



# TEACHERS' RESOURCES

## RECOMMENDED FOR

Junior primary (ages 5+)

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## KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **Learning areas:** English and HASS
- **General capabilities:** Literacy, Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capability, Ethical Understanding

## REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

- To discuss new vocabulary and respond to texts
- To share feelings and thoughts about the events and characters in texts
- To learn more about our relationships with each other
- To use the text as a springboard for cross curricular teaching

## THEMES

Friendships and family, play and imaginative play, home life, school, conflict resolution, music and art

## PUBLICATION DETAILS

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9781760147204 (ebook)

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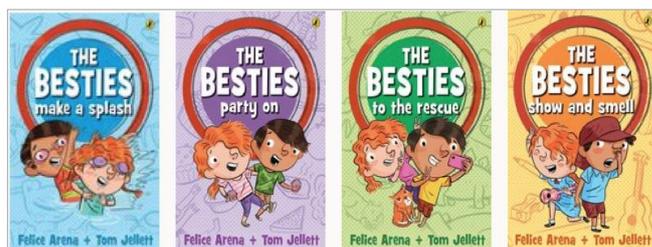
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## The Besties series: *The Besties Make a Splash* *The Besties Party On* *The Besties to the Rescue* *The Besties Show and Smell* By Felice Arena Illustrated by Tom Jellett

## PLOT SUMMARY

Oliver and Ruby have been besties forever . . .

From the author and illustrator of the popular Sporty Kids books comes an exciting new beginner-reader series that celebrates the everyday adventures - at school, at home, in the backyard, even in the living room! A funny, sweet series about kids being kids, where imagination and play rule!

### THE BESTIES MAKE A SPLASH

Oliver and Ruby love going to the beach - swimming in the surf, wading in the rockpools and eating ice-cream! And it gets even better when their funny friend Zac and the coolest girl in school turn up. But what if your bestie is having more fun with someone else?

### THE BESTIES PARTY ON

It's Ruby's birthday and she's going to have the most amazing party. Ruby and Oliver decide to try out all the games before anyone else gets there. It's too good! How will the real party ever compete with the besties' practise party?

### THE BESTIES TO THE RESCUE

Oliver is trying to record Ruby's awesome trampoline flips in slow-mo, but he captures something else too. Cutie Pie, the cat from next door, is pouncing on a bird's nest! The baby bird is too young to fly. Will the besties be the best bird-parents ever?

### THE BESTIES SHOW AND SMELL

Ruby is so looking forward to Show and Tell, but the teacher is away and it looks like she'll miss out. Plus, the besties won't get to see what Zac's talent is - it's bound to be really funny and gross! Can they turn a very bad day into the very best?

The besties series is supported by an album of songs and lyrics, a full chord sheet and the strumming patterns at [TheBestiesWorld.com](http://TheBestiesWorld.com)

## ABOUT THE CREATORS

**Felice Arena** is one of Australia's best-loved children's writers. He is the author and creator of many popular and award-winning children's books for all ages, including the acclaimed historical adventures *The Boy and the Spy*, *Fearless Frederic* and *The Great Escape*, the bestselling Specky Magee books and the popular Andy Roid and Sporty Kids series.

**Tom Jellett** is an acclaimed children's book illustrator whose work includes a series about a little pirate (*The Littlest Pirate*), books about a teddy bear called Ted (*Ted Goes Wild*, *Ted Gets Lost* and *Ted Hits Town*) and the Sporty Kids series, written by Felice Arena. His picture books with Justine Clarke and Arthur Baysting, *The Gobbledygook is Eating a Book* and *The Gobbledygook and the Scribbledynoodle* have been Australian bestsellers. His other acclaimed picture books include *Why I Love Footy* and *Why I Love Summer* with Michael Wagner, and *Grandpa's Big Adventure* written by Paul Newman.

## AUTHOR'S INSPIRATION

One of the great things about being invited to talk to thousands of kids each year at school visits and festivals, is that you get a front-row view of how children interact with each other. You get to know their likes and dislikes and the way they think, talk, and connect in a fast-paced, ever-changing world.

I've been lucky to share my stories and books with children of all ages for close to twenty years now, and there's one thing I've noticed that hasn't changed among kids: Play. That's right, play.

From where I'm standing, I'm happy to report that play and imagination are still driving forces for our kids, especially for the little ones aged 4 to 7. The need and desire to move, dance, wiggle, make silly noises, laugh, pretend, sing to themselves - it's all still there. What a relief, right?

