Whenever I make recommendations, there an invisible “consider” beforehand; I just didn’t feel like typing “consider” a thousand times.

When I say “think about,” I mean I’ve come across something which is a stylistic decision on your part; there’s no ‘right answer,’ so I’m encouraging you to think about these decisions and what you want them to contribute.

I know you said not to focus as much on the meter, but still be aware that the rhythm varies significantly, sometimes jarringly, across the story and even from one stanza to another. The final book can compensate a little for this with clever illustrations and graphic layout, but there’s only so much that can do.

Stanzas I’ve revised in red are only examples, to demonstrate the suggestions.

Love this first stanza; puts you straight into the dreamlike setting.

Be consistent with capitalisation. *Either* go the more traditional/formal route of always capitalising the first letter of each line, *or* be informal by only capitalising the beginnings of sentences & proper nouns. Whatever you pick, be consistent throughout.

On a sandy shore,

*Consider* (only time I’ll say it) adding another descriptor to the shore, like wide/hot/far.

between the shallows and tide,

Think about: Do you need a “the” before “shallows”?

Stands a large seesaw,

“Large” feels a bit weak, saying this aloud feels a little clumsy.

tipped to one side.

On a far sandy shore

Between shallows and tide,

Stands a large seesaw

Tipped to one side.

An elephant had sat on the seesaw seat

You can jump straight into calling him “Elephant.” A pretty common choice in children’s books, and skips the jumpy transition between calling him “an elephant” to “Elephant.” Also, you can probably guess what I’m about to say here, be consistent with what you choose to call him.

Remove “had” as it implies he’s not sitting there any more.

Don’t need “seat,” as “sitting on the seesaw” already gets that across.

Depending on the rhythm you’re going for, it might be beneficial to add an adjective for the seesaw.

tilting it to one side only,

Need either an “and” in the next line or a semicolon after “only”

waited for a friend to join him,

Waiting “for a friend to join him” makes it sound like he’s expecting someone. קיבלתי

feeling rather sad and lonely...

Generally speaking, avoid “rather” the same way you’d avoid “very,” as they are vague, filler words. Okay once in a while, but not a good habit.

Elephant sat on the wide seesaw, Elephant sat on the seesaw

Tilting it far to one side, So it leaned to one side only

And waited for a new friend, And waited to meet a new friend,

Feeling lonely inside… Feeling rather sad and lonely…

I could see this stanza being spread across a few big pages of illustrations.

He waited an hour, or two, even more.

Only use both these commas if the words are visually spread out. If they’re compressed into one line (like above), remove the first one.

staring at the sun sweeping over the shore.

Capitalisation.

Sitting here alone… oh, such a bore!

He waited an hour or two, even more.

Staring at the sun sweeping over the shore.

Sitting here alone… oh, what a bore!

Suddenly, a butterfly appeared,

Add “suddenly” to the list of words to, generally, avoid. Maybe “With a puff of the wind” or “In the blink of an eye,” etc.

Be more descriptive than “appeared.” Maybe “flew up/fluttered by/etc.”

And suggested with a smile:

“Suggested” is the largest word in the story. Nothing wrong with a good old fashioned “said.”

"if you' re waiting for a friend to swing with,

Capitalisation.

Space in “you’re”

Again, “you’re waiting for a friend” implies Elephant is, well, waiting for someone.

I might stay here for a while”

Period at the end.

Remove “here” or “for,” for cleaner line.

A butterfly flew up with the breeze,

And said with a smile:

“If you want someone to play with,

I could stay for a while!”

"You are welcome to stay”

Need comma, or an exclamation point

Where? Between what to what?

The elephant agreed,

Be consistent with either “the elephant” or naming him “Elephant.”

But as the butterfly settled,

He was sorry he did.

Not the strongest rhyme between “agreed” and “did.”

**Suggestion?**

This stanza was bolded.

Capitalisation.

