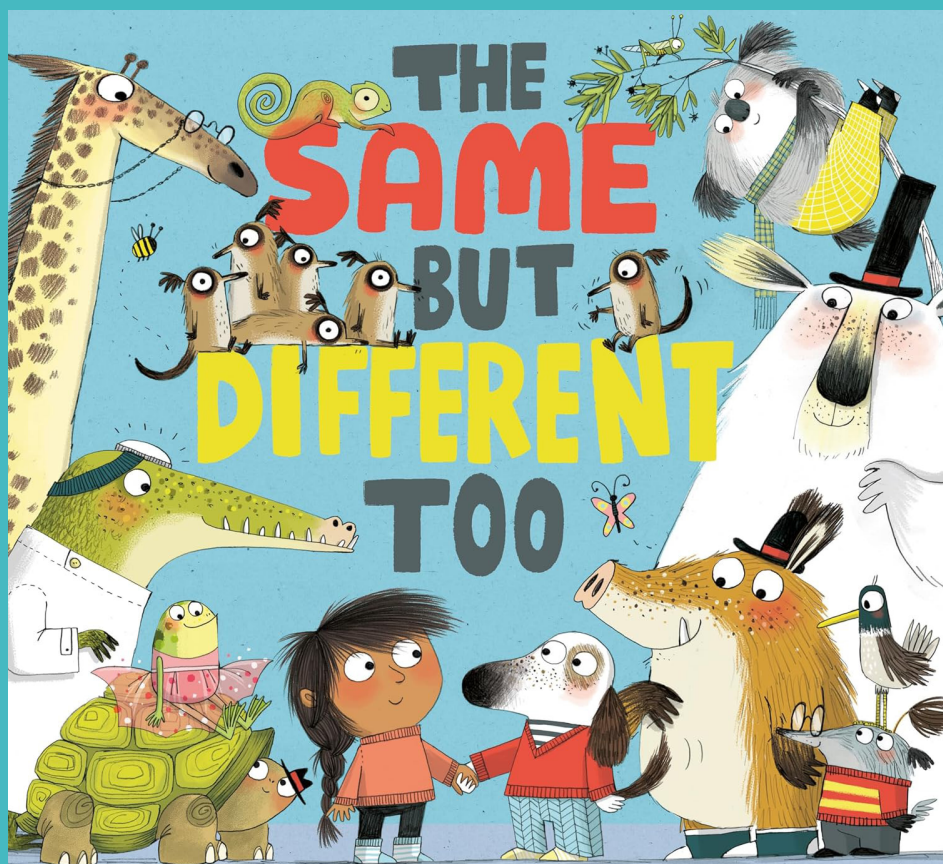


Getting ready to start school

with



KARL NEWSON

KATE HINDLEY

nosy
crow

Get ready to start school

Your child will have lots of new experiences and things to get used to in their first weeks at school.

The Same But Different Too by Karl Newson, illustrated by Kate Hindley, can help by showing your child that they can have similarities and differences with other children and still make great friendships.



Look at the book together

- Let children hold the book and turn the pages themselves.
- Read the words together and talk about the pictures.
- Encourage them to join in and repeat words or phrases.

Fun activities inspired by the book

Try these activities based on the story to help your child prepare for school.

Chat together

Talk about the animals together - in what ways are they similar or different to us?

You could say: *"Snail is slow, and Leopard is fast! You are a fast runner, aren't you? I am much slower."*

When you talk together, your child is learning how to have a conversation. This will help them feel confident chatting to friends and asking grown-ups for help.



Talk about feelings

Ask your child to guess how the characters are feeling in each picture.

You could say: *"How do you think Dog feels?"*

"How do you feel today?"

"Sometimes we feel sad, happy, tired, excited, or worried..."



Bring the book to life

When you look at the book with your child, use your faces and voices to act out how the characters feel and sound.

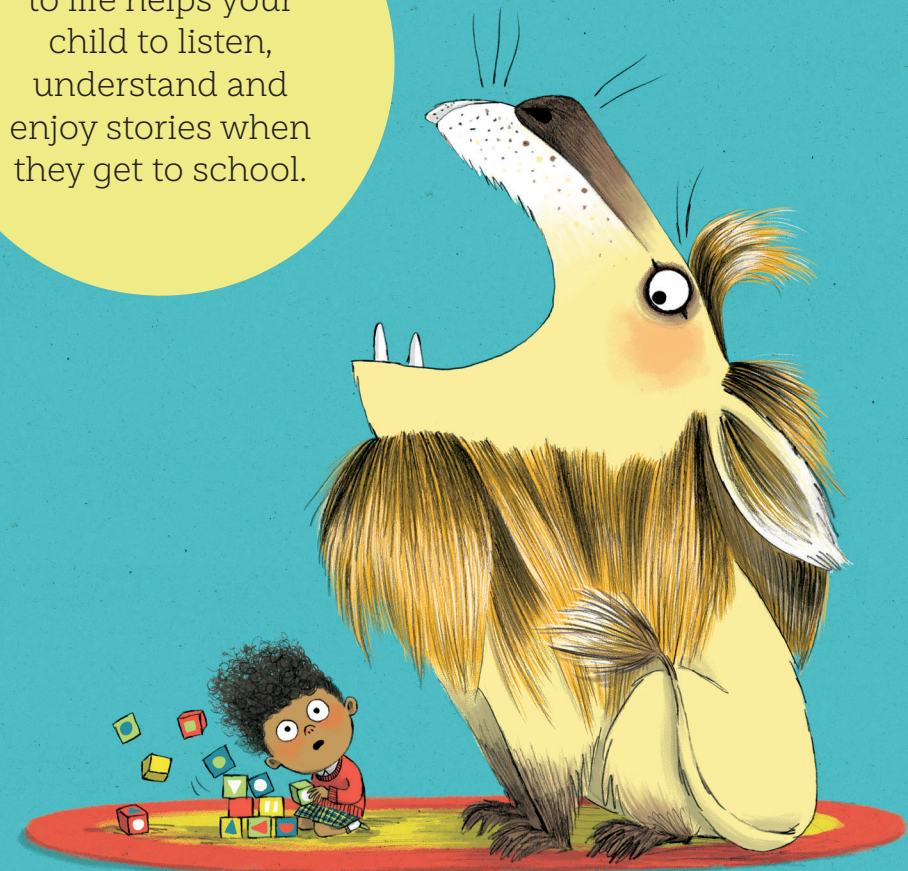
You could say:

"Let's be loud like Lion, ROAAAAAAR!"

"Can you make a surprised face like the quiet little boy?"

Bringing the book to life helps your child to listen, understand and enjoy stories when they get to school.

Talking about the characters' facial expressions helps your child begin to understand other people's feelings. This will help them to communicate with their new friends.





Re-tell the story

This picture shows all the characters from the story. They're all the same, but different too!

What can you and your child remember about these characters? If they don't remember, try prompting them:

"Look at the crocodile! He's asleep but you can still see all his teeth. He has more teeth than you!"

"Can you find the zebra? The zebra was good at hiding, do you remember?"

"Can you see the snail? He moved very slowly!"

Remembering parts of the story together helps your child practice their memory skills, which helps them learn and remember new information when they start school.

We hope you and your child will enjoy sharing *The Same But Different Too* by Karl Newson, illustrated by Kate Hindley.

Each child starting reception in a Manchester Local Authority primary school in September 2026 is being gifted their copy of *The Same But Different Too* to help support their transition into reception.

The books are provided free of charge by Read Manchester, Making Manchester Fairer and Manchester City Council.

Illustrations from *The Same but Different Too*
by Karl Newson & Kate Hindley
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