



Retired Ofsted Inspector & Head Teacher

'Roxy says....' by Andrew Samuels

The book reminded me of the wise words I once read:

I'm always amazed
How you stand so very tall,
How you never give in,
You bend, but never fall !

This book is a good attempt to raise children's social awareness, self awareness and relationships management. Through Roxy's stories followed by opportunities of adult led discussions, the children are helped to name and understand feelings and experiences they may be struggling with.

The book addresses many emotions, behavioural and learning challenges that children face. Roxy's stories are designed to support children's mental health and other common challenges like dealing with painful experiences or coping with strong emotions and anxiety. Stories, as we know of numerous family incidents or simple acts of kindness can help children feel connected. This book successfully provides that and more in terms of children's emotional literacy development.

'Roxy's safe place was always her heart...', says a great deal in one of the stories.

A lot depends on how well this book is used to help children's emotional well being.

The book addresses many emotional issues, for example, how to be resilient, persevere and never give up. A child once wrote:

Never give up
It's not always lucky,
Resilience is key,
Even if it's tricky.

I wish Andrew Samuels all the success.

Regards

R. A., Ex Ofsted Inspector.
(26 January 2020)

A Senior Teacher of Key Stage 2 Children

Roxy

In these difficult times, it is imperative that young children have an outlet to discuss their worries and concerns. This book is designed to do just that. Not only is this a book for the present circumstances in which we find ourselves but also one for when we return to what is considered to be 'normal'.

The Coronavirus lockdown may become a catalyst for parents to hear worries and concerns that may have lain dormant and unexpressed in the hustle of everyday normality. Using this book, and in the safety of their own home, children are given the opportunity to start to explore deep emotions and thoughts that may well have, until now, not found an expression. Once they return to school they will also need the emotional tools to adjust to what was once routine but now represents a new beginning.

For those with old worries and former anxieties about school life from which they have taken a break - they will now face the prospect, perhaps unedifying, of a return to the 'old order'. For those children this book represents a god-send. Through the medium of simple everyday stories, the characters with their dog Roxy, encounter everyday situations which troubled them. Roxy is the device by which these children turn and face their fears.

Here is a book which encourages a child to discuss these feelings with a parent, teacher or other appropriate adult. In a non-threatening manner, the open-ended questions at the end of each chapter allow them to think about what they could do to help themselves. It also provides for the adult a safe vehicle to introduce subjects in a non judgemental way.

As a senior teacher of Key stage 2 children I can see how this might prove helpful in a school situation.

- G. M

A Senior Teacher of Key Stage 2 Children
(1st May 2020)

MBACP & Certified Play & Creative Arts Therapist for Children

I was given the book 'Roxy Says' to read by Andrew in conversation he shared how he felt the older generation could help the very young generation and visa versa, being a grandparent I agreed. Andrew felt it would be beneficial for a grandparent to read the book with their grandchild being in a more objective perspective, I thought I would give it a go !

I read the book with my grandson who is 8 years old. As a loving nanna I would explain him as being overly active and full of energy. His true nature is caring loving and thoughtful. As a counsellor I would say he holds anxieties and insecurities that keep him searching for reassurance which he gains through trying to control situations. This leads him to feel frustrated and act out in seeking any attention good or bad, to get that one to one recognition which can be seen as challenging behaviour.

I read a chapter each night as suggested. Having pre read the book I was familiar with the story and used my very best story telling voice and tone to create drama and calmness to enhance its telling. At times I would pause and ask what do you think ? or 'Oh dear can you imagine' ! The highlighted words were helpful to explore and over the days as we read he would seek them out first. I suggested he could draw a picture after we had read, in which he interpreted the story and feelings from what he had heard and his own perspectives. Being 8 years old at times he became fidgety, I would ask him if he wanted to continue, this way he had choice and control.

I felt the book has been very well thought through with adult support questions enabling the reader to have clarity in how to bring out the best from the context. I did have to break down the content at times into 8 year old bite size snippets by pausing and checking he understood other times he was ahead of me. He enjoyed the word dictionary at the back I felt he liked feeling grown up in 'using' the book. The exercise section and action plans support the context while the ethos of the sharing and confiding became very informative. I could see how confused he was in trying to make sense of adult situations and generally a world he has totally no control over. The reactions to life events with the age of emotional and verbal communication as an 8 year old made sense. I feel, the essence of the book really creates a homely picture of a family trying to reassure and be together in acceptance that can come when people share their vulnerabilities. When things are shared open (age appropriate) and spoken about tip toeing round ceases and stops everyone trying to pre-empt and make assumptions that aren't real. Understanding is shared and the vulnerability of Jan and more importantly all the families feelings are enabled to be explored.

I enjoyed the book and the bonding time with my grandson as he invitingly opened up, leading me into his world. I felt he also listened and respected what I had to share my experiences of life and people. What I took away with me most was how articulate and insightful my grandson could be when offered the opportunity to share his thoughts and feelings.

As a counsellor, play and creative arts therapist to adults, children and young people I have a desire to support through varying creative mediums. I feel Roxy say's manages to create inspirational narrative when conjoined with the readers imagination and invaluable own expressed experiences. Its combined outlay, drawings and whole ensemble has been complied with thought compassion and a unity of insightful minds who I feel want to reach out and support others.

- J. M.

MBACP & Certified Play & Creative Arts Therapist for Children and Young People (14th Sept 2019)

Mum with 9yr old daughter

A book essentially about emotions, its narrative follows a dog, Roxy, and its adventures with family and friends. With each chapter representing a specific emotion set in an engaging scenario that a child can relate, the book aims to educate children on various feelings and how they can be managed. Throughout the chapters, specific words are highlighted and these are associated with various emotions felt by different characters. The meaning of the words is found in a glossary at the back of the book.

While reading the book to my daughter, we were able to discuss Roxy's and the other character's reaction to different situations and circumstances. The questions from the guide initiated the start of many conversations regarding emotional wellbeing, which I wouldn't have otherwise had with my 9-year-old daughter.

This book is a good opportunity to delve into the complexities of feelings and emotions in a way which isn't intrusive to children.

- S. M. **Dedicated Mum**, (31st March '19)

Roxy's Workbook Reviews (Cont'd)

**Mum of 7yr old boy
(Read together during
pandemic lockdown)**

5.0 out of 5 stars

An amazingly helpful workbook for children, full of rich language of emotions.

I bought this book to read to my 7 year old son, who is quite a sensitive boy, but also can get emotional and frustrated and didn't know how to deal with his emotions or talk about them.

Not only has the book been really helpful for him but also to me in dealing with my own emotions. It has helped my son access language to describe his emotions and the stories are very engaging with lots of detail and good use of language.

The action plans areas at the end of each chapter were particularly useful, stimulating more discussion of how to apply what we had learnt into our daily lives.

It has also been really helpful to have this book over the period of the lockdown, when my son has had a particularly challenging time being away from his friends.

I would highly recommend this book for reading with children of any age over 5.

- T. Patel.

Mum of 7yr old boy
(20th May 2020)

KS2 Private Tutor

A well written and structured set of stories about Roxy that portray:

1. Humility - a core principle of human behaviour that ensures we are patient and respectful enough to appreciate the positive differences in all of us;
2. Attention - so that we can fully grasp the inter- communication among ourselves;
- 3 - Resilience - so we are aware that there will always be challenges and that giving up is not a favourable option.

This book will engage children well as it uses a wide range of descriptive terms to alert readers about the 'feelings' they are experiencing or showing to others around them.

Would recommend it to children, parents, teachers and anyone working with young people.

- Walter

Tutor (29th July 2020)