



Teaching Notes by Tye Cattanach

What Do You Wish For By Jane Godwin and Anna Walker

Jane Godwin and Anna Walker have created a magical and timeless new picture book – *What Do You Wish For?* Celebrating the importance of family, community, excitement and creativity.

There is an undeniable magic to be had in making a wish, particularly at Christmas, when anticipation and goodwill permeate our neighborhoods and schools, enhancing the feeling that anything might be possible.

Tuning In -

Play your students a song about wishing, using a site like SoundCloud, YouTube or Spotify

Suggestions -

"A Dream Is A Wish Your Heart Makes" - Lily James

"When You Wish upon a Star" - Jiminy Cricket

"We Wish You a Merry Christmas" – Various

"I'm wishing" – (Snow White) Disney

Shared Reading of What Do You Wish For?

Reading the blurb and exploring the cover –

All the children in the street are writing down a special Christmas wish. But what is Ruby's wish? What does she wish for at Christmas time?

Ruby thinks of all the things that make Christmas special . . .

Ask students to predict what they think this book might be about. For older students, perhaps discuss the recognition of symbols used in the illustrations that denote what event might be being celebrated.

Ask students to think about where the children in the illustrations might be. Could they be preparing for a school play? An event at their local church or hall? Do they think that the children might be friends with one another? Why might there be pets/animals present?

Exploring the illustrations/Visual Literacy -

Look at the cover illustrations. Which character do we think might be Ruby?

There are wishes written on small cards in the endpapers. Read these aloud to the class and ask them to raise their hand if they have ever made the same wish.

Where do we think Ruby lives?

What season is portrayed in the illustrations?

"Ruby felt as if her whole self was filled up with wishing". What do we think this means?

There are a lot of animals and birds in What Do You Wish For? Do we think animals and birds make wishes? What do we think animals and birds wish for?

Be sure to look out for the little reindeer that appears in many of the illustrations. How many times can we spot him?

Why do we think the back endpapers are a different colour to the front endpapers?

Ask your students to think about what makes Christmas special for them. Ask for a show of hands from those students whose families celebrate Christmas. Those students who do not celebrate Christmas might like to share with the class stories of their own special celebrations and family events.

Questions to consider -

What is a wish?

Who can grant wishes?

Where do wishes come from?

In what ways can we make a wish? E.g. Some cultures have customs in which people are encouraged to "make a wish", such as blowing out the candles on a [birthday cake](#), seeing a [shooting star](#) at night, tossing a coin into a [wishing well](#) or [fountain](#) or breaking the [wishbone](#) of a cooked [turkey](#). Many believe such wishes can only come true if they are kept a secret from other people.

Does a wish have to be for something magical?

Can you make a wish for another person?

How can a person make a wish come true?

Can you make your own wish come true?

How many fairy tales can you name in which the character makes a wish?

Do wishes always come true?

Have you ever had a wish come true?

Make a Wish Activity -

Ask your students to choose a coloured sheet of paper.

Ask students to think about the wish they would like to make

Ask students to write their wish onto the paper.

Students might like to decorate their wish with collage, beads, wool, glitter, recycled materials and various colours.

Perhaps you can stick the wishes to the wall in the shape of a tree or better still, bring a real potted tree into the classroom or library.

Further Questioning -

Think about a special occasion that makes you happy. What is your favourite thing about this special occasion? What do you love most about Christmas?

Who do you celebrate Christmas and special occasions with?

Looking at the table set for Christmas celebration – what things can you name? Which of the food/decorations do you have at your Christmas celebrations?

The children have all dressed up for the celebration. Name what they have dressed up as.

About the Author/Illustrator –

Anna Walker works from a studio in Melbourne Australia shared with wooly and feathery creatures. Her imagery is inspired by tiny details in the world around her. Anna writes and illustrates stories for children around the world.

Anna was born in Sydney, Australia and grew up in Melbourne and is now an author and Illustrator of picture books <http://www.annawalker.com.au/>

Jane Godwin is a Publisher, Books for Young Readers, at Penguin Random House Australia. She is also a highly acclaimed author of over twenty books for children, across all styles and ages. Her work is published internationally and she has received many commendations, including the Queensland Premier's Award (Children's Books), the Aurealis Award and the Animal Welfare Award, and shortlistings in the CBC Book of the Year Awards, the Prime Minister's Literary Award, the New South Wales State Literary Award (Patricia Wrightson Prize) the YABBA Awards, the Speech Pathology Awards, The Family Award for Children's Books, and the Australian Book Industry Awards.

<http://www.janegodwin.com.au/>