



Story Summary

Bird lives for adventure. He wants to swoop, soar, and explore. Giraffe is perfectly happy right where he is, thank you very much. He never worries when Bird flits off for a while. But one afternoon his friend fails to return. Giraffe has a bad feeling that something has happened to Bird. Giraffe dreads the wide world full of tangly forests, craggy mountains, and mysterious plains. But he doesn't hesitate. If Bird is in trouble, then Giraffe will find and rescue him.

Rebecca Bender is a well-loved author-illustrator of children's books as well as an art director and designer. Her books include *Not Friends*, *Slug Days* (illustration), *Don't Laugh at Giraffe*, *Giraffe Meets Bird*, *Peach Girl* (illustration), and *How Do You Feel?* Her awards and honors include the OLA Blue Spruce Award, a Cooperative Children's Book Center best-of-the-year choice, and a Toronto Public Library best-of-the-year selection. Rebecca graduated from the Ontario College of Art and Design at the top of her class, earning the Medal for Illustration. Rebecca lives in Burlington, Ontario, with her husband and two children. With several birds in her life, Rebecca knows how it feels to be the giraffe, and she wouldn't trade these friendships for anything.

Links:

How to Draw Cartoon Animals

Links: <https://www.how-to-draw-funny-cartoons.com/draw-cartoon-animals.html>

Pair this book with:

Giraffe and Bird, *Don't Laugh at Giraffe*, and *Giraffe Meets Bird*, all by Rebecca Bender.

Picture Book Ages 4–7 | ISBN: 978-1-77278-051-2 | Pages: 32

THEMES

Friendship, Courage, Ingenuity

BISAC CODES

JUV039060 JUVENILE FICTION / Social Themes / Friendship

JUV002320 JUVENILE FICTION / Animals / Giraffes

JUV002040 JUVENILE FICTION / Animals / Birds

JUV001000 JUVENILE FICTION / Action & Adventure / General

JUV039090 JUVENILE FICTION / Social Themes / New Experience

READING LEVEL

Lexile Measure: 590L | Fountas & Pinnell: K

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Read-Aloud; Writing: Character Creation; Strong Verbs; Visual Arts; Social Studies: Mapping

THIS GUIDE CONTAINS:

ACTIVITY	MAIN SUBJECT AREA	SPECIFIC SKILLS AND TOPICS
Read-Aloud	Comprehension Character Education Mathematics Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activate prior knowledge • Infer, predict, make connections • Friendship, courage • Collecting data and graphing • Representing ideas from stories through dance
Character Creation	Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating characters through drawing, generating story ideas through play, revising
Strong Verbs Mini-Lesson	Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacing general words (ordinary verbs) with specific words (strong, descriptive verbs)
Art Inspiration	Visual Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixing paint colors, mixed media posters
Mapping	Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cardinal directions, legends, representing landforms and bodies of water on maps

THE READ-ALoud

Learning expectations:

Students will:

- Use comprehension strategies such as making connections, activating prior knowledge, inferring, and predicting
- Gather data to answer a question, using a simple survey with a limited number of responses
- Use dance as a language to express feelings and ideas suggested by songs, stories, and poems

You Will Need

- *Giraffe and Bird Together Again*
- Chart paper and markers
- Paper, pencils, colored pencils

How To:

Before Reading

Read the cover and the author’s name. Invite students to recall other books they have read about Giraffe and Bird or other books by Rebecca Bender. What can be learned about the relationship between Giraffe and Bird from the cover illustration? Open the book to the front endpaper and just pause, allowing students to enjoy the pattern. Turn to the map page. Point to each feature and read the labels. Invite predictions.

During Reading

First spread: After reading expressively, ask, “What do we know about Giraffe and Bird?”

Second spread: Comment that Rebecca Bender has incorporated sound effects into the illustrations. Introduce the word *onomatopoeia*. Read Bird’s sound effects in varied voices to represent his varied diet.

Read Giraffe’s in a monotone. Point to the last frame and ask, “What do these wiggly lines indicate?”

