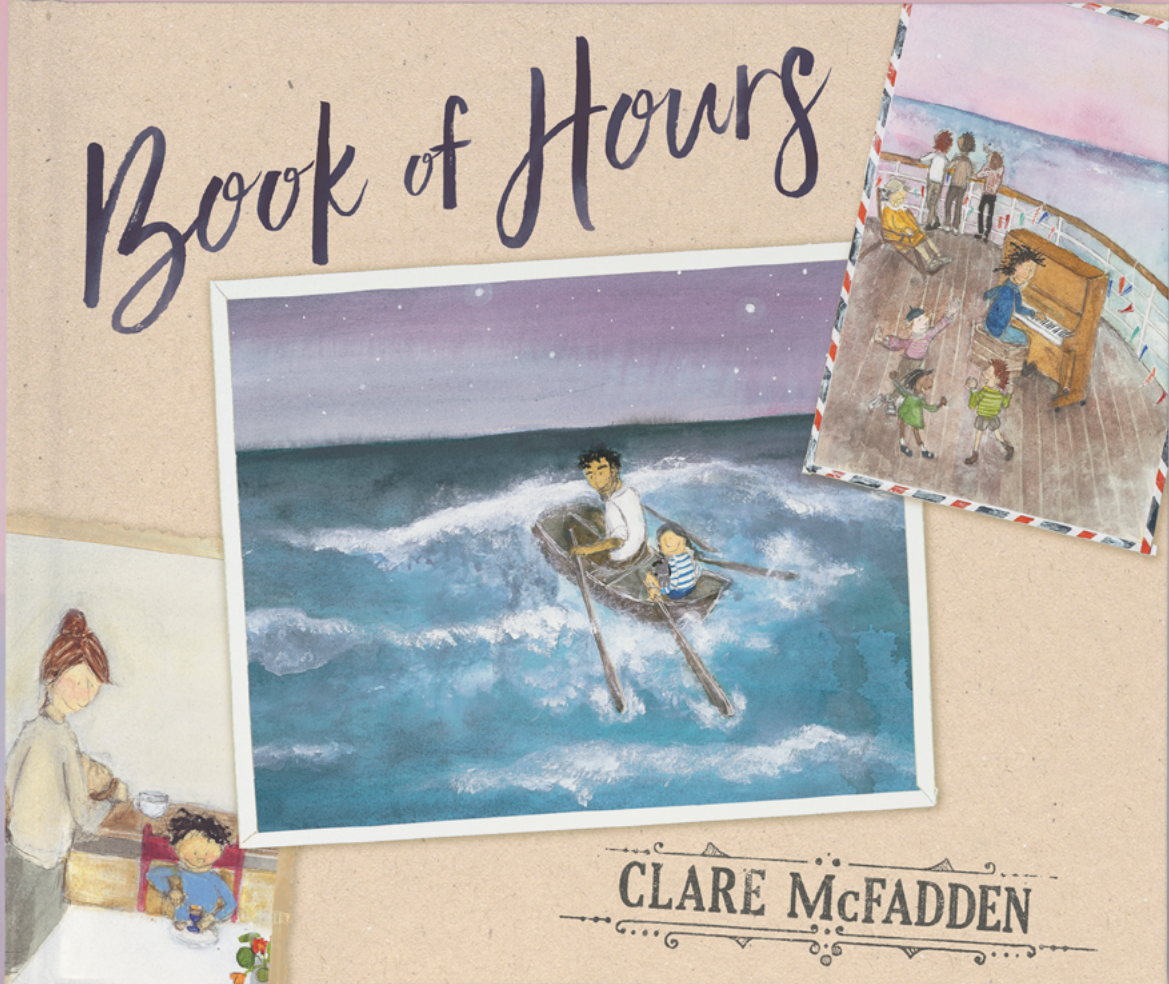


Book of Hours



CLARE McFADDEN

TEACHER NOTES

Teacher Notes by Dr Robyn Sheahan-Bright AM

WALKER BOOKS

Contents:

