

HAROLD AND GRACE

Sean E Avery

ISBN (HB): 9781925162295

Themes: friendship, bullying, life cycles, wetland ecosystems

Year level: Kindergarten to Y3

Cross-curriculum priority: Sustainability

ABOUT THE BOOK

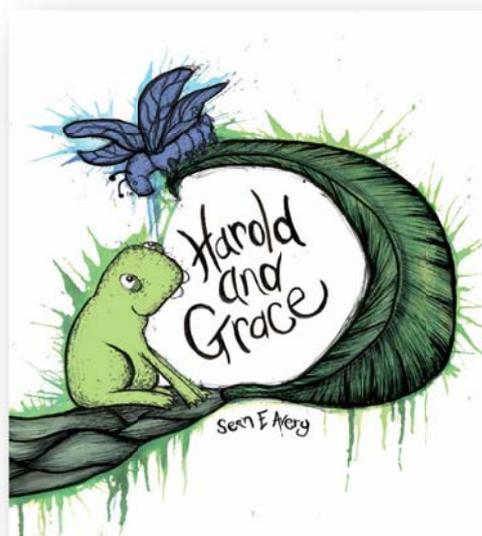
Harold and Grace is the beautifully illustrated story of two unlikely friends.

After a terrible storm, only one slimy egg and one silky egg survive on a 'lonely leaf growing on a tiny tree beside a little pond.' When the eggs hatch, Harold the tadpole and Grace the caterpillar quickly become best friends. But when Harold starts to grow fins and spends more time swimming, Grace can't join in the fun.

One day, Harold remembers to visit his old friend at the lonely leaf, and finds she is gone – only a small, silky sack remains. Wherever could Grace be?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR

Sean E Avery is a young sculptor, author and illustrator who started his first newspaper column at age twelve. His artworks have featured in SciTech (Perth) and Ripley's Believe It Or Not exhibitions in the USA. He is best known for his animal sculptures made from CDs and electronic waste, and for his first picture book, *All Monkeys Love Bananas*, also available from Fremantle Press. Sean conducts workshops and presentations of all kinds for all ages – sculpture, writing, illustration, design and storytelling. He can be contacted via his website: <http://seaneavery.com/home.html>



STUDY NOTES

LITERACY: COMPREHENDING TEXTS THROUGH LISTENING, READING AND VIEWING

(A) Before Reading

Author/illustrator background – Sean E Avery

1. Ask students to share their understanding of the term 'artist'.
2. Create a list of different kinds of artists (e.g. painters, sculptors, graffiti artists, photographers, mixed-media artists, print artists, illustrators etc.).
3. Do any children in the class have a favourite artist? Why do they admire this individual's work?
4. Visit Sean E Avery's website: <http://seaneavery.com/home.html>
 - a. What type/s of artist does he identify as? (sculptor, illustrator, visual artist, mixed media artist)
 - b. View some of the animal sculptures Sean has created from CDs and other electronic waste materials (http://seaneavery.com/section/130105_Sculpture.html). Which is your favourite and why?

Predicting

5. Explain the different parts of a book: title, author name, front cover, back cover, blurb, spine. Ask children to point to each part of the book.
6. Ask children to explain the difference between an 'author' and an 'illustrator'.
7. Have students read the blurb aloud to a partner, or read this together as a class. Does the blurb make them want to read the story? Why/why not?
8. Create a class prediction chart detailing what students think may happen in the story. (Note: It is often interesting to keep this chart to look over at the end – amusing false predictions inevitably arise!)

Picture walk

9. Photocopy three pages from *Harold and Grace* (showing the illustrations with the text omitted).
 - a. As a class, have students interpret the images to brainstorm a list of ideas about what is happening on each page.
 - b. Afterwards, invite them to predict what may happen in the story based on these images alone.

Expanding vocabulary: clarifying unfamiliar terms

Younger readers may be unfamiliar with some of the words in the story. Before commencing reading, go through the following list with your students and explain each term. Alternatively, have students work in pairs to use the dictionary or an appropriate internet dictionary to locate definitions.

