

Equity 8™

The gender-equity rating

The Big Honey Hunt (A Berenstain Bears' picture book)

Written and illustrated by Stan and Jan Berenstain, Copyright 1962

Rating: 1 out of 8 stars



Met criterion = 1

Did not meet criterion = 0

Egregiously did not meet criterion = - 1

What to look for	Example(s)	Rating	Explanation of rating and recommendations
<p>Did the author tell the entire story without mentioning gender? (Just by mentioning gender we communicate that it's someone's most important quality and activate stereotypes.)</p>	<p>No gendered words, such as she, he, girl, boy, mommy, daddy, etc.</p>	<p>-1</p>	<p>Gendered words are used. Male-related words are used an excessive 23 times. ("He," 9 times; "Dad," 10 times; "Pop," two times; and "his," two times.) Female-related words are used 1 time.</p> <p>The authors omit the important work of female bees by calling the bee a "he" throughout the story. The contributions of female animals (outside of raising young) are too often overlooked. Children need to be taught that all bees outside the hive, flying from flower to flower, are females.</p> <p>It's good that the child is called "Small Bear" and not "Boy Bear."</p>

<p>Did the artist illustrate the entire story without contributing to gender stereotypes?</p>	<p>No pink, bows, or exaggerated eyelashes, etc. on girls. No blue, ball caps, etc. on boys, (Length of hair alone is not enough to exclude a book from this criterion. Authors often want/need to differentiate between characters. Hair is one way to do so that is less loaded with negative stereotyping.)</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>Mother Bear wears a dress and apron, stays at home the entire story, and is merely a secondary character.</p>
<p>Is there counterstereotyping? (Note: not mentioning gender counters stereotypes as it puts gender in the background.)</p>	<p>Are stereotypes challenged by showing the opposite? Examples are showing a boy happily cuddling a baby or a girl swinging a bat with expert skill.</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>Even if the reader makes Small Bear a “she,” stereotypes are not countered. Small Bear merely follows Dad around.</p>
<p>Are characters with different gender representations interacting with mutual respect, skill, and admiration? (Or are the characters neutrally drawn so we can create the above dynamic ourselves?)</p>	<p>Are girls and boys both shown using tools while building something? Do they smile at each other? Do they treat each other like a peer (and not an/a inferior or superior)?</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>Small Bear does not interact with another small bear.</p>

<p><i>Does the girl character have agency?</i></p>	<p><i>Is her body shown in motion? Is she making something happen through her efforts? Can you see her straining her muscles in active movement?</i></p>		<p><i>Small Bear is a follower of Dad, so agency doesn't come across. Though Small Bear is never called a "he," so we could make the character a girl. (Note: in later Berenstain books, however, "Sister Bear" is added in pink clothes with a pink bow on her head. This demonstrates that Small Bear was meant to be a boy in the authors' eyes.)</i></p>
<p><i>Does the book's story represent any of the Guiding Principles?</i></p>		<p>0</p>	<p><i>Bravado doesn't align with the Guiding Principles. Also the story guides us to laugh at the dad rather than empathize with him learning from his missteps. There is also a hierarchy present as Small Bear is not invited to collaborate or brainstorm with the dad.</i></p>
<p><i>Are girls the main characters or do they share the spotlight equally with boy characters?</i></p>		<p>1</p>	<p><i>Yes, if we make Small Bear a "she" and refer to her frequently in the story while reading to children. Ideally, we want to make the bee a "she," too.</i></p> <p><i>Mom is not included enough in the plot.</i></p>
<p><i>Is the writer and/or illustrator a woman?</i></p>		<p>1</p>	

