

Women don't want to just
sit around looking pretty. They want
to **DREAM** and **DO** bold things.

Fashion Designer Elsa Schiaparelli





Bloom

A Story of Fashion Designer Elsa Schiaparelli

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About the Book

When Elsa was young, she felt ugly and unloved, but she found beauty and joy in the world around her. Inspired by her uncle, Elsa followed her dreams to become an artist and a fashion designer. She created new colors and innovative designs for women's clothing. Collaborations with artists, such as Dali and Giacometti encouraged Schiaparelli to create everything from the lamb chop hat to the color known as "shocking pink", and soon, Elsa saw "the beauty of my art reflected in the world." Her avant-garde designs delighted and still influence the fashion industry today.

Discussion Questions

- * When did Elsa first notice color and beauty? What inspired her as a child?
- * Describe Elsa's family life. Did she have a happy childhood? Why or why not?
- * Ask the children what they think "Bella" and "Brutta" mean on pages 5-6. How do you know?
- * When Elsa was seven years old, what important wondering did she have?
- * When the seed seller pinned a flower to Elsa's dress, she got an idea. What did she do? What happened to her?
- * The author talks about flower seeds and "a seed of wild imagination." What does she mean by that?
- * Describe Elsa's relationship with her uncle Giovanni. Why was this relationship so important to her?
- * When Elsa returned home from Milano, she began her journey as an artist. Where did she find ideas?
- * Elsa needed money to follow her dream to become an artist. What job did she take?
- * When Elsa designed her first dress, what happened?
- * Elsa believed that "to be an artist is to dream big and risk failure." What does this mean? Did Elsa become a fashion designer right away?
- * What was Elsa's first successful design?
- * What were some of Elsa's unique designs? How did they inspire other women?
- * Why is this book titled *Bloom*?



Extension Activities

Dress Up. Have students explore Schiaparelli's clothing designs. Then ask the students to replicate one of her designs on paper or, inspired by her designs, create their own design. Hold a "fashion show" in the classroom by displaying the students' designs.

Color Mixing on Coffee Filters. Have each student fold a plain white coffee filter into fourths. Using colored markers, have students color the filters with their own creative designs.

Unfold the filter, and lightly spray with water. Have students observe the colors running together to create a beautiful, unique design!

In Fashion. Ask the students to choose another fashion designer to research and then have them write a brief biography about the designer. They should present their research to a partner or in a small group and include why they are inspired by this person's designs.