



# The World According to Humphrey

<b>Author:</b>	Betty G. Birney
<b>Copyright Date:</b>	2004
<b>Publisher:</b>	Penguin Group; Puffin Books
<b>About the Author:</b>	<p>Betty G. Birney wrote her first book at age seven. It was called, "Teddy Bear in the Woods," and was followed by a sequel. As a child, Betty always loved roller-skating, riding her bike, swimming, playing piano, reading, and attending school. She grew up in Afton, Missouri - near St. Louis. Betty graduated from college at Webster College and majored in English. She soon moved to Southern California and worked for Disney at Disneyland. Betty wrote and produced commercials and movie trailers for movie previews. She became a writer and editor for Disney Channel, writing cartoon episodes for <i>Madeline</i>, <i>Doug</i>, <i>Bobby's World</i>, <i>Fraggle Rock</i>, <i>Zoobilee Zoo</i>, and many more shows. Ms. Birney later married an actor, Frank Birney. They have two stepdaughters and a son. Ms. Birney has been fortunate to win many awards for her writing. They include: a Writer's Guild of America Award and three Humanitas Prizes. Additionally, Betty has won a Daytime Emmy Award for <i>Madeline</i>. More recently, she received the Christopher Award for Friendship <i>According to Humphrey</i> and the Rhode Island Children's Book Award for <i>World According to Humphrey</i>.</p>
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<b>Author's Photo:</b>	<div data-bbox="527 1304 1430 1906"><p>writing house!</p><p>Sometimes I'm visited by my dog Desi, or by lizards that wander in. Now and then I get a rude awakening as avocados bounce off the roof from the huge tree nearby. At other times, I go outside to play catch with Desi or watch the hummingbirds.</p><p>Then, it's time to go back to my own little house, which is my favorite place of all.</p><p>And for you ... the door is always open!</p></div>

<b>Annotation:</b>	Humphrey, pet hamster of Room 26 at Longfellow Elementary School, learns he has important jobs to do in helping his classmates and teacher, Mrs. Brisbane. He is a problem solver for such issues as shyness, assuming responsibility, loneliness, noisiness and distraction in the family, and giving hope to others. With a refreshing voice and an engaging perspective from a hamster’s viewpoint, Betty Birney’s Humphrey will provide humor and discussion as a read-aloud or a small group book choice.
<b>Booktalk:</b>	A lively hamster’s-eye-view of the classroom and human nature, Humphrey not only observes, but also shows us that hamsters RULE! Humphrey helps, he reads, he writes, he even shoots rubber bands! (Not suggested to be tried at home or school) This story is the adventures of Humphrey the hamster, who ultimately writes the “Guide to the Care and Feeding of Humans,” a pleasant parallel to facts from a hamster care book. If you like books that are funny and are about animal stories, this is the one for you!
<b>Characters:</b>	<p><b>Humphrey</b>- the main character and classroom pet hamster of room 26</p> <p><b>Mrs. Mac</b>- temporary teacher while Mrs. Brisbane is out and person who brings Humphrey to room 26</p> <p><b>Mrs. Brisbane</b>- returning regular teacher in Room 26 who doesn’t like Humphrey in the beginning</p> <p><b>Mr. Morales</b>- principal of Longfellow Elementary School whom Humphrey helps his children with responsibility</p> <p><b>Aldo</b>- the school custodian of Longfellow Elementary School whom Humphrey helps to find a girlfriend</p> <p><b>Sayeh</b>- a class member of room 26 and a smart and shy Indian girl who is learning English as her second language whom Humphrey helps to find confidence</p> <p><b>Miranda and Clem</b>- a perfect classmate of room 26 with a not-so-perfect dog, Clem, whom Humphrey has to defend himself against</p> <p><b>A.J.</b> - a class member of room 26 and a noisy boy whose family watches a lot of T.V. whom Humphrey helps to turn off the distractions</p>
<b>Conflict:</b>	Humphrey has a new home in Room 26 at Longfellow Elementary School. He is very happy until Ms. Mac announces that she is leaving and the regular teacher, Mrs. Brisbane, is coming back. Mrs. Brisbane makes it clear that she does not like rodents. The struggle occurs because Humphrey is fearful that Mrs. Brisbane is out to get rid of him. Humphrey wonders what will happen to him and all the nice friends he has made in Room 26.
<b>Conflict Resolution:</b>	Humphrey becomes a beloved friend and problem solver to the students, principal, custodian, and even Mrs. Brisbane. All turns out well for Humphrey... he learns new things, sees Ms. Mac again, and is happy-happy-happy again!
<b>Genre:</b>	Friendship Fiction; Humorous Fiction; Animals and Nature Fiction