



SIMPLYGOODFORM

Lesson Plans

2026

The Pink Balloon

Author: Cynthia Sweeney

www.thepinkballoon.ca

www.SimplyGoodForm.com



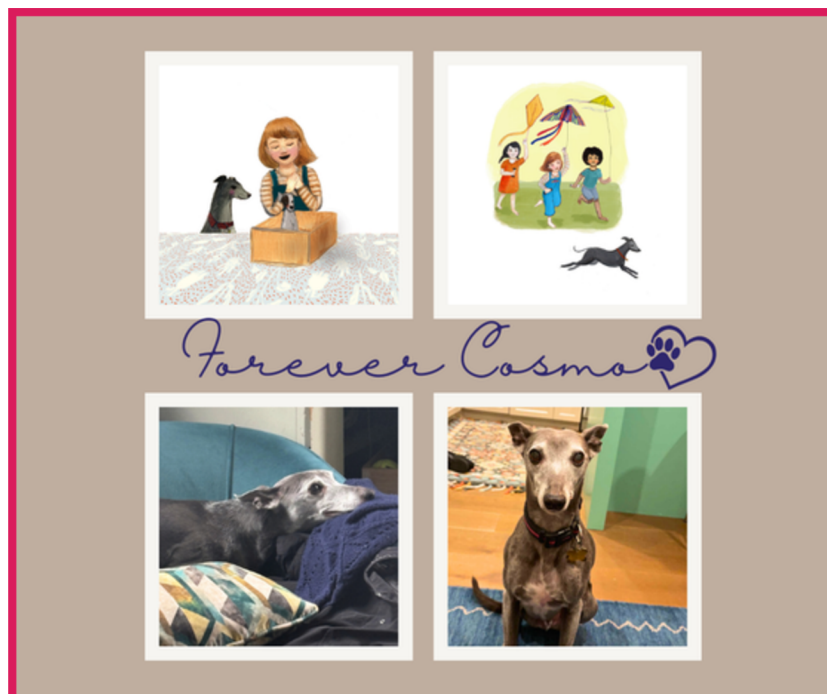
HELLO FRIENDS!



I am so excited for you to read my storybook.
Did you know this story is based on a TRUE Story?

