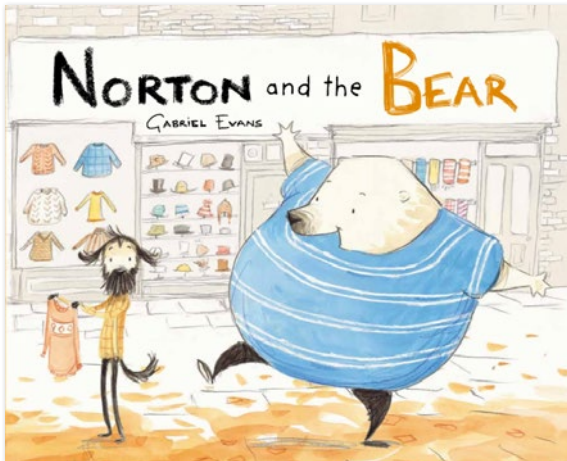


# Teachers' notes for Norton and the Bear



<b>Title:</b>	Norton and the Bear
<b>Author:</b>	Gabriel Evans
<b>ISBN:</b>	9780648785132

## ABOUT THE BOOK

### SYNOPSIS

Norton wants to dress uniquely, and the bear wants to look just like him. How will anyone tell them apart?

This hilarious story explores the good and bad of every kid's least favourite form of admiration.

### THEMES

- Conformity
- Individuality
- Clothing/personal style
- Personal boundaries
- Belonging
- Friendship
- Humour

### AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR

Gabriel Evans is an internationally published children's picture book illustrator and author from Western Australia. He has been creating picture books professionally since the age of seventeen. To date, his books have received two Notable Children's Book Council of Australia Book of the Year nominations.

When he's not creating picture books, Gabriel runs workshops and talks in schools and libraries around Australia, from Melbourne and Sydney to remote communities in the Kimberley and Pilbara.

Gabriel works from a small, messy studio near a river. His hobbies include drinking tea, growing trees and searching for the perfect artist's beret.

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## FOR THE CLASSROOM

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Look at the cover. Do you think this is a serious or a funny book? How did you come to your conclusion?
- Why does Norton like to dress differently? What does it make you think is important to him?
- Why does the bear like to copy Norton? Is copying okay or annoying or both? How do you feel when someone copies you?
- Do you think this story has a good ending? How else could this story have ended?
- Does it matter if Norton and the bear are dressed alike? Why or why not?
- Why do you think Norton feels BAD after he shares his feelings with the bear? Do you think he should feel bad?
- Does this story remind you of situations in your own life? How so?
- What are personal boundaries? Is Norton good at setting boundaries? What personal boundary does Norton set with the bear? What happens when Norton tells the bear not to copy him, and to find his own style?
- How else could Norton have handled this situation, and how do you think the bear would have responded?
- What are some clever ways of setting personal boundaries?
- What do you do when someone crosses one of your boundaries?
- What do you do when someone gets upset with you for doing something they don't like? How does it make you feel?
- Younger siblings and pets often have trouble respecting others' personal boundaries. Can you think of some examples? Is this endearing or annoying? Or both?
- Even after Norton yells at the bear, the bear does something kind for him. Why do you think that is?

### ACTIVITIES

- Draw your own endpapers for *Norton and the Bear*, creating different tops Norton might enjoy wearing. Afterwards, your class may like to share your illustrations with the author and publisher on social media.
- Draw a unique-looking outfit for yourself. Something that represents your own personal style. Then swap your drawing with a partner and copy their drawing.
- Think of a personal boundary you have used in the past, e.g. 'Don't tease me' or 'Don't write in my book'. Now, copying the story of *Norton and the Bear* as much as you like, write and/or illustrate your own story but instead of the bear copying Norton, have the bear breaking your boundaries. If you choose to, you can create your own characters to replace Norton and the bear.
- Find a partner to role play boundaries. Your partner takes something from you without asking permission. Ask your partner to give it back. Try this a few times, using different techniques, e.g. ask them politely, ask them directly, ask them crossly. See what happens. Then switch roles. What did you learn from this role play?
- Find a partner to role play Norton and the bear but instead of responding the way Norton did, find your own way to respond. Then switch roles.

