

Teacher Notes

The Spotty Dotty Lady

written by Josie Boyle

illustrated by Fern Martins

Teacher Notes prepared by Christina Wheeler

OVERVIEW

This is the story of a sad lady who is inspired by an unusual flower in her garden to paint spots on her cups and saucers ... then her kitchen and soon all over her house. She is no longer sad as she paints her way into the hearts of her neighbours and her street becomes the happiest in the neighbourhood. A delightful tale of the transformative power of nature — offering a glimpse of how the natural and emotional worlds can connect in making the ordinary extraordinary.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR

Josie Wowolla Boyle is a Wonghi woman who was born in the desert of Western Australia. She is an acclaimed storyteller, singer and artist who has been enchanting children of all ages since the 1980s. Josie performs in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. She has made a number of recordings, worked as an artist in residence and featured on ABC's 5 Nations' Dreaming stories. She is also a regular presenter in literature and music festivals across WA.

Fern Martins is an artist of extraordinary range and experience working as a sculptor, printmaker and artist in the mediums pencil, pastel and watercolour. Fern has exhibited her watercolours and drawings at the National Gallery. Together with other young Aboriginal urban artists, she started Boomalli, the first Aboriginal Artists Cooperative, in Sydney in 1988.

THEMES

Loneliness:

- The old lady is very lonely. The flowers in her garden are her only friends.

Nature and Gardening:

- Hobbies and the joy of simple things such as flowers are important aspects of life.
- The new flowers give the lady hope and a reason for living.

Art:

- The lady expresses herself through her artwork. This brings joy to herself and others.

Happiness and Friendship:

- The lady and her neighbourhood find happiness through the bond of friendship.
- Friendship is an important theme of the text.

WRITING STYLE

The Spotty Dotty Lady is written in third person, past tense. It is suitable for independent readers and also as a 'read aloud' for younger readers. The theme of friendship is well-treated in the text.

LINKS TO THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

These notes have been written in context with the Australian Curriculum. The appendix highlights a selection of relevant cross-curriculum priorities, general capabilities and content descriptors across a range of year levels that the following activities address.

CLASSROOM IDEAS

Activities for Early Childhood Students

- Retell *The Spotty Dotty Lady* in your own words.
- What is your favourite part of the story? Why is this your favourite part? Share with a friend.
- Look carefully at the page opening in which the old lady discovers that many of the spotty dotty flowers have opened in the garden. The background is yellow. Compare this with the blue background of the first page. Discuss the way that colour adds meaning to these pages.
- Practise 'reading pictures'. Is there more of the story being told through the illustrations than the words tell us?
- Introduce students to basic parts of speech such as nouns, verbs or adjectives using examples from *The Spotty Dotty Lady*.
- Use the written text to teach basic sentence structure such as capital letters at the start and full stops at the end of sentences.
- In small groups, use the text to listen to students reading orally. Check for fluency, self-monitoring and comprehension.
- Invite your 'buddy' class to come and share in the reading of *The Spotty Dotty Lady*.
- Create your own spotty dotty flowers for your classroom.

Activities for Older Students

While *The Spotty Dotty Lady* is aimed at an early childhood audience, the following activities are suitable for older students who are investigating the way in which picture books address more mature themes. Visual literacy, point of view, elements of narrative including structure, characterisation and plot as well as author's intent are also concepts that are inherent in *The Spotty Dotty Lady*.

- Before reading, discuss the cover and title of the book.
- The old lady's body language tells the reader a lot about her character and her loneliness. Discuss how the illustrations use body language to help convey added meaning.
- How can we tell what is happening, even though we can't see facial emotions?
- Write a reflection about a time you felt the way *The Spotty Dotty Lady* feels.
- A synopsis is a short summary of a story. Write a synopsis of *The Spotty Dotty Lady*, using clear sentences and appropriate vocabulary to communicate your ideas.
- Construct a story graph to show the structure of *The Spotty Dotty Lady*. Highlight the orientation, complication and resolution.
- Create a Cloze activity using the text.
- The old lady discovers the importance of friends. Write a journal entry about the importance of friendship in your own life.
- Write a review or blog on *The Spotty Dotty Lady*. Include your opinions and ideas about the text.
- Create a vocabulary list of any words from the text with which you are unfamiliar. Keep adding to this list as you discuss the book.
- Which is your favourite page opening? Why? Discuss with a friend.

