy and understanding. Some ideas for engaging this topic with your child and digging deeper into its themes include:

- Celebrate our uniqueness! Bruno didn't have to change who he was to keep his friend or make new ones. By the end of the book everyone had hats! Come up with examples of things that make each member of your family unique.
- Explore themes of bullying and friendship in the Bible. Some examples:
 - In the story of Jacob's sons (starting in Genesis 37), the youngest, Joseph, was bullied and mistreated by his brothers because he was his father's favorite. Find Joseph's story in a children's Bible to read together.
 - There are many well-known friendships in Scripture including Jonathan and David, Ruth and Naomi, and Paul and Timothy, to name just a few. Choose a Bible duo (from the ones listed or ideas of your own) to learn more about what their friendship looked like.
- Create something! Whether you decide to craft your own hat like Bruno's or create friendship bracelets to give to classmates, set aside time for being crafty and creative.
- Make a new friend! Whether they're from your church or neighborhood, or are a classmate or teammate, look for ways to get to know someone new.

MORE TO READ & DO

CLICK THE LINKS BELOW TO LEARN MORE

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE FOR *BRUNO'S HAT*

- Download the [Discussion and Activity Guide](#)

ADDITIONAL BOOKS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF FRIENDSHIP

- [Who Is My Neighbor?](#), by Amy-Jill Levine, Sandy Eisenberg Sasso, and Denise Turu
- [What in the World Is Wrong with Gisbert?](#), by Fariba Gholizadeh and Jochen Weeber
- [I Love You, Blue.](#), by Barroux
- [Apple and Magnolia.](#), by Laura Gehl and Patricia Metola
- [Arthur and the Forgetful Elephant.](#), by Maria Girón
- [Binkle's Time to Fly.](#), by Sharmila Collins & Carolina Rabei

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