Because the butterfly was as airy as a feather,

Remove “because.”

As light as a morning breeze,

which made the elephant feel big and clumsy

“Which made” works, but “so” also works.

from his wrinkly trunk to his scabby knees.

The two “his”s are unnecessary.

The butterfly was as light as a feather,

Airy as morning breeze,

So Elephant felt big and clumsy

From wrinkly trunk to scabby knees.

Capitalisation.

weight differences in seesaw,

I can’t point to anything specific, but “weight differences” feels like a grown-up way of speaking…

as you probably all know

“As” is not strictly necessary.

You speak to only one individual in books – the reader – with the rare exception of books intended to be read aloud to a crowd. Generally, treat your audience as a single person, so get rid of “all.”

Will always, but always,

Think about: Do you prefer “but always” or “and always”?

keep one side below.

Different weights on a seesaw,

You probably know,

Will always and always

Keep one side below.

Capitalisation.

“I am sorry" firmly elephant said:

Need comma after “sorry”

Be consistent with “the elephant” or “Elephant” as a name.

It’s a comma after “said,” not a colon.

There are more descriptive and concise ways to express “firmly said”

“if we can’t swing together,

then you can’t be my friend!”

Was this supposed to be one big stanza, or two big ones? What is supposed to rhyme in these first few lines? “Said” and “friend”? It feels more natural to add break this up into two stanzas and add a line to the first one.

he waited an hour, or two, even more.

staring at the sun sweeping over the shore.

Sitting here alone… oh, what a bore!

“I am sorry,” Elephant sighed,

Firmly shaking his head,

“If we can’t swing together,

Then you can’t be my friend!”

He waited an hour or two, even more.

Staring at the sun sweeping over the shore.

Sitting here alone… oh, what a bore!

Capitalisation.

Then, a cat showed up

What’s a more cat-like way to show up than “show up”?

purring loud and clear:

“If I sat here, with you,

would you scratch behind my ear?

"You are welcome to join me” the Elephant agreed

But as the cat sat down, He was sorry he did.

Because the cat snuggled

on elephant’s lap,

and one ear scratch later

he fell into a deep nap.

and although the cat was

nice and kind,

The seesaw was still leaning

to merely one side.

"I am sorry" sadly Elephant said

“but if we can’t swing together,

then you can’t be my friend”

He waited an hour, or two, even more,

staring at the sun sweeping over the shore.

Sitting here alone, oh, such a bore!

A wolf suddenly sneaked quietly,

howling loudly from behind:

“I’d like to sway with you and some friends,

I hope you don’t mind”

"You are all very welcome” the Elephant agreed,

But as the wolf sat down, he was sorry he did.

For a pack of wolves instantly sat with the wolf

on the seesaw’s seat,

they smiled at the elephant politely and said:

“it is really a pleasure to meet”

but the wolves started to wail

like a big marching band

in a language that elephant

simply didn’t understand.

they swayed for a while

and stared at the shore,

but strangely Elephant felt

even lonelier than before.

"I am sorry" sadly Elephant said

"But this isn’t working out, I’m afraid"

He waited an hour, or two, even more.

staring at the sun sweeping over the shore.

Sitting here alone, oh, such a bore!

Then, a cloud of dust arose,

And an elephant suddenly appears,

Stomping along, all big and clumsy

From tail, to trunk, to his fan - like ears.

“hello, I’m elephant, it is so nice to meet!”

Said the elephant to the elephant on the seesaw seat.

The elephant just couldn’t believe his eyes:

“we are so much alike!” he cried with surprise:

“we are not just ‘alike’

We’re practically the same;

the same size and same height…

we have even the same name!”

the other elephant shook his head,

gave a big smile and replied:

“we are actually very different.

See, I prefer the slide”

and before the other elephant

turned his back and went away,

he said:

“I’m meeting some friends here,

you are welcome to play”.

Haha love the ending.