- Discuss the use of colour in *The Spotty Dotty Lady*. What does this colour reveal about the mood of the text?
- What do you think is the author's main message in *The Spotty Dotty Lady*?
- How does the old lady change in *The Spotty Dotty Lady*? Use examples or illustrations from the book to help support your answer.
- Discuss the idea that 'happiness is contagious' as seen through the text.
- Create your own invitation to the old lady's party.
- Grow your own flowers in a garden bed or tub at school.
- Decorate your own tea cups (or paper cups) in a style similar to those the old lady paints.
- Create a flower for each child in the class. Have other students write 'warm fuzzies' on each petal of the flower. Display these around the classroom.
- Hold a cake decorating competition with cakes suitable for the Spotty Dotty Lady's party.

Appendix – Links to the Australian Curriculum – *The Spotty Dotty Lady*

Year Level	English - Language	English - Literature	English - Literacy
F		<p>Recognise that texts are created by authors who tell stories and share experiences that may be similar or different to students' own experiences (ACELT 1575)</p> <p>Identify some features of texts including events and characters and retell events from a text (ACELT 1578)</p> <p>Recognise some different types of literary texts and identify some characteristic features of literary texts, for example beginnings and endings of traditional texts and rhyme in poetry (ACELT1785)</p> <p>Respond to texts, identifying favourite stories, authors and illustrators (ACELT1577)</p> <p>Share feelings and thoughts about the events and characters in texts</p>	<p>Listen to and respond orally to texts and to the communication of others in informal and structured classroom situations (ACELY1646)</p> <p>Use interaction skills including listening while others speak, using appropriate voice levels, articulation and body language, gestures and eye contact (ACELY1784)</p> <p>Use comprehension strategies to understand and discuss texts listened to, viewed or read independently (ACELY1650)</p>

		<p>(ACELT1783)</p> <p>Retell familiar literary texts through performance, use of illustrations and images</p> <p>(ACELT1580)</p>	
1	<p>Recognise that different types of punctuation, including full stops, question marks and exclamation marks, signal sentences that make statements, ask questions, express emotion or give commands (ACELA1449)</p> <p>Identify the parts of a simple sentence that represent 'What's happening?', 'What state is being described?', 'Who or what is involved?' and the surrounding circumstances (ACELA1451)</p> <p>Explore differences in words that represent people, places and things (nouns, including pronouns), happenings and states (verbs), qualities (adjectives) and details such as when, where and how (adverbs) (ACELA1452)</p> <p>Know that regular one-syllable words are made up of letters and common letter clusters that correspond to the sounds heard, and how to use visual memory to write high-frequency words (ACELA1778)</p>	<p>Discuss characters and events in a range of literary texts and share personal responses to these texts, making connections with students' own experiences (ACELT1582)</p> <p>Discuss features of plot, character and setting in different types of literature and explore some features of characters in different texts (ACELT1584)</p> <p>Recreate texts imaginatively using drawing, writing, performance and digital forms of communication (ACELT1586)</p>	<p>Respond to texts drawn from a range of cultures and experiences (ACELY1655)</p> <p>Engage in conversations and discussions, using active listening behaviours, showing interest, and contributing ideas, information and questions (ACELY1656)</p> <p>Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning about key events, ideas and information in texts that they listen to, view and read by drawing on growing knowledge of context, text structures and language features (ACELY1660)</p> <p>Create short imaginative and informative texts that show emerging use of appropriate text structure, sentence-level grammar, word choice, spelling, punctuation and appropriate multimodal elements, for example illustrations and diagrams (ACELY1661)</p>
2	<p>Understand that spoken, visual and written forms of language are different</p>	<p>Compare opinions about characters, events and settings in and between</p>	<p>Discuss different texts on a similar topic, identifying similarities and differences</p>

