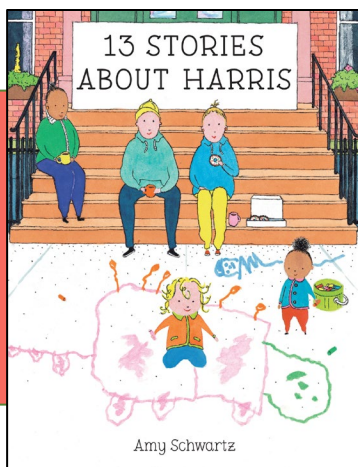


# HOLIDAY HOUSE | EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



HC: 9780823442492 • Ages 4–8

## 13 STORIES ABOUT HARRIS by Amy Schwartz

★ “This book is exactly what being a toddler is all about, and Schwartz shares it with **simple language, wonderful art, and an attitude of sheer delight.**”—*School Library Journal, Starred Review*

### About the Book

**A wry and affectionate look at the ups and downs of preschoolers in the big city.**

“That’s why they call permanent markers permanent,” Harris’ mother says as she surveys Harris and his best friend Ayana’s handiwork in his bedroom.

In thirteen illustrated vignettes, young Harris gets into big and little adventures at home, at best friend Ayana’s house, and throughout his diverse city neighborhood.

Inspired by her own child, celebrated author-illustrator Amy Schwartz captures a preschooler’s sense of wonder and possibility, such as when Harris and Ayana vow to keep holding hands “forever and ever”—even while riding stampeding elephants.

### Discussion Questions

- Study the art on the cover and on the first page of the book. Discuss whether Harris lives in the city or the country. Take a look at the first double-page spread. Point to Harris’ house, Ayana’s house, Harris’ tree, the falafel shop, and the No Parking sign. What other things do you see in Harris’ neighborhood?
- Harris is drawing a very long dragon tail. Follow the tail with your finger. How does Harris end the trail where he began?



- Define *imagination*. Harris uses his imagination when he draws the dragon. In what other ways does Harris use his imagination?
- In which stories is Harris helpful to his mother? Harris likes to play with Ayana. What fun things do they do? In which story are they naughty? In story eight, his mother says, “That’s why they call permanent markers permanent.” What does *permanent* mean? What must his parents do to fix the naughty thing he and Ayana have done?
- In story four, Harris attends Ayana’s birthday party. Contrast the way Harris looks at the beginning and the end of the party. Why does he think he looks nice when the party is over? Discuss whether his mother is likely to send him to another birthday party dressed in white.
- What season is it in story five? How does the wind cause a problem for Harris and his family when they are out walking? In what other ways might the wind cause problems in Harris’ neighborhood? Name some fun things that Harris and Ayana might do outside when the wind is blowing.
- Harris and his mother take care of Ayana’s hamster. Explain why Harris’ mother looks so surprised when she peers into the hamster cage. As it turns out, Stanley is an odd name for the hamster. Discuss whether Ayana knows that her hamster is a girl. Debate whether she will be surprised when she collects Stanley from Harris’ house. Make a suggestion for a new name for Stanley.
- Describe the preschool classroom. Why is the teacher playing games with Harris? Explain why she thinks Harris is an interesting child. Describe the mask that Harris creates in story twelve. Why is Harris so sure his mask will work? How does he prove there is no right or wrong way of creating art?
- Harris and Ayana are friends forever. Count the number of times they appear in the same illustration from the beginning of the book to the end. How does this prove their friendship?

*Guide prepared by Pat Scales, retired school librarian and independent consultant, Greenville, South Carolina.*

## About the Author



**Amy Schwartz**, the author-illustrator of *13 Stories About Harris*, has written and illustrated many celebrated books for children, including *What James Likes Best*, winner of the Charlotte Zolotow Award; *Polka Dots for Poppy*, a Bank Street Best Children's Book of the Year; *Bea and Mr. Jones*, a Reading Rainbow selection; and *100 Things That Make Me Happy*, which received three starred reviews. Her work has also landed on the *New York Times* Best Illustrated List and won awards such as the Jewish Book Award and the Christopher Award. Amy lives in Brooklyn, New York.

NB 7.20

