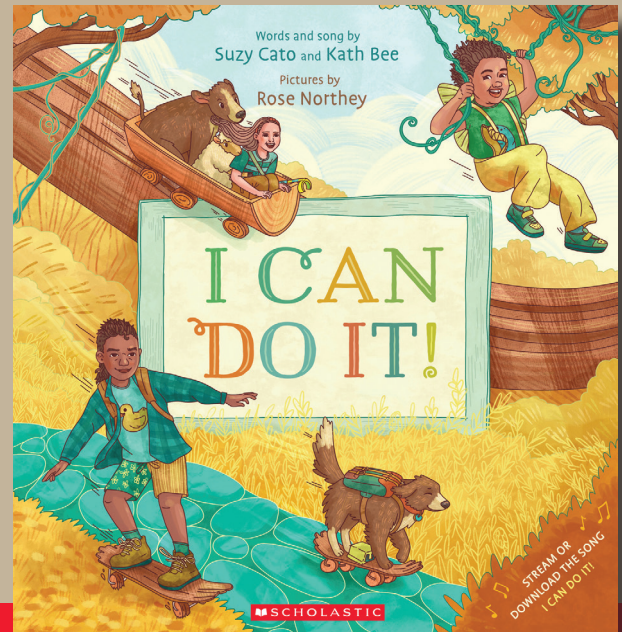


# I Can Do It!

By Suzy Cato and Kath Bee

Illustrated by Rose Northey



• Reading • Writing • Thinking Skills • Feelings • Art

## Synopsis

Three children and a dog set off on a journey where they battle their way through a maze of barriers, working out solutions as they go with a can-do attitude, all while having fun. These barriers include crossing a rickety bridge, bypassing a fierce-looking bull (wearing sunglasses!) which is blocking the gate into a field; and climbing up an impossibly steep cliff. And all the while, they sing this refrain: “I don’t have to BE the best, I just need to be MY best! And once I start, I’ll keep on going and encourage all the rest. I can do it! I can do it!” The book extols the merits of believing in yourself, encouraging others, and never giving up.

## About the Authors

**Suzy Cato** is a beloved New Zealand children’s entertainer and personality, and is best known as the host of *Suzy’s World* and *You and Me*, as well as hosting a YouTube channel, *Suzy & Friends*. This is the fourth book Suzy has published with Scholastic. Her other titles are *The Kauri Family*, *Christmas in Summer* and *Going on a Kiwi Holiday*.

Suzy and her family live in Auckland. Check out her website: [www.suzy.co.nz](http://www.suzy.co.nz)

**Kath Bee** has written some of New Zealand’s most loved children’s songs including *Individuality*, *Dad I Wanna Be a Camel*, *Dragons Under My Bed* and most recently the 2022 APRA NZ Best Children’s Song winner, *E Tū Tāngata – Stand Together*. Suzy and Kath’s first collaboration, *Sprinkle A Little Sunshine* is extremely popular and sung in schools nationwide, by thousands of tamariki every day. It is well-loved by teachers too

Kath has toured New Zealand extensively, performing in primary schools, ECCs, libraries, Teddy Bears’ Picnics, fairs, festivals and everywhere in between. *I Can Do It!* is her first book with Scholastic. Please contact Kath Bee [songs4kids@gmail.com](mailto:songs4kids@gmail.com) if you’d like Teacher’s Notes for teaching the *I Can Do It!* Song

Kath lives in Nelson. Check out her [YouTube channel](#).

## About the Illustrator

**Rose Northey** is a poet, illustrator and comedian based in Wellington. She was the 2021 winner of the Storylines Gavin Bishop Award, with her storyboard for *The Lighthouse Princess*. This was Rose’s first picture book and it also won the Best First Book award at the 2023 New Zealand Children’s Book Awards. Originally a mechanical engineer she now works full-time as a creative. Rose brings a sense of joy and silliness into all of her art forms.

Check out her website: [www.rosenorthey.com](http://www.rosenorthey.com)

# Writing and Illustration Style

*I Can Do It!* is a fun, affirming song-story that celebrates the power of positive thinking and the Kiwi can-do attitude. Highlighting the importance of the journey taken one-step-at-a-time rather than the destination or end product, *I Can Do It!* emphasises participation, fun and personal achievement over being the best. This is an anthem for every child, endorsed by trustworthy New Zealand icons, authors Suzy Cato and Kath Bee.

Written first as a song (which can be downloaded or streamed), the writing employs rhyme and rhythm, creating a pleasurable read-aloud experience. The repetitive refrain is self-affirming and reminds the reader that they're never on their journey alone.

