

EVERYDAY SKILL BUILDERS

The Phoenix Five teaching needs literacy



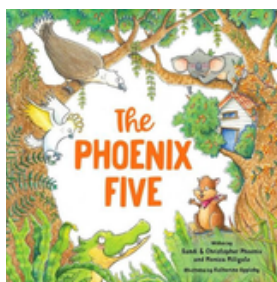
3 MINUTE VIDEO
TUTORIAL HERE

The Phoenix 5 is a story about five friends building a treehouse together. But underneath that story is something much more powerful – an introduction to the idea that every person has needs, that those needs look different in each of us, and that difference is something worth celebrating.

Before children can build emotional literacy, they need something more foundational: a language for needs. This guide helps you unlock that layer, one read at a time.

INTRODUCE THE CHARACTERS

Before you read the book to children, become familiar with the characters and their strengths.



- Saffi Koala loves routine, comfort, safety and predictably
- Marli Croc has a checklist, a plan, and the drive to get the job done
- Cody Quokka makes sure everyone has a role and feels included
- Flo Cockatoo brings the joy – if it isn't fun, Flo will make it fun!
- Frankie Sea Eagle loves exploration. He's full of big creative ideas.

"Each of these characters has different strengths and needs – do any of these five friends sound like someone you know?"

WHILE YOU'RE READING – THREE SIMPLE MOVES

1

Name the strength out loud. As each character appears, pause and notice what they bring. "Wow, look at Marli go – she has got a checklist for everything! She really wants this treehouse to be just right." You don't need to use the word "need" yet. Just build familiarity with who each character is.

2

Celebrate the differences. When the characters do things differently, make that visible. "Cody wants to make sure everyone has a job. Flo just wants everyone to have fun. They both care – just in different ways. Isn't that interesting?"

This is where the seeds of empathy and respect for diversity get planted.

3

Connect to someone they know. "Does Frankie remind you of anyone? Someone who loves to explore and come up with big ideas?" Children light up when they see people they love in these characters. It makes needs feel real, not abstract.

AFTER THE BOOK IS WELL KNOWN – BRING IT INTO REAL LIFE

Once children know and love these characters, you have a shared language you can reach for in everyday moments – especially tricky ones.

For understanding a friend:

"Remember how Cody always wants to make sure everyone feels included? I wonder if Maya is feeling a bit like Cody right now – like she just wants to be involved?"

For conflict resolution:

Child: "Tom keeps bossing me around!"

You: "Oh, I wonder if Tom has a big plan and really wants to see it through – a bit like Marli? What if we helped Tom feel like his plan matters, and found a way for your idea to be part of it too?"

Curiosity before judgement. Understanding before solutions. When children learn to wonder about what someone else needs, problem solving becomes something they do together – not something that's done to them.

A NOTE ON NEEDS PROFILES

The Phoenix 5 characters are a wonderful introduction to the idea that people have different needs – but in real life, we all have all five needs. No child is just one character. The beauty of this book is that it opens the conversation, not closes it. Use the characters as a bridge, not a label.

Notes and Reflections

