

**Pre-Kindergarten Curriculum Guide Book Summary**

**Book title:** ***A Birthday for Frances***

**Author:** Russell Hoban

**Main characters:** Frances, Gloria, Mother, Father

**Executive summary:** When her little sister Gloria celebrates her birthday, Frances feels jealous that Gloria is getting all the attention, but she learns that everyone deserves a special day that is just their own.

**Detailed summary:** Everyone is getting ready for Gloria’s birthday; everyone except Frances. She doesn’t want to celebrate her little sister’s birthday. As mother and Gloria make place cards for the party, Frances goes in the broom closet and sings to her imaginary friend Alice, “Happy Thursday to Alice.” She tells her mother that Alice doesn’t have a birthday, so that is why she sings “Happy Thursday” to Alice. Frances’s Mother tells her that everyone has a birthday one day each year. Her mother asks Frances to come out and help make place cards for the party. But Frances doesn’t want to draw flowers and rainbows and happy things on the cards. She sings a song about drawing “three-legged cats” and “caterpillars with ugly hats.” Frances grabs a broom from the closet and pretends it is a horse. She rides away to play outside with Alice.

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Frances peeks in the window to watch her mother wrap Gloria’s presents. She feels bad because everyone got Gloria a present except her. She asks her Mother if she can use her allowance to buy Gloria four gumballs and a candy bar. That evening Frances’s Father takes her to the store to buy four gumballs and a candy bar for Gloria, but Frances puts the gumballs in her mouth on the way home. Now she only has the candy bar to give to Gloria. Frances tells her Father that Gloria will probably only be able to eat half of the candy bar. Her Father says that Gloria loves candy bars and will be able to eat the whole thing. Her father holds on to the candy bar, so Frances doesn’t eat it herself.

The next day is Gloria’s party. The table is decorated and there are treats and hot chocolate for everyone. The party guests are Frances, Mother, Father, Gloria’s friend Ida and Frances’s friend Albert. Albert tells Frances that his gift for Gloria is a small toy truck. Frances tells Albert about the candy bar. She says that she might not give it to Gloria, because she had to spend her own money to buy it. Albert and Frances talk about all the things they don’t like about little sisters. Then Ida arrives, and it is time for the party!

Gloria wants to open presents, but first they have cake and sing Happy Birthday. Frances does not sing the right words. When Gloria blows out the candles on her cake, she makes a wish. She says she wished that Frances would be nice to her and would forgive her for hiding her toys last year. After that Frances decides to give the candy bar to Gloria. It is wrapped with pretty paper and a ribbon. Frances even sings the Happy Birthday song to Gloria. And when Gloria wants to share her candy bar, Frances says “no,” because Gloria is the birthday girl today.