

The Tiny Star

Author: Mem Fox

Illustrator: Freya Blackwood

Publisher: Penguin Australia

ISBN: 9780670078127

Synopsis

Once upon a time, although this happens all the time, a tiny star fell to earth . . . This touching and timeless story combines, for the first time, the talents of world-renowned author Mem Fox with the heartwarming illustrations of Freya Blackwood. These two luminaries craft a truly unique and moving story about the journey of life, to be cherished and shared for generations to come.

Author Bio

Mem Fox has written over 38 books for adults and children including *Possum Magic*, which has sold over three million copies and is the bestselling picture book ever in Australia. Mem has been presented with many awards including an AM in the 1993 Australia Day Honours for services to the cultural life of Australia; an SA Great Award for Literature in 2001; the Prime Minister's Centenary Medal in 2003; and she was shortlisted for the Australian of the Year in 2004. She worked as an Associate Professor of Literacy Studies in the School of Education at Flinders University, South Australia for twenty-four years and is now an international literacy consultant.

Mem's books with Penguin include *Where is the Green Sheep?*, *Hunwick's Egg*, *A Particular Cow*, *Where The Giant Sleeps*, *Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes*, *Hello Baby!*, *The Goblin and the Empty Chair*, *A Giraffe in the Bath* and most recently *Baby Bedtime*. She lives in Adelaide, Australia.

<https://memfox.com/>



Illustrator Bio

Freya Blackwood is one of Australia's most admired children's illustrators today. Her stunning and iconic illustrations perfectly capture the warmth and complexity of growing up. While warm and classic, her style has a unique quality that renders her work instantly recognisable. The pathos of her characters is a joy to behold, and her work has deservedly captured international attention and a swag of awards and nominations. These include the prestigious Kate Greenaway Medal (2010), which is the UK's most prestigious award for children's illustration, and the CBCA Picture Book of the Year Award - Early Childhood (2007).

Her most recent books are *Maudie and Bear* (2010), *Harry and Hopper* (2009), *Her Mother's Face* (2009) and *Amy and Louis* (2006). *The Treasure Box* is Freya's first book with Penguin Australia. Freya lives in Orange, NSW, with her daughter, Ivy.

<https://www.freyablackwood.com.au/>

Curriculum Links

HASS - Foundation Year - My personal world

ACHASSI001 ACHASSI004 ACHASSK011 ACHASSK012 ACHASSK013 ACHASSK015

The Foundation curriculum focuses on developing students' understanding of their personal worlds, including their personal and family histories and the places they and their families live in and belong to. The emphasis is on the student's own history and their own place. They explore why places are special to them and others. As students explore the people and features of their social and physical worlds, they examine representations of place and sources, which may include stories from family members and from different cultures. They may also study places of similar size that are familiar to them or that they are curious about, coming to see how people feel about and look after places. Learning about their own heritage and their own place contributes to students' sense of identity and belonging, beginning the idea of active citizenship.

HASS - Year 3 - Diverse communities and places and the contribution people make

ACHASSK063

English Literature - Foundation - Year 4

Foundation ACELT1575 ACELT1577 ACELT1578 ACELT1783 ACELT1785

Year 1 ACELT1581 ACELT1582 ACELT1583 ACELT1584

Year 2 ACELT1589 ACELT1591

Year 3 ACELT1596

Year 4 ACELT1603

Mem Fox and Freya Blackwood Talking about Tiny Star

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=t9HwQ16qfT0

Themes

- Lifecycles
- Love
- Family Unit
- Community
- Kindness
- Caring
- Diversity
- Inclusion
- Inclusivity

Pre Reading Questions

Look at the front cover of the book.

Read the title together.

Look at the other names on the book. What are they there for?

Identify the author and the illustrator. What do the author and illustrator do?

Mem Fox is the author of this book. Does anyone know any other books by Mem Fox?

Freya Blackwood is the illustrator of this book. Do the illustrations look familiar to you? Can you think of any other books illustrated by Freya Blackwood.

Have a selection of other books by Mem Fox, and books illustrated by Freya Blackwood to look at, at a later stage. Talk about which ones you liked and which ones you didn't and why.

What do you think the story will be about?

Read the blurb at the back of the book.

What do you feel about it?

What kind of things are you now expecting to see inside the book?

What questions do you have?

Discussion Questions

This book can be read on many different levels.

Take into account your students backgrounds, family life and maturity when discussing some of the more sensitive aspects of the story.

After reading the story, ask the students what they thought it was about.

- Ask who liked the story. Why did you like it?
- Ask who didn't like the story. Why didn't they like it?
- Talk about the other Mem Fox, and Freya Blackwood books, and discuss why they prefer some over others

- Look at the first line in this story, Once upon a time.
- What kind of stories can you think of that start with Once upon a time?
- Was there anything about this story that reminded you of a fairy tale?

After reading the story, did you notice there's one thing that the baby has with it through it's whole life? The quilt covered in stars. * Go back and look at each illustration picking out the fabric of the quilt It helps us recognise the baby as she gets older.

- Ask the students if they still have something - a soft toy/blanket/item of clothing they still have from when they were little that they keep.
- Talk about why these things are important to us.

