**Title: Invisible Jerry**

**Author: Adam Wallace**

**Illustrator: Giuseppe Poli**

**Publisher: EK Books**

**Price: $24.99**

**ISBN: 978-1-925335-78-1**

**Publication date: November 2018**

**Audience age: 4+**

**Key Curriculum Areas: Arts, English, Ethics,
 Respectful Relationships**



**SYNOPSIS:**

Jerry feels invisible. He never gets seen, or heard, or noticed … until Molly comes along. That’s when Jerry realises that not only can he be seen, but he can change someone else’s life too!

**THEMES:**

All kids are superheroes, sometimes they just need someone to see them.

Feeling invisible

Friendship

Inclusiveness and rejection

**SELLING POINTS:**

* In today’s busy, cliquey world it’s all too easy for kids to feel like they don’t matter, that they’re not one of the crowd, that they’re ‘invisible’. This is the perfect book to offer them hope and show them that they *do* matter, and that the right people will *see* them.
* Written by award-winning and best-selling author Adam Wallace, and inspired by his own experiences as a child, this is story that comes straight from the heart.
* A valuable resource for teachers, parents and counsellors.
* Incorporates the idea of ‘paying it forward’, a concept made popular by the film of the same name, that taps into the power of kindness and generosity — key elements in developing emotional resilience.

**WRITING STYLE:**

Gentle with a touch of whimsy

**ILLUSTRATION STYLE:**

Tender and emotional imagery created with pencils, watercolours and digital.

**AUTHOR MOTIVATION:**

To write a story for the kids that feel left out, that feel like they don’t have a voice, and for them to see that maybe, sometimes, it’s just that the wrong people are listening.

**AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR BACKGROUND:**

*Author* — Adam Wallace’s background is a fridge, a pantry and a slight view of a corridor. He is also a *New York Times* and *USA Today* bestselling author based in Melbourne. Adam’s books have sold over 900,000 copies, and have been shortlisted for awards in Australia and America. Adam used to be an engineer and Primary School teacher, until he realised both of those jobs required writing reports, and he doesn’t like writing reports. So he turned to children’s books instead!

*Illustrator* — When Giuseppe was a little boy he loved solving problems, making cool drawings, stories and games. He loved movies so much that when he grew up he started a long, wandering adventure into computer graphics, games, feature film visual effects and IT but he then realised he was missing something — he wanted to make his own stories. After searching for new paths, Giuseppe soon found his home in Children’s Literature — he is feverishly illustrating and writing stories and can’t wait to delight people for many more years to come.

**INTERVIEW:**

**AUTHOR**

**What is the inspiration for this story?**

I was speaking to a child who had played basketball at school that day, and she was saying that no one ever passed the ball to her. It got me thinking that a lot of kids would feel that way, that no matter what they do, it feels like they aren’t seen, by other kids, by teachers, or even by family. Those kids have a voice that is just as important as anyone else’s, and I wanted this to be a book to let them know that. To let them know that there are people out there who will hear and see them, and to let them know that their thoughts and ideas and jokes are worthy.

**What was the most rewarding part of this project?**

Writing it. And seeing it come to life with Giuseppe’s illustrations.

**What was the most challenging part of this project?**

I generally, well pretty much always, write stories that are light, funny, and a little bit crazy, so this was a departure from that. The biggest challenge was writing a story that not only got across the message I wanted to, but that also was interesting enough and light enough that children would enjoy reading it. Because if they don’t enjoy it, the message is redundant anyway.

**ILLUSTRATOR**

**What media do you use to create your illustrations? Briefly describe your process.**

I used pencils and watercolours on multiple sheets of paper and then collaged them all together using Photoshop. This way I was able to experiment freely with different line styles and approaches with paint. I really wanted to create an emotional experience and in most instances didn’t really know how I was going to do it. The computer allowed me to have the freedom to make mistakes at all stages of the process without having to lose too much time correcting them or exploring other ways to solve it.

**What was the most rewarding part of this project?**

Well, I’d have to say two things. Firstly, receiving Adam’s text. I was completely captured and moved by the text and felt so privileged to be asked to help bring his text to life. Secondly, actually finishing the project. After my initial reaction to the text and how I strongly I felt, I then realised how big a challenge this was going to be — I felt I had to dig deeper and reach higher than I had ever before.

