



## Bear with Me

*Max Kornell*

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## **Bear with Me** Max Kornell

Everything in Owen's world is just peachy-till his parents bring home a bear named Gary-without even asking! Gary changes everything: he takes up way too much space and makes a mess of all of Owen's toys. Gary means well, though, and eventually Owen starts to see that there are some good things about having a bear in the family.

Because Gary is such an unusual addition to the family, this story will appeal to kids getting used to any kind of new family member, be it a baby, grandparent, pet, or even sharing with a friend. Refreshing humor, expressive illustrations, and characters full of personality make this warm, funny debut a book that will be treasured.

## **Bear with Me Details**

Date : Published May 12th 2011 by G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers

ISBN : 9780399252570

Author : Max Kornell

Format : Hardcover 32 pages

Genre : Childrens, Picture Books, Storytime, Family, Fiction

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## From Reader Review Bear with Me for online ebook

### **Boni says**

I adored the first half of this book- excellent premise and execution. Very cute and laugh-out-loud funny. But the ending sort-of fell apart for me.

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### **Anthony says**

Owen's world is perfect. He has a mom, a dad, and his blocks. Life is good until his parents bring home a big bear named Gary. Gary makes a mess, takes up space, and doesn't recap Owen's markers. This story teaches that sudden change can be frustrating, but with a little patience and understanding change has a way working out for the better for all involved.

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### **Dolly says**

This is a fun story about a new addition to the family. The new family member is a bear, but children who are experiencing similar changes, such as a new sibling or step-sibling will be able to easily relate to young Owen's plight. The narrative is simple and the illustrations, with watercolors, inks, acrylics and cut out pictures are colorful and cartoonish. We enjoyed reading this story together.

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### **Kayla says**

I'm pretty sure the bear is supposed to represent a new baby here...interesting concept, but kind of misleading for a kid when it turns out that a new sibling won't be quite as much fun to play with as a new bear, at least not for a few years. I enjoyed the story, though.

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### **Kelly K. says**

Bear With Me by Max Kornell

Summary: Bear With Me is about a young boy named Owen who explains how well his life is going. He explains how he has his parents a new set of blocks to play with. One day, his parents come home with a bear named Gary, without even telling Owen. Owen's parents now believe they have the perfect family however Owen doesn't believe so. Owen says Gary breaks everything and his parents are giving Gary more attention now. Eventually Owen starts to see that there is nothing wrong or bad about Gary and they become a happy family.

Theme: Some surprises aren't always a bad thing. Although Owen was upset at first that his parents brought home a bear, he learned to appreciate Gary by playing with him.

Response: This story has a very relatable plot line that I think many kids can relate to. Especially kids who

experience new members to a family. The pictures are fun to look at and are colorful. The font makes the text easy to read because it is bolded font. It was a short but sweet story that could be used in the classroom setting.

Recommendation: I would recommend this book to children who feel neglected by their family due to a newborn or adopted sibling/family member, or pet. This book could be read to any children as young as Kindergarten. It is very easy to understand and comprehend. I could also see this book being read in the classroom setting or by a family member. In the classroom setting the lesson of treating new people nicely could be incorporated.

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### **Shannon says**

Great book for anyone who has added a child to the family, especially an older child via adoption or foster care.

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### **Lauren says**

I think this book was written more for adoption than a new baby? Because all the things it talked about "bear" doing when he comes into the family are things only big kids could do.

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### **Alessandra Piaggio says**

Goodreads Pt.2

Summary:

Owen is a little boy who doesn't have any brothers or sisters, yet he has a perfect life with his mom and dad. But one day, his parents brought home a bear, named Gary, as a surprise for him. Owen at first did not like Gary at all because he was not used to sharing his toys, his room, or even sharing his parents. For example, he got mad at Gary because he broke his swings or left his markers uncapped. After a little while, Gary and Owen started slowly to become friends after Owen saw that having someone knew in the family was not that bad after all.

Major Theme:

I would say the theme of this book would be sharing and selflessness. A new addition to the family may not always be easy yet if given the chance to those being added, it could be a good thing after all.

Personal Response:

I enjoyed this book so much because it relates to me since I am the oldest of my two younger siblings. I loved the pictures how colorful they were and also how they gave life to this story that has only a few words in it.

