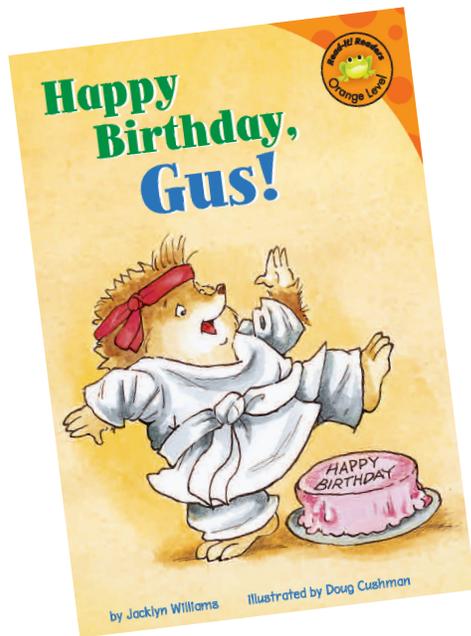


# CREATIVE DRAMATICS

Picture Window™  
Books



## Happy Birthday, Gus! by Jacklyn Williams

- Characters:** Mom  
Gus  
Bean  
Billy  
Sensei Chase
- Props:** Karate belts and headbands,  
Pretend cake
- Genre:** Realistic Fiction
- Ages:** 4 - 6

# Happy Birthday, Gus! page 1

## NOTES TO THE LEADER OF THE CREATIVE DRAMATICS SESSION

Before acting out the story, read *Happy Birthday, Gus!* to the entire class.

The leader/narrator of the creative dramatics session needs to give clear, simple clues to the children who are acting out the story. First, select the children who will be playing the separate parts. Gus and Bean can be played by two individuals or by a group. The same for Billy and Sensei Chase.

The leader might want to ask the children to describe the characters before the session begins. For example, "What kind of animals are Gus and Billy?" or "What are words to describe Gus and Sensei Chase?" Answers could include friendly, curious, smart, happy, excited, etc. Also, "What are words to describe Billy?"

The children can act out the story from their chairs, sitting on the floor, or by standing in clearly marked places where the action will take place. The front of the room could be Gus's house, while the back is karate camp. It's always a good idea to make sure that the characters and locations (if you decide to use them) are clearly established before the play session begins.

**Narrator:** On Gus's birthday, his mom says, "I have a surprise for you, Gus."

**Mom:** I have a surprise for you, Gus.

**Narrator:** *(Narrator can prompt, "What do you think the surprise is? Have you ever gotten a birthday surprise? What was it? How did you feel? Were you excited, happy, etc.? Can you show me how you acted?")*

Gus's mom tells him she is sending him to karate camp. Gus says he can't wait to go to karate camp!

**Gus:** I can't wait to go to karate camp!

**Narrator:** The next morning, Gus and his best friend, Bean, wait at the bus stop to go to camp. Gus and Bean say, "We are so excited for karate camp!"

**Gus and Bean:** We are so excited for karate camp!

**Narrator:** Gus tells his mom, "Thank you for the wonderful present!"

**Gus:** Thank you for the wonderful present!

**Narrator:** When the bus comes, Gus waves goodbye to his mom.

**Gus:** *(Waves goodbye.)*

**Narrator:** "Have fun," his mom says. "I'll see you in five days."

**Mom:** Have fun! I'll see you in five days.

## Happy Birthday, Gus! page 2

**Narrator:** At camp, Gus and Bean learn all about karate from Sensei Chase. Sensei means “teacher” in Japanese.

Billy is at karate camp, too. He isn’t very nice sometimes. He can be a bully.

*(Narrator can prompt, “Have you ever met someone who is not very nice or a bully? What’s the best way to deal with a bully?”)*

Sensei Chase makes everyone repeat these two rules: “I promise never to use karate in anger. I promise to only use karate in class.”

*(Narrator can prompt, “Everyone, raise your right hand and repeat after Sensei Chase.”)*

**All:** I promise never to use karate in anger. I promise to only use karate in class.

**Narrator:** Billy crossed his fingers when he said the pledge. He lied about his promise.

*(Narrator can prompt, “Uh-oh. Billy lied. It’s never good to tell a lie. Why is lying bad?”)*

All during karate camp, Billy used his karate outside of class. He used it to make his bed, but he just made a mess.

He used it when Gus and Bean were fishing, but he just scared the fish.

On the last day of karate camp, Gus and Bean packed up their gear.

Gus had fun at camp, but he was sad he missed out on birthday cake.

*(Narrator can prompt, “Gus is sad. What are some things that could cheer him up? What are some things that cheer you up when you’re sad?”)*

Suddenly, a bell rang. “Oh boy, lunch!” says Bean.

**Bean:** Oh boy, lunch!

**Narrator:** When Gus walks into the dining hall, everyone yells, “SURPRISE!”

**All:** SURPRISE!

**Narrator:** Gus looks around. There are balloons, streamers, and a huge chocolate cake.

*(Narrator can instruct children to sing “Happy Birthday.”)*

Sensei Chase tells Gus to blow out the candles.

## Happy Birthday, Gus! page 3

**Sensei Chase:** Blow out the candles, Gus.

**Narrator:** Gus takes a deep breath. Just then, Billy runs in. “Let me help,” Billy said.

**Billy:** Let me help!

**Narrator:** “No,” says Gus. “My wish won’t come true.”

**Gus:** No. My wish won’t come true.

**Narrator:** *(Narrator can ask, “Do you make a wish when you blow out the candles? What other traditions do you celebrate on your birthday?”)*

Billy punches the air, trying to make enough wind to blow out the candles.

*(Narrator can instruct Billy to start moving his arms in karate-like movements toward the cake, in an attempt to blow out the candles.)*

“Watch out!” shouts Gus.

**Gus:** Watch out!

**Narrator:** It was too late. Billy punches and the cake and makes a huge mess. Sensei Chase frowns.

*(Narrator can indicate the cake has been destroyed.)*

Do you think Gus’s wish will come true?

*(Let’s all wish Gus happy birthday.)*

**All:** Happy birthday, Gus!

**THE END**