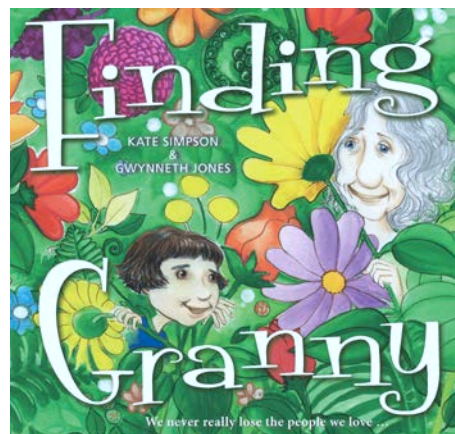


Title: Finding Granny
Subtitle: We never really lose the people we love...
Author: Kate Simpson
Illustrator: Gwynneth Jones
Publisher: EK Books
Price: \$24.99
ISBN: 9781925335699
Publication date: 1st July 2018
Audience age: 4 – 7
Key Curriculum Areas: English, health and personal development, art.



SYNOPSIS:

Every 10 minutes in Australia, somebody suffers a stroke. In *Finding Granny*, that someone is Edie's beloved grandmother. When Edie comes to the hospital, she is confronted by the physical changes in her grandmother: muddled words, a crooked face, a woman confined to bed. 'That's not my Granny!' Edie says. She waits in the corridor during her mother's visits. But when Mum takes Edie to watch one of Granny's art therapy sessions, Edie starts to understand that the Granny she loves is still there.

THEMES:

Illness – stroke

Changing relationships

Resilience

Family

Grandparents

SELLING POINTS:

- A heart-warming story about the bond between a grandmother and a granddaughter.
- Uniquely relevant to the millions of people worldwide living with the effects of stroke.
- A message of resilience in the face of change.

WRITING STYLE:

Finding Granny is written in prose, although in parts the strong rhythm of the text makes it feel almost like verse. The text is written in close third person, meaning that the reader sees everything very strongly from Edie's point of view. The first three spreads of the book are ostensibly about Granny, and yet in these pages the reader learns as much about Edie and the things she likes, as they do about Granny. Much of the story of Finding Granny appears *between* the lines of text – both in the illustrations and in what is implied but not stated by the text.

ILLUSTRATION STYLE:

Simple, uncluttered illustrations that show Edie's perspective. The atmosphere of the hospital is portrayed with blues and greys, with humour peppered through the book to show Granny is still in there, despite her illness.

AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR BACKGROUND:

Kate has always loved books, but believed that writing was something that other people did. People with *ideas*. In her thirties, Kate began reading about the strong link between creativity and happiness. She started exploring various creative pursuits, but it soon became clear that writing was what she loved to do. Because there are bills to pay, Kate still has a day job and fits writing in around work, parenthood and hosting a children's book podcast called One More Page. Writing remains one of the biggest sources of joy in her life – it turns out all those studies about creativity and happiness were right on the money.

Gwynne has always been artistic, and has completed an art certificate at TAFE, a visual art degree majoring in Plant and Wildlife Illustration, and also design courses which all helped to develop her artistic style. Gwynne started illustrating full time in 2012, and started book illustration in 2014. She has currently illustrated six published books and is working on number seven.

INTERVIEW:

AUTHOR

What is the inspiration for this story?

The relationship between grandparents and grandchildren is particularly special to me. My grandmother lived with me for much of my childhood, and my mother is like a third parent to my own young children. She is very much like Edie's grandmother – full of games and fun, cuddles and bedtime stories.

Edie and Granny were originally part of a completely different story. For a variety of reasons, I couldn't get that story to work, but Edie and her grandmother stayed with me. One evening, I sat down, and the opening line of Finding Granny came to me: Edie's Granny is a playtime Granny, a bedtime, story-time pantomime Granny...

I wrote the first draft of Finding Granny very quickly and the current story is not too different from that first draft. As for the original story that Edie and Granny were a part of, I'd still like to make it work one day, but I'll have to find some new characters to star in it.

What was the most rewarding part of this project?

I have written around 20 picture book manuscripts, but this is the first that was accepted for publication. To have a publisher acknowledge that my work was suitable for publication was a very proud moment for me, and gave me a lot of confidence in pursuing my other manuscripts.

What was the most challenging part of this project?

I wrote the middle of this story in a number of ways before I found one that worked. Initially, I had the idea that Granny would be undergoing physiotherapy, rather than art therapy, but I couldn't find a way to really bring out Granny's cheekiness and sense of fun in that setting. With a picture book you have so few words, you really need to be able to communicate your ideas very quickly, and although I tried, I wasn't able to do that with my original idea. When I hit on the idea of art therapy and of Granny splashing the paint on Edie's face, I was very excited because to me this single scene really highlights Granny's character and also allows Edie's attitude to change very quickly, in a believable way.

ILLUSTRATOR

What media do you use to create your illustrations? Briefly describe your process.

Firstly I draw the roughs in pencil to the same size as the work needs to be, and break the text up to flow with the drawings, then on the finished illustrations, I use anything that works, so my drawings are often mixed media with watercolour base, topped with ink felt pen, paint pens, colour pencils, chalk and gouache. This book's illustrations have a bit of everything on watercolour paper.

What was the most rewarding part of this project?

Getting to do the book, and think about an important project and theme such as this. I love the first bit when I get to imagine the work and draw it out roughly.

What was the most challenging part of this project?

Finding the right style of illustration for the book. I initially did 3 different roughs for this book, one more realistic with a stroke affected Granny, one anthropomorphised, (which didn't really work) then finally the third set which still brought animals into it in a roundabout way but made it portray the child's feelings more than the affliction of stroke.

