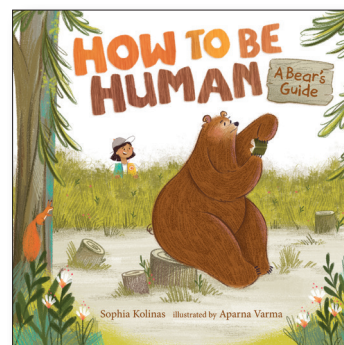# How to Be Human: A Bear's Guide
Discussion and Activity Guide by Sophia Kolinas

About the Book

Once there was a bear who lived in a forest and did all the regular bear things. But as his home and the world around him change—fewer fish, fewer trees, and less quiet—he notices how tricky his life is becoming to maintain. The sensible thing to do is adapt, so the bear enlists the help of a little girl and asks her to teach him how to be human.

The unlikely duo works together to master the art of being human, but when the bear heads to the city to try out his new skills, nothing goes as planned. Back in the forest, the girl considers that maybe humans should learn from bears instead. So the bear shares his own unique knowledge with the girl, and she ultimately discovers that the Earth is a place of giving, where all living things breathe together.

Book written by Sophia Kolinas and illustrated by Aparna Varma

Charming illustrations bring this story of cooperation and friendship to life, inviting readers to see the value of exchanging ideas and learning from others.

Before Reading

- What do you think this book is about? What kind of clues do you get from the title?
- What does being human mean to you? What differences would you say humans have to bears?

After Reading

- What are some ways that the girl, bear, and all of nature are connected? Can you spot it in the pictures?
- What do you think the author means when she writes "the Earth is a place of sharing"? What are some things that you share in your day-to-day life?
- What are some ways that we can create a space for all?

ISBN 978-1-77147-494-8	CURRICULUM LINKS **Language Arts**: Reading **Character Education**: Responsibility, Cooperation, Positive Communication **Science**: Environmental Awareness, Environmental Stewardship	READING LEVELS **Grade**: 1 **Fountas & Pinnell**: I **Lexile® Measure**: AD 560L **COMMON CORE**: RL.1, W.1, SL.1, L.1

Science: Understanding Life Systems

Activity 1: My 5 Senses Scavenger Hunt
Overall Expectations: Investigate the needs of plants, animals, and humans.

- The natural world is a sensory wonderland! Discuss how in the story the bear teaches the girl to experience nature in a deeper way. Explain how our senses help us to meet our needs and explore the world around us.
- Go on a 5 Senses Scavenger Hunt and invite students to investigate the world around them using each of their senses. Use the attached *My 5 Senses Scavenger Hunt* activity sheet to help students in their search.

Activity 2: Life Systems
Overall Expectations: Assess the role of humans in maintaining a healthy environment.

- From tree planting to litter picking, there are so many opportunities to be an environmental steward and share space. Discuss with the class all the exciting ways they can encourage biodiversity and protect habitats.
- Invite students to look outside the window and observe birds and butterflies.
  - How do they move?
  - Where do they go?
  - Why do they fly to certain areas? Could there be more food there?
- Research birds and butterflies native to the area and what they need to stay healthy and happy. Welcome students to take personal action in maintaining a healthy environment and build a bird feeder or butterfly house.

Language: Writing and Media Literacy

Activity 1: Writing
Overall Expectations: Generate, gather, and organize ideas and information to write for an intended purpose and audience.

- The story explores the joy of exchanging ideas and learning from one another. As a class, create a T-chart of the bear's lessons and the girl's lessons.
- Have students share special things that they would like to teach the bear (e.g., coolest way to jump into a puddle, how to build the perfect LEGO® tower).
- Ask students to choose their own special lesson for the bear and create a 'How to' step by step guide using pictures, symbols, and sentence starters like 'First,' 'Next,' etc.

Language: Writing and Media Literacy (cont.)

Activity 2: Media Literacy
Overall Expectations: Create a variety of media texts for different purposes and audiences using appropriate conventions and techniques.

- Create and record a soundscape for the city where the girl lives and the forest where the bear lives. Students can get adventurous and recreate woodland sounds using twigs and leaves.
- Using mixed media, create a collage of the many things that are special to the bear.

Visual Art: Creating and Presenting

Overall Expectations: Produce 2D artworks using elements, principles, and techniques of visual art to communicate feelings, ideas, and understandings.

- The bear teaches the girl how to listen to a sunset. Ask the class to draw a picture of how a sunset makes them feel.
- To encourage this exploration, you might ask:
  ◦ What colours and shapes would you use?
  ◦ What lines? Zigzag or straight?
  ◦ How would you create texture?

Drama: Creating and Presenting

Overall Expectations: Use elements and conventions of drama to communicate stories.

- Put students into groups and ask them to create a tableau for each plot point in the story.
  ◦ Alternatively, they can create a tableau of the problem and solution in the story or even of a scene that doesn't exist.
  ◦ For example, what are some other adventures the girl and bear could get up to?
- Encourage the class to re-create the whole picture. This means including the various trees or animals that could be in the scene along with the protagonists.
- To further engage students, tap on each of their heads whilst they are in their tableau, and ask: If your character could say something just now, what might it be?
- To make things really fun, designate two students to hold up a blanket to mimic the closed curtains of a stage. Have them drop the blanket between each scene to reveal the actors in their new tableau.

My 5 Senses Scavenger Hunt
Find and Draw

Sight	Sound	Touch	Smell	Taste
Something green	Something that snaps	Something soft	A smell you like	Something a bird eats
A pattern	Something that crunches	Something rough	A flower	Something a human can eat
Something long	An animal sound	Something wet	Something with no scent	