This feel-good song-story is paired with whimsical illustrations, where the imagination rules supreme. The diverse children are on an odyssey of an adventure through an imagined land. A vibrant turquoise stone path leads to a broken swing bridge, which the tamariki get over with the help of a little Kiwi ingenuity. The controlled colour palette of turquoise, brown and gold adds to the magical landscape, with critters abound and tree branches turn into roller coasters. The last illustration spread requires the book to be turned 90 degrees to make a tall, long picture, adding an extra element of fun with much to talk about, including the use of physics and technology. On the final page, the satisfaction of a job well done is evident on the faces of the intrepid explorers, both human and animal.

## Shared Learning and Discussion Points

During the shared sessions, encourage students to ask questions to clarify their understanding of characters and events. Have them make predictions and inferences and relate these to their own experiences. Read the book aloud and, if appropriate, have students read alongside or by themselves. Use all or some of the questions below for discussion, comprehension checks and making connections.

### ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

Look at the cover and read the blurb then turn to the title page.

- Do the children and animals look like they're having fun? How can you tell?
- What do you notice about the tree, roller coaster and skateboards?
- Do you think this story is set in a real or an imagined land? Why do you think that?
- What are the letters of the title on the title page made out of? How do you think that might connect to the story?

### Comprehension

- What do you notice about the text? Why do you think that the story has been written in this way?
- Can the tamariki cross the bridge on pp.4–5? Why/why not? How else could they get across to the other side?
- What's the difference between being 'the best' and being 'my best'? Which is the most important? Why?
- Where did the tamariki get the tyres from to make their zip line? How are they being resourceful?
- How would going on a zip line with friends make it easier and more fun?
- What does it mean to 'encourage' someone? Think of a time when you have needed encouragement or have encouraged someone else. How did it feel?
- Find the rhyming words on pp.8–9 (the dancing spread).
- How has the rhyming structure changed on pp.10–11?
- What has inspired the girl's painting on p.11? What is the boy making? Predict what they will use them for.
- What do you think the cattle think about the tamariki pretending to be one of them? How can you tell?
- What happens if we think 'I can do it!' instead of thinking negatively? How can positive thinking help us?
- What do you think the dog has in his backpack and yellow case?
- Predict what you think will be at the end of the blue path. (pp.12–13)
- What is confusing about the signpost? How will the children know where to go? (pp.14–15)
- Why is it important to ask questions?
- What does the sheep have in its backpack? What do you think it wants them for? (p.15)
- How can not knowing the answer sometimes feel like being in a dark place? Why do the children and animals have torches? (pp.14–15)
- What have the sheep and the child with the wings worked together to make? How can working together help build friendships? (pp.16–17)
- What do you think the older children are building? What has the boy found? (pp.16–17)



teacher toolkit

 SCHOLASTIC

- What has the tree transformed into? (p.20)
- How is life 'like a roller coaster ride'? (p.20)
- How will the friends get up the cliff to follow the path? (p.20)
- Was your prediction correct? How did working as a team help the friends?
- How do you think the friends feel at the end of their adventure? How can you tell?

## Activities

### ACTIVITY 1: BE A DESIGNER

Using the title page as a springboard, design and draw your name using objects and natural items to form the letters. Try to use objects that are connected to your interests to make your name say something about you, e.g., use a soccer ball for an 'o' if you like soccer or use a ballet shoe with ribbons curled around to make a 'b' if you like to dance.

### ACTIVITY 2: BE A GOOD FRIEND

Being a good friend involves encouraging others to be their best. As a class, brainstorm ways to encourage and lift each other up, e.g., help those who are struggling, let people know you appreciate them, play with someone who is on their own. Invite the tamariki to pick a behaviour to use that day.

### ACTIVITY 3: MAKE A COMPLIMENT CARD

Make a compliment card and give it to someone in your class. Think carefully about the person you are making the card for. What is something great about him/her? Focus on complimenting their behaviour rather than their appearance or clothing, e.g., you are very helpful, you are fun to play with, you are kind to younger children.

### ACTIVITY 4: BE YOUR BEST

Write a list or draw pictures of three things you could do to help yourself be the best that you can be. Your list could include anything from going to bed earlier for a good night's rest, to tidying your room. The choice is yours.

### ACTIVITY 5: PLAN AN ADVENTURE

If you could go on any adventure with your friends, where would you go? Who would you take with you? How would you get there? What would you do? Write a story describing your adventure, including detail and wow words (adjectives, verbs and adverbs) to make your story interesting.

Written by Frances McBeath



teacher toolkit

 SCHOLASTIC