First Mention	Word	Meaning
Spread 5	guppies	
Spread 6	ghastly	
Spread 6	slither	
Spread 6	ridiculous	
Spread 7	ventured	
Spread 13	morsel	

(B) During Reading

Harold and Grace can be used for several different reading sessions including:

- Modelled reading as a whole class
- Shared reading in student pairs
- Guided reading in small groups
- Independent reading

Comprehension strategies to practise (Kindergarten to Y3)

- Sounding out words aloud (not only in your head)
- Phonics (blending and segmenting)
- Slowing reading rate for comprehension
- Self-monitoring for understanding
- Using illustrations to help predict unknown words
- Predicting words by recognising familiar letter patterns
- Re-reading to crosscheck graphophonic information

Depending on the needs of your class, the story can be used to practise finding initial and final sounds (e.g. point to a word on the page that starts with 's') to develop letter/sound awareness. Or they can be used to practise fluency and expression for more advanced readers, who may likely still be challenged, however, by some of the sophisticated vocabulary highlighted in the table above (e.g. ridiculous, ventured).

Visual literacy

10. Explain that in picture books, illustrations are equally as important as the written word in communicating the story.
 - a. Compare and contrast *Harold and Grace* with a novel. What do the children notice? What makes a picture book different to a novel?
 - b. List some conventions of the picture book genre.

11. In groups of four, have students examine the illustrations in detail.
 - a. What style has the illustrator used to draw the characters – realistic, cartoon, abstract, fantasy?
 - b. What medium has he used – collage, black and white, watercolour etc.? What effect does this create?
 - c. Why do you think the artist has chosen a colour palate comprising predominantly greens, purples, blues and blacks?
 - d. Where has the illustrator positioned objects on each page and what effect does this create?
 - e. Can students identify any patterns? (e.g. repetition of colour sequences)

Comprehension questions

Spread 1

12. Look carefully at the two characters on the front cover (a frog and a butterfly). Then look carefully at the picture on the right-hand side of Spread 1.
 - a. Which eggs do children think contain the baby frogs – the 'slimy eggs' or the 'silky eggs'?
 - b. Which eggs do they think contain the baby butterflies? Why?

Spread 2

13. Look carefully at the 'tiny tree' and the 'lonely leaf'. How has the artist used colour to show what is happening to the eggs during the storm?

Spread 3

14. Compare and contrast the illustrations of the baby butterfly inside the 'silky egg', and the baby frog inside the 'slimy egg'. What similarities and differences can children find? Create a list.

Spread 4

15. Highlight the use of capital letters for the names of each character.
 - a. Have children point to the capital letters: *'Hello,' said Harold the tadpole. 'Hello,' said Grace the caterpillar.*
 - b. When else should students use a capital letter? (e.g. to name a place)

Spread 5

16. *Harold swam off to explore the little pond. There, he overheard some gossiping guppies.*
 - a. What does it mean to 'gossip' about someone?
 - b. Why is this an unkind thing to do?
 - c. Turn to a partner and talk about a time when someone has gossiped about you – how did it make you feel?
 - d. The guppies wonder why Harold has no fins. What are fins? Can you point to the fins on each guppy?

Spread 7

17. How many different kinds of animals, insects or arachnids can children see on this spread? Use the page as a stimulus to practise counting aloud, e.g. How many legs does each crab have? How many guppies can you see?

Spread 8

18. Look carefully at the illustrations on the left and right.
 - a. How are they similar? (The illustration on the right is a 'zoomed in' version of that on the left!)
 - b. Why do you think the illustrator has chosen to design the page like this?
19. *'I like your fur,' said Harold. 'I like your tail,' said Grace.*
Turn to a partner and tell them something you like about them!

Spread 9

20. Look closely at Harold. What changes can children see?

Spread 12

21. What do you think might be hiding inside the silky sack?

Spread 13

22. *'Harold, you big, green nincompoop. It's me!'* Who do you think is talking here?

Spread 16

23. Harold and Grace are 'unlikely friends' because frogs usually eat insects. Can you think of any other 'unlikely friends' in a story you have read? (e.g. a cat and a dog that are best friends, even though many dogs like to chase cats).

LITERACY: COMPOSING TEXTS THROUGH SPEAKING, WRITING AND CREATING

(C) After Reading

Spelling and vocabulary

24. Have children practise the correct spelling of common sight words included in the book, e.g. *from, tree, little, some, to, the, of, which, just, in, water, and, then, hit, when, was, but, had, all, one, time, same, day, said, hello, off, there, he, that, fish, where, are, its, can't, be, much, any, very, sad, swim, up, her, my, look, for, on, they, back, like, your, best, friends, as, went, with, more, stop, got, old, she, sorry, so, you, out, long, into, not, stay, who*
25. Use the books as a resource for teaching the correct spellings of long vowel sounds and diphthongs present in the story. For example:
 - a. long vowel sounds – ee, ea, e-e, y, ay, o-e, ow
 - b. diphthongs – ou, aw, au, oy

Fun ways to practise spelling!

