Ira Says Goodbye – Reading Guide

Author/Illustrator: Bernard Waber
Themes: life change (friend moving), empathy, showing you care

Lesson/Notes: *It can be difficult when someone you love moves away. People show their feelings in different ways. Remember, your friend may feel upset and excited at the same time. It feels nice when people show you they care about you. We can find ways to show other people we care about them.*

Discussion Questions

- *How does Ira feel about the news that his friend is moving?*
- *Is Reggie important to Ira? How do you know? ("best friend", lots of special memories together, always there for each other)*
- *How does Reggie feel about moving? (sad then excited)*
- *Why is it important to Ira that the turtles stay together?*
- *Do you think Reggie cares about Ira?*
- *When they say goodbye, what does Reggie give Ira? What does Ira give Reggie? (Turtles, favorite baseball card) These gifts show each other how much they care.*

Activity: Show You Care

- If your child knows someone who is moving or has a friend (or relative) who lives far away, encourage child to write him or her a letter. (S)he can draw a picture, too. (Adapt to your child's capabilities). Here are some ideas:
  - Draw a fun memory you have with the friend
  - Draw a picture of your family and/or pets
  - Ask your friend questions
    - How is the weather there?
    - What's new with you?
    - What do you like about your new home/town?
  - Tell something new about you
  - Write something nice to show you care
    - I miss you; I care about you; I hope you're having fun.

- If you do not have someone specific who would like a letter, consider sending an encouraging letter to a soldier serving in the military. You can do this through Operation Gratitude (operationgratitude.com).
  - Discuss how it was hard for Reggie to move away from his home and how these soldiers leave their homes to protect our country.
  - Encourage child to write a letter and/or draw a picture to be mailed to a soldier who has moved away from home. Follow Operation Gratitude's guidelines.

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