

Book review



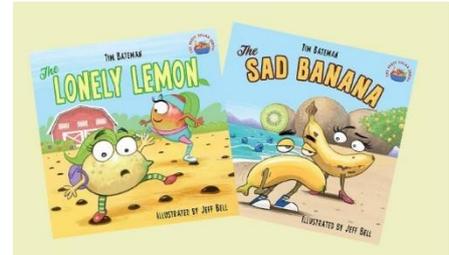
The Lonely Lemon & The Sad Banana (Fruit Salad series)

Author: Tim Bateman and Jeff Bell

Year: 2023

Publisher: David Bateman Ltd

ISBN: 9781776890521



These are pretty cute books – fun colours, rhymes and pictures that support our tamariki to understand emotions. It also introduces some ideas that help them process and navigate their emotions. There are many important topics inside these cute books, for sure!

Bateman weaves a story around each of his fruit characters that makes them relatable for tamariki and supports them to empathise with themselves and others. Parents and teachers offer support to Bowie Banana and Lulu Lemon, which really helps tamariki to think about their network of people who care.

These books include some hefty concepts. Through Bowie Banana's journey, we learn that we can choose how we respond to situations and challenges. While Lulu Lemon discovers that differences are okay, and finding people with similar interests supports us to flourish. The strategies offered feel eminently doable inside these stories. Using fruit as characters allows parents and teachers kōrero points while preparing kai, or as opportunities to remember the stories and their key 'ingredients' ((points) – but did you see what I did there!?). And bananas beautifully demonstrate a smile, or frown, hey?

I like that these books are written by a New Zealand Rugby Union player. Bateman has played across the Crusaders, Hurricanes, Māori All Blacks and the Coca-Cola Red Sparks in Japan. While Bateman humbly hasn't added that into the books' covers or introductions, it is actually a great way to introduce the books and ideas – we need to know that we all have low times and experience difficult emotions, and that it's kei te pai to do so. I think this supports more of our tamariki to kōrero and seek support from their networks with their challenges. I'm looking forward to reading more inside this Fruit Salad Series!

Anna Mowat has a background in psychology and works across many national projects which support children's wellbeing. She works under her business name Real Collective.

Disclaimer: Please note these reviews are not intended as endorsements or recommendations from the Mental Health Foundation. This feature introduces resources that may be useful for individuals with an interest in mental health and wellbeing topics.