Third spread: Briefly discuss how people worry about their loved ones if they don’t hear from them when expected and the practice of calling home when you arrive safely at a destination.

Fourth spread: See if students notice the sound effects and the bush baby which was introduced on the map. Discuss how the phrase “adventures are for the birds” is both figurative and literal. Should giraffe turn back?

Fifth spread: Discuss how concern for others can help us find courage. Point out that the bush babies are helping Giraffe and he doesn’t even know it. The world is full of unsung heroes, strangers who perform random acts of kindness that go unrecognized but make the world a better place. Help students connect this idea with any kindness initiatives in which your school participates. Invite students to be on the lookout for other unrecognized helpers in the book. Have students try to “sound out” the fun sound effects.

Sixth spread: Read expressively and wait for students to point out the helpful ibex.

Seventh spread: Have students stand and imitate Giraffe’s determination as he leans forward, digs in his hooves, and stomps. Can they feel Giraffe’s courage and determination as they do this? Invite predictions: What could the shiny something be? Who could the small and beaky someone be?

Eighth spread: Read expressively. Ask students to show what *slumps* means. Invite inference. What do the stars mean? What has happened to Bird?

Ninth spread: Students will undoubtedly notice that this is the cover illustration. Pause after the first paragraph to allow students to enjoy the warm feeling of friendship. After reading, invite predictions: What is on the sign? What hints has the author given us? These include the yucky muck, the sinking feeling, and the feeling of foreboding in the second paragraph.

Tenth spread: Help students read the word *quicksand* and have someone explain what that is. Discuss the fact that even though Bird was so recently in a daze, when his friend is in trouble, he hops to his feet immediately and calls for help. How does the author-illustrator indicate that Bird is shouting? We see bold capitals, a spiked red bubble behind him, a tight facial expression, and beckoning body language. Discuss how Bird’s actions are similar to what a person might do if they came upon an accident scene: call 911 and then keep the victim talking, both to keep them from thinking about their fear and to keep them conscious.

Eleventh spread: Read expressively. What might Bird be saying as he cheers him on? What do you say to cheer on a friend? How did Bird contribute to Giraffe’s escape?

Twelfth spread: Invite students to act out “utterly exhausted.” Invite prediction: What might the birds be doing?

Thirteenth spread: What might the bush babies and ibex be thinking?

Fourteenth spread: When Giraffe says that “adventures are for the birds,” does he mean it figuratively or both figuratively and literally? When Bird agrees, how does he mean it? Bender uses this double meaning as humor, which some students, often beginning around the age of 6 or 7, may “get.”

Last page: Note Giraffe’s safety equipment. Introduce the word *compromise*. Invite students to describe the compromise Giraffe and Bird have arrived at and ways in which they compromise with their friends.

AFTER READING

- Discuss the ways in which Giraffe and Bird behaved as good friends and how the class can apply those ideas to their own relationships.
- Discuss the meaning of courage or bravery. Students may think that a person who is brave does not feel scared. Help them see that it really means doing the right thing even if you *are* scared. Discuss circumstances in which this might apply to them.
- Present a large chart on which you have drawn three columns bearing these headings: “Adventures,” “No thank you,” and “Sign me up!” You could sketch Giraffe next to the second heading and Bird beside the third. Write “Ride a Roller Coaster” in the first column. Invite students to come forward and place a sticker or tally mark under either “No thank you” or “Sign me up!” to indicate how they feel about that “adventure.” Elicit other types of adventures from students and add these to the adventure column. By show of hands, have students indicate how they feel about each of these adventures, and write the number of respondents in each column. Use this data in different ways, according to the mathematics curriculum for your grade or the interests of your class. You might have students create a bar graph of the data. Older students might calculate percentages and create a pie graph. Students could make their own tally sheet of different adventures (ones from the class chart or others they have thought of) and survey people at home or on the playground.
- Show the first spread. Discuss the meaning of the words *gaze*, *graze*, *swat*, and *repeat* (Giraffe’s actions), as well as *glide*, *swoop*, *soar*, and *explore* (Bird’s actions). Invite students to suggest actions for each. Create a dance in which half the class does Giraffe’s actions in place while the other half does Bird’s actions while moving about the area. After a few repetitions, switch parts. Select appropriate music (with a strong 4-count) to accompany the actions. Perform the actions in time with the music.
- Search for examples of graphic text features Rebecca Bender has incorporated into the story. These include sound effects or onomatopoeia in the pictures, such as *Mmmm*, *SLLRRP*, and *Munch*; a speech balloon; a spiked balloon behind Bird when he is shouting for help; the use of frames or sequenced pictures on the second and sixth spreads; and others.
- Read the other Giraffe and Bird books by Rebecca Bender, listed above.