<p>modes of communication with different features and their use varies according to the audience, purpose, context and cultural background (ACELA1460)</p> <p>Identify visual representations of characters' actions, reactions, speech and thought processes in narratives, and consider how these images add to or contradict or multiply the meaning of accompanying words (ACELA1469)</p> <p>Identify language that can be used for appreciating texts and the qualities of people and things (ACELA1462)</p> <p>Understand that simple connections can be made between ideas by using a compound sentence with two or more clauses usually linked by a coordinating conjunction (ACELA1467)</p> <p>Understand that nouns represent people, places, concrete objects and abstract concepts; that there are three types of nouns: common, proper and pronouns; and that noun groups/phrases can be expanded using articles and adjectives (ACELA1468)</p> <p>Identify visual representations of characters' actions,</p>	<p>texts (ACELT1589)</p> <p>Discuss the characters and settings of different texts and explore how language is used to present these features in different ways (ACELT1591)</p> <p>Create events and characters using different media that develop key events and characters from literary texts (ACELT1593)</p>	<p>between the texts (ACELY1665)</p> <p>Construct texts featuring print, visual and audio elements using software, including word processing programs (ACELY1674)</p> <p>Create short imaginative, informative and persuasive texts using growing knowledge of text structures and language features for familiar and some less familiar audiences, selecting print and multimodal elements appropriate to the audience and purpose (ACELY1671)</p>
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	<p>reactions, speech and thought processes in narratives, and consider how these images add to or contradict or multiply the meaning of accompanying words (ACELA1469)</p>		
3	<p>Understand that languages have different written and visual communication systems, different oral traditions and different ways of constructing meaning (ACELA1475)</p> <p>Understand how different types of texts vary in use of language choices, depending on their purpose and context (for example, tense and types of sentences) (ACELA1478)</p> <p>Understand that paragraphs are a key organisational feature of written texts (ACELA1479)</p>	<p>Discuss texts in which characters, events and settings are portrayed in different ways, and speculate on the authors' reasons (ACELT1594)</p> <p>Draw connections between personal experiences and the worlds of texts, and share responses with others (ACELT1596)</p> <p>Discuss how language is used to describe the settings in texts, and explore how the settings shape the events and influence the mood of the narrative (ACELT1599)</p>	<p>Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning and begin to evaluate texts by drawing on a growing knowledge of context, text structures and language features (ACELY1680)</p> <p>Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts demonstrating increasing control over text structures and language features and selecting print, and multimodal elements appropriate to the audience and purpose (ACELY1682)</p> <p>Use software including word processing programs with growing speed and efficiency to construct and edit texts featuring visual, print and audio elements (ACELY1685)</p>
4	<p>Understand that Standard Australian English is one of many social dialects used in Australia, and that while it originated in England it has been influenced by many other languages (ACELA1487)</p> <p>Recognise how quotation</p>	<p>Make connections between the ways different authors may represent similar storylines, ideas and relationships (ACELT1602)</p> <p>Discuss how authors and illustrators make stories</p>	<p>Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning to expand content knowledge, integrating and linking ideas and analysing and evaluating texts (ACELY1692)</p> <p>Plan, draft and publish</p>

	<p>marks are used in texts to signal dialogue, titles and quoted (direct) speech (ACELA1492)</p>	<p>exciting, moving and absorbing and hold readers' interest by using various techniques, for example character development and plot tension (ACELT1605)</p>	<p>imaginative, informative and persuasive texts containing key information and supporting details for a widening range of audiences, demonstrating increasing control over text structures and language features (ACELY1694)</p> <p>Use a range of software including word processing programs to construct, edit and publish written text, and select, edit and place visual, print and audio elements (ACELY1697)</p>
5	<p>Understand that patterns of language interaction vary across social contexts and types of texts and that they help to signal social roles and relationships (ACELA1501)</p> <p>Understand how to move beyond making bare assertions and take account of differing perspectives and points of view (ACELA1502)</p> <p>Understand the use of vocabulary to express greater precision of meaning, and know that words can have different meanings in different contexts (ACELA1512)</p>	<p>Identify aspects of literary texts that convey details or information about particular social, cultural and historical contexts (ACELT1608)</p>	<p>Identify and explain characteristic text structures and language features used in imaginative, informative and persuasive texts to meet the purpose of the text (ACELY1701)</p> <p>Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive print and multimodal texts, choosing text structures, language features, images and sound appropriate to purpose and audience (ACELY1704)</p> <p>Use a range of software including word processing programs with fluency to construct, edit and publish written text, and select, edit and place visual, print and audio elements (ACELY1707)</p>

6	<p>Understand that different social and geographical dialects or accents are used in Australia in addition to Standard Australian English (ACELA1515)</p>	<p>Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts (ACELT1613)</p>	<p>Participate in and contribute to discussions, clarifying and interrogating ideas, developing and supporting arguments, sharing and evaluating information, experiences and opinions (ACELY1709)</p> <p>Use comprehension strategies to interpret and analyse information and ideas, comparing content from a variety of textual sources including media and digital texts (ACELY1713)</p> <p>Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, choosing and experimenting with text structures, language features, images and digital resources appropriate to purpose and audience (ACELY1714)</p>
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