**What was the most challenging part of this project?**

When I read Adam’s text I felt so strongly about its expansive and hopeful message. The message was bigger than just two characters. I started to think about who this book was for and I wanted it to be for everyone. How could I create imagery that connected with not just those that feel invisible, but all those around them?

One of the key ideas was what does Molly do? How does she make Jerry feel visible … and could other kids do this? I felt that it wasn’t what she said; it was that she saw him and then she listened. I loved the simplicity of this … because in this age of superheroes with superpowers, many kids can come to the rescue for those kids that feel invisible. We are superheroes. We already have super powers. We can use our eyes and then we can use our ears … and for those that feel invisible, that is life changing.

**TEACHER ACTIVITIES/NOTES (with links to the Foundation-2 Victoria Curriculum)**

Respectful Relationships

Personal and Social Capability

Ethical Capability

Arts

English

(VCPSCSE001 and VCPSCSO007 and VCPSCSE008) Read the story and stop on each page to identify the specific emotions felt by each character. Use a different coloured post-it note for each emotion, or for each character.

(VCECU001 and VCECD002 and VCECD003 and VCAMUE017) Choose two pages (such as the sporting teams pages) and have students add sound effects to this, exploring the Foundation Respectful Relationships question — what do emotions sound like?

(VCPSCSE002 and VCPSCSO012 and VCADRE017 and VCADRE021 and VCADRD018 and VCADRD022) Explore the ways students would respond if they were in Jerry’s situation. What would they do differently? What about if they were a different character? How could they make a lonely student feel included? Use role-plays to delve into the intricacies of the various characters.

(VCPSCSE003 and VCPSCSO005 and VCPSCSO006) Make a list of games that can be played by big groups, and modify small group games to suit a larger group. Brainstorm all the games that can be played by the whole class, so that everyone is able to participate. Spend some time playing inclusive games, and make time to reflect on how it felt to all be involved.

(VCPSCS0015) Make a list of people Jerry could ask for help, if he were at your school. Also list the ways help can be sought using appropriate questions. Role-play the various ways these discussions can be conducted, and how one should respond when someone is seeking help.

(VCELY154) Prior to reading, have students suggest whether the book is imaginative or informative, and ask them to justify their predictions. What would an imaginative text typically include?

(VCELT148) During the reading, stop and have students measure their own relationship with Jerry. Have they felt this way? When? How? In what ways are they similar or different to Jerry, or the other characters?

(VCELT159 and VCELT173 and VCELY174 and VCELY175) After reading, ask students to retell or recreate the text. They may do this using role-plays, music, drawings, verbally or in a modified written piece. They may do this from the perspective of Jerry, or another character. They could perhaps modify the ending, or change the way in which the story reaches its’ happy ending.

(VCPSCSE009 and VCPSCSE002 and VCPSCSO006 and VCPSCSO012 and VCPSCSO013) After reading, have the children give positive statements about Jerry, Molly and Paul. Have each child write one positive thing (Anastasia is funny, Tracey is nice, etc) about every other child in the class. Collate the statements and make a poster for each child with all the positive things other kids see in them. If something is repeated more than once, put it in more than once!

**Questions/comprehension, connections, etc**

Why do you think the first page is mostly in black and white? Why is Jerry in colour?

‘He never got picked last for sports teams …’ Why do you think this sentence ends in … ?

And why does it stop before you turn the page?

Why would getting picked last be a bad thing?

The story says Jerry wouldn’t want to stand out. Why do you think this is?

It says, ‘Until Molly came along.’ What does Molly do to make Jerry feel special?

What connection can you make with the things Molly does to what happened to Jerry earlier in the book?

Why does everybody need a Molly? Why can’t everybody *have* a Molly?

Why don’t you think Paul gets found? Is it because he’s so good? Or some other reason?

How can you tell Paul’s vote doesn’t count towards the total?

What is similar about what happens to Paul that we have seen before?

Another boy has joined the group on the last page. Have you seen him anywhere else in the book before this?