



Story Summary

Back in print at last! Award-winning author-illustrator Mies Van Hout celebrates the joys and challenges of parenthood as vibrant birds grow their families.

Set against Mies van Hout's iconic black backgrounds and utilizing the same vibrant chalk style of the internationally bestselling *Happy*, each spread of *Surprise* shows vivid birds portraying the emotions of parenthood, from “marveling” to “teasing” to “listening.”

This lively book is perfect for both new and experienced parents alike, as they will resonate with the emotional and ephemeral journey of parenthood. This new, high-value edition of *Surprise* features extra-heavy pages that, like the love parents have for their children, will stand the test of time and repeated readings.

Award-winning author-illustrator Mies van Hout brings humor and charm to the exhilarating adventure of parenthood. Her distinctive paintings are cheerful and bold, and her work has been published in more than twenty countries.

Mies van Hout is the author and illustrator of the picture books *Happy*, *Friends*, *Surprise*, *From One to Ten*, and *This Is My Daddy*, among others, which have been hugely popular in Europe and North America. She studied graphic design at the Arts Academy in Groningen, the Netherlands, and has worked as a freelance illustrator and graphic designer since 1989. Her distinctive paintings are cheerful and bold, and her work has been published in more than twenty countries.

Picture Book Ages 3–7 | ISBN: 978-1-77278-312-4 |

Pages: 26

Bisac Codes

JUV013060 JUVENILE FICTION / Family / Parents

JUV017150 JUVENILE FICTION / Holidays & Celebrations / Mother's Day

JUV039050 JUVENILE FICTION / Social Themes / Emotions & Feelings

JUV002040 JUVENILE FICTION / Animals / Birds

JUV009080 JUVENILE FICTION / Concepts / Words

Reading Level

Fountas & Pinnell: LB

Lexile measure: NP

Learning Expectations

Students will have the opportunity to:

- Identify reading comprehension strategies (e.g., activate prior knowledge, infer, predict, make connections) and use them before, during, and after reading to understand the text
- Learn about the use of color and shape to express emotion
- Express their ideas and feelings through art

Key Vocabulary

Teacher note: *Surprise* is comprised of 12 vocabulary words, some of which may be familiar to the students. Students may need context and an example for each of the following words:

- **longing:** wanting something badly; a desire
- **expecting:** believing that something will arrive soon
- **marveling:** filled with wonder or great surprise
- **cherishing:** to protect or care for someone or something with love
- **encouraging:** to support someone; to give confidence

Before reading

Present the cover to your students and ask:

- How does this cover make you feel? What about the cover makes you feel this way?
- What colors are used?

- Do these creatures look like animals or monsters?
- What emotion do you think these animals are displaying?

Open the book to the end papers and ask:

- What colors are used in this image?
- How does it differ from the cover?
- Does it make you feel different than the cover?
- What do these creatures look like to you?

During reading

- Slowly flip through the pages as a class and examine each spread carefully. Ask your students to guess the meaning of each word, and then ask them how that word connects to the image.
 - What colors are used to depict this emotion? Do you think it's effective?
 - How does this image represent the emotion?
 - What interests you about the images?
 - What don't you like about the images?
- Stop briefly on each page and ask your students to recall a time when they felt the displayed emotion. Have them share it with a partner or group.

After Reading

- Do the birds in this picture look like real birds? How are they similar or different than the birds that you know?
- What did you learn about mother and father birds from the words and pictures in this book?

- What did you like about this book?
- What questions do you have about what happened in this book?
- Does this book tell a story? Explain.
- What would you tell someone about the picture book *Surprise*?

Activity #1: Vocabulary And Spelling

Students will have the opportunity to:

- Explore spelling patterns that appear in the 12 words in this story (i.e. verbs + suffix 'ing' / vowels)
- Apply their understanding of spelling patterns by completing a word puzzle of words that appear in the story (and related words).

Teacher Note: The following three activities are designed to help students explore the spelling patterns with each of the twelve vocabulary words in *Surprise*. You can present one or both of the following activities, each with a specific spelling pattern.

Option 1: Verbs + 'ing' suffix

- Draw students attention to the 'ing' ending that is added to verbs to make a new word (play + ing = playing)
- Explain that with words that end in 'e' we are required to drop the 'e' before adding 'ing' (e.g. make+ ing = making)
- The word 'et' is an exception to the above rules. When adding 'ing' we need to double the letter 't' (let + ing = letting)

long + ing =	care + ing =	enjoy + ing =
hope + ing =	comfort + ing =	listen + ing =
expect + ing =	cherish + ing =	encourage + ing =
marvel + ing =	tease + ing =	let + ing =

Bonus: These words do not appear in the book *surprise*. Add 'ing' to the following

fly + ing =	sing + ing =	take + ing =
try + ing =	ride + ing =	share + ing =

Option #2: Focus On Vowels

The following words from the story are missing vowels. Fill in the blank with the vowel (a, e, i, o, or u) to spell the word correctly.

Example: leting

s_rpr_s_	m_rv_l_ing	t__sng
l_ng_ng	c_r_ng	_nj_y_ing
h_p_ng	c_mf_rt_ng	l_st_n_ng
_xp_ct_ng	ch_r_sh_ng	_nc__r_g_ng

Bonus: These words do not appear in the picture book *Surprise*. Add vowels to each of these words that can be used to discuss *Surprise*.

b_rds	m_th_r	p_r_nt
f_m_ly	b_b_	t_g_th_r

Activity #2: Illustrating / Visual Arts

Students will have the opportunity to:

- Use a vocabulary word as a source for creating an illustration
- Create illustrations like in *Surprise*

Materials: Black construction paper, chalk or oil pastels or crayons

Students can choose (or be assigned) a single word from the book *Surprise* to create a picture that depicts that emotion. Remind the students that the author / illustrator used birds to create her illustrations. For this art activity, you may choose to assign a specific animal (dog, cat, or fish) for students to illustrate. Alternatively, students can choose any animals of their choice for their pictures.

- **Teacher note #1:** Review the vocabulary words featured in this picture book. Students can choose any word from the story for their art work. Alternatively, you can assign a word to each student.
- **Teacher note #2:** Review the Mies van Hout's art work as it appears in this picture book. Draw attention to the bright colours, the textures, the small images that appear throughout, and the story that each picture tells.

Extension:

- Once completed, students can label their drawing with the vocabulary word they used for illustration.
- Art work can be displayed on a bulletin board or assembled into a class book entitled 'Surprise' modelled on Mies van Hout's picture book.

*This Teacher's Guide was written by **Larry Swartz**, Larry has been an instructor in literacy as well as dramatic arts at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto for nearly two decades. He is well-known for his use of children's literature to help young people grow as readers, writers, and citizens of the world.*

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