

EDUCATOR GUIDE

You Need to Chill!



Synopsis

When asked repeatedly where her brother is, the book's narrator just tells everyone, "You need to chill!" But the more curious the other children get, the wilder and more creative their guesses become. Eventually, she needs to explain what really happened to Bill, and it's not at all what anyone expects. In the end though, the most important thing everyone learns is that sometimes you just need to chill.

Teacher Notes

While children are often very open to discussions about gender and expression, there is always the potential for some children to feel uncomfortable or for others to express questions or opinions that can be hurtful. It is important to make your classroom a space for open and honest discussion, so be mindful and ensure that nonbinary or transgender students are not put in a position to have to defend their identity and existence. Some of the following questions and activities may not be right for every classroom, so be aware of how students are reacting to the story and how they respond to some of the pre-reading activities before moving on with more in-depth discussions.

This book is a fun, silly, and simple introduction to concepts of gender, gender expression, and transgender identity, as well as acceptance, inclusion, and family. The book and this guide can be used as a simple introduction to concepts of acceptance and inclusion or as a deeper dive into gender, and queer and trans history by utilizing the educator resources and extension activities.

Pre-Reading Activities

- Show students the cover of the book and ask them to guess what they think the book will be about. Ask them what it is about the cover that brings them to their conclusions.
- Ask students if they have ever been told to "chill." What does the term mean to them? What feelings, activities, or other things do they associate with the term? Ask after the discussion if it changes what they think the book might be about.
- Ask students what they know about pronouns, and if necessary, use some of the resources at the end of this guide to answer any questions. Ask students if they know what their pronouns are and to share if they feel comfortable.

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- On the title page, animals are present in many forms, whether on clothing, backpack designs, or drawings. Ask students to point out which animals are present on the page and then tell them to keep an eye out for them through the rest of the book.

Reading Questions

While reading, consider asking the following questions:

- Why do you think the narrator is being so mysterious about her sibling? And why does she keep repeating the same phrase: “Hey, you need to chill”?
- As the book goes on, the theories about what happened to the girl’s sibling get wilder and more imaginative. What other ideas can you come up with for what might have happened?
- In the middle of the book, the other kids say they are “so confused! And so concerned! We cannot rest until we find out what has happened to your older brother Bill!” Why do you think they are so confused and concerned?
- At the end of the book, the narrator explains that “if people have a problem, we shout ‘Hey, you need to chill!’” What could you say to people who have a problem with your sibling(s), or a friend that you know well?
- The children who are all holding up signs on the last pages are being allies for Lily. Do you know what the word “ally” means? How can you be an ally for your friends, siblings, or other family members?
- Why do you think Lily is the only person in the book to get a name? What impact does this have on the story? Why did Lily change her name?
- Do you know anybody who has changed their name? What other reasons might people have to change their names?
- How do the illustrations in the book make you feel? What do you like about them? Are there things you don’t like about them? What and why?
- Are there any words in the story that you do not know? Work together to come up with a list of words that you are not familiar with and then define them (e.g. hysteria, krill).

Extension Activities

- Author Juno Dawson uses playful rhyming throughout the book. Ask students to recall which words rhymed with “chill.” What other words throughout the book were used for rhymes (e.g. park, silly, name)? **Use the chart on the next page** to help students organize their thoughts and exercise their vocabulary skills to come up with additional rhymes.

Primary Word	Rhyming Word	Other Rhymes	New Rhyme
Example: Bill	Example: Until	Example: Quill	Example: Maybe I can use a quill to write a letter to Bill
Chill			
Park			
Lily			

- Rainbows show up throughout the book, including on Lily’s socks, and on a book cover that is on the floor of the family’s living room. Ask students what they think of when they see rainbows. Does it mean something different if the rainbow is on an object and not in the sky? **Use the “Rainbow Flag: Color Meanings” resource** to discuss the Pride flag and the meaning of its six colors.
- There is another flag—one that is blue, pink, and white—that shows up throughout the book, including in the colors on the cover and on another book on the family’s living room floor. Do your students know the meaning of this flag? **Use the “Brief History of the Transgender Pride Flag” resource below** to discuss the history of the flag and the meaning of the colors. Ask them how they see the flag being connected to the narrative. Do they see the connection to Lily? If they are unsure, **use the “Gender Unicorn” resource** to introduce what it means to be transgender.



- Family and love are a big part of this story, and Juno Dawson ensures that Lily is accepted immediately, even if her family admits “It was maybe quite a shock at first...” Bring up the concepts of love, acceptance, and inclusion with your students. Why are these concepts important to the idea of family in the story? How do students think the family’s reaction to Lily makes her feel? How do Laura Hughes’ illustrations support their conclusions?



