



The Adventures
of
Rumi
&
Bixby Bear

Parent's Guide

A discussion guide for
parents, teachers, and children

By
J.R. Rothstein

Inspired by the poetry of
Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī

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A Parent's Guide

Friendship Book

In the story, Grandfather explains that it is important to “be a good friend to others.” Brainstorm with your child ways to “be a good friend.” Then, make a book with each idea on a separate page. Illustrate the ideas. (For example, spending time together, having fun, sharing, respecting differences, sticking up for each other, caring for other’s well-being). Enjoy reading the book and sharing it.

Who Am I? Silhouette

Trace your child’s body on a piece of construction paper/poster board (or tape pieces together). Use markers or paint to outline the silhouette, add facial features (eyes, nose, mouth, hair, etc.) You can also use yarn for the hair. In the middle, write in large letters “Who Am I?” Then, discuss with your child the importance of friendship. Help your child write words to describe them: friendly, good listener, helpful, kind, caring, loving, etc. With various art mediums (crayons, paint, colored pencils, markers), draw and color clothing items (e.g., shirt/pants/shoes, etc.). Then, hang up the silhouette in your house.

Career Bookmarks



Cut tag board or thick construction paper into a rectangle(s). Use a hole-punch in the top-middle of the shape. String yarn through the hole and tie. Have your child draw on their bookmark what their life will be like when they grow up. Maybe your child has several ideas like a policeman, a fireman, a doctor, a vet. Or they might want to be a parent, a sports player or dancer, a bus driver, or a farmer. Draw lots of ideas on the front and back. Then use the bookmark(s) as you enjoy reading other books!

Experience Journals



Either use a ready-made journal or make your own by stapling typing paper together. Decorate the cover. Then, spend time each day writing at least one thing you want to do to “experience great joy in your journey.” Talk about how Rumi did yoga on top of the Great Wall of China and how she floated on top of the water in the Dead Sea in Israel/Jordan. Add a picture. Each week, review the book and begin to plan to do some of the experiences.

Grateful Jar



Each day, write down one thing that you are grateful for on a slip of paper and place in the jar. Other members of the family can join in the activity, too. Before you know it, your jar will be full, and you can see so many things in this world to be grateful for on “our journey in life.”

Make a Difference Day



Establish a routine (first Saturday of the month, every Monday afternoon, 1 activity each season, etc.) and help someone in the family, neighborhood, or community. Point out the importance to be patient and to love and care from your heart, lessons that Rumi learned in the book. Activities might be cleaning out the basement or garage. Maybe a neighbor needs some yard work done or their dog walked. You might organize a canned food drive for your community or a collection of dog food for the local humane society. You might visit a nursing home and spend time reading or playing bingo with the residents. Or make cards and deliver them to a hospital, etc.

Teaching Exchange

What can you teach someone? What do you want to learn? Emphasize that everyone has something to teach and everyone has something to learn. Talk about the qualities of patience. Then help your child find something to teach someone. Ask them some things they would like to learn and help them experience new learning. Throughout the teaching exchange, talk about the role of patience and the excitement of teaching and learning.