



# Goosehill Primary School

## Weekly Notes-September 25, 2015



Dear Parents,

Thank you to the GPFA for a wonderful Welcome Back to School picnic on Friday! All of our families enjoyed spending time together on a beautiful afternoon.

Throughout the year you will hear, from your child's teacher and me, about the benefits of reading aloud to children. One benefit of reading aloud to children is that many children's books help to open conversation with children about difficult topics, from moving to divorce, the birth of a sibling to the death of a loved one. Here is a list of book recommendations from [grandparents.com](http://grandparents.com) that can help foster communication when families are facing life's challenges together. (Yes, grandparents really do know best!)

**Enemy Pie** by Derek Munson (Ages 4 to 7). With bright, vivid illustrations and a funny and highly original text, *Enemy Pie* is a definite crowd pleaser. Thanks to his dad, one little boy learns an effective recipe for turning your worst enemy into your best friend, Enemy Pie. This is a hilarious story with a subtle message about turning negatives into positives and letting kids know that "enemies" are often "friends" we just don't know yet.

**Two Homes** by Claire Masurel (Ages 2 to 5). This is one of the most relatable books on divorce for younger children. Rather than dealing with the messiness of divorce, it focuses exclusively on the positives from a child's point of view. Alex introduces himself and his parents and explains that he has two homes. Very exciting. He discusses all the cool stuff he can do at his daddy's house in the country and his mommy's apartment in the city. There is no indication of unhappiness in either locale, only excitement derived from having "two favorite chairs, two sets of friends, two of everything." This is a child-centered book stressing the fact that Alex is loved, no matter which home he is in.

**Now One Foot, Now The Other** by Tomie dePaola (Ages 4-7). The story is about all the little things Bobby's grandfather, Bob, helped his grandson do when he was a small boy, and how Bobby does all the very same things for his grandfather after Bob has a stroke. Everyone in the family thinks Bob is unable to understand what is happening around him, but Bobby insists that his grandfather is responding to him. With patience and determination, he helps Bob regain motor control, leading him through all the same exercises that Bob used to help him gain coordination as a baby. Though in real life not all such stories have the positive ending found here, dePaola creates a beautiful intergenerational tale that will help children relate to aging loved ones.

**Boomer's Big Day** by Constance W. McGeorge (Ages 2 and up). Moving can be a traumatic experience for a child. The genius behind Boomer's Big Day is that it is written from the perspective of a dog, who, much like a small child, finds it hard to process change. Boomer realizes that "this was not going to be an ordinary day." Confused by the absence of his favorite toy ball and the unwelcome arrival of strangers, moving trucks, and boxes, Boomer emerges from an endless car ride to find himself in a new house with nothing to do and no one to play with. Things start looking up once he has a look around, and at the end of the day he finds that his dinner bowl is in the kitchen and his bed and old green tennis ball have been unpacked. "Boomer wagged his tail," McGeorge writes, "happy to be home."

**The Invisible String** by Patricia Karst (Ages 3 and up). The Invisible String by Patrice Karst is a heartwarming story that reassures children that even though they can't always be with a loved one, they're always in each other's hearts. Whenever a child thinks about a family member, THE INVISIBLE STRING gives a tug. This book is an excellent way to begin the conversation about death. The gentle story illustrates that we are still connected by love even after someone passes.

**Babies Don't Eat Pizza** by Dianne Danzig (Ages 3 to 6). This is a book that really prepares children for the joys and annoyances of being an older sibling. The factual yet humorous text answers all the questions new big siblings have about pregnancy, birth, coming home, and developmental milestones. Danzig beautifully blends the excitement of a new baby with the inevitable downside, with an overriding message of unconditional love and understanding.

Warm regards,

Lynn Herschlein