Water words

26. Children use a paintbrush and cup of water to write their spelling words on the ground outside the classroom.

Hangman

27. Children play 'Hangman' but must select words from *Harold and Grace* to be the mystery word.

Spelling Bingo

28. Create bingo grids that contain the list words from *Harold and Grace* (instead of numbers). Play as a class or in small groups, with children taking turns each or the teacher as the 'bingo caller'.

Verbs and adjectives

29. Create a class definition for the term 'adjective'.
 - a. Why are adjectives important in story writing? What do they do? (e.g. describe a noun, help to enhance imagery)
 - b. Read the book as a class and collect adjectives (e.g. lonely, silky, slimy, ghastly, strong).
 - c. Have students use each of these words in a sentence.
30. Create a class definition for the term 'verb'.
 - a. Why are verbs important in story writing? What do they do? (e.g. describe an action)
 - b. Read the book as a class and collect verbs (e.g. slithered, ventured, rushed, howled, splashed).
 - c. Have students use each of these words in a sentence.
31. Print the following words out on cards: *lonely, silky, slimy, ghastly, strong, slithered, ventured, rushed, howled, splashed*. Shuffle the cards, then have the students sort them into two categories – adjectives or verbs.

Poetic language

32. Create a class definition of the term 'alliteration'.
33. Have students find examples of alliteration in the book (e.g. 'lonely leaf, 'tiny tree', 'gossiping guppies'). Create a list of examples.
34. Have students experiment with alliteration to create their own word-pairs and sentences.

Parallelism in the text

35. Create a definition for 'parallelism' (the use of similar phrases that have the same grammatical structure). Consider the following sections of the story:
Spread 4: *'Hello,' said Harold the tadpole. 'Hello,' said Grace the caterpillar.*
Spread 8: *'I like your fur,' said Harold. 'I like your tail,' said Grace.*
 - a. Are these examples of parallel structure? Which words are the same?
 - b. Why do you think the author chose to use this structure? What effect is created?
 - c. Look carefully at the illustrations on this page, and throughout the book. Can you see examples of parallelism in the illustrations too?

Recount and sequencing activities

36. Sequence pictures from *Harold and Grace* in the correct order and write a sentence below each to describe what is happening.
37. Write a recount of the events in *Harold and Grace*. Pay careful attention to simple punctuation (full stops and capital letters).

Creative writing: practising simple punctuation, planning, editing and redrafting

38. Write a story entitled 'A Day in the Life of a Butterfly'.
 - a. What would you do if you were a butterfly for a day? Would you fly as high into the sky as you possibly could?
 - b. What kinds of friends would you make?
 - c. What kinds of dangers might you face?
39. Write a story entitled 'A Day in the Life of a Frog'.
 - a. What would you do if you were a frog for a day? Would you jump so high that you felt like you were wearing trampoline shoes?
 - b. Would you swim to the very bottom of a lake? What kinds of friends would you make down there?
40. Write a story about two 'unlikely friends' (e.g. a cat and a dog).
 - a. How will they meet?
 - b. Why will they become best friends?
41. Write an alternative blurb for *Harold and Grace*.

Grammatical elements to explore during short story writing:

- past tense
- descriptive language to create imagery – adjectives
- verbs relating to animal movements
- connectives

Punctuation skills to model, practise and assess:

- capital letters
- full stops
- question marks
- speech marks (for more advanced writers)

Writing and editing

The writing sequence below can be adapted for any of the creative writing activities previously listed.

- *Modelled writing* (teacher only) – the teacher 'thinks aloud' as he/she writes a story on the whiteboard while the class watch.
- *Shared writing* – the teacher has the pen and continues to 'think aloud', but also asks for children's input and ideas. Children are invited to come and help write/make corrections on the whiteboard.
- *Guided writing* – children can plan their writing in pairs using a narrative planning sheet with the following subheadings: character description, setting, conflict, climax, resolution.
- *Independent writing* – children write their own piece and engage in editing and redrafting.
- *Presentation to audience* – children create an illustration to accompany their story and share with one another in small groups.
- *Editing: you be the teacher!* – children swap their draft with a partner. Partners to correct spelling/punctuation in a red.