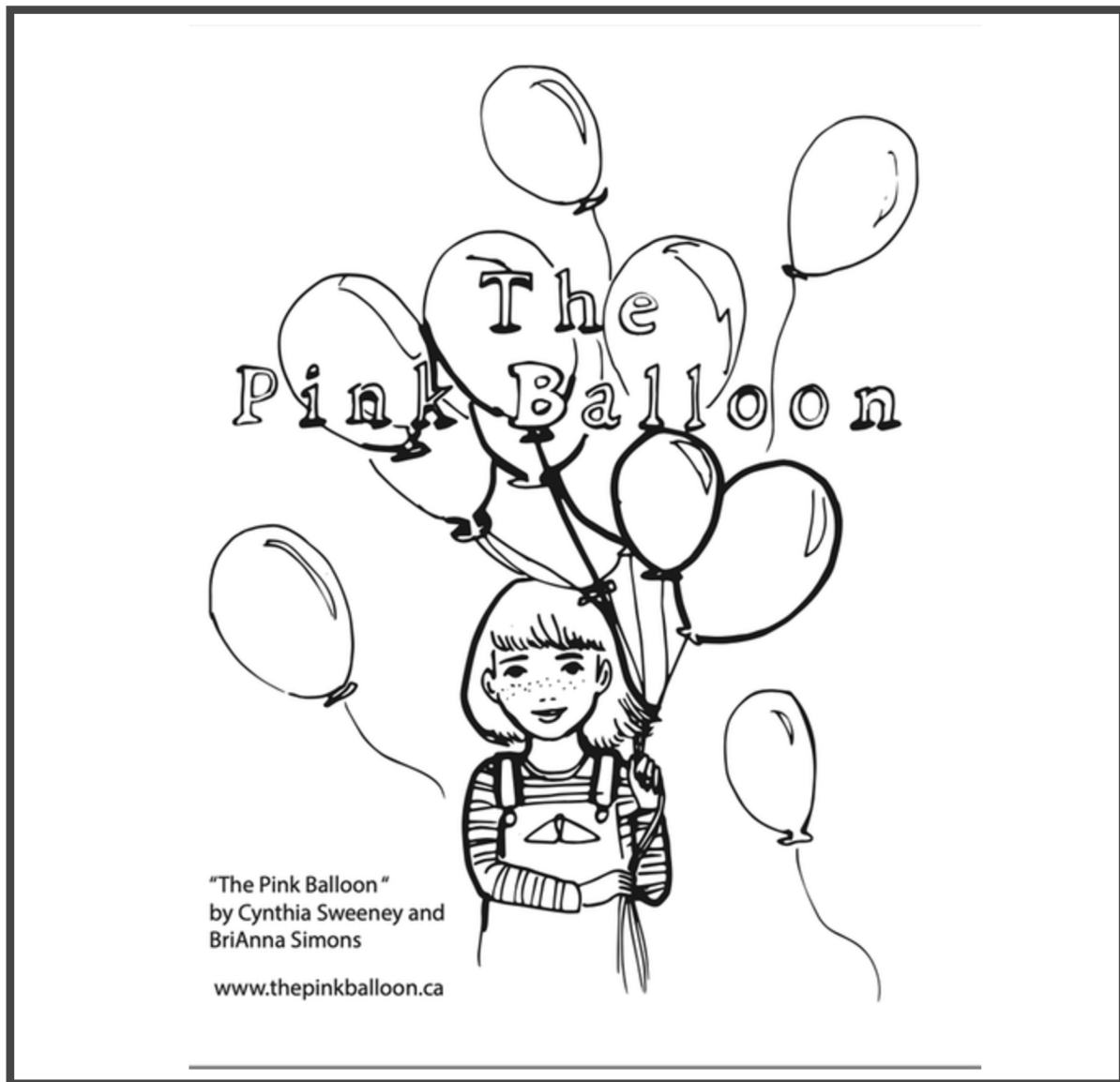
Here are a couple of fun things for you to know about this book:

1. The little dog you see on many of the pretty pages inside is my dog Cosmo. He is a whippet and can run really fast. Cosmo was born in Ireland and moved here with us when he was a tiny puppy. He loves curling up in a sunny chair and cuddles.
2. Above the crib there is a hanging mobile. Maybe you had one like it when you were a baby? This mobile is very same mobile that hung above Briar's crib when she was a baby.
3. All of the pictures (also known as illustrations) inside my book were first painted by an artist. After she painted the pictures, they were then made to fit inside The Pink Balloon.
4. The pink, blue and white moth you see inside my book, is a symbol of love, friendship and belonging.



THE PINK BALLOON

workbook



Name _____

The Pink Balloon



"The Pink Balloon"
by Cynthia Sweeney and
BriAnna Simons

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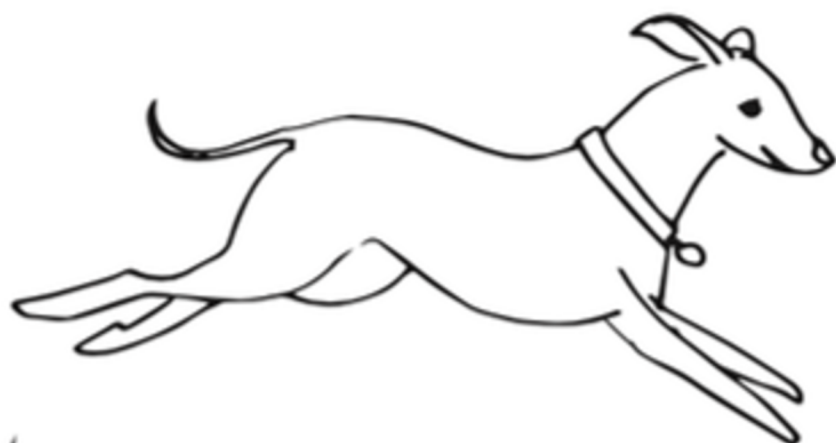
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The Pink Balloon

Activities Inspired for Pre-Schoolers

Cosmo's Friendship Walk

1. Place picture cards around the room.
2. Children help "Cosmo" (a stuffed dog) visit each station.
3. Stations:
 -  Give Cosmo a compliment.
 -  Show Cosmo a feeling face.
 -  Tell Cosmo something special about yourself.
 -  Show how you include a new friend.