Introduction

Q&A with Clare McFadden

About Clare McFadden

About the Writer of the Notes

Teacher Notes

A. Critical Literacy: Before and
After Reading the Book

B. Themes & Curriculum Topics

C. English Language & Literacy

- Plot & Structure
- Style & Use of Language
- Writing Exercises
- Further Reading Ideas for Class Discussion

D. Visual Literacy & Visual Arts Activities

E. Geography

F. Further Ideas Using Technology

Worksheets 1-2

Introduction



BOOK OF HOURS
CREATOR: CALRE MCFADDEN
ISBN 9781760651770 HARDBACK
MAY 2024

**'Yet, this is when you see it coming towards you like
it were always here. The beginning.'**

Every life is made of hours, moments and feelings ... what will
you remember?

This book offers a unique invitation to ponder the moments that
create our memories and the mystery of time ...

It is a glorious work which is a profound meditation on the
passing of time, the power of memories, the various stages of
life, and about accepting change.

The title Book of Hours refers to a Christian text which
recorded a calendar of events and the canonical parts of the day
associated with different prayers.

This is an astoundingly beautiful work of art by artist, writer
and educator, Clare McFadden.

Q AND A With CLARE MCFADDEN

1. What was the initial inspiration behind this book? Was it inspired by an image, by particular words, or by an experience, a memory, or someone's actual experience?

There were many sources of inspiration for this book - certainly images, memories and actual experience all informed it. One source of inspiration was the nature of time and the physics theory that time is a construct and is non-linear. Of course, the idea of time as non-linear is not just particular to physics. The Dreaming of First Nations people in Australia is another example of non-linear time - encompassing past, present and future - what anthropologist W.E.H. Stanner described as an 'everywhen'.

So these ideas informed my thinking about *Book of Hours*. If we could exist 'outside' of time, we'd see all the moments of our life at once. This was the start of the idea to present three illustrations, from three different life phases, from the same character's life on each spread. For example, on the 'Oceans' page, you see the main character on the same stretch of shoreline: firstly as a toddler, then with her father as a tween, then departing on a boat as a young adult. This same landscape holds all these experiences in the character's life. At the end of the book we see the old lady seeing her life - in all its moments - all at once. Time is related to memory in this way too.

The book also offers a way to consider time more broadly: how do we think about time? A small child knows it's the end of the day when it's time for dinner, when there are stars in the sky, when they are reading a bedtime story - we might also think about the measuring of time by how many sleeps there are to a birthday, or a trip to the beach. The seasons help us make sense of time too. Where I live, we see the Jacarandas coming into bloom as a sign that school is almost over for the year. What are the signs of time passing in your part of the world?

I guess another source of inspiration, which is related to this idea, was thinking about the different journeys in our lives - in *Book of Hours* there is the journey of a 24 hour day when our main character is a toddler, the migratory voyage she takes as a young adult and then the character's whole life journey (from when she is a tiny baby to a very old lady). I also was thinking about how all these different journeys and different times in our life make up who we are, whatever age we are. For the old lady in the book, there is a part of her who is still the little toddler exploring, another part of her is the young person taking her first big step out in the world - all our experiences, shape who we are today, whatever age we are.

2. Did you have actual places in mind when you wrote this text? The child appears to have been born on an island then as a young adult travels via ocean liner to a new life possibly in Australia? Is that correct?

Yes that's right! It was such a challenge to create the world of the book for *Book of Hours* as it spanned time, eras and places, and the places depicted were not always places I had visited in the real world. The old country where

the girl is born. The migratory voyage she makes as a young person. The coastline where she spends her childhood. For a long time, I felt I couldn't draw anything because I didn't know how one part of this world connected to anything else. I collected hundreds of photos from the various times and places the book is set in, tracked the sea routes of post war migration and examined the floor plans of traditional thatched cottages.

I think it's very important to get details right - to honour those whose experiences we are depicting, and make things feel authentic, but I also think if you are creating a world that has elements of the magical, it has to be grounded in an unwavering reality - it's the details of the real world which make the magical elements real.

