



DRUM ROLL PLEASE... IT'S STEVIE LOUISE TANYA HENNESSY

May 2021
ISBN 9781760526412
Format: Paperback
Recommended for 7 to 11 year olds

Summary

Meet Stevie Louise. She is an entrepreneur (that's like a business person), an entertainer (obviously), and an extrovert on the inside (wait, is this a thing?).

Stevie has a BRILLIANT PLAN. She's going to have fun, make money, and most importantly, make sure the Brooke Street kids stay best friends forever. Then a new neighbour arrives and threatens to derail all Stevie's plans. And then real disaster strikes. But the show must go on. After all, Stevie is a professional.

A gloriously warm, funny and relatable story from much-loved comedian, writer, radio announcer and social media sensation Tanya Hennessy.

Author Style

The story starts, hilariously, with Stevie Louise trying to reason with her two-year-old brother who is riding the family cat like a horse. Hers is a thoroughly Gen Z voice ('...respect my boundaries...'), and it is clear she has no time for an ignorant, smelly, sticky, cat-riding brother when her own concerns are so important ('I AM TRYING TO RUN A BUSINESS in here').

Tanya Hennessy is adept at making Stevie Louise a thoroughly engaging and funny first-person narrator. And the use of bold and enlarged capitals and italics serve to provide a comic book feel, with Leigh Hedstrom's bold illustrations helping to set the mood and enhance the action.

But *Drum Roll Please, It's Stevie Louise* is much more than just a funny story. Although her friends and family see her as an extravert, Stevie Louise is beset by insecurity in front of strangers and this story is about her learning to overcome anxiety and become the person she wants to be in front of everyone.

Visit <https://www.allenandunwin.com/resources/for-teachers> for free downloadable teachers' notes, reviews by teachers, extracts and more. Sign up to receive the Allen & Unwin e-newsletter for monthly updates on new resources!
Contact Carolyn Walsh, Education Marketing Manager: Tel: +02 8425 0150, Email: education@allenandunwin.com

Themes

Friendship, family, community, anxiety, courage and emotional honesty.

Suggestions for Classroom Discussion and Application

Before reading

Look at the book's cover and try to guess what sort of person you think Stevie Louise might be. Does the expression on her face, her clothes (including mismatched socks), hair and untied boot laces provide any clues?

What do the words 'Drum Roll Please...' suggest about her and the story ahead? Do you think this is going to be a funny or serious book? How did the title, font, colour and image help you decide the answer to the previous question?

After Reading

- Which member of the Brooke Street Crew would you most like to have as a friend, and what is it about that particular character you liked?
- Do you feel like Stevie is like you in any way? How is she different to you?
- What do you think Addison learned from Stevie and what do you think Stevie learned from Addison?
- Do you think that Stevie is closer to being ready for high school by the end of the story? Why?
- Retell the story from Addison's viewpoint. How does the story change when you see it from another perspective?
- What did you think was the funniest part of the story?
- Why do you think Stevie's production of *Cinderella: Sea What Happens* was such a hit at the Peach Centre?
- Why is the title of Stevie's play a pun? Can you think of any other puns?
- If you could ask the author one question, what would it be?

Visual Literacy

Sometimes the way words are shown on a page help tell the story. Turn to pages 62-63 and find examples of text:

- in upper case
- in bold
- italicised
- in a different font to the rest of the words in the sentence
- larger than the rest of the words in the sentence

Explain why you think these changes were made and how they affected the way you read the story.

Characterisation

'Like I said, I'm a bit shy – especially at school. But I'm not shy inside. I'm fine with the Brooke Street gang and people who know me. I wish I could be that Stevie everywhere.' (page 15)

- Make a list of the times that Stevie feels shy and uncomfortable in the story.
- Why do you think staging the play with her old friends – and Addison – helped her overcome her anxiety?
- Do you think that becoming 'that Stevie everywhere' made her a happier person? Why?
- Turn to pages 98-99 and study the image of the Brooke Street Crew reacting to the news that Addison is their new neighbour and will be joining them in the production. What does each thought bubble and image tell you about each character?

Creative Writing and Drama

Work in a group of three or four to write a play that can be performed in front of your class. Before you begin consider:

- What sort of play you would like it to be. Funny or serious?
- Will it be a well-known play that you will change or something completely original?
- Who is your audience and why might they like to see this particular play?
- What is the moral or lesson of the play?
- How many roles will be needed?
- Whose job it is to put dialogue and scene instructions down on paper.

Now begin to write. Remember, a good play should have a beginning (where you introduce characters) a middle (where you build up events and introduce problems that the characters might face) and ending (where the problems are resolved).

Once finished divide responsibilities such as:

- Who will be the play's director?
- Who will be responsible for the 'look' of the stage?
- Who will be the 'star' and who will have lesser roles?
- Are costumes necessary and who will provide them?

Remember: Rehearse several times so everyone knows their lines and where they should be on the stage.

About the author

If Amy Schumer and Rebel Wilson had a love child, you'd get Tanya Hennessy – comedian, radio announcer and social media sensation. Originally from Newcastle, Tanya started in radio in 2012. Since then she has become an international social media sensation; written her first book, bestseller *Am I Doing This Right?*; become an ambassador for Priceline Pharmacy; sold out 27 venues for her first comedy show *Low Expectations*; and appeared on *I'm a Celebrity, Get Me Out of Here!* In 2017 Tanya's rising star was recognized when she won the Junkee Award for Breakthrough Artist, was nominated for Cosmo Woman of the Year, selected to perform at Australia's first VIDCON and won best radio documentary at the Australian Commercial Radio Awards. Talented and hilarious, Tanya is a true multi-media star.



In the author's own words

'I wrote Stevie because I wanted to write a female character who was relatable and led by ambition. Not love. So, Stevie's funny, fierce and passionate, and she's a kid who wants to create.'

'I also wanted to write something real about teamwork, overcoming adversity and relationships. It's a mix of some of my favourite books like *Hating Alison Ashley* and *Babysitters Club*.'

- Tanya Hennessy