

Honey the Hen

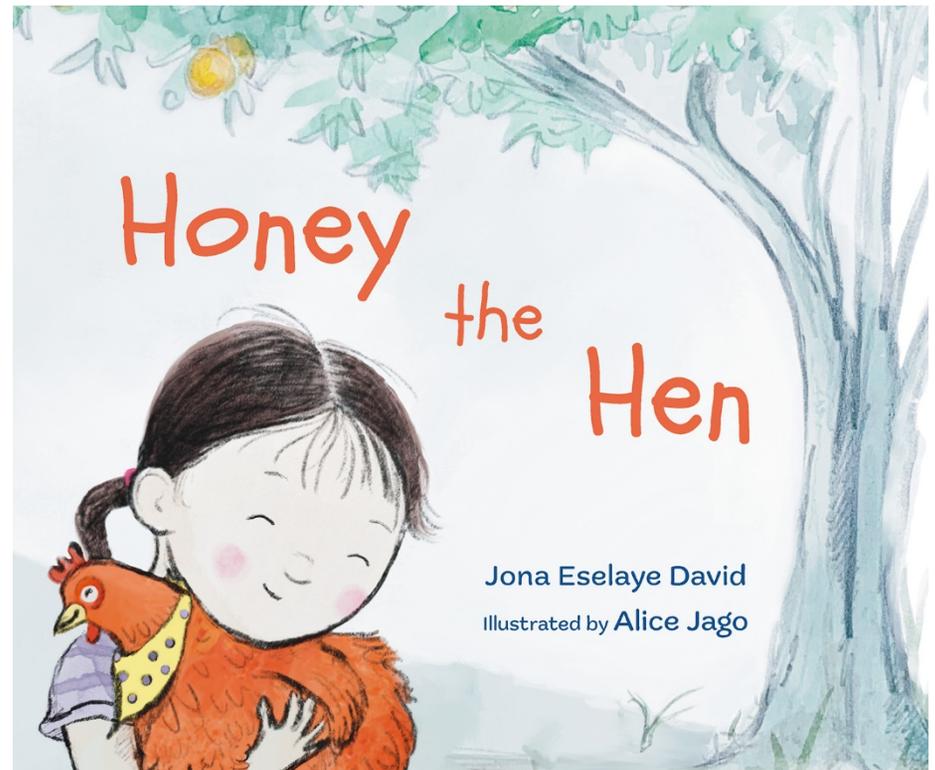
Teaching Notes

Author: Jona Eselaye David

Illustrator: Alice Jago

Synopsis:

Mikaela enjoys taking care of the family pets. However, when Honey the hen becomes unwell, Mikaela seeks advice from a veterinarian and devotes herself to Honey's recovery. Through this experience, Mikaela and Honey develop a close bond. While Honey initially recovers, Mikaela is later faced with letting Honey go. Mikaela learns that despite her loss, the friendship, and memories she formed with Honey are long-lasting. Mikaela's sweet nature and devotion to animals aim to appeal to young readers, who may be able to relate to her love for her pets. Additionally, Mikaela's devotion to Honey educates readers about responsible pet ownership while offering a gentle introduction to loss.



Before Reading

- Look at the illustration on the cover. Who do children think is the main character?
- What do children think is the relationship between the two characters?
- What emotions do the characters show?
- Read the blurb. What children think the story is about based on this?
- What colours can be seen on the cover?

During Reading

Literal Questions

- How many pets does Mikaela's family have?
- Can you spot any wildlife animals visiting Mikaela's home?
- Which pets like to play in the pond?
- How does Mikaela know when Honey is sick?
- What kind of other pets does Mikaela see at the animal hospital?
- What does Mikaela do to help Honey feel better?
- What does Honey wear after she is feeling better?

Inferential Questions

- Where do you think Mikaela's family lives? Do they live in a suburb or a farm?
- Which hen do you think is Honey?
- Do you think Mikaela and Honey are friends? How do you know?
- How does Mikaela feel at the animal hospital when Honey becomes sick again? How do you know?
- Which other pets help comfort Mikaela after Honey passes? How do you know?

Additional Questions

- What names would you give the other pets in the story?
- What kind of job do you think Mikaela would like to do when she's older?
- Do you have any pets that you help look after?
- What kind of activities do you enjoy doing with your pets?

After Reading

- What did you like or dislike about this story?
- How did this story make you feel?
- What do you find interesting about this story?
- Did you learn anything new looking after pets?
- Do you have any pets that have now passed? What are your favourite memories with them?

Classroom activities

1. Mikaela enjoys looking after her pets. Choose your favourite type of pet and create a guide on how to care for them including:

- A demographic profile – name, age, type of animal or species, a description of their appearance and personality traits.
- What kind of food do they eat and how often do you need to feed them?
- Where do they sleep?
- Do they prefer to play indoor, outdoors or both?
- What games or activities can you do with them?
- How do you know when they are sick?
- How would you look after them when they are sick?

2. a. Do you have a pet?

Write a short story to share describing what they look like, what they enjoy doing and your favourite memory with them.

OR

b. Is there an animal that you would like to have as a pet?

Write a short story to share describing what they look like and a fun adventure that you would like to have with them.

3. Which letter does the name for your favourite animal start with?

Create a short poem describing them using words that start with the same letter.

About the Author:

Debut children's author Jona Eselaye David resides in Melbourne, Australia, with her family (including two dogs, nine hens, five ducks, and one rooster—but who's counting?!) Jona has a background in applied bioscience and currently works as a senior advisor within the higher education sector. *Honey the Hen* marks her first venture into the realm of children's writing and was inspired by her beloved daughter Mikaela and her treasured hen, Honey.

About the Illustrator:

Alice Jago is a self-taught children's illustrator, who lives in Cornwall, England. She spent her childhood writing stories and drawing characters and rediscovered her love of picture books after having children of her own.