ACTIVITY 1: CHARACTER CREATION

Rebecca Bender spends some time describing the traits of each character before the adventure begins. Once the characters get into trouble, each must dig deep to find traits they didn't know they possessed in order to solve the problem. Students will use this basic schema to create their own original characters and a story around them. This activity is ideal for students in grades 2–4. Grade 1 students will be able to do it once they have basic writing skills. Students in kindergarten and early first-graders could do the hands-on portion and then create their stories orally or with the help of a scribe.

Learning Expectations

Students will:

- identify specific elements of texts (e.g. characters) and explain how they contribute to the meaning of the texts
- express personal opinions about ideas presented in texts, such as identifying traits they admire in the characters or commenting on actions taken by characters
- generate ideas about a potential topic using a variety of strategies and resources
- write short texts using simple forms
- make simple revisions to improve the content, clarity, and interest of their written work using several types of strategies, such as replacing general words with concrete, specific words or phrases

You Will Need

- *Giraffe and Bird Together Again*
- Card stock, pencils, erasers
- Craft sticks
- Glue, scissors, colored pencils

How To:

1. Look through the illustrations of *Giraffe and Bird Together Again* and discuss ways in which Rebecca Bender has made the characters take on human qualities, for example showing close-ups of their faces often, showing a front view (especially with Bird) that approximates a human form, facial expressions, and body language.
2. Invite students to choose two animals (not a giraffe and a bird). Choose two yourself. Model drawing one animal in a humanized, cartoonish way on card stock. There are websites to help, such as at <https://www.how-to-draw-funny-cartoons.com/draw-cartoon-animals.html>. Begin with an oval or circle drawn lightly in pencil that will be the face. Show students front-view photos of the animal online and modify the face shape slightly to suggest the given animal. Note the position of ears (and horns or other features if any) and add them, as this will make the animal more recognizable. Make the eyes large and a little closer to the middle of the face than the animal naturally has, more like human eyes. The body can be roughly an oval shape to which legs and tail are added. Examine the first spread of *Giraffe and Bird Together Again* to see how Bender has drawn the body of a four-legged animal in nearly front view. Other examples can be found online by searching “front view cartoon [name of animal].” Color and cut out the animal and glue on a craft stick to make a stick puppet. Show your second animal puppet (which you have made in advance) to the students.
3. Give students the opportunity to create and name two stick puppets each.
4. Invite students to use any classroom materials (e.g. blocks, furniture, books) to create a landscape which will be a setting for their adventure (e.g. a desk might be a mountain, chairs could be trees, buildings could be created from construction materials). You might wish to have them working in pairs or small groups. When the landscape is finished, allow students to “play” with their puppets and one or more peers, using the landscape to stimulate imagination. Look for students who are starting to define a storyline with their puppets.

