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Tales from the waterhole by Bob Graham

Publisher: Candlewick Press

RRP \$12.99

Friendships and summer sunshine feature in these fun stories by the multi-award winning author/illustrator.

School is out, the waterhole is full, and the animal friends grab their swim gear. Roars, grunts, squeaks, and squeals filled the air as the friends dive-bomb into the water.

Like all kids at a swimming pool, the animals flip and flop, twist and twirl, and leap from the diving board. Morris the crocodile has brought his skateboard and tries some tricky moves to impress Wendy Warthog, but she ignores him. Although his efforts don't work out as he'd hoped, Morris still manages to salvage his pride.

There are four stories in this collection, written at an achievable level for readers moving into chapter books. Each tale is an amusing glimpse of friends coping with the challenges of daily life, such as mothers in embarrassing swimsuits, saving face in awkward situations, and shopping for new jeans that are always too short or too long.

Bob Graham's illustrations develop the individual personalities with gentle humour. The interactions between the friends are realistic, and their facial expressions comical. The characters' clothing is an added delight, particularly the fashionable mothers.

This title in the Sparks series is an excellent introduction to independent or shared reading.

Reviewed by children's book author Jean Bennett

