



Written by Edwina Wyatt
 Illustrated by Lucia Masciullo
 Published March 2016 by Little Hare

SYNOPSIS

What happens when the dearest of friends want to go in different directions? Sometimes friends who have known each other and enjoyed the same things seemingly forever, suddenly discover they have different tastes and want different things in life.

Edwina Wyatt's perceptive story about individuality tells how friends find ways to be together, even when they are apart. Sensitive and evocative illustrations by award-winning Lucia Masciullo bring love, loneliness and tenderness to life in this endearing ode to timeless friendship.

THEMES

Key themes: friendship, growing apart, separation, emotional maturity.

This story explores the way in which two inseparable friends go about managing a life apart. Unlike many friends, who are separated by circumstances beyond their control, Goat and Pig go their own ways because they recognise that their life goals have taken different directions. This recognition does not come easily. Goat has always been the leader in the relationship, and he is shocked and hurt when Pig decides to go home instead of staying with Goat on the mountain. Pig feels pain because he must make the difficult decision to follow his own path and live in the orchard by the stream.

However, Pig and Goat have learnt much from each other, and are able to draw emotional strength from remembering their friend, and also to find unique ways of keeping their memories fresh. In this way they feel they are always together, even when they are living apart.





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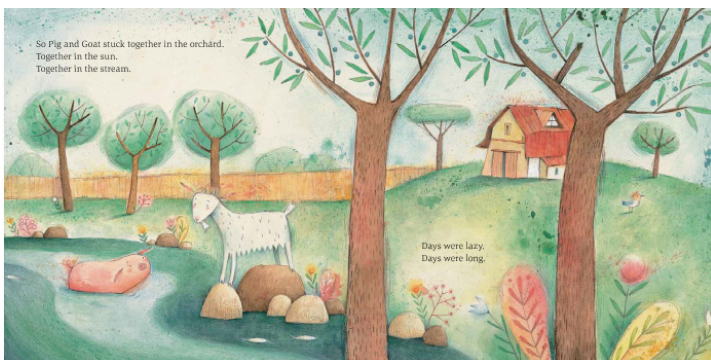
WRITING STYLE

Edwina Wyatt is an emerging author with a bright future. She writes in prose, but her writing often reads like poetry—it is tightly constructed, elegant, thoughtful, and has a rhythmic element that is almost musical. Although she repeats words and phrases, using them as a recurring refrain, no word is wasted.

In *Together Always*, the words 'together' and 'always' are both repeated throughout the narrative. In the second half of the story, the word 'alone' is added as a third repeated idea. Edwina uses each repetition to add to the meaning of the narrative, rather than simply reiterating it: each repeat adds a layer of understanding, and suggests a slightly different emotion. Edwina extends this repeated patterning of language to the structure of the story. For example, the key phrase that introduces the story on the first spread—'But no matter what hung from the trees, Pig and Goat were always together'—is repeated as the final line, creating a sense of circularity. The situation of the ending, however, is the opposite of the situation at the start, and Edwina's use of this exact repetition serves as a dramatic reminder of the stark difference. Harmony is used to suggest dissonance, as well as ongoing harmony.

ILLUSTRATION STYLE

Edwina Masciullo is a versatile artist with many styles. She matches her illustrative style to the text she is illustrating. The deep emotionality of this story seemed to require a looser approach, which Lucia has created with her splashes of paint and whimsical linework. Even so, the composition and execution is balanced, with small delicate details in the vegetation and broader landscape. She manages to convey a full range of emotion on Pig and Goat's faces with a minimum of marks. Lucia has also made use of patterns and repetition, reflecting the patterns and repetitions in the text. This mix of orderliness and spontaneity has the potential to enhance the reader's emotional response to the mixed feelings suggested by the story and, in this way, adds meaning that the words alone might not as effectively convey.





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STUDY NOTES

1. *Together Always* is a story about two friends who have to live apart from one another. Pig and Goat have worked out a way to feel together even when they are apart. Think of some other ways that friends could feel together when living apart. Write a short letter to a real or imaginary friend who is living far from you and suggest ways of reminding yourselves of each other.
2. In some ways, *Together Always* is a sad story and in other ways it is a happy story. How do you feel about reading sad stories? Have a class discussion about the usefulness of sad stories. Describe how Edwina Wyatt has managed to make *Together Always* a happy as well as sad story.
3. Edwina Wyatt uses repetition and patterns in her writing. See if you can find where she has repeated a phrase or sentence. How do you think these repetitions or patterns help us to feel the emotion of the story?
4. Both Pig and Goat go through a range of emotions in this story. Try to describe the emotion that each character is feeling in each drawing. Try to be as exact as possible. You may need to learn a few more names of emotions to do this! Write one list of these feelings for Goat, and one list for Pig, in the order in which they occur. What sort of emotional pattern emerges overall? How does this pattern fit the storyline?
5. Lucia Masciullo is skilled at drawing facial expression without using many marks on the paper. Try drawing some faces showing emotional expression using only minimal marks (such dots for eyes, tiny lines for mouths and eyebrows). When you have drawn a few, show them to someone else and ask them to guess which emotional expressions you have drawn.
6. Using your answers to the task above, try to decide whether the feelings and emotions of the characters are the same thing as the storyline itself, or if they are something that run alongside the storyline. You might like to arrange a class debate about this.



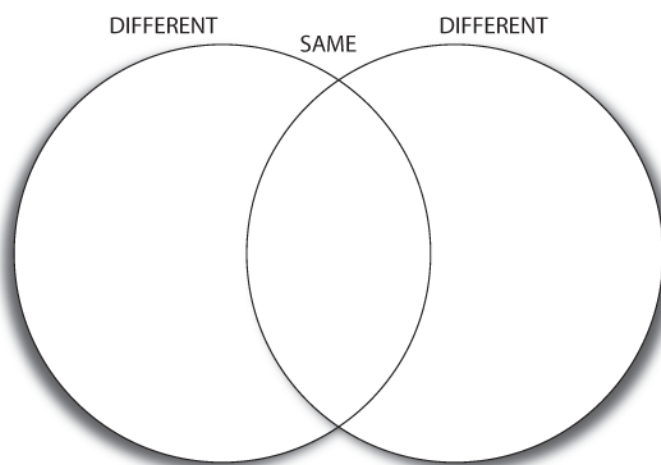


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ACTIVITIES

- Ask students to get into pairs. Ask them to write a list of things they have in common and another list of things each of them like separately. Then, instruct students to put the columns into a Venn diagram and present to the class the things they have in common and the things they like doing separately.

VENN DIAGRAM



- Ask students to discuss a time when they saw a friend or family member after a time apart. What feelings did they have about seeing that friend? Were they more or less excited about seeing that friend because they hadn't seen them for a while?
- Have students write their own version of the story using themselves and their friend as the main characters. In the story, get them to write how each character would be feeling, and how they can overcome the feelings they experience. Then discuss the role of friendship as a class, and how it is okay to want different things but still remain friends.
- As a class, list different animals that could be the unlikelyst of friends. What would each animal's favourite setting be? For example: Pig felt most comfortable in the orchard, while Goat loved to roam among the rocks and wildflowers. Once you have a list of animal friendships and their favourite environments, students should pair up and illustrate a scene from the list created.