I say relief, because we all know that at the core of what makes us human, of what makes us connect, love, laugh, and learn, is this very precious gift we call play. But as we age into doom-and-gloom-and-bills-to-pay-bah-humbug adults, we end up burying and suppressing that gift. I've actually been told by some close teacher friends that many schools nowadays actually hasten this transition. School curriculums are so driven by outcome-based results and teachers are drowning in so much paperwork and red tape that play is often 'straight-jacketed' or at least limited - yes, even for the junior classes.

So . . . when I was thinking of writing my new beginner series *The Besties*, I knew I wanted play and imagination to dominate my stories. How about two best friends - besties - who share in everyday adventures at home, in their backyards, and at school? And what if I make sure that the stories are not over-complicated and weighed down in heavy narrative, or bound by over-the-top plots and jeopardy? What if the dialogue and action was entertaining and visually engaging? Okay, so my vision and intentions were set, and my publishers were on board. *The Besties* were born.

I also wanted something that would enhance the reading experience and communicate this sense of playfulness in a tangible way. I wanted it to jump off the pages and into the young readers lives - and at the same time include something that would allow teachers and parents to follow-up with creative learning activities. So . . . cue music and art - play's partners in crime.

A lot of my own childhood playing embodied my love of art and music, and that carried on well into my twenties as a young musical-theatre performer in London's West End - so combining drawing and singing with play seemed like a natural fit.

Oliver loves to draw. He records his daily adventures in his own comics, which feature in each adventure and appear as Ollie's Comics at the back of the books (the comics were created by award-winning illustrator Tom Jellett).

Ruby loves to play her ukulele and make up songs, which are also included at the end of the stories. While I was writing the lyrics for Ruby, I sent them off to my super-talented musical mates in the UK to see what they thought. Within days they came back to me with melodies and rough recordings, and before we all knew it we were going back-and-forth with ideas for other songs. Soon after that I was headed off to Scotland to record an album in Edinburgh with my besties - three middle-aged men bringing play back into their lives.

I hope these books, and the accompanying album, will not only stir your child's imagination but will also help kick-start a lifelong love of reading and music and art and, of course, play.

## WRITING STYLE

Felice Arena has a distinctive 'conversational' style and humour plays a large part in his stories. Written in past tense third person, his books are filled with



language that is accessible to the emerging reader, and he employs **dialogue** rather than sections of **narrative storytelling** to build the characters and convey feeling. **Description** is largely left for Tom's entertaining illustrations and Tom's images add hugely to the humour.

The above writing techniques can be explored by students and Tom's illustrations are an excellent place to being discussions about visual literacy.

- Consider the tense the author has used? What is another way the story could have been told?
- Consider the use of the third-person perspective. What is another way this story could have been told?
- How does each book's title relate to its content? What does it refer to?
  - What are adjectives? As a class, brainstorm some adjectives that could be used to describe Oliver and Ruby.
  - Read the writing on the back of the book (the blurb). What do you expect the book will be about? Do you have any questions? Are those questions answered in the story?
  - Discuss the idea of tone? What would you say is the tone of the series? What are some other books that have the same tone?
  - Each of the books contain a **procedural text**. Discuss the key elements in this type of writing. What is your favourite activity, hobby or the skill you are most proud of? Write a simple procedural text to tell your friend how to do it. Use diagrams if they will help.

## KEY STUDY TOPICS Cross curriculum study

- Both Oliver and Ruby love to create things. Do you and your friends create and craft? Have you ever made a piñata? Use the procedural text in *The Besties Party On* to make your own.
- Oliver is amazing at drawing comics. Draw a comic of a scene from your favourite Besties book as if you and your friend were Oliver and Ruby.
- Ruby's favourite activity of the week is Show and Tell. Bring your favourite thing in and tell the class why you love it, practise a song or dance to show them or teach the class a skill like Zac does in *The Besties Show and Smell*.

- Both Oliver and Ruby know a lot about animals. What did you learn about birds from *The Besties to the Rescue*? And if you could talk to Oliver about dinosaurs what would you tell him?
- Do you play an instrument or sing? At the back of each book are the chords and lyrics for one of Ruby's songs. Can you learn the chords from one song and strum them?
- How do you think each song would go? Watch Felice's tutorials and sing along to the tune. Was it the same as how you imagined the tune?
- Do you have a best friend who is just right for you like Oliver and Ruby or Zac and Isabella in *The Besties Make a Splash*? Draw them and write a note about why you two are perfect.
- Find three words in your favourite Besties book that are new to you. Try to work out what they mean from the context (the way they are used and the words and pictures that surround them).
- Activity: Create a book trailer for your favourite Besties book.