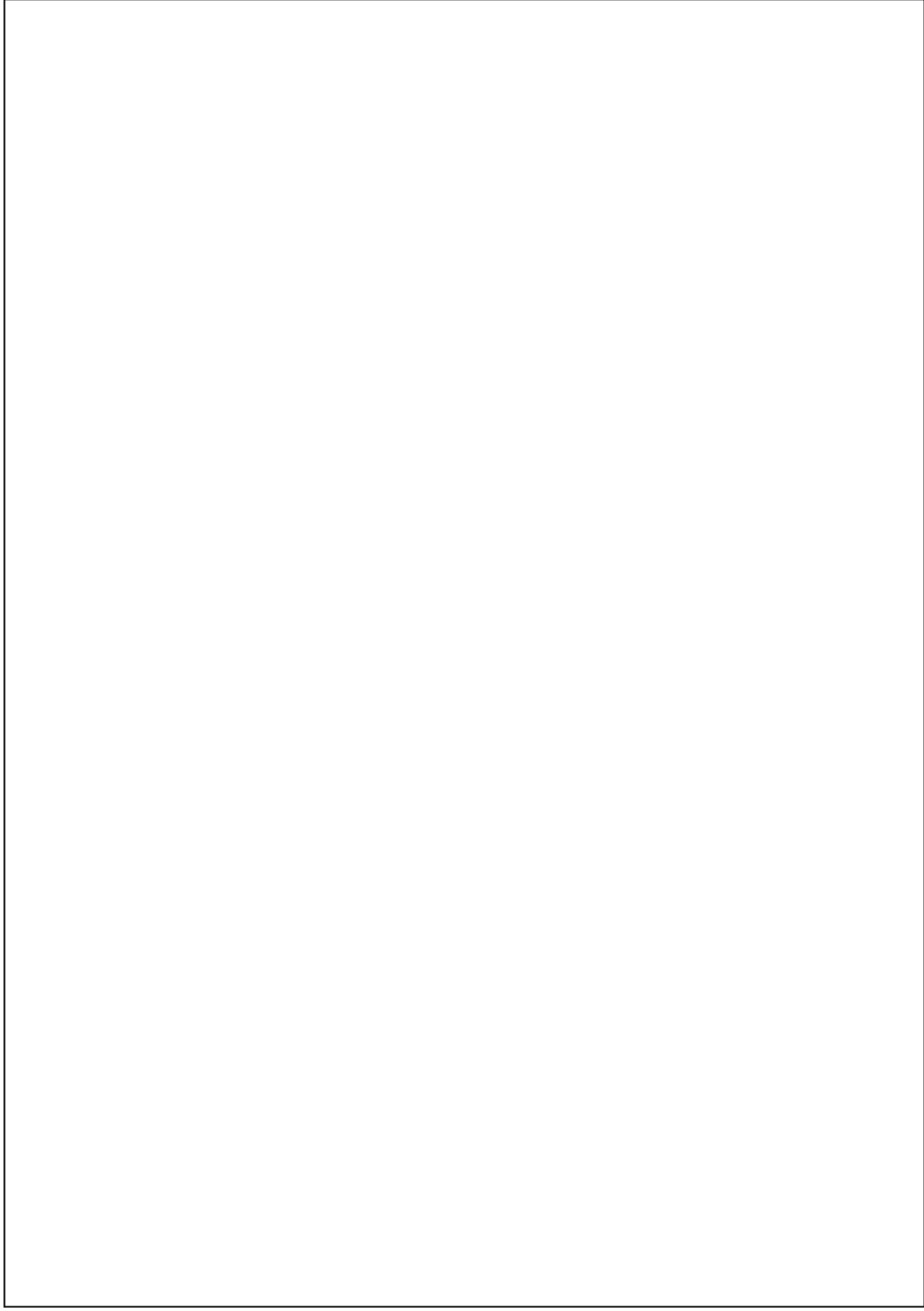
- Ask students to think about family, love, acceptance, inclusion, and any other concepts that have come up in discussion, and then give them the opportunity to design and color their own personal flag (**blank template included on last page of guide**). Ask them to assign meanings to the different colors they choose, as well as the design. When they are finished, allow them time to share these meanings and why they made certain decisions.

Resources

- On Our Sleeves* – “How to Talk to Kids About Gender Identity” (Avery M. Anderson) [<https://www.onoursleeves.org/mental-health-resources/mental-health-resources-for-lgbtq-youth/how-to-talk-to-kids-about-gender-identity>]
- On Our Sleeves* – “Teaching Kids About Gender Pronouns” (Tabi Evans) [<https://www.onoursleeves.org/mental-health-resources/mental-health-resources-for-lgbtq-youth/teaching-kids-about-gender-pronouns>]
- Trans Student Education Resources* – Gender Unicorn [<https://transstudent.org/gender/>]
- SOGI 123* – Elementary Lesson Plans [<https://bc.sogieducation.org/sogi3#elementary-lesson-plans>]
- Gilbert Baker Foundation* – Rainbow Flag: Color Meanings [<https://gilbertbaker.com/rainbow-flag-color-meanings/>]
- Medium* – A Brief History of the Transgender Pride Flag (Jeffrey J. Iovannone) [<https://medium.com/queer-history-for-the-people/a-brief-history-of-the-transgender-pride-flag-93c1c2a1c39>]

CREATE YOUR OWN FLAG

Name: _____

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a student to draw their own flag. The box occupies the majority of the page below the title and name line.