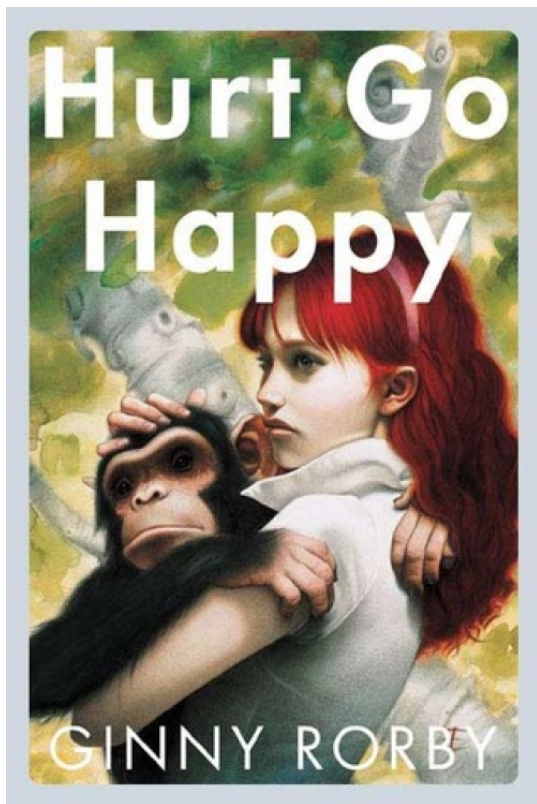


## Hurt Go Happy

Rorby, G.



Thirteen-year-old Joey is a typical teenage girl except that she is hearing impaired and must lip-read to understand what her family is saying but often struggles to connect with them and seeks solace in their wild, forested backyard. One day Joey ends up on Dr. Charles Mansell's property, and they form a unique friendship—Dr. Mansell has a chimpanzee, Sukari, who communicates with sign language and the Doctor and Sukari teach Joey how to sign and her world opens up with possibilities. This captivating novel for grades 5-8 raises issues of living with disabilities, fairness, equality, family conflicts, and use of animals in research. Useful for literature circles or guided novel study.

**Collections** Novel

**Subject** English Language Arts

**Grades** 5-8

**Primary Identifier** 9780765379375

**Evaluation Date** May 2018

**Copyright** 2016

## Resource Evaluation

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## **CURRICULUM FIT**

**Does the resource support BC curriculum?**

Extensively

**This product supports the Core Competencies of the BC curriculum:**

- Communication
- Critical thinking
- Positive Personal and Cultural Identity
- Personal Awareness and Responsibility
- Social Responsibility

This book supports two Big Ideas for the grades 5-8 Language Arts curriculum. The first is, "Exploring stories and other texts helps us understand ourselves and make connections to others and to the world." As students read about the main character, Joey Willis, they learn what life is like for her to be hearing impaired and how this impacts her daily interactions with her family and social connections at school. The second Big Idea is, "Questioning what we hear, read, and view contributes to our ability to be educated and engaged citizens." There are some ethical decisions which characters make in this story. Students will develop their personal questioning skills and societal engagement.

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## **SUGGESTED CLASSROOM USAGE**

This book could be used for a literature circle or guided novel study in which students explore and discuss character development, family conflicts, ethical decision making, and social awareness and acceptance of disabilities. Extended research and/or writing activities could focus on human and primate acquisition of sign language and hearing impairments in people. This novel is also suitable for independent reading. The novel also provides opportunities for conversations about the ethics of using animals for research purposes.

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## **SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Ability:**

The main character has a hearing disability caused by her father beating her as a child. Joey's mom initially refuses to let Joey learn sign language, preferring that she learn to lip-read so that she is able to fit in with the hearing community.

### **Violence:**

Some graphic imagery describes the chimpanzee facility and cages in which the chimpanzees live, depicting their aggressive behaviour within the research facility.

### **Ethical:**

Some students may react to the practice of taking chimpanzees and monkeys to lab facilities for chemical and drug testing.

### **Safety:**

Joey makes a few spontaneous, unsupervised trips which are complicated by her young age and her inability to hear.

