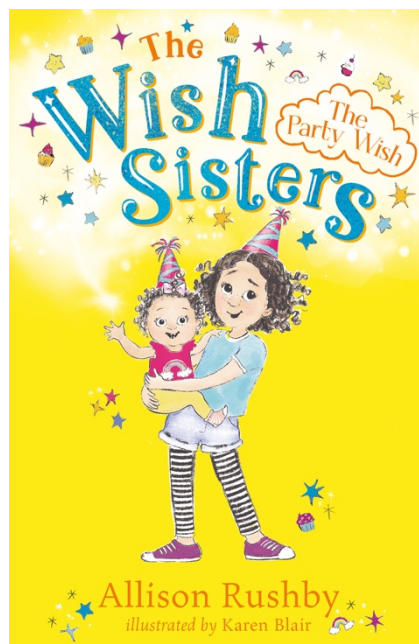


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THE WISH SISTERS: *THE PARTY WISH*

Allison Rushby / Karen Blair



Teachers' Notes

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SYNOPSIS

Imagine if your baby sister were granted unlimited wishes. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is, and that's exactly what Flick is about to discover. If only the mischievous imp who wields the magic didn't delight so much in twisting the wishes into catastrophes! Meet The Wish Sisters, Flick and Birdie, who must be *very* careful about what they wish for.

In *The Party Wish*, Birdie wishes for a unicorn party just like the one from her favourite storybook, complete with lolly rainbow slides, cupcakes galore and a real unicorn. But how can Flick prevent their busybody neighbour from discovering the truth?

Perfect as a read-aloud to early readers or for newly independent readers craving their next chapter book, *The Wish Sisters: The Party Wish* is fun, action-packed and filled with cheeky impish magic.

THEMES

- Magic
- Unicorns
- Sisters
- Problem-solving

WRITING STYLE

Written in third person, past tense, *The Party Wish* is ideal for independent readers who are ready to devour chapter books. The relationship between Flick and her little sister, Birdie, is refreshingly positive. Readers will enjoy interpreting Birdie's 'Gah, gah, gahs', as well as the cheekiness of the imp and its twists on words. The stories are well structured, using appropriate vocabulary and relevant storylines. They encourage audiences to make predictions, visualise and engage with the events and characters. The chapter lengths are digestible for younger readers, and the hooks at the end of each entice children to read on.

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STUDY NOTES

- Before the story begins, Flick introduces herself and her little sister, Birdie. What were your initial thoughts when she said that having unlimited wishes is 'a whole lot of trouble'? With your friends, brainstorm some wishes that could go terribly wrong.
- Birdie's favourite book is *Petunia the Unicorn's Super-fabulous First Birthday*. Why doesn't Flick like this book as much as Birdie? What was your favourite book when you were little? Share with a friend or in a short talk to the class.
- Birdie wishes for her own *Petunia the Unicorn's Super-fabulous First Birthday* party. How might this end in disaster?
- If you could wish for your dream party, what would it include? Share with a friend.
- Birdie can only say, 'Gah, gah, gah!' and 'Bleh'. Replace her baby talk with what you think she is really trying to say.
- Flick is determined to be 'the best big sister ever' (p. 3). Why does she feel this way? How does this influence her actions? How can you be the best sibling you can be? Would this always mean giving in to your siblings' wants? Discuss.
- As you read *The Party Wish*, track the main plot points on a class story map.
- Choose a scene from *The Party Wish* to re-enact in a Reader's Theatre or freeze-frame.
- On p. 6, Flick says, 'sometimes Birdie could be pretty cute'. Describe a time when you thought this way about a sibling.
- What do you see as the main complication in *The Party Wish*? What advice would you give Flick about navigating this issue?
- Write a part of this story from Birdie's point of view, sharing her feelings and thoughts.
- After reading p. 10, sketch your depiction of Flick's backyard as the party unfolds. Compare your visualisation with the illustration on p. 12.
- When Flick's dad says they need to 'have a little talk' (p. 13), what do you think he might say?
- How does the t-shirt Granny Aggie gave Flick influence her actions in *The Party Wish*?
- Stop reading at the end of chapter 3. Write the next few pages of the story before reading on. Share your predictions with a friend.
- Describe the imp's character. Why has the author made it a little bit naughty?
- Why is the imp determined that adults don't find out about the wishes? Do you agree with its reasoning? Discuss.