TEACHER ACTIVITIES/NOTES:

ENGLISH

- Usually, the types of words we use to describe things are adjectives: big or small, funny or serious, red or blue. Identify the words and phrases used in the text to describe Granny. Where has the author used adjectives, and where hasn't she?
- Try to describe Granny using only adjectives. How does this compare with the author's original text? Which description tells you more about Granny?
- Choose a person who is important in your life. Can you describe them without using adjectives, in a similar way to the way Granny is described in the text?
- Write a book review (See Worksheet 1)
- Reading comprehension (See Worksheet 2)
- Sequencing activities (See Worksheet 3)

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Discuss how Edie feels when her grandmother falls ill and why.
- Brainstorm other situations that might make someone feel sad/afraid/confused. These may be examples from a child's life or general examples.
- Making something beautiful together makes Granny and Edie feel stronger. Brainstorm with the students what things make them feel happier when they are sad or stronger when they are discouraged.
- Brainstorm changes that have happened in the students' lives. Discuss how the changes made them feel. Looking back at the changes now, did things turn out the way the children expected they would? Do they feel differently about the changes now compared with how they felt at the time?

FAMILY AND RELATIONSHIPS

- Choose someone special in your life. What makes your relationship special? What do you like to do together?
- Bring in a photo of that person and one object that reminds you of them. Give a short presentation to the class about why your relationship is special.
- Use pictures cut from magazines to make a collage that represents your relationship (for Edie and her grandmother, this might include pictures of ice cream, of books, of fire places on cold winter nights among other things).

VISUAL ARTS

- The illustrations in this book are made with a combination of watercolour, ink felt pen, paint pens, coloured pencils, chalk and gouache paint. Experiment with using different media to create an artwork. How does each give a different effect? Where does each medium work well and where does it work less well? (Example: fine pens might be excellent for outlines, but not so good for blocks of colour.)
- The painting of a vase of flowers that Edie and Granny are working on is a type of art called a still life. In a still life, the artist arranges objects from everyday life and paints them. Choose some objects and arrange them in a beautiful or interesting way. Consider using flowers, fruit, shells, interesting glassware, a table setting, books or jewellery. Draw or paint the arrangement as a still life.

STROKE

A stroke happens when the flow of blood is cut off to a part of your brain. Blood contains oxygen and important nutrients for your brain cells. If an artery carrying blood to the brain is blocked or bursts, blood flow to parts of the brain may be interrupted. When brain cells do not get enough oxygen or nutrients, they die.

A stroke can happen to anyone, but it is most common in people aged 65 or older. People who have had a stroke may permanently lose some brain function – that means they may never be able to do all the things they could do before they had a stroke. Physiotherapy, speech therapy and occupational therapy can help someone who has had a stroke to recover some or all of their previous abilities, or to learn to do things in new ways.

The faster a person gets treatment for a stroke, the better their chances of recovery. The acronym F.A.S.T is used to help people remember how to recognise a stroke.

For further information, go to:

<https://strokefoundation.org.au/en/About-Stroke/Stroke-symptoms>

To learn more about stroke, see the following country-specific websites:

In Australia:

- Stroke Foundation <https://strokefoundation.org.au/>

In New Zealand:

- Stroke Foundation of New Zealand
<http://www.stroke.org.nz/>

In the UK:

- Stroke Association www.stroke.org.uk

In the USA

- National Stroke Association www.stroke.org
- American Stroke Association
<http://www.strokeassociation.org/STROKEORG/>

In Canada

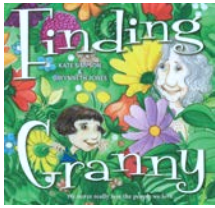
- Stroke Survivors Association <http://www.strokesurvivors.ca/>
- Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada
<http://www.heartandstroke.ca/>

WORKSHEETS

The worksheets on the following pages may be used for classroom or take-home activities.

Book Review

WORKSHEET 1



Title: _____

Characters:

Setting:

What happens in the story?

Did you like the story? Give it a score out of 5 stars.



Draw a picture on the back of this page.

1. The first three double-page spreads of the book are all about Granny. What do we learn about Edie on these pages?

2. Look at Edie's face when she first arrives at the hospital and sees Granny in bed. How do you think she is feeling?

Look at her expression when the doctor explains about Granny's illness. How do you think Edie feels here?

3. According to the doctor, what is wrong with Granny?

4. Find the page with the following text: 'Edie comes to the hospital every day. She waits in the corridor.' What do we learn from the pictures on this page that isn't explained in the words?

5. When Granny first gets sick, Edie says ‘that’s not my Granny!’ What event in the story helps Edie change her mind?

6a. What things about Granny and Edie’s relationship are different at the end of the book compared with the beginning?

6b. What things about Granny and Edie’s relationship are the same at the end of the book compared with the beginning?

7. Why do you think the story is called Finding Granny?

Sequencing Activity

WORKSHEET 3

Cut out and order the sentences.

An ambulance takes Granny to hospital.



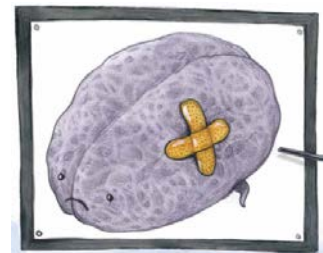
Granny dabs paint on Edie's nose.



Edie and Granny work on their painting together.



The doctor tells Edie and Mama what is wrong with Granny.



Granny reads Edie a story about a horse.

