



Reader & Teacher Guide

Kiss (Honi the Honu Turtle & Hongli the Dragonfly)

A Gentle Story About Friendship, Noticing, and Kindness

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A Note to Teachers, Librarians & Homeschool Families

Kiss is designed to be a gentle, flexible read-aloud that supports Social-Emotional Learning, observation, and kindness across a wide range of ages. This story works beautifully in classrooms, libraries, and homeschool settings where calm storytelling, discussion, and creative exploration are valued.

The guide that follows offers simple prompts and activities that can be adapted for group learning, one-on-one reading, or independent exploration. There are no right or wrong answers — the focus is on noticing, trying, and connecting. Use this story to spark conversations about friendship, encouragement, and how small moments can make a big difference.

About This Book

Kiss is an evergreen Surf Soup® story inspired by a true moment from Hawaii. Through Honi the Honu Turtle, Hongli the dragonfly, and the joyful Kumus, children explore friendship, encouragement, and the power of small, caring gestures. This story supports Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), observation skills, and cultural appreciation in a calm, accessible way.

Learning Focus (SEL-Aligned)

Self-Awareness

Notice how it feels to be seen, welcomed, or encouraged
Identify quiet emotions like curiosity, shyness, and calm happiness

Social Awareness

Practice noticing others' feelings and needs
Understand that friendship can be gentle and nonverbal
Relationship Skills
Learn that kindness can be shown through small actions
Explore encouragement, teamwork, and patience
Responsible Decision-Making
Practice choosing kind, respectful ways to connect with others
Recognize that trying matters more than perfection

Discussion Questions

How did Honi show friendship without using many words?
How did Hongli make Honi feel when she landed on his nose?
What do the Kumus teach everyone about learning?
Can you think of a small moment that made your day better?
Why do you think noticing little things is important?

Activities & Extensions

Gentle Gesture Practice

Invite children to practice a kind gesture (a smile, a wave, a soft “honi”) and talk about how it feels.

Dragonfly Observation

Watch insects, birds, or nature outside. What do you notice when you slow down?

Shell Condo Drawing

Draw the inside of Honi's shell. Who lives there? How do they help each other?

Movement & Rhythm

Try gentle swaying or simple hula-inspired movements to music. Focus on feeling, not perfection.

Hawaiian Words to Explore

Honi — kiss

Honu — turtle

Kumu — teacher

Aloha — love, compassion

Mahalo — gratitude

Classroom & Homeschool Use

Read-aloud for SEL lessons

Morning meeting or calm-down time

Art + movement integration

Nature and observation units

Inclusive discussions about learning at different paces