Balloon Feelings Circle

Objective: Build emotional literacy and empathy.

Materials: Paper balloon cut-outs in different colours.

Instructions:

1. Give each child a balloon shape.
2. Ask them to draw a face showing how they feel today.
- 3.

Invite children to share:

- "Today my balloon feels..."
- "Something that makes my balloon happy is..."

Teacher prompts:

1. "Do all balloons need to look the same?"
2. "Do people always feel the same every day?"
3. "What can we do when a friend's balloon is feeling sad?"

The Pink Balloon

Activities Inspired for Pre-Schoolers

Nature Loves Variety Matching Game

Print pictures of:

- Chimera butterfly
- Parrotfish
- Cardinal
- Clownfish
- Different flowers
- Different leaves

Children sort into:

- ☀ "Same"
- ☀ "Different"
- ☀ "Beautiful"

Teacher script:

"Nature has many ways of being. Some animals change colours, some change roles, and some are a mix of many beautiful things. Nature loves variety—and people are wonderfully unique too."



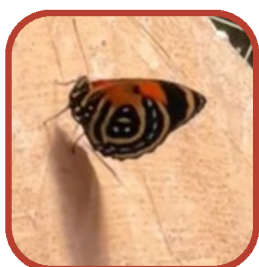
Purple-winged butterfly (Eunica)



Sister butterfly (Adelpha)



One-spotted Prepona Butterfly



Tigerwing butterfly (Ithomiini)



Sister butterfly (Adelpha)



Nymphalid butterfly caterpillar

Friends from the Amazon

These are a few moths and catapillar, that I met in the Peruvian Amazon!

The one-spotted Prepona are among the largest and fastest-flying butterflies in the Amazon

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The Pink Balloon

Author: Cynthia Sweeney

Co-author BriAnna Simons. Art by Briana Corr Scott

Suggested Grade Level: K to Grade 5

Understanding gender identity and transgender identities in school with HRCE curriculum outcomes

Book overview:

Note: The book purposefully introduces you to Briar and her parents who are very excited about the arrival of their first child. Briar shares with us her story in helping her parents see that she is a girl and understand why she is girl and where those feelings come from.

Avoid introducing this story as a book about a transgender girl. Instead, you could simply say this is a story based on a true story of a little girl growing up in Nova Scotia.

First Steps:

- We suggest you read through 'The Pink Balloon' on your own first.
- What questions do you have?
- What questions will your students have?
- There are child-friendly definitions in the back of the book.
- Always stay positive - it's a learning opportunity for everyone. We will also provide tips for handling any heckling or inappropriate commentary/questions in a safe and positive way.

Being mindful of gender expansive students in your class:

If you have children who are transgender or non-binary at your reading:

- Respect their privacy to ensure they are not outed to their peers or non-affirming adults.
- A Safer Spaces statement (attached) at the beginning will help remind others of this.
- Be mindful not to put those students in a position of teaching other children about their identity. That is the job of the educator, not the student.

About the Story

FUN FACTS! This story is based on a true story. The little dog throughout the pages of the story is Cosmo, a whippet. Cosmos is Cynthia's family dog and is 14 years old. The illustration of the ultrasound was made using the co-author's real ultrasound image! A drawing in the nursery is a real piece of art created by Cynthia's child.

This story is a simplified version about what it means to be transgender. Gender identity is not monolithic. It is very unique for everyone. But for this age group, it is simplified to 'a girl brain but a boy body'. Gender Identity is about how you feel on the inside.