Jigsaw reporting

42. Students are divided into 'home groups' containing five members. In these groups, they will research a species of butterfly or frog found in Australia. They will eventually each write an individual report detailing the physical characteristics, diet, life cycle, habitat, threats (and their causes).
 - a. First the topic is split into the five headings, so that one student per 'home group' is allocated a unique section to research.
 - b. Then the 'home groups' split up temporarily and students form 'expert groups' in which all

members of the group are researching the *same* subtopic. Thus students can share/discuss/add to their findings.

- c. Finally, students return to their original 'home group' and take turns each to be the 'expert' on their selected area of research.

Written report

43. After completing the above, students write a report on their findings using the research subtopics as subheadings. Literacy teaching focus points include: capital letters; full stops; text connectives; how to label a diagram; scientific literacy (expanding vocabulary); differentiating between using adjectives to describe Australian animals and using verbs to describe their movements.

Speaking and listening

44. Children research the life cycle of a frog or a butterfly species that is found in Australia. They can then present their findings to the class or in small groups. Students may like to make a poster depicting each stage of the life cycle. They should be encouraged to include drawings and/or images.

CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS

Art

45. View some of the animal sculptures author Sean E Avery has created from CDs and other electronic waste materials online (http://seaneavery.com/section/130105_Sculpture.html). Which is your favourite and why?
46. *Description of the artistic process* – Sean E Avery has stated that each creature starts with wire that is shaped with a pair of pliers. He then cuts up CDs with a pair of kitchen scissors, arranges the shards according to size and colour, and attaches them to the frame using a hot glue gun. He arranges the shards in a feather or fur pattern. Sean has made sculptures that contain over 300 discs! Some took more than a month to complete.
Invite children to create their own sculpture art using pipe cleaners as the 'wire frame' and different coloured cardboard pieces as the 'shards.' What kinds of animals can they make?
47. *Eco Art* – Sean E Avery only uses recycled materials to create his sculptures, which classifies them as 'Sustainable Art' or 'Eco Art'.
 - a. Research other eco-artists in Australia.
 - b. What kinds of recycled materials do they use?
 - c. Plan and create a class and/or school sculpture made from recycled materials that will educate others in your school about 'Eco Art'.
48. *Continue the story* – as a class, brainstorm what adventures might happen next for Harold and Grace.
 - a. Have students illustrate one such adventure attempting the artistic techniques modelled in *Harold and Grace* (e.g. use of similar primary and secondary colours, use of characters drawn in the style of Harold and Grace).
 - b. Hold a class exhibition and invite other classes and parents.
49. *Puppet show* – ask students to create their own 'Harold' and 'Grace' puppets, which they can use to retell the story. Show them several different mediums they can use (e.g. pastels, watercolours, water pencils or cut-outs of geometric shapes such as triangles and rectangles).
50. Undertake a class excursion to an exhibition at your local or state art gallery.
51. Undertake a class excursion to an exhibition at a gallery of contemporary art in your region.

Science

52. Create a map of the life cycle of a frog.
53. Create a map of the life cycle of a butterfly.
54. Visit the wetlands exhibit at your local zoo to learn more about endangered species.
55. Initiate a school or classroom compost project (exploring the life cycle of earthworms).
56. Explore food chains and food webs in Australian wetland habitats.
57. Create a recycling project at your school: what everyday classroom materials can be recycled?
58. Explore the classification of different kinds of organisms – mammals, reptiles, amphibians, insects etc.

Sustainability cross-curricular priority

59. Wetland environments like the ones where Harold and Grace live are under threat for a variety of reasons within Australia. Research ways in which students can help protect the environment by contributing to sustainable living. Visit the address below for 'change the way you live' links:
www.wwf.org.au/what_you_can_do/change_the_way_you_live
60. Create a poster or pamphlet advertising this information to your school community. Suggested topics:
 - Recycling
 - Sustainable shopping
 - Transport – car and air travel and offsetting
 - Saving water
 - Reducing energy consumption
 - Green building design
 - Ethical and responsible investment

History

61. Research a famous Australian artist and write a report using the following subheadings: biography, early career, career highlights, artistic mediums and techniques.