## Storytelling

- How many characters are in your favourite Besties story? Do you think things other than people can be powerful characters in a story? How? Can you think of other stories that have non-human characters?
- Have you ever had a party like Ruby's? What games did you play? Write a diary entry from after your favourite party or a fictional diary entry pretending you have been to Ruby's.
- Break into small groups and tell your classmates about a time you have achieved great something like Ruby jumping on the trampoline, Oliver scaring Cutie Pie away or both of them saving Rex. What did you do? Why was it awesome and what did you feel about it? How did it change you?
- Stories often have a 'message' or a 'moral'. Think about your favourite Besties book, is there a 'moral of the story'?
- Do you play-act or imagine exciting adventures with your friends or siblings? In groups of two, roleplay a scene from your favourite Besties book.



FURTHER READING FROM PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA



*Sporty Kids: Handball*  
By Felice Arena  
Illustrated by Tom Jellett

'Do you want to give up?' said Vinnie.

'No way!' Luca said. 'I can beat you.' But he was starting to wonder if he could . . .

Luca never loses at handball. But can he beat the Handball King?

Get sporty with these great new books for beginner readers!

Collect the whole series:

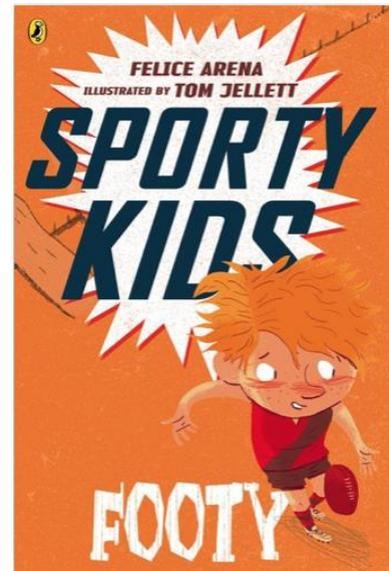


*Sporty Kids: Swimming*  
By Felice Arena  
Illustrated by Tom Jellett

Ben dived. Jessica dived. Oliver dived. And Emma went WHACK!

It was the belly-whacker of all belly-whackers.

Emma is a swimming superstar. But can she learn to dive?



*Sporty Kids: Foody*  
By Felice Arena  
Illustrated by Tom Jellett

Joe marked the foody. He ran with it as fast as he could. Then he handballed to Angus.

'Dropping the ball!' shouted the umpire.

Joe is awesome at foody. So why is handballing so hard?



## ORDER FORM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	SCHOOL YEAR	RRP	QUANTITY	TOTAL
The Besties Make a Splash	Felice Arena	9781760890964	5+	\$9.99		
The Besties Party On	Felice Arena	9781760890995	5+	\$9.99		
The Besties to the Rescue	Felice Arena	9781760890971	5+	\$9.99		
The Besties Show and Smell	Felice Arena	9781760890988	5+	\$9.99		
Sporty Kids: Little Athletics	Felice Arena	9780143783183	5+	\$9.99		
Sporty Kids: Soccer	Felice Arena	9780143308430	5+	\$9.99		
Sporty Kids: Tennis	Felice Arena	9780143308447	5+	\$9.99		
Sporty Kids: Footy	Felice Arena	9780143308409	5+	\$9.99		
Sporty Kids: Swimming	Felice Arena	9780143308416	5+	\$9.99		
Sporty Kids: Netball	Felice Arena	9780143309086	5+	\$9.99		
Sporty Kids: Cricket	Felice Arena	9780143308454	5+	\$9.99		
Sporty Kids: Basketball	Felice Arena	9780143308010	5+	\$9.99		
Sporty Kids: Handball	Felice Arena	9780143308904	5+	\$9.99		
<b>TOTAL</b>						

PLEASE NOTE THAT PRICES ARE RECOMMENDED RETAIL ONLY AND MAY HAVE CHANGED SINCE THE TIME OF PRINTING. PRICES ARE GST INCLUSIVE.