This is a story about family and community.

- Who are the people in your family?
- - Use the Family tree template (at the end of these notes) to show your family and the relationship between family members.
- Who are other people that are important to you and your family?

All families are different, but there are some things that we all have in common and things we want to have a happy family.
Discuss what these things might be:

How do we know that time is passing in the story?

- We see the baby at the start of the book celebrate it's 80th birthday.
- Birthdays are one thing we might celebrate with our family. What are some other events we might celebrate during the year?

What happens to the baby/old lady in the story?
She just disappears one day.
What do you think that means?

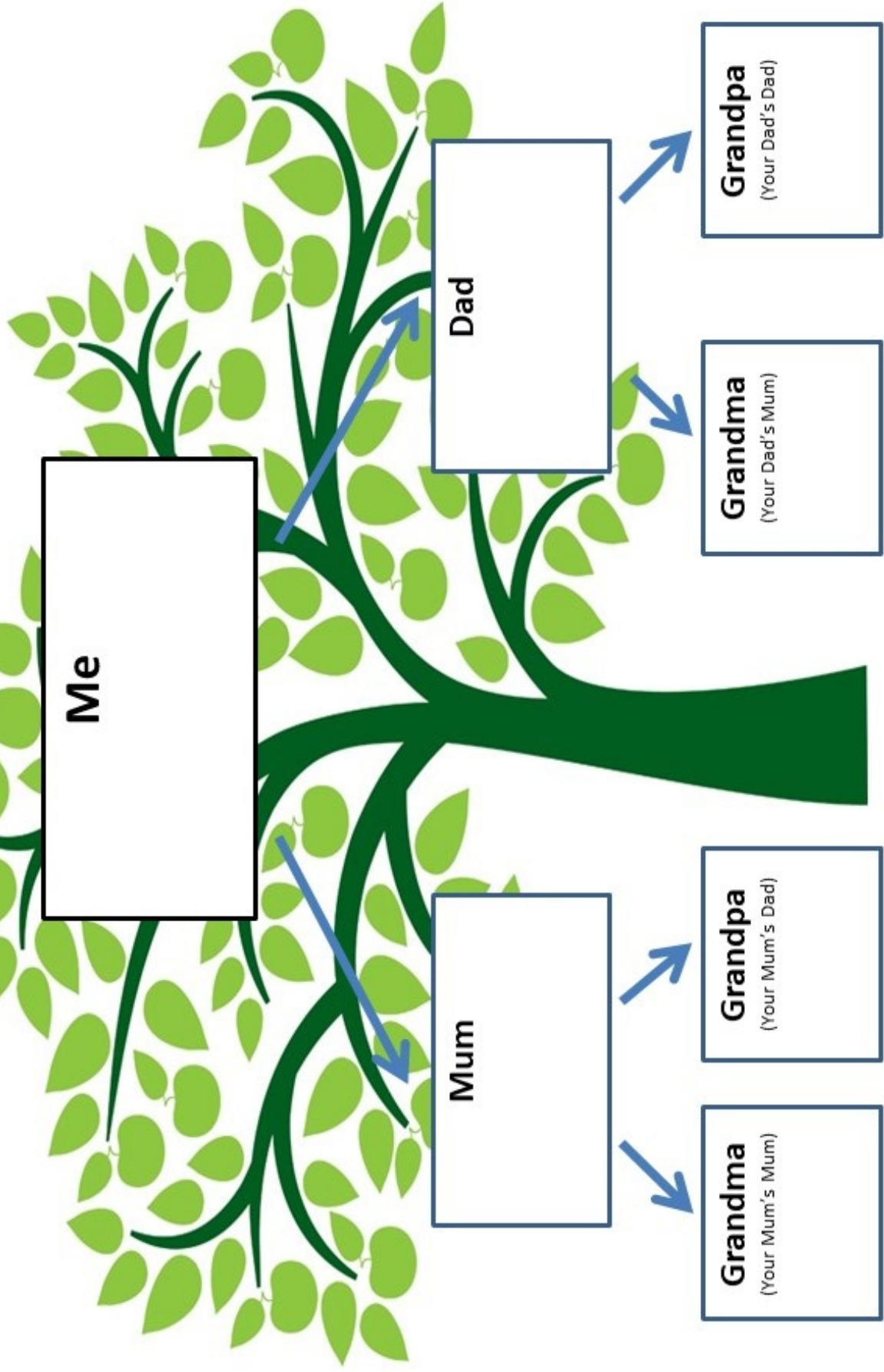
What can we tell about the setting of this story?
What kind of area is it? City/Suburban/Rural?

- How is this the same or different to where you live?
- What does your neighbourhood look like?
- Are there spaces between the houses? Do you have a garden?
- Maybe you live in an apartment.
- Look at images of different types of houses in Australia and the world...what things are the same, what things are different

This story has a multicultural cast of characters.
What does the word multicultural mean?

- Think about where you live, or the school community. How multicultural is that community?
- What good things do you think come from people from different cultures all living in the same communities, or going to school together?
- What can we learn from other cultures?

My Family Tree



All families are unique



If you need to add extra people to your family tree, cut these boxes out and stick them onto your tree, and tell us who they are.