My Recommendation:

I would totally recommend this book especially to those children around the age 4 to 7 and who are the oldest sibling in their family. They may have someone new come into their family like a baby, a pet, a grandparent or anyone in their family or friends and it does not necessarily need to be a bad thing. This book can teach young kids the importance of sharing and being able to cope with small changes in their family just like the one depicted in this funny yet warm story.

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## **Ann Marie Denson says**

Themes: Themes of sharing, change, and grace are prevalent in this story as a young boy adapts to a big shift in his family dynamics.

Summary: Owen loved his happy life and his perfect family, so why did his parents have to change everything? When Owen's mom and dad brought home a bear, Gary, without his permission, he longed for things to go back to the way they were. Sharing a room, toys, and attention was not ideal for Owen, and he had a hard time accepting change. However, after a change of heart towards grace and patience, Owen realized how wonderful of an addition to the family Gary really was. Owen came around to appreciate Gary and enjoyed his companionship.

Personal Response: After my older siblings all left for college, I was the only child at home just like Owen. I know what he means about having the perfect life. I had my space, my things, and all the attention from my parents. When my siblings would come home from college to visit, it definitely was not the same, and sparked some jealousy in me. But I learned to appreciate their company as Owen did for Gary. I love this story because many kids can relate to times in their life when they have been challenged to share, forgive, and adjust to change in some way.

Recommendation: I recommend this book for children ages 4 to 6. This easy-to-read story is a great tool for parents to engage in conversation about change with their children, whether it may be about new siblings, divorce, moving, or sharing with friends. Regardless of the situation, kids must learn about forgiveness and sharing in order to build relationships. Owen and Gary set a perfect example!

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## **Richie Partington says**

23 May 2011 BEAR WITH ME by Max Kornell, Putnam, May 2011, 32p., ISBN: 978-0-399-25257-0

"I had a little brother  
And brought him to my mother  
And I said I want another  
Little brother for a change..."  
-- Mary Ann Hoberman, "Brother"

"Who has a little brother?" That's what I ask my young audiences -- while signaling them to raise their hands -- before I begin reciting Mary Ann Hoberman's poem which (as a firstborn) is one of my all-time favorites.

You see, I have a little brother. Fifty-three years later, I can still remember when my mother disappeared to go have him. It was one of those rarer-then-rare occasions when both of my grandmothers were at our house at the same time. Mom gone. Two grandmothers sitting side-by-side on the couch. This clearly was not a good sign.

And it wasn't.

He was trouble as a little kid: By the time he was three, my maternal grandmother was talking about him growing up to be a lawyer with the way he'd argue. I remember, some years later, being behind Cedar Road School and having to back away from a bunch of big kids he'd angered by mouthing off to them. Me pushing him away, him still mouthing.

He was trouble as a teenager. It would drive me nuts that he would successfully demand that Mom prepare him something different for dinner from what everyone else had. And then he'd expect her cut it up for him, too!

But he got better when he grew up. Right? Guess again. I just got off the phone with him 15 minutes ago and he is still trouble.

And so now you know why I love BEAR WITH ME by Max Kornell, which is an amazingly funny story of a firstborn boy whose parents bring home a new family member. Only instead of it being a typical younger sibling story, these parents bring home a BEAR! The bear is named Gary.

You have the usual issues that arrive with a new family member: The parents are too busy with the new family member to give all their attention to the firstborn like they used to. The new family member breaks stuff and uses stuff without asking. On top of that, Gary snores! ("Gary's snores are so loud that it sounds like there is a helicopter flying around in circles in my room.")

In the long run, the firstborn discovers that Gary is actually pretty cool to have around. Now, for me, having lived the past 53 years with a little brother, that is not a particularly realistic way to end the story. But probably the author is a younger sibling and so he gets to make this a fantasy story.

Richie Partington, MLIS

Richie's Picks <http://richiespicks.com>

BudNotBuddy@aol.com

Moderator [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/middle\\_...](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/middle_...)

Moderator <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/EcolIt/> <http://slisweb.sjsu.edu/people/facult...>

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## **Maria says**

Such a cute book, especially the illustrations, it really came to life when I was reading it! I loved the meaning of the story, and how heartfelt it was, especially when Owen and Gary truly found the meaning of their friendship. If only we all had a pet bear growing up, it would make childhood so much more fun!

