



**How to Use *Frieda B. Herself*®
To Uncover and Encourage the Story
Tucked inside the Child You Love**

Dear Parents and Caregivers:

I firmly believe it. Your child has a story. Your child IS a story.

Yes, tucked inside that little body you love is a story like no other, made up of a one-of-a-kind mix of gifts, passions, imagination and purpose. To add to that, I firmly believe that children who are encouraged to dream about, believe in and explore the uniqueness and power of their innate story (and acknowledge those of others) have a head start on a life of hope, focus and meaning.

And so, I wrote *Frieda B. Herself*, to encourage children to dream big and believe in their very own dreams and stories. Just like *Frieda B.*, each one of us is free to be and do whatever our heart tells us to (for the heart truly is the keeper of our stories).

I've created this resource for you, to use when reading and talking with your child about *Frieda B. Herself*. Nothing fancy. Just a guideline of talking points I've developed while working with thousands of children during author visits. It's in my work with children that I've discovered the true power and potential of this book. And I'm ever-grateful for the opportunity to share the message of *Frieda B. Herself* with people of all ages. For I deeply believe it's an ageless truth.

My own dream and story? To help children everywhere believe in theirs. Imagine: What would the world look like if thousands, millions of children grew-up believing in their story?

Let's start with you and the children you love.

Thank you for bringing *Frieda B.* and me into your home. We promise to be very neat and not eat too much (we can't promise the same for Zilla, but he's very lovable, and hypo-allergenic).

And So - Onward and Upward...


Renata Bowers
Author, *Frieda B. Herself*

“Dream your dreams big and believe they can be.”™

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Things to talk about with your child.

Why is the girl in the book named “Frieda B.” What does that sound like? What do you think it means?

What are all the ways Frieda B. uses her imagination in the book? What’s your favorite? Why? What are some of the things you’d like to do – places you’d like to go – with your imagination?

In the middle of the book, Frieda is very upset because she thinks she’s lost her imagination. Have you ever felt that upset about something? What was it? Do you think she’s really lost her imagination? Why?

At the end of the book, who is the person sitting on the tree branch? [Note to parent: it’s the reader, your child. Mention that the artist can’t draw one person that looks like everybody, so you have to use your imagination to see that it’s you.] Whose dreams are in the sky on this page? What dreams would you add?

See, now you know how to dream big and believe, just like Frieda. That’s why she and Zilla are waving for you to come down from the tree – they want you to join them. So on the very last page, we see Frieda B. and Zilla – and who’s the third person? Yep, it’s you. You’re off and ready to start telling your very own story. Just like Frieda B., you’re free to be and do whatever your heart tells you to.

Notes from the author, for parents.

Zilla appears on every page with Frieda. That’s intentional. Not only does it help to tell the story through another pair of eyes (a neat thing to pay attention to), but also it helps to reinforce the importance of friendship. Zilla never leaves Frieda, even in the darkest part of the book, when Frieda thinks she’s lost her imagination. Zilla provides great lesson material for what it means to be a good and loyal friend.

Imagination is a critical skill (yes, skill) to continually foster in your child. Those with vivid imaginations grow-up to be better problem-solvers, inventors, empathizers, peacemakers. I have research – lots of it – to back this up. *Frieda B. Herself* is saturated with imagination. But pay special attention to the 6-page conflict/resolution storyline in the center of the book. Frieda is stuck. Scared. Angry. She fears she’s lost her imagination. In her fury of pounding her pillow, feathers fly and create shadows on her wall. Her imagination sparks. She sees the shadows as animals, and follows them to a farm where joy and imagination abounds. These 6 pages provide ample opportunity to talk with your child about using imagination to solve a problem, to have hope that a solution always exists, and to realize that oftentimes the solution provides a new and wonderful window on the world.

How to help your child tell his or her story? Here’s what I share with children:

1. You carry inside of you a story that you’re meant to tell. It’s true! And no one has a story exactly like yours -- so you **MUST** tell it. Your story is made up of two parts: stuff you’re good at (reading, hugging, baking, math, soccer, being a good friend, etc.) and stuff you care about (everything from saving the rainforests to spending time with your grandma). What are you good at? What do you care about?

2. Now, when you take something you’re good at **AND** something you care about – and use your **IMAGINATION** to bring them together – you can do something that makes the world a better, happier place. (Here, talk about examples of kids who have done that – Google “Austin Gutwein” or “Daniel Dietz”.) You don’t have to wait to be a grown-up to make a difference in the world, big or small; just do what you love to do, and care for what you care about. You can make the world a better, happier place just by making one person feel better – it doesn’t always mean helping lots of people or raising lots of money.

3. One last thing: it’s not enough to **HAVE** a story to tell. You have to **DREAM BIG** about that story, and **BELIEVE** you can tell it to make a difference. What would happen if I, as the author, just sat on the story of Frieda B. and never shared it with anyone? Would it make a difference? Well, the same is true with the story you carry around inside of you. It’s not enough to know you **HAVE** a story. You must, must, must **DREAM BIG** about what that story is, and **BELIEVE** you can tell that story to make a difference. There are a lot of people who just sit on their stories; please don’t be one of them. Use your gifts and passions and imagination -- every day -- to make the world a better, happier place. I believe in you and your story.