



Frieda B. and the Finkledee Ink:
A Tale about the Importance of Belief

Dear Parents and Caregivers:

The Frieda B. series of books is built upon the premise that every child – truly every human being – has an important, one-of-a-kind story to tell. The fundamental key, the essential first step, to unlocking one’s story is to *believe* that it exists. For without belief, how can a dream be dreamt, or pursued, or achieved?

And so I’ve written *Frieda B. and the Finkledee Ink*, to further explore the importance of belief – the very linchpin that holds a story together and allows it to take root and reach for the heavens.

In the early pages of this book, we learn that Frieda B. has a deep desire to be a writer. Yet her belief in her abilities is misplaced when she chooses to spend every cent she has on a “magical” jar of Finkledee Ink that is promised to immediately make her a great author.

As the story unfolds, her beliefs in that ink and in her own innate gift of writing are challenged. In the ups and downs of this literary adventure, Frieda is fortunate to be gifted with the belief of both her teacher and her dear friend, Zilla. Indeed, it is Zilla’s unshakeable belief in Frieda’s gift of writing that turns the story back on the right track.

Crafted into this story, then, are these fundamental messages about belief:

- Each of us has an innate set of gifts that is directly wired to the story we carry.
- Belief in the existence of your story and innate gifts is essential to realizing them.
- Stories, dreams, gifts require hard work and due diligence; there is no magical free pass.
- The belief of others in our stories, dreams and gifts is essential to realizing them.
- There is great reward and fulfillment in achieving a dream through hard work and persistent belief in what’s possible.
- Our belief in others – in their stories, dreams and gifts – also is essential to true fulfillment. We all work best when we all work together.

One of my greatest joys is helping children believe in their unique worth. It is my hope that the pages of this book – accompanied by my notes on the back of this letter – will do that for you and the children you love. Frieda, Zilla and I are ever-so-grateful to be welcomed into your world.



Renata Bowers

Author of the *Frieda B.* Series of Children’s Books

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

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Notes from the Author: Things to talk about with your child.

A man comes to Frieda's hometown selling bottles of Finkledee Ink. He says this special ink magically can make anyone a great writer. How does Frieda feel as she listens to the man's words? What does Frieda want to be?

As Frieda counts all her money, then gives her money to the man selling Finkledee Ink, how does Zilla respond? Does he look happy? Excited? Worried? Angry? Why do you think he's acting that way? [Note: Zilla is a good and true friend who doesn't like to see Frieda spending all she has on something he knows she doesn't need. *However: He doesn't prevent her from doing it.* He lets her learn the lesson on her own. And through the rest of the story he never leaves her side; he's there to support her through the ups and downs of learning the lesson. This is a great reminder for us as parents and caregivers to know when to let the children we love live through their decisions.]

When Frieda gets home with her new jar of Finkledee Ink, she doesn't start writing right away. What does she do? [Note: This is a good place to point out – even after you've finished reading through the whole story – that *this* is what makes Frieda a good writer. It is her combination of wanting to write, having the gift of writing, and taking time to dream/prepare that makes her a great writer. It's not about the ink.]

After writing her first story, Frieda shares that story with her teacher. What does her teacher say? How does that make Frieda feel? The belief of Frieda's teacher helps Frieda to believe in herself even more. That's pretty important stuff. Do you like it when someone believes in you? How does it make you feel?

Frieda writes story after story, completely enjoying being a writer. All is going well until... She accidentally bumps the jar of Finkledee Ink off of her desk. It shatters and splatters all over her floor, 'til the last drop of Finkledee Ink is no more. How does she feel now? Why is she so upset? [Note: She is embarrassed because she believes that everyone is going to find out now that she really isn't a writer. Discuss the words "phony" and "fraud." More importantly, she still believes the only reason she's been writing such great stories is because of the magical ink. She still doubts her own gift of writing.] Do you ever feel the way Frieda does right now? We all do at times. What can you do to feel better?

While Frieda is feeling very sad, who comes near her? What does he have? What does he do? Why does he do this? [Note: Zilla is a very good friend who always has believed that Frieda is a good writer. Now he sees his opportunity to help her believe in herself.]

Because Zilla believes in her, Frieda B. picks up the pencil he gives her, and she starts to write. What kind of story does she write – without the Finkledee Ink? How important is it to have people who believe in you? How important is it to help your friends believe in themselves when they're not feeling good?

Frieda reads that last story to her teacher and her classmates. How do they feel about it? How do you think that makes Frieda feel?

There are certain things you are good at, just because you are. It's important to believe and dream about those things. And it's important to understand there's nothing you need to buy or get: everything you need already is inside you. Just like the writing was already inside Frieda B. There is no magical ink.

What do you love to do? Who believes in you? Name each person you can think of. These are the people you can turn to when you're having a bad day. They will help you believe in yourself again. Now name at least one thing each of those people is good at. Remember that you can help believe in them, too, when they're having bad days. Kind of neat, isn't it? Believing in ourselves and in others: That, dear friend, is a Frieda B. kind of thing to do, every day.