<p>NAME: _____</p> <p>SCHOOL: _____</p> <p>ADDRESS: _____</p> <p>STATE: _____</p> <p>POSTCODE: _____</p> <p>TEL: _____</p> <p>EMAIL: _____</p> <p>ACCOUNT NO.: _____</p> <p>PURCHASE ORDER NO.: _____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>PLEASE SEND ORDER FORMS TO YOUR LOCAL EDUCATION SUPPLIER.</p>
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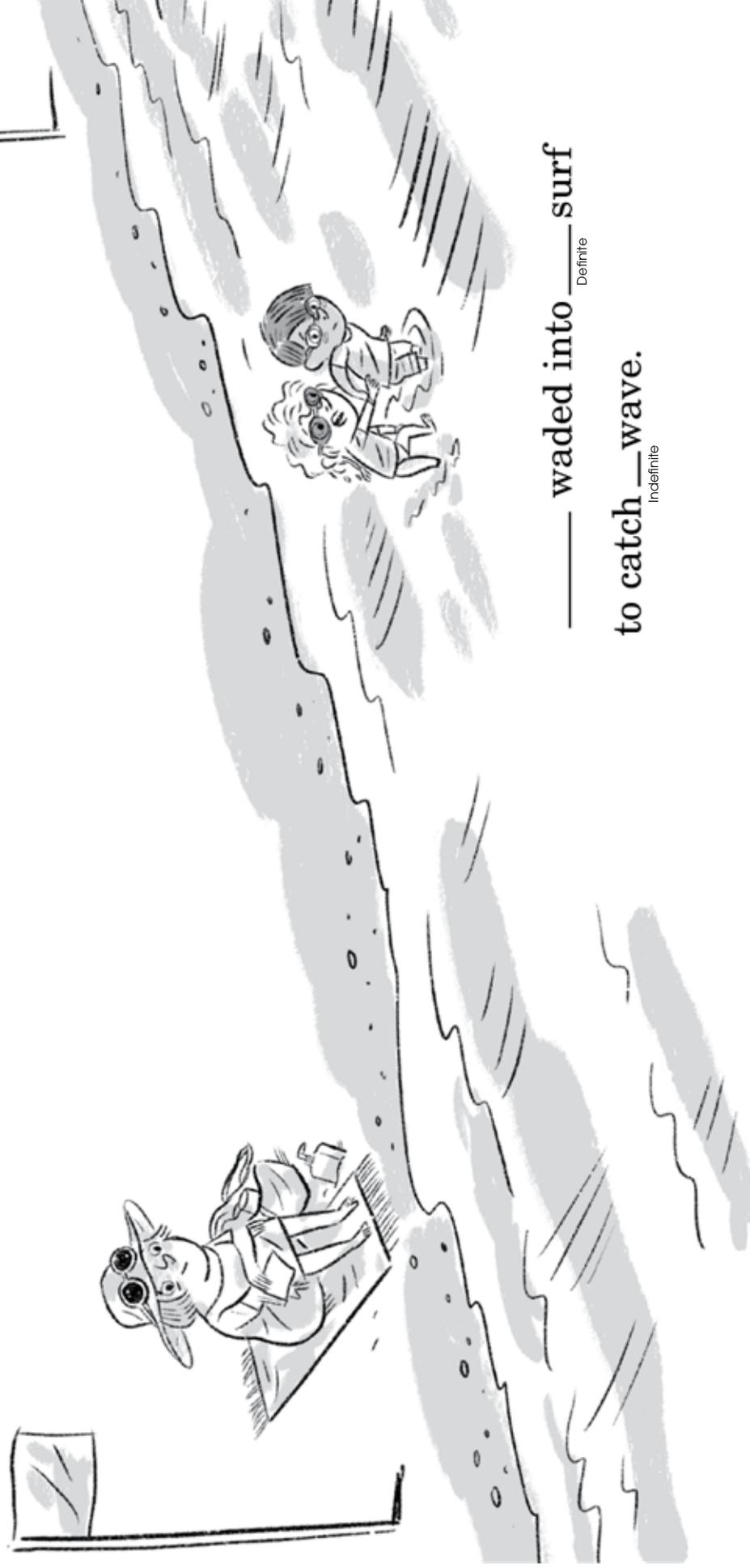


Today Ruby's mum had  
taken them to the \_\_\_\_\_  
Common noun

It was a \_\_\_\_\_ day.  
Adjective about  
the weather

They'd \_\_\_\_\_ looking  
Also a green  
vegetable  
forward to going for a

\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_.  
Verb Rhymes with  
pages