### **Do the social considerations support, rather than detract from, student learning?**

Extensively

### **Social Considerations Comments:**

While there are some controversial and ethical decisions being made by characters in "Hurt Go Happy", this information does not detract from the overall enjoyment of the story. Descriptive writing is used to display a clear picture of the cage conditions the chimpanzees are in at the testing facility, however, students could discuss the rationale behind this type of situation. There is no violence in this novel; rather, we learn how the main character became hearing impaired through a conversation with another character.

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## **GENERAL CONTENT**

### **Content**

**Is the resource engaging?**

Extensively

**Is the content current for the intended curriculum and grade?**

Extensively

**Is the content accurate for the intended curriculum and grade?**

Extensively

**Is the content timely and important for student broad understandings?**

Moderately

**This resource supports the characteristics of Aboriginal worldviews and perspectives:**

Emphasis on Identity

### **Audience:**

**Is the content appropriate to the emotional maturity and cognitive level of students?**

Extensively

**Does the resource provide opportunities for creative and critical thinking?**

Extensively

**Can the content be differentiated?**

Moderately

**Can reading level be adjusted?**

Not at all or slightly

**Is the level of detail appropriate?**

Extensively

**Is the content of particular interest to male students?**

Moderately

**Is the content of particular interest to female students?**

Extensively

**Is the language use appropriate to the emotional maturity and cognitive level of students?**

Extensively

This novel is inspired by a true story of a chimpanzee that learned sign language and her interactions and effect on the humans around her. Students will have opportunities to critically consider the difficult but important decisions Joey makes throughout the novel and personally consider what they would do in her situation. Joey is a resilient and likeable character who many students will be able to relate to.

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## **TECHNICAL DESIGN**

**Does the resource make effective use of the medium?**

Extensively

**Is the location of illustrations appropriate?**

Moderately

**Is the resource easy to use?**

Extensively

**Is the use of font, text size and presentation uniform?**

Moderately

**Are extraneous elements/illustrations kept to a minimum?**

Extensively

"Hurt Go Happy" has an engaging front cover which intrigues the reader to explore the book. There are a few black and white pictures of chimpanzees on the front cover. Each chapter is numbered and similar in length. At the end of the novel, there is a complete American Sign Language Alphabet and number graphic.

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## **PRINT NOVEL**

**Does the text show insight into the complexity of the human condition?**

Extensively

**Does the text broaden students' experiences and understanding?**

Extensively

**To what degree is this text stylistically rich?**

Moderately

## **Plot description:**

Joey Willis is a 13-year-old girl growing up in Fort Bragg, California. She is similar in nature to many teenage girls, except that she is hearing impaired. Joey lip-reads to try and understand what her family is saying but often struggles to genuinely connect with them. Instead, she regularly leaves her house to explore their wild, forested backyard. On one of these excursions, Joey is on the private property of Dr. Charles Mansell. Initially not pleased with Joey's trespassing, they soon form a unique friendship. Charles has a baby chimpanzee, Sukari, who uses sign language to communicate. Charles and Sukari teach Joey how to sign and soon Joey's world opens up with possibilities.

## **Related Comments:**

"Hurt Go Happy" is a captivating novel for upper elementary and middle school readers. It tells the story of Joey Willis and what it means to have a hearing impairment. The descriptive writing and intimate experiences which Joey has with other prominent characters in the novel reveal her true feelings and passion towards the injustices in our world. Readers will consider the issues of fairness, equality, and animal rights as they learn about Joey and Sukari.

**Genre:**

- Contemporary
- Inspired by a true story

**Literary Highlights:**

- Complex conflict
- Point of view

**Type:**

Novel

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**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS****Readability:**

- At intended grade level(s)

The end of the book includes a Reading and Activity Guide with before and after reading questions. In addition, it includes detailed research and writing activities for classroom and individual student projects. "Hurt Go Happy" is the winner of the Schneider Family Book Award. It is also an International Literacy Association Teachers' Choices selection, a Book Sense Children's Pick, a KLIATT Editor's Choice: Best of the Year's Hardcover YA Fiction selection, and a New York Public Library "Books for the Teen Age" selection.

**Resource URL**

<https://focusedresources.ca/en/k-12-evaluated-resource-collection/hurt-go-happy>