5. Gather students together and invite one or more students whom you observed defining a storyline to demonstrate what their puppets were doing in the landscape. This will help inspire other students.
6. Instruct students to work independently to think of an adventure their puppets could have in the landscape and act it out. Different students may use the same landscape features differently. For one, a bookcase might be a mountain, but for another, it could be a skyscraper.
7. Now that students have gotten to know their characters, gather them together and invite them to share character traits, likes, and dislikes. Turn back to the first two spreads of *Giraffe and Bird Together Again* and reread the sentences in which Rebecca Bender has described her two characters. Have students describe the traits, likes, and dislikes of their two characters, perhaps using a “think-pair-share” strategy.
8. Have students return to their seats with their puppets and write down a description of their two characters, their traits, their likes, and their dislikes. This will be the beginning of their story. Next, they will write down the adventure they had acted out with their puppets. Remind them to have their characters act in ways that are consistent with the traits they have given them. It’s fine if students are not able to do this, but at least they will be more aware that it’s something authors think about.
9. Pause the writing when most students have finished describing their characters and before anyone is too far into the adventure part of their story. Revisit the places in which each character rises above their usual character traits in order to help their friend (Giraffe pushes through his fear and finds courage beginning at the 5th spread; on the 10th, Bird is worried about his friend and does everything he can, calling for help and distracting Giraffe from his despair). Suggest that students have at least one character find strength or compassion they didn’t know they had. Again, students may not achieve this, but they will be thinking about it. Have them complete their stories.
10. Give a mini-lesson on a revision strategy you would like your students to focus on. For example, add an introduction or great opening sentence

to the story, substitute strong verbs (see mini-lesson below), or add a sensory description. Have students implement the strategy with support.

11. Have students edit their stories with support and, if appropriate, rewrite them.
12. Have students illustrate the landscape they imagined on heavy art paper and add their characters, either by redrawing them or by taping their puppets to the landscape. Alternately, they could create a diorama in a shoe box and place their puppets inside.

ACTIVITY 2: STRONG VERBS MINI-LESSON

A simple piece of writing can be elevated to the next grade level or more just by incorporating a few strong verbs. That is the goal of this activity.

Learning Expectations

Students will:

- use words and phrases that will help convey their meaning as specifically as possible
- make simple revisions to improve the content, clarity, and interest of their written work, using several types of strategies, like replacing general words with concrete, specific words or phrases
- use parts of speech appropriately to communicate their meaning clearly

You Will Need

- *Giraffe and Bird Together Again*
- Chart paper and markers
- Paper and pencils

How To:

1. Read through *Giraffe and Bird Together Again*, searching for strong verbs. List these on a chart. Examples of strong verbs: *gaze, graze, swat, glide, swoop, soar, wrestles, climbs, slips, tumbles, leans, digs, stomps, pausing, gleams, spots, slides, slumps, hops, struggle, recounts, cheers, flops, wander, explore.*

- Discuss how strong verbs can improve the students' own writing. Think of ordinary verbs that mean roughly the same as the words on the list, but are less descriptive (e.g. *look, eat, hit, fly, go up, fall*). With student input, create sentences using these ordinary verbs and then repeat the sentences, substituting the strong verbs. Encourage students to observe how different the sentences sound.
- Have students take a piece of their own writing, such as the adventure story above, and circle three to five "ordinary" verbs. These will be verbs like "went," "came back," "took," or "saw." It need not be a different verb each time. With students, make a list of all the verbs they have circled. Beside each, brainstorm as many strong verbs as possible that could replace these ordinary verbs. Some ideas will come from *Giraffe and Bird Together Again*, but the teacher and students can also provide ideas. Even moderately descriptive verbs like "jumped" or "threw" can be replaced with stronger verbs such as "leapt" or "flung."
- Invite students to replace their three to five circled verbs with more descriptive verbs. It is impressive what a huge difference changing just these few words can make to the level of the writing.
- Keep the Strong Verbs chart up in the classroom and add to it whenever you or students find a new strong verb during read-alouds or their independent reading.



ACTIVITY 3: ART INSPIRATION

Students will study samples of Rebecca Bender's artwork in *Giraffe and Bird Together Again* and use these to inspire their own artwork.

