A guide for grown-ups

Bruce Counts to Ten

About the story

A little bee wraps up in a big green leaf. When the rain washes the leaf into the river, Bruce floats away from home, sings Mama's counting song to feel brave, and counts his way back: 1 frog, 2 ducks, all the way to 10 fireflies.

Before you read

- Look at the cover together. What is Bruce sitting in? Where do you think the river goes?
- Hold up your fingers and count to ten together, so the numbers are warm when they show up in the book.

While you read

- Each counting page has a red number. Point to it, say it, then count the things in the picture with one finger each.
- On the song page, stop and sing. The tune is Row, Row, Row Your Boat, so most grown-ups already know it.
- Let your child turn the pages. It slows the story down in a good way.

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Questions to talk about

- Why did Bruce wrap up in his leaf?
- What helped Bruce feel brave on the big river?
- What helps you when something feels too big?
- Which animal would you like to meet on the river? How many of them were there?
- Point to Bruce's face when the rain comes and his wings get wet. How does he feel?
- Find Bruce when the fish tickle him. What does his face look like when he giggles?
- Look at Bruce asleep in his leaf at the end. How does he feel now?

Counting games after the book

- Counting walk: find 1 of something, then 2 of something, then 3, on a walk or around the house.
- Leaf boats: float leaves in a bowl of water and count how many stay afloat.
- Bath-time song: sing Bruce's song and hold up a finger for each number.
- Use the free tracing pages and the count-and-circle sheets on bruce.alderfoldpress.com.

A small tip

There is no need to get through the whole book in one sitting. Stopping at five and finishing tomorrow is still reading together.

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