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- How would you describe Oli? Why is he an important character to include in the story?
- What role does Mr Tran play in *The Party Wish*? What connection might he have with Granny Aggie?
- Create a character portrait of Mrs Mortlake. What words would you use to describe her? Why does the story need someone like her in it?
- Discuss the body language of Flick and Birdie's parents on p. 36. Why do they look so uncomfortable?
- Why does Flick warn Oli not to eat the cupcake? What might Oli be thinking at this time?
- Why doesn't Flick tell Oli about the imp and the wishes at first? What would you have done if you were Flick?
- What would Granny Aggie have thought of Birdie's party? Share in a reflection.
- Explain how the imp twists the girls' wishes. Why does it do this? How would the story be different if it were an obedient and well-behaved imp.
- What wishes would you make if you had unlimited wishes. Swap with a friend. Now, in the role of the imp, twist your friend's wishes. Choose one to write a story about.
- How does Oli use his problem-solving skills to help Flick?
- Do you agree with Oli when he says, 'I think having wishes might sound better than it really is' (p. 77). Give reasons to support your thinking.
- Why does Flick say it 'hurt to have something taken away from her that Granny Aggie had wanted her to have' (p. 77–8)? How would you explain this to the imp to help it understand?
- Flick tells Oli that he is a good friend (p. 79). What makes a good friend? In what ways are you a good friend? What is it that you most like about your good friends?
- Retell this story using Talking Strips.

First...	Next...	After that...	Finally...

- After the party, Birdie wants Flick to read *Digby the Dinosaur Lives in my Dining Room* (p. 88). As a class, devise a storyline for a Wish Sisters story about Digby.

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- What makes Flick change her mind about Petunia's unicorn party, deciding that it was indeed 'super fabulous' (p. 88)?
- Read the sneak peak of the next book in the series, *The Big Wish*. Make predictions about its storyline.

AUTHOR MOTIVATION

The truth is, I wrote The Wish Sisters series because the imp made me do it. Down one of my usual research rabbit holes, I stumbled across an article about the Lincoln Imp, a little grotesque carved figure housed atop a column in Lincoln Cathedral. The imp had a cheeky, gap-toothed grin and a jaunty cross-legged stance and it caught my attention immediately. That imp was definitely up to no good! I tucked a picture of the imp into my ideas folder. Not long after this, I was on the hunt for an idea for a junior fiction series and the imp jumped right out of my ideas folder and said, 'Me! Me! Write about me!' How could I say no? Everything came together very quickly after that. A bit more research told me that imps could grant wishes. As soon as I dropped that imp into a family setting, the imp suggested the baby would make the best wishes. I started jotting down all the hilarious things a baby might wish for and the imp took it from there ...

ILLUSTRATOR MOTIVATION

I think the imp has been waiting patiently in my lounge room for the past 23 years to emerge in The Wish Sisters series ... I have seen the real Lincoln Imp in England, carved into the big Minster (church) centuries ago. I have a little replica that has been in every home since, and so when I was asked to illustrate this series the character emerged very quickly indeed! There are a few similarities between how the imp and baby Birdie look, with their toothy grins and curly hair. I suppose being in any family brings a bit of chaos, so I didn't need to look too far from my own family for inspiration. I love the way that Allison writes with all the fun and humour of the drama caused by the wishes, but in the end there's always love and togetherness – a big sister caring for her baby sister, and that is the most important thing I wanted to convey in my illustrations.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Allison Rushby made a wish when she was six years old. She wished to be a ballerina with pierced ears. Not long after this, she wrote her very first book (not about a ballerina) and decided to be an author with pierced ears instead. She

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went on to write many more books, for both adults and children, though none of them were sticky-taped together like that first one. She lives in Brisbane with her family and her two not very useful assistants, Harry the Bordoodle and Titus the Sphynx. To learn more about Allison, visit www.allisonrushby.com.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

When Karen Blair was young, she wished she could see the fairies in the garden and would sometimes leave baked beans out for them. She also wished that she could draw all day and now the wish has come true! Karen loves to illustrate characters that are young, old and in between. She lives in Fremantle, Western Australia, with her husband, two children and a small dog called Dobby, who thinks he's a cat. To learn more about Karen, visit www.karenblair.com.au.