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Primary to Gr. 2 Outcomes

Discussion with teens and adults:

Are there ways you can relate to Briar's story?

What are some ways we can support transgender and non-binary youth?

Correct pronouns and names

1. Protect their privacy - do not share someones information if they trust you with knowing their gender identity. It can put them in danger.
2. Always check with them on what you can and cannot share.
3. Be a Change-Maker! If you don't see gender neutral spaces like washrooms or change rooms, ask about how to make it happen. Are there actions you can take in your community/school/religious community that can help affirm trans and non- binary people?
4. What's ok and what not? It is never ok to ask about body parts. All bodies are private and this includes trans and non-binary people's bodies. It is never ok to ask about surgeries, etc.

Nova Scotia Health Education - Essential Learning Outcomes 2015-2016

PRIMARY

Outcome 1: Students will recognize a range of emotions that humans share. Indicators:

- Name a variety of emotional responses (COM, CT, CI)
- Describe their own emotional responses to events (COM, CT, CI, PCD)
- Describe the emotional responses of others (COM, CT, CI, PCD, CZ)
- Demonstrate an awareness of their need to feel safe, loved, cared for, heard, and treated with
- Respect (COM, CT, CI, PCD, CZ)

Outcome 2: Students will appreciate the diversity of family structures in multiple cultural contexts.

Indicators:

- Describe their own family structure and those different from their own (including blended,
- Those with same sex parents, institutional, families led by extended family members, and
- Families that do not live together all of the time) (COM, CT, CI, PCD, CZ)
- Begin to demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of similarities and differences that are visible and not visible (PCD, CZ, COM)



Primary to Gr. 2 Outcomes

Grade 1

Outcome 3:

- Students will practice communication skills that promote healthy and safe relationships

Indicators:

- Identify and discuss the qualities of a healthy friendship and of healthy peer relationships (PCD, COM, CT, CZ)
- Describe what kindness, respect, and inclusion look, act, sound, and feel like and why this is important (PCD, COM, CT, CZ, CI)
- Describe and demonstrate respect for, inclusion of, and kindness towards others (PCD, COM, CT, CZ, CI)
- Demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of similarities and differences that are visible and not visible (PCD, CZ, COM)

Grade 2

Outcome 2:

- Students will demonstrate empathy for others.

Indicators:

- identify and discuss times when people need care and concern (PCD, COM, CT, CZ, CI)
- identify and demonstrate ways of showing respect and consideration to others.
- use language that shows care and concern for another (PCD, COM, CZ)
- demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of similarities and differences that are visible
- and not visible (PCD, CZ, COM)

Grade 3

Outcome 1:

- Students will recognize, discuss and identify decisions that affect physical, social, mental, and emotional health.
- Gender expression and being able to express oneself freely and openly promotes positive emotional and mental health outcomes.

Indicators:

- Make a healthy decision and describe its effect on their physical, social, mental, and emotional health (PCD, COM, CT, CI, CZ)

Primary to Gr. 2 Outcomes

Outcome 2: Students will communicate ways to manage difficulties in friendship.

Indicators:

- identify and discuss issues that can present challenges in friendships (PCD, COM, CT, CZ, CI)
- compare and contrast actions that contribute to maintaining friendships with those that do not (PCD, COM, CT, CZ, CI)
- demonstrate the use of interpersonal skills to solve issues within friendships (PCD, COM, CT, CZ, CI)
- demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of similarities and differences that are visible and not visible (PCD, CZ, COM)

Outcome 3:

- Students will ask for help in unsafe risk scenarios.

Indicators:

- Identify and discuss stereotypes and prejudices within media messages (PCD, COM, CT, CI, CZ)

Live & Virtual Book Readings

Book a live or virtual story time for your class with Cynthia. For more information: cynsweeney@simplygoodform.com



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Please share
a review on
Amazon
★★★★★





Name _____

Section _____

Teacher _____

Date _____

COUNTING COSMO THE WHIPPET & BUTTERFLIES

AN ADDITION GAME

Directions: Count how many of each animal you see.

