

A TRIP TO THE HOSPITAL

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Recommended for 3 to 7 years old

Summary

Going to hospital might seem scary or worrying – you might be hurt, you might feel sick or maybe you just have to visit a friend. But don't be worried! Hospitals are amazing places filled with clever people all doing incredible things, including making you feel better. Follow Momo, Rani and Henry on three very different adventures inside a busy children's hospital.

A picture book that shows children all the interesting things that happen inside a hospital, helping them feel safe and secure, and ready for their first visit.

Themes

Health, hospitals, safety, family, pandemic, illness, cancer and disability.

About the author

Freda Chiu is a Sydney-based freelance illustrator and educator at the University of Technology, Sydney. Her work can be found in books and magazines, in festival graphics, public spaces and in retail. *A Trip to the Hospital* is her debut picture book.

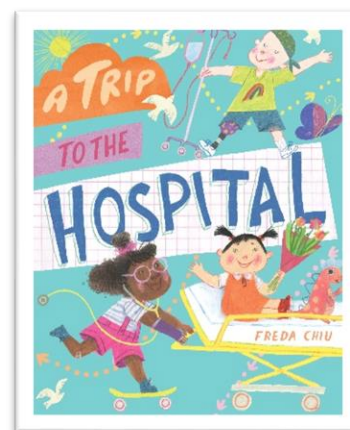


Suggestions for Classroom Discussion and Application

Before reading

- Gauge your class's knowledge about hospitals by asking the following questions:
 - What is a hospital?
 - What are some of the reasons why people go to hospitals?
 - Lots of people work in hospitals. Can you name some of the different jobs people do there?
 - Has anyone in the class been to a hospital to visit someone? Would you like to share what you learned when you were there?
 - Has anyone in the class been to a hospital as a patient? Would you like to share what you learned when you were there?

- Now show the cover of *A Trip to the Hospital* to your class and ask them to look closely at the images, colours and fonts used. Ask them:



- Does this cover make you think that going to hospital will be a scary experience?
 - What is it about the cover specifically that made you think that? [You may need to provide some scaffolds by suggesting they think about the colours used, the looks on the kids' faces, the font or shape of the words in the title, the presence of a shining sun, butterflies and birds.]
 - Can you find clues as to why the children on the cover might need to visit a hospital? [Hint: the boy is wearing a scarf on his head and looks like he might not have hair, a common feature of serious illnesses such as cancer. He also has a prosthetic leg and is attached to an IV machine. The girl on the skateboard has a cast on her arm, so she may have broken it.]
- Turn to the book's front endpapers (the double-page leaves on the inside of the front cover) and ask students where you might normally see messages and images like this. [Hint: Get well cards from friends and family.]



- After reading the story through once ask the following comprehension questions:
 1. There are two* ways you can enter a hospital. One is when you have an appointment like Henry and you go through the Main Entrance, and the other is where Momo and Rani enter. What is the name of that entrance? (*Note to teachers: hospital entry protocols might change depending on the state of the pandemic)
 2. What are the three rules you must follow when you enter a hospital?
 3. Why does a triage nurse ask you how you feel when you enter Emergency? Why do you think Momo, who is having trouble breathing, gets to see the doctor before Rani, who has a broken arm?
 4. Other than her height and weight and oxygen levels, what does the nurse check before Momo sees Doctor Frances?
 5. Why does Henry have to go to the hospital if he was sick the year before? What sort of things does Henry do while he is at the hospital?
 6. Jonny is a physiotherapist, which means he helps Henry build his walking muscles with lots of exercises. True or False?
 7. Rani needs to have an operation in hospital so she has to see lots of people, such as:
 - a s_____ [surgeon]
 - an a_____ [anaesthetist]
 - a p_____ [porter]
 - a n_____ [nurse]
 - a r_____ [radiographer]
 8. Is Rani awake during her surgery?
 9. Where does Rani wake up after her surgery?
 10. Hospitals have fun places to play and learn. True or False?
- Explain to students that words aren't always necessary – or the best way – to present information. Turn to the double page spread with the words *It's a BIG place* in the centre. Read the text out loud but give students an opportunity to study each of the images and, in a whole class discussion, ask them to list the reasons why the people in each frame have come to the hospital. [Hint: to have a baby, to visit patients, to get their teeth checked, to have scans, to have their eyes checked, for an operation.]
- The **Did You Know** section mentions that Australian hospital worker uniforms are colour-coded. Explain to students that that means you can tell what a person's job is by the colour of their uniform. Now ask them to go back to the story and see if they can discover the colours for a nurse, doctor, physiotherapist, cleaner and porter. [Note to teacher: Sometimes these colours can differ from hospital to hospital, the ones shown in this book are close to the NSW health guidelines. Sometimes, children's hospitals also allow staff to wear 'fun scrubs' too, which have cute patterns on them!]
- Why it is important for hospital workers to be easily identified, especially in a busy environment like the emergency department or during surgery?

- The **Did You Know** section also features photos of some of the people the characters within the story are based on. These characters help Henry, Rani and Momo. Ask students to write a short description of what each of these people do in the story but be careful to explain that not all of these people are easy to find and they will have to search extra hard for Paul, Eugene and Mary-Kate. [Hint: Paul is the doctor treating Momo in the Ward scene, Eugene is the doctor who treated Henry's bone cancer, and Mary-Kate is the triage nurse.]
- Doctors and scientists are amazing people who not only help people get better in hospitals, but also invent things that prevent people getting sick in the first place or help them to recover better. Ask students to research one of the inventions mentioned in the **Did You Know** section – spray-on skin, bionic eye, electronic pacemaker, bionic ear/cochlear implant, anti-cancer vaccine – and prepare a 1-minute talk to the class about what the invention is, who was responsible for inventing it and how it has helped people.
- Turn to the book's back endpapers and discuss who might be writing messages of thanks and who the messages might be for.

In the author's own words

'There were many challenges I faced creating this book, including the problem of how to write and visualise a book about hospitals when there were restrictions in place during a pandemic that meant I couldn't enter a hospital unless I was a patient or a visitor! I also had to think long and hard about how many child protagonists are necessary to highlight the most common reasons for children going to hospital without making the text and visuals confusing. I was also very aware of the need to strike a balance between making the hospital space look exciting and clinical. This was particularly important because I wanted the book to be inclusive of both children's hospitals (which are designed to be very colourful and child-friendly) and adult public hospitals that house a paediatric ward, which can be more daunting.



'My healthcare worker-friends and family were crucial in helping me decide these factors during our personal interviews and/or proofreading my drafts. My consultants included Dr Frances Yuen (a paediatric doctor who had worked at Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick), Mary-Kate Moylan (an Emergency Department nurse at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital), Jonathan Young (Team Leader Physiotherapist at Westmead Hospital), Dr Eugene Moylan (Head of Oncology at Liverpool Hospital), and Dr Paul Chay (Head of Paediatrics at Liverpool Hospital). My drafts were also read by a disability sensitivity reader, Jessica Walton, to ensure that my book is as inclusive and sensitive as possible. I was even lucky to get a guided tour of the Paediatric Ward and Emergency Department from Dr Chay, which was fundamental to helping me visualise the hospital space and resolve some of my narrative issues.'

– Freda Chiu