

A Choose to Read Ohio Toolkit

Use this toolkit to plan book discussions, library programs, or classroom activities.

Meet Ohio resident, *New York Times* bestselling author, and award-winning cartoonist Terri Libenson.

Select from a range of discussion questions and extension activities to deepen the experience of reading *Invisible Emmie*.

Discover interviews, readalikes, websites, and other resources to explore topics and themes in depth.

Invisible Emmie

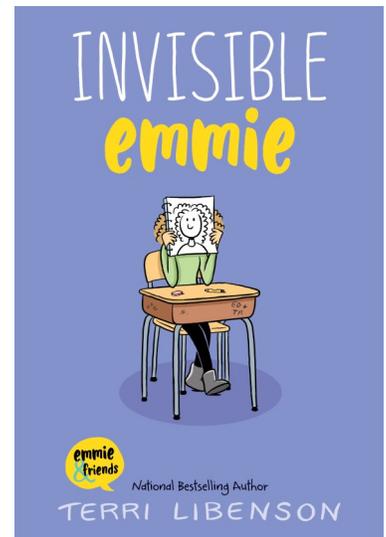
By Terri Libenson



About the Book

This is the story of two totally different girls—quiet, shy, artistic Emmie popular, outgoing, athletic Katie—and how their lives unexpectedly intersect one day, when an embarrassing note falls into the wrong hands. . . .

All the crushes, humiliations, boredom, and drama of middle school are compressed into one surprising day in this extraordinary novel about flying under the radar yet wanting to be heard and acknowledged—and about having the courage to express yourself.



Book jacket image and book description courtesy of HarperCollins. Used with permission.

Book Details

Invisible Emmie by Terri Libenson
Balzer + Bray (An Imprint of HarperCollins Publishers), 2017. ISBN 9780062484949.
192 pages. Ages 8–12.
Leveled Reading: AR Points 2.0. ATOS Book Level 3.8. 570 Lexile.

www.harpercollins.com/products/invisible-emmie-terri-libenson?variant=33007663317026

Available as an ebook through the Ohio Digital Library: ohiodigitallibrary.com

Terri Libenson's *Emmie & Friends* series continues the stories of Lakefront Middle School students in *Positively Izzy*, *Just Jaime*, *Becoming Brianna*, and *Truly Tyler*. The books can be read in order as a series or individually as stand-alones.





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“There are a whole lot of books about kids who are outcasts. . . . It’s all good, but what about books starring other kinds of kids? . . . The ones who are maybe . . . heroes-in-waiting. And what if this “hero” isn’t picked on? What if the hero just goes . . . unnoticed?”

About the Author

Terri Libenson (pronounced LEE-ben-son) is a *New York Times* bestselling children’s book author and award-winning cartoonist of the syndicated daily comic strip, *The Pajama Diaries*, which ran from 2006-2020. She was also an award-winning humorous card writer for American Greetings.

Terri graduated from Washington University in St. Louis with a BFA in illustration and a minor in art history. She developed her first professional comic strip, *Got a Life*, in 2000, which was distributed by King Features Weekly Service. *The Pajama Diaries* launched with King Features in 2006 and ran in hundreds of newspapers internationally until its retirement in January, 2020. *Pajama Diaries* has been nominated four times for the Reuben Award for “Best Newspaper Comic Strip” by the National Cartoonists Society and won in 2016. You can read the *Pajama Diaries* archives daily on [ComicsKingdom](http://ComicsKingdom.com).

Born and raised in Kingston, Pennsylvania, Terri lives with her husband and two daughters in Cleveland.

Author Resources

Terri Libenson’s official website
terrilibenson.com

Watch Terri Libenson’s *Invisible Emmie* interview for the 2018 Ohioana Book Festival:
www.youtu.be/twHFBsPvyZY

See Terri Libenson draw Emmie and Katie from *Invisible Emmie*:
www.youtu.be/H1ul60ozKhq

For publicity and speaking engagement inquiries:
Contact Mitchell Thorpe at HarperCollins Children’s Books:
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Talk About It!

Topics to share when discussing *Invisible Emmie* with young readers.

Educators: Every CTRO book may be used to support Ohio’s English Language Arts reading, writing, and speaking and listening standards. See examples below. Other Learning Standards such as Social and Emotional: Self Awareness and Social and Emotional Learning: Relationship Skills may also apply. Discussion questions and educational activities for *Invisible Emmie* align with Learning Standards for Grades 3-5.

Librarians, parents, and others: These activities are also for library programs, family activities, and other projects. Learning Standards define what students should know and be able to do at each grade. For more information, see the Ohio Department of Education website, education.ohio.gov. From the Topics dropdown menu, click on “Learning in Ohio.”

Spoiler warning! Some discussion questions refer to key elements in the book. Do not read if you do not want to find out what happens.