Mathematics

62. Students construct sculptures using a variety of three-dimensional shapes (e.g. Geo Solids and Constructo Straws), learning about the properties and shape names alongside assembling their artwork. Use this as an opportunity to practise counting (e.g. How many straws did you use in your sculpture? If we add five more then how many will you have? How many corners does your cube have? How many faces does the pyramid have?)
63. Allow students to create artwork using pattern blocks. What animals can they make? Again, use this as an opportunity to examine the properties of different shapes (e.g. How many sides does a triangle have? Can you make a square from two triangles?)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- The author's website: <http://seaneavery.com/home.html>
- Interview with Sean E Avery:
www.ideasdecodiseno.com/entrevistas,%20interviews/Sean%20E%20Avery%20-%20Interview.html
- ABC Arts: www.abc.net.au/arts

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM LINKS BY YEAR LEVEL

Foundation Year

- Recognise that texts are created by authors who tell stories and share experiences that may be similar or different to students' own experiences ([ACELT1575](#))
- Respond to texts, identifying favourite stories, authors and illustrators ([ACELT1577](#))
- Listen to and respond orally to texts and to the communication of others in informal and structured classroom situations ([ACELY1646](#))
- Identify some differences between imaginative and informative texts ([ACELY1648](#))
- Understand that some language in written texts is unlike everyday spoken language ([ACELA1431](#))

Year 1

- Discuss how authors create characters using language and images ([ACELT1581](#))
- Respond to texts drawn from a range of cultures and experiences ([ACELY1655](#))
- Express preferences for specific texts and authors and listen to the opinions of others ([ACELT1583](#))
- Discuss features of plot, character and setting in different types of literature and explore some features of characters in different texts ([ACELT1584](#))
- Understand concepts about print and screen, including how different types of texts are organised using page numbering, tables of content, headings and titles, navigation buttons, bars and links ([ACELA1450](#))

- Explore differences in words that represent people, places and things (nouns, including pronouns), happenings and states (verbs), qualities (adjectives) and details such as when, where and how (adverbs) ([ACELA1452](#))
- Compare different kinds of images in narrative and informative texts and discuss how they contribute to meaning ([ACELA1453](#))

Year 2

- Discuss how depictions of characters in print, sound and images reflect the contexts in which they were created ([ACELT1587](#))
- Compare opinions about characters, events and settings in and between texts ([ACELT1589](#))
- Identify aspects of different types of literary texts that entertain, and give reasons for personal preferences ([ACELT1590](#))
- Discuss the characters and settings of different texts and explore how language is used to present these features in different ways ([ACELT1591](#))
- Understand that different types of texts have identifiable text structures and language features that help the text serve its purpose ([ACELA1463](#))
- Understand how texts are made cohesive through resources, for example word associations, synonyms, and antonyms ([ACELA1464](#))
- Create events and characters using different media that develop key events and characters from literary texts ([ACELT1593](#))
- Discuss different texts on a similar topic, identifying similarities and differences between the texts ([ACELY1665](#))
- Identify the audience of imaginative, informative and persuasive texts ([ACELY1668](#))
- Read less predictable texts with phrasing and fluency by combining contextual, semantic, grammatical and phonic knowledge using text processing strategies, for example monitoring meaning, predicting, rereading and self-correcting ([ACELY1669](#))
- Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning and begin to analyse texts by drawing on growing knowledge of context, language and visual features and print and multimodal text structures ([ACELY1670](#))
- Know some features of text organisation including page and screen layouts, alphabetical order, and different types of diagrams, for example timelines ([ACELA1466](#))

Year 3

- Discuss texts in which characters, events and settings are portrayed in different ways, and speculate on the authors' reasons ([ACELT1594](#))
- Draw connections between personal experiences and the worlds of texts, and share responses with others ([ACELT1596](#))
- Discuss how language is used to describe the settings in texts, and explore how the settings shape the events and influence the mood of the narrative ([ACELT1599](#))
- Identify the point of view in a text and suggest alternative points of view ([ACELY1675](#))
- Understand how different types of texts vary in use of language choices, depending on their purpose and context (for example, tense and types of sentences) ([ACELA1478](#))
- Understand that paragraphs are a key organisational feature of written texts ([ACELA1479](#))
- Discuss the nature and effects of some language devices used to enhance meaning and shape the reader's reaction, including rhythm and onomatopoeia in poetry and prose ([ACELT1600](#))
- Know that word contractions are a feature of informal language and that apostrophes of contraction are used to signal missing letters ([ACELA1480](#))
- Identify the effect on audiences of techniques, for example shot size, vertical camera angle and layout in picture books, advertisements and film segments ([ACELA1483](#))
- Understand how to use sound-letter relationships and knowledge of spelling rules, compound words, prefixes, suffixes, morphemes and less common letter combinations, for example 'tion' ([ACELA1485](#))



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