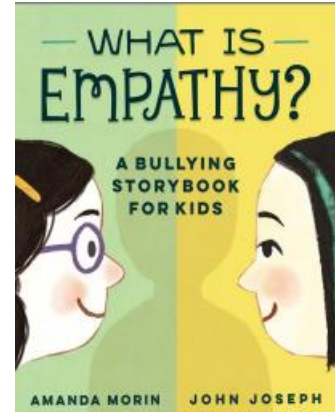




## PINK SHIRT DAY

### What is empathy? A bullying storybook for kids

By Amanda Morin, illustrated by John Joseph. (2020).  
Rockridge Press.



When kids are little, they are so caught up in exploring the world around them that it can be hard for them to think that others experience events differently. If children haven't yet learnt empathy - if they don't have the skills to ask others for their take on what has happened, and if they don't realise that they do not necessarily have all the information about what is happening - then this can lead to bullying.

*What is empathy?* tells the story of two girls, Ava and Sofia, and what happens when one of them gets a new friend, leaving the old friend out. Telling the story twice, from each girl's point of view, it teaches readers how to think about others, to develop and use empathy, and to stand up to bullying when they see it.

This is a lovely little book for parents, teachers, and other adults to use with the 5 to 7- year-olds in their lives. While many stories teaching social skills can be quite preachy, this isn't the case with this book, and children will enjoy comparing the two stories, seeing how their thoughts and attitudes change as they learn more about Ava's and Sofia's sides of the story. With simple language and a relatable plotline, children will find similarities within their own lives and relationships, and helpful notes at the start of the book give ideas of ways for children and adults to interact with the story and get the most out of the experience.

Amanda Morin works as a special education advocate, focusing on the importance of empathy, and John Joseph works as an illustrator and facilitates an anti-bullying group at an elementary school. Together they have created a tool that will benefit anyone working with young school aged children to help them build healthy, happy, empathetic relationships.

**Reviewed by Ky McWilliam**

The Mental Health Foundation's Information Service brings you reviews this Pink Shirt Day on books with bullying prevention themes. To view the full Good Reads section go to [www.pinkshirtday.org.nz/good-reads](http://www.pinkshirtday.org.nz/good-reads)