\_\_\_\_\_ waded into \_\_\_\_\_ surf  
Definite

to catch \_\_\_\_\_ wave.  
Indefinite

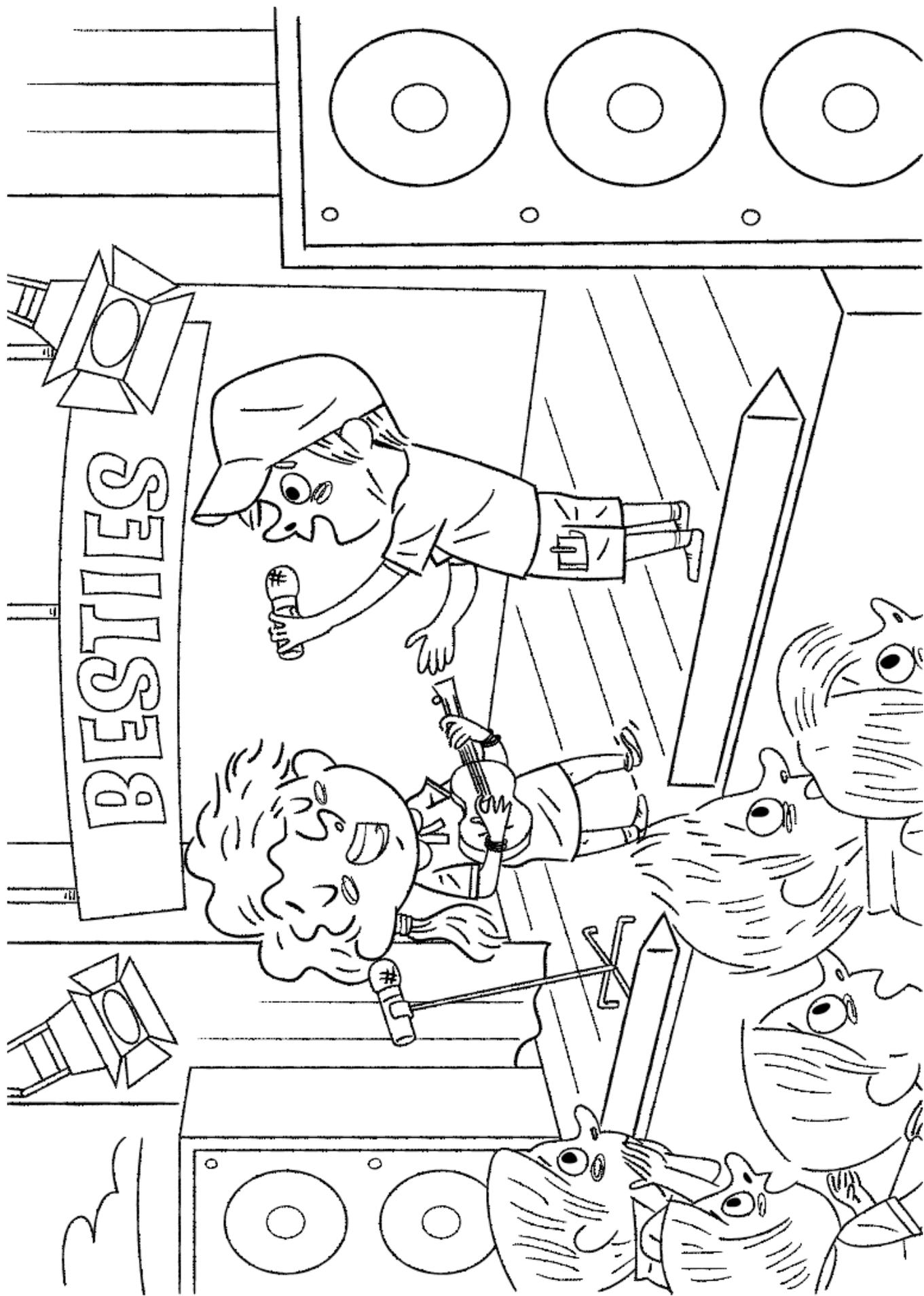
‘Okay, get ready!’  
Proper noun  
shouted. — if we  
A conjunction

don’t — this — the —  
Verb relating to a fish or a wave      A number      Rhymes with tea  
monsters will get us.’



‘Catch the — or get  
A noun that is also sometimes  
eaten,’ Oliver shouted.

‘We have to — the  
Swim faster than  
monster!’



# Find-a-word

Find all the words from the word list in the grid. Words may be found going up, down, forwards, backwards or diagonally.

Ask an adult for help if needed!

C A X I Y T A G Y E X B E E X  
H W R N G K N B U I E W L G W  
O C E A Y I V T R S H X E M P  
Z N M N G W A O T P N V L Z V  
M E A N I I O F D R U T U B Y  
S C I X S L R O S Y Z Z K A N  
Z S W Z G I O J Y B U R U L O  
T M N F E E G P D R A W I N G  
M T V N Z O C F M K M X H E J  
S S D L L E T D N A W O H S O  
S S U O Q A S D M B R Z C J L  
H Y P M X R C L W R U T V Q I  
A E P P M F K S E Y B S U T V  
V Q E H Q E J Y I O T P K O E  
J I P X L O R N M A L O Q D R

BESTFRIENDS

DRAWING

GAMES

OLIVER

RUBY

SHOWANDTELL

SINGING

SUMMER

TRAMPOLINE

UKULELE