Talk About It! (continued)

- Compare the different writing styles used in the Emmie and Katie chapters. Why do you think the author did this? Do you like one style more than the other? Why? What do the different styles say about Emmie's and Katie's personalities?
- Why do you think Teri Libenson used bright colors for Katie's chapters and neutral, subdued colors for Emmie's?
- The color of the Emmie chapters changes from the beginning of the book to the end. Why do you think Teri Libenson chose to do this? Do the Katie chapters change as well?
- There is a surprise twist at the end of *Invisible Emmie*. Did the author provide any hints about the twist earlier in the book?
- Think about a time when you were embarrassed. What made you feel better? What could you do to help someone else in an embarrassing situation feel better?
- Emmie has "much older, louder siblings" who are in college now. How does Emmie's relationship with her siblings affect how she sees herself?
- Emmie says art "makes me feel like there's something I can do that not a lot of others can." List some of the characteristics, qualities, pastimes, and other things that describe you. Which things make you feel happy or special? Are there things you'd like to be better at? How could you accomplish these goals?
- Emmie's shyness made her very anxious about talking to people she didn't know well, until one day, she decided to try it despite her fear. What were the benefits of Emmie trying something new? Were there drawbacks? Is bravery something you can practice?
- Emmie describes her life at school in words and in pictures. How is Emmie's school like yours? How is it different?

Some discussion questions are from the *Emmie & Friends Educators' Guide*; used with permission. Download this guide for additional discussion questions and extension activities: <https://www.harpercollins.com/products/invisible-emmie-teri-libenson?variant=32207358459938>.

Go Further!

*Ideas for extending the experience of reading **Invisible Emmie**.*

Invisible Emmie contains an epilogue, which is a section at the end of a book that takes place after the main events of the story. It may tell readers what happened to the characters or remind readers about the story's theme or lesson. The epilogue in *Invisible Emmie* takes place later the same day. Ask students if they think the epilogue would be different if more time had passed. Invite them to write and/or illustrate a new epilogue that takes place one month after the events in the story.

Emmie's favorite activity is art. Take a virtual tour of the Metropolitan Museum of Art at [MetKids](#). Students can explore individual artworks on an illustrated map of the museum; use the Time Machine to focus on favorite time periods, places, or ideas; and watch videos to learn about art from Met experts, see projects made by other kids, and even fold their own origami helmet. The class can use online resources available to students through INFOhio ([infohio.org](#)) and to all Ohio residents through Ohio Web Library ([ohioweblibrary.org](#)) to learn more about their favorite artworks or objects.

Have students plan and create their own comic strip or panel (a single image). What experience, idea, or feeling do they want to convey? Will they include words or use only images? What colors will they use? For additional ideas that incorporate visual storytelling in the classroom, see the Edutopia article "[Creating Comics in the Classroom](#)."

Explore More!

Additional ideas and resources to use with **Invisible Emmie**.

Bullying

www.stopbullying.gov/resources/kids

Emmie is teased when her note about Tyler is discovered. This website provides facts about bullying and information on how kids can safely respond to bullying and stand up for others. Resources for adults include research, information about applicable laws and policies, and bullying prevention training.

Shyness

kidshealth.org/en/teens/shyness.html

This article from Nemours TeensHealth explains what shyness is, highlights some special strengths that shy people may have, and provides tips for becoming less shy.

What Is Friendship?

people.howstuffworks.com/what-is-friendship.htm

From HowStuffWorks, an overview of friendship and its benefits, the different types of friends, and healthy ways to respond when a friendship is under stress.

Your Life Your Voice: Anxiety

www.yourlifeyourvoice.org/Pages/anxiety.aspx

Emmie suffers from anxiety when she goes to school; she describes it as “the knots.” This website from Boys Town provides tips and tools for dealing with anxiety, stress, and other emotions and also provides help for situations from bullying to talking with your parents to friendship.

Check It Out!

Recommended for readers of **Invisible Emmie**. Look for these books at your school or public library and ask your librarian for more recommendations!

***Moonpenny Island** by Tricia Springstubb

New Kid by Jerry Craft

***Other Words for Home** by Jasmine Warga

Real Friends by Shannon Hale, illustrated by LeUyen Pham

The Secret Language of Girls by Frances O’Roark Dowell

Smile by Raina Telgemeier

Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli

Wishtree by Katherine Applegate

***The Year of the Book** by Andrea Cheng

*These books are current or previous Choose to Read Ohio titles.

Choose to Read Ohio, a project of the State Library of Ohio, the Ohioana Library Association, and the Ohio Center for the Book, encourages public libraries, schools, families, and others to build a community of readers and an appreciation of Ohio authors, illustrators, and literature. CTRO is adaptable for use in classrooms, libraries, bookstores, by book discussion groups, families, and other community groups.

Explore Choose to Read Ohio resources & toolkits:
library.ohio.gov/ctro.

This toolkit revised
April 2021.

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