Learning Expectations

Students will:

- use a variety of materials, tools, and techniques to respond to design challenges
- develop an understanding of color, shape, and repetition in pattern
- mix colors with a limited palette
- create secondary colors from primary colors

You Will Need

- Giraffe and Bird Together Again*
- Animal photos (online)
- Drawing paper
- Crayons or colored pencils, scissors, glue
- Heavy art paper
- Tempera paints, small containers, craft sticks, paintbrushes
- Thick markers

How To:

- Show students the endpapers of *Giraffe and Bird Together Again*. Discuss what the pattern represents.
- Look at photos of other patterned animals, such as zebras, leopards, jaguars, turtles, fish, Dalmatians, tigers, snakes, butterflies, tabby cats, cheetahs, and so on.
- Have students cover a sheet of paper in a pattern inspired by one of these, using colored pencils or crayons.
- On the back of the sheet of paper, have students draw the outline of an animal. Show them how to make the body parts thick enough so that they will not tear off when they are cut out. Tell students not to draw on eyes or other features, as this will be the back. Have students cut out

- their animal and turn it over to show the patterned side. It is meant to merely suggest the animal, as the pattern will be evenly distributed over the entire animal. It is not meant to be realistic, but some students will still wish to add facial features, and that's fine.
- Use the cut-outs as a border to a bulletin board display, perhaps of the adventure stories from Activity #1 above, or of pictures from the art activity described in the following steps.
 - Show students the title page (inside) of *Giraffe and Bird Together Again*. Draw their attention to the bands of color in the background. Ask students what they think the bands represent and how Bender might have achieved them. Tell students they will try this technique.
 - Provide each student with red and blue tempera paint and small containers in which to mix paint. Part of an egg carton with four cells will work, or some similar arrangement. Put about a tablespoon of red paint in two of the cells and a tablespoon of blue in the other two. Most commercial blue paint is very dark, so you may wish to pre-mix the blue with white to create a medium blue. Provide each student with two craft sticks as well. Tell students that one red cell will stay red and one blue cell will stay blue, but the other two are going to change. To one of the reds, students should add a small amount of blue paint using the craft stick, stirring it well. Hopefully, they will achieve a purply red. To one of the blues, they should add some red paint (not from the mixed cell) and stir it well. It will probably take more red paint to noticeably change the color of the blue. Be prepared to give students more red paint if they need it, but they should not add too much. The mixed blue should end up a bluer purple than the mixed red. Students should now have red, reddish purple, bluish purple, and blue.
 - Give each student heavy art paper, colored pencils or crayons, and a paintbrush. Instruct students to place the paper in "portrait" orientation and to draw three wavy horizontal lines across it, using the title page of *Giraffe and Bird Together Again* as a guide. Have students paint the bands, using the paints in the same order as Bender did to create a color progression.
 - Repeat this activity using other color combinations: red and yellow, blue and yellow, brown and green, brown and purple, brown and orange, or white and any other color.
 - Have students choose one of their dried paintings from steps 8 and 9. On white paper, invite students to draw a character from their adventure story using crayons or colored pencils, cut it out, and glue it onto the painting. Using markers, have students write the title of their adventure story and their name. Display these next to the stories. Alternately, have students use the paintings as posters for a current event or project at the school. In this case, they will use markers to write a meaningful message such as an environmental, friendship, or safety slogan. You may wish to have them draft their message and have it edited before writing it onto their painting.



ACTIVITY 4: MAPPING

The map provided on the introductory pages of *Giraffe and Bird Together Again* can be used as a jumping-off point for a social studies unit on mapping.

Learning Expectations

Students will:

- analyze and construct simple maps
- demonstrate an understanding that there are a variety of countries, continents, physical features, and bodies of water around the world and that their locations can be represented in different ways
- identify cardinal directions on a map and use these directions when locating selected communities, countries, and/or continents

You Will Need

- *Giraffe and Bird Together Again*
- Chart paper and markers
- Writing or drawing paper, pencils, colored pencils or crayons

How To:

1. With students, examine the map on the title page. List the map features found there, including the compass rose and a variety of landforms such as plains, mountains, a forest, and a river.
2. Explain that some maps have other features. Explain what a legend or key is. Together with students, create a legend for this map, including plains, a forest, mountains, a river, and yucky muck.
3. Make a list of map features and conventions your students are required to learn. These may include a title, use of capital and lower-case lettering, blue for water, a different color for land, and different types of markings to indicate different-sized cities and capital cities.
4. Have students create a map to accompany the adventure story they have written, their classroom, their school or neighborhood, or an imaginary place. Together with students, create a list of features they need to include.

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