



Bearly There



Teachers' notes

Bearly There is an exquisitely humorous story about a boy and his bears, about new friends and old, about love and loyalty.

Aleesah Darlison is the author of a number of junior fiction books and picture books.

A note from the author:

When my son, Blake, was a toddler he was totally addicted to his raggedy teddy bear, 'Whinnie'. Blake took that bear everywhere with him, always played with it and slept with it every single night. Seeing how much Blake adored Whinnie (despite how terrible he looked) inspired me to write *Bearly There*.

The illustrations are done by multi-talented artist, Jill Carter-Hansen using a palette of red and black only (with various shades of each). The rich red colours used in the book emphasise a theme of love and playfulness.

Before reading

What do you think this book may be about?

Why do you think the illustrator used only red and black?

What do you notice about the spelling of the title? Why do you think Bearly is spelt that way?

After Reading

Why do you think Blake is so attached to Bearly?

Why do you think Winston behaved so badly?

Do you have a similar toy story?

In *Bearly There*, Bearly is like an old friend to Blake and Winston is like a new kid at school. Have you ever been in the situation where a new kid has come to school

Written by Aleesah Darlison

Illustrated by Jill Carter-Hansen

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and you have felt left out like Bearly? What other situations can you think of that might be similar to the story?

Writing

Try writing the story from Bearly's point of view. What does he think about Winston? Why does he go missing?

Now write the story from Winston's point of view.

What do you think Bearly and Winston get up to when Blake is at school?

Write a story about what might happen if a teddy bear is left somewhere and forgotten.

Art

Experiment with illustrations using only black and white with one other accent colour.

Use charcoal to do illustrations and experiment with smudging and shading

Look at other books about bears and compare illustration styles.

Make felt bears. Use a template to cut out a bear shape twice and then the children can place some stuffing in the middle and sew around the edges with wool or thick cotton. Stick on some eyes and a felt mouth. (You can make this as easy or complicated as you like or feel the children are ready for). Look on the internet for other simple teddy sewing ideas.

Other activities

Have a teddy bears picnic

Bring in you favourite teddy bear story

