



THINGS MY PA TOLD ME

TEACHERS NOTES

Written by Anthony Bertini
Illustrated by Jonathan Bentley

Published by Hardie Grant Egmont in August 2018

SYNOPSIS

A meditation on fatherhood, and a timeless story that will resonate with fathers across the generations.

As a day unfolds in a quiet Italian village, a father encapsulates his hopes and dreams for his young child. Wise, moving and inspirational, *Things My Pa Told Me* is the perfect story for fathers to share with their children.





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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Anthony Bertini has spent most of his career at the leading edge of business and science innovation. His belief in the knowledge and wisdom of others inspired him to write his first children's book

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

As a little boy, **Jonathan Bentley** liked football and drawing. When he was about eight years old he realised he wasn't going to be good enough to play football for Leeds United, so he concentrated on drawing instead.

When he left school he studied at Brighton Polytechnic. Jonathan worked as a builder's labourer and kitchen hand for many years before he became a full-time illustrator, and he worked in London and Sydney before moving to Brisbane, Australia.

Jonathan was an editorial illustrator at the Courier Mail newspaper for ten years, and has illustrated books for Margaret Wild, The Wiggles, Andrew Daddo and Shaun Micallef.



Jonathan likes to work with a range of materials including acrylics, oils, and line and watercolour, and he looks forward to the day when he has a big barn-like studio somewhere in the countryside.





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THEMES

- Families
- Relationships and the ways they change over the years
- Growing up
- Becoming independent

WRITING STYLE

Things My Pa Told Me is written in the style of a letter from a father to his child. It's highly illustrated, with minimal text; indeed, the majority of the narrative is told through the illustrations.

Things My Pa Told Me is subtle in its delivery but packs a big emotional punch: with each life lesson shared, a father shares not only his wisdom but also his hopes and dreams for his child. Through the illustrations it's evident that these timeless insights have been passed down through the generations – from a father to his son, and then to the son's own child – and that they are intended to be advice that will help the child even when the adults are no longer present.

STUDY NOTES AND ACTIVITIES

- Where In The World – ask students to guess where this book is set. Why do they think the book is set in that particular place? What clues can be found in the illustrations to learn the location of this text?
- Ask students to name the child portrayed in the book. Why do they think the author has not named the child? What things do students notice and learn about the child? What do they imagine about the child? Have students write a character profile for the child in the story. How do they think the child has benefitted from the advice in the narrative?
- Ask students if they have ever visited a farm or lived on a farm. How was their farm experience the same as the child's experience in the book? How was it different?
- A cat appears in the book only once. Ask students if they can recall which illustration the cat appears in, and what its role is in the narrative.
- There is only a single illustration in which the dog does not appear. Ask students if they can recall which illustration the dog is missing from, and why they think the dog is not pictured there.



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- Ask students to make a list naming as many of the fruits and vegetables in the book as they can.
- Ask students to make up their own narrative for the illustrations. How would they tell the story differently based on the illustrations?
- Ask students to write a letter to their parent, carer or grandparent. What would they like them to know about themselves? What advice would they give their parent, carer or grandparent?