Write the answers at the box provided below.



WHIPPETS

BUTTERFLIES

TEACHERS NOTES: NON-BINARY ANIMALS



It is natural for young children to notice differences.

Most people are familiar with butterflies who display symmetry – with one wing being a mirror image of the other wing.

However, there are some butterflies that have one wing displaying typical female patterning and the other wing displaying typical male patterning. These types of butterflies are called chimera butterflies (pronunciation: ky-mee-ra).

Benefits to students: Introducing students to animals that are non-binary, as opposed to the “female and male” gender binary, helps them to understand that there are many genders and that nature displays great diversity. There are other examples of animals who could be called nonbinary, such as cardinals or gender fluid, such as hyenas. Some parrotfish changes their gender.

Pre-School

Read-Aloud Extension: "Nature's Amazing Helpers"

After discussing parrotfish and chimera butterflies, ask:

1. What makes this animal special?
2. How are you special?
3. Are any two children exactly the same?
4. Is being different a good thing?

Finish with:

"Our differences help make our classroom colourful—just like balloons in the sky."



Design

YOUR OWN CHIMERA BUTTERFLY

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<https://www.livescience.com/64831-cardinal-gynandromorph.html>



This brightly coloured parrotfish is a male, but may not have started life that way



Parrotfish are equipped with powerful beaks they use to bite through corals

<https://marinemadness.blog/2020/02/04/parrotfish-the-gender-fluid-narcoleptics-that-poop-out-beaches/>



Name _____

Section _____

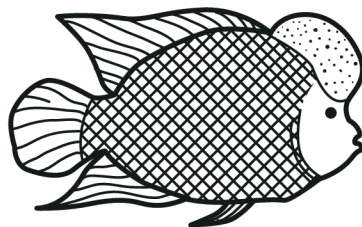
Teacher _____

Date _____

NON-BINARY ANIMALS

AN ADDITION GAME

Directions: Count how many of each animal you see.
Write the answers at the box provided below.



PARROTFISH

CHIMERA
BUTTERFLIES



Name _____

Section _____

Teacher _____

Date _____

NON-BINARY ANIMALS

AN ADDITION GAME

Design

YOUR OWN CHIMERA
BUTTERFLY

write

A STORY ABOUT A CARDINAL
THEME: KINDNESS, INCLUSION
AND FRIENDSHIP

make

YOUR OWN CHIMERA
BUTTERFLY FINGER PUPPET

Name _____

Date _____

Year _____

Teacher _____

CLASSROOM QUILT OF BELONGING

Each child decorates a square:

"Something special about me..."

or

"I belong because..."

Assemble all squares into one large classroom mural.

Teacher closing:

"Just like a quilt, every piece is different, and every piece matters."



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Name _____

Date _____

Year _____

Teacher _____

A Book Review

Book Title and Author

SUMMARY
OF THE BOOK

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST
ABOUT THE STORY?

WILL YOU RECOMMEND THIS
BOOK TO YOUR FRIENDS?

WHAT DO YOU LIKE LEAST
ABOUT THE STORY?

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ACROSTIC POEM ABOUT BEING KIND

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ACROSTIC POEM ABOUT BEING KIND

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An Inclusive Sensory Poem

Write the first thing that comes to mind



Written by Cynthia Sweeney
Co-Author BriAnna Simons
art by Briana Corr Scott

NAME

SECTION

DATE

TEACHER

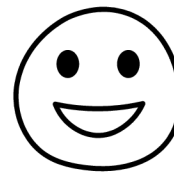
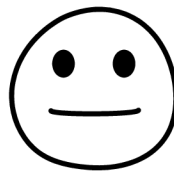
Create a poem based on what you see, hear, when you listen to The Pink Balloon story.
Your poem must have at least 300 words and must be written in the first person.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Daily REFLECTION

Today is:

How I feel about today:



My act of kindness:

Reason for my rating

Something new I learned today:

DESIGN A BOOK COVER

Design a book cover inspired by your readings this week.

