



A STANDARDS-ALIGNED EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

Bella & Blue

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ABOUT THE BOOK:

Eight year old Bella has anxiety. Small things aren't so small for Bella. But with the help of her colorful dog, Blue, and her grandma, Gigi, who has a flair for all things French and over-the-top hats, Bella can handle every day's twists and turns. Blue is the companion children dream of. The therapy dog that plays paddy-cake to calm Bella's nerves & take away her blues.

Celebrate the beauty of being blue, in this first book of the graphic early reader series, Bella & Blue. Book 1 contains 3 short stories, perfect for the stamina of emerging readers.

ISBN (ebook): 978-1-956378-08-5

ISBN (PB): 978-1-956378-07-8

ISBN (HC): 978-1-956378-25-2

Publisher: The Little Press

Page Count: 78



ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ ILLUSTRATOR:

Berrie has been passionate about children's literature since she was a little girl, and has fed her desire by becoming a children's librarian and by pursuing a career as an illustrator and writer of children's books. Berrie's professional experience includes illustrating books for various businesses and academic institutions. Berrie is the Illustrator Coordinator for the Eastern PA SCBWI. Berrie is an active contributor to the Eastern PA SCBWI blog. Bella & Blue is Berrie's debut children's book



PRE-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Observe the illustration on the front cover.

Look at the front cover, what do you notice?
Who do you predict is Bella?
Who do you predict is Blue?
This book type is called a graphic novel. Have you ever read a graphic novel before?
What do you know about graphic novels?

Read the back cover.

What predictions do you have after reading the back cover?
What decision do you think the main characters are going to make?
What are some problems Bella might face in this book?

READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

**What if there is thunder and lightning?
The weatherman said it's just a little rain shower.**

- Authors and illustrators sometimes use weather as a symbol for feelings. How does the author/illustrator use weather to portray emotions at the beginning of the story?
- Bella and Gigi are very different. How are Bella & Gigi alike or different? How might their experiences in life make them the same or different?
- What made Bella's dad change his mind about letting Bella keep Blue?

**What happened to third?
Why are there so many rules?
I don't think I'm doing anything right!**

- What does it mean when someone uses the phrase "comfort-zone"? What does it mean to be stuck in your "comfort-zone"?
- Have you ever been afraid to try something new? What was holding you back from that experience?

***I think Blue would be good for Bella.
I think you may be right.***

- What does Blue do for Bella? Do you have anyone in your life who supports you through challenges?
- The illustrator of this story sometimes uses pictures instead of words to give ideas of what is happening. Can you find an example of when the illustrator does this? Why do you think she chooses to draw pictures in some moments rather than write words?
- How does Bella feel at her ballet class? Why does she feel this way?
- Bella was nervous about entering Blue into the costume contest, what was she nervous about? Have you ever felt this way about something?

**What if everyone laughs?
I guess laughing isn't such a bad thing.**

- This book has 3 different short stories. What was your favorite story and why?
- In this story, Gigi is a positive influence on Bella, what are some things that Gigi does to help Bella to explore different experiences. Do you have anyone in your life who supports you?

**You get the prize for
being the best dog ever!**



EXTENSION ACTIVITY:

- Some characteristics of graphic novels are- using images to tell the story and heavy use of dialogue bubbles. Use the space below to create your own graphic novel!
- In this story, Bella relies on both Gigi and Blue to help her push outside her comfort zone. Think about a time you needed help pushing outside of your comfort zone. Use this as a story line in your graphic reader.



Draw your Graphic Story

The template consists of 11 rounded rectangular panels arranged in a zig-zag pattern. The panels are connected by a vertical line on the left that starts with a circle at the top and ends with an arrow pointing down to a small character icon at the bottom.