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## **Tasha says**

Owen had a great life before Gary showed up. One day his parents just showed up with a big bear. They said they had always wanted a bear. But Owen didn't want a bear at all. Gary was going to sleep in Owen's room, share Owen's toys, and live with them as part of their family. Now his parents were busy with Gary and Gary snored when he slept! He even left the covers off the markers so they dried out and broke the swing in the backyard. Owen finally had enough and went outside by himself. Gary found him there and slowly, slowly the two of them became friends. Perhaps having a bear join the family wasn't as bad as Owen had thought.

Kornell writes with a wry sense of humor that works very well here. The use of an intruding bear as a stand-in for a new sibling works well in his hands. He keeps the text straight-forward but humorous.

The illustrations add much to the book. They are done in an intriguing style of cut-paper that has been drawn on and then added to the scenes. Each character is often their own cut out on a background that is one large sheet. The lines are simple and the colors bright. Gary is a wonderfully large bear that is completely non-threatening and looks just as worried as Owen.

Ideal for blended families or new adoptive siblings, this book has loads of appeal. Appropriate for ages 4-6.

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## **David says**

Bear with Me by Max Kornell is a look at family dynamics, change, and sharing when there is an unusual and unexpected addition to a family.

Owen's world is great until his parents bring home a bear named Gary to become part of their family. Gary's loud and large needs often come ahead of Owen's. Owen must let him sleep in his room and play with his toys and possessions, even though Gary is messy at times. After Gary breaks the swing, Owen is very mad. Gary gets Owen to see that they can play together, share common interests, and that Gary can make things fun and interesting as a part of the family.

The text is straight forward. Some of the text is in color for emphasis. I appreciate the clever title.

The illustrations are done in ink, watercolor, and acrylics, and an interesting cutout technique. The colors are bright and appealing. Gary is depicted as non-threatening, and looking worried about his place in the family. The humor is enhanced by Gary's good natured actions. The mother is quite stylishly depicted. My favorite images include the wordless panels of Gary on the porch, then coaxing Owen in to play blocks, Gary holding Owen up as they brush their teeth, and the two images of Owen flying a kite.

While some reviewers feel this will not be helpful for families expecting a new baby, I feel it could be a useful book concerning additions to a family, particularly with an adoption or welcoming an additional family member into the home. The humor of this story and the debut talent of its author/illustrator should be enjoyed by those who enjoy funny, well illustrated stories, most particularly the charming Gary.

For ages 4 to 6, bears, family dynamics, patience, change, sharing, love, friendship, surprises, humor and fans of Max Kornell.

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## **Caroline Kohring says**

Summary: Owen's life is perfect -- he has his parents, his toys, and everything he needs. Then Owen's parents surprise him and bring home a bear named Gary. Gary turns Owen's world upside down; now Owen has to share his parents, his toys, and his room. As the story progresses, Owen slowly begins to like Gary, and realizes that maybe this surprise wasn't as bad as he thought.

Theme: This story touches on the areas of sharing and selfishness. Owen learns that he can't always get everything he wants for his entire life. Instead, he has to learn to compromise and share the things that are important to him. This story also alludes to the common issue of an only child having to adjust to life with a new sibling.

Star Rating: I give this book 3 out of 5 stars. The story teaches a good lesson on sharing. However, if this book is intended for young children who are adjusting to a new sibling, they might not get the comparison of

a bear to a baby.

Personal Connection: I am the oldest of 4, but I was only child for 3 years before my sister was born. I had a very hard time adjusting to sharing my parents and their attention. This book could have been very useful and relatable during that time in my life.

Recommendation: I would recommend this book to any young child, but especially children whose parents are expecting or have just had another baby. This books allows them to realize that their feelings of selfishness are normal, and show them how rewarding it is to share.

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## **Melki says**

Cute tale of a boy whose parents bring home a new member of the family - a bear. It's a bumpy ride to acceptance, tolerance, and learning to get along, but our hero is up to the challenge. I really enjoyed Kornell's unusual watercolor cut-paper artwork.

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