After a lot of research, many sketches that didn't work (I even considered making models so I could better see how these places in the book fitted together!) I slowly felt the world come to life. Sketch by sketch, I started to see the world reveal itself to me. I hope the reader will feel this too.

3. I have mentioned the religious origin of the title in these notes. Was that something you particularly wanted to suggest, or was the title selected simply because it is such a spare and concise summary of the meaning behind this text?

I was definitely inspired by the medieval *Book of Hours*. The original *Book of Hours* (and perhaps this is covered in your notes!) were books of prayers for particular times of the day and the year. A more recent *Book of Hours* which I also drew inspiration from is 'Thomas Merton's *A Book of Hours*' (edited by Kathleen Deignan). Merton's reflections and writings are arranged into four sections - Dawn, Day, Dusk and Dark. I found something so beautiful about honouring these times of the day and night and taking a moment to reflect. In many of the medieval books of hours, there was a focus on the illustrations - what Art Historian Wendy Stein describes as 'painted prayers'. So this concept served as one of the entry points for me into *Book of Hours* - as an honouring and marking of the times in our day and the times in our lives in the way that a prayer or reflection does.

*Note - several Australian libraries have medieval *Book of Hours* manuscripts in their collection - some of them are digitised should teachers wish to look at these with their students. (National Library of Australia, State Library of NSW and State Library of Victoria all have original examples in their collection). The link below to the Metropolitan Museum of Art has links to the digitised books in the Met's collection.

4. The text has a poetic quality and is both profound and very evocative and suggestive of feelings. What came first - text or image?

The text came first. I wrote it like a poem really. However, the concept of the book (three intersecting stories told through three sets of illustrations but using the same text) came before that. So, as I was writing the text I was certainly considering how it could apply to all three stories as told by the illustrations - so in this way I don't think I could separate the text from the illustrations in terms of my process because I'm always thinking about the pictures even before I've put them on the page.

Teachers, this is something that might be reassuring for your students - I was a very messy writer at school! I was also more interested in drawing than

I was in writing. Just because you're not a neat writer or a good speller it doesn't mean you're not a great storyteller! I'd like to pass on to children who are struggling with writing - maybe you'll tell a story mainly through illustration or you could record a story orally and have a grown up transcribe it for you? There are many ways to tell a story!

5. The images are glorious. What art medium did you use in the book? Can you describe the process entailed?

That's a lovely thing to say and it makes it all worth it as the process was not so glorious!! Teachers, this is something I'd love to pass on to your students too - there are sometimes MANY failures before getting something right ... and it's not something you can always see from the outside. The finished book doesn't tell you about the many failed drawings and the many weekends I spent at the desk.

I already had the concept of the book - three stories told through the illustrations supported by a single text - but it was a really big challenge to work out how I would actually execute this idea! When I was developing the story, I had a table with notes on each illustration which also included the year or the time of day in which that part of the story took place- this was particularly important for the story of the character's life. I wanted to make sure I got details right: what was the make of an aeroplane from the 1970s? What did a cottage look like at the time and place in which she grew up? How would I show the character changing through the years and how would I make sure the reader knew who the character was in each of the illustrations?! Even though the book is not as didactic to mention times, places, dates, I think by making all these details accurate it grounds the book in real time and place and thus makes the story all the more authentic. It took me AGES to do the illustrations for this book. Some illustrations I did three or four times until I was happy with them.

The media I used was rag paper (paper that is made of cotton rather than trees - this makes it highly absorbent) and acrylic paints. Because the rag paper is so absorbent, you can use a lot of water - so the result can look more like watercolours in some ways. I made the frames that are around each image by collage - cutting them out of paper - the white frame (for the life journey) was made of photographic paper; the blue, white and red frame (for the voyage journey) was made from copying old airmail envelopes; and the old fashioned frame (the day journey) was made from copying the rough edge of an old fashioned photo. I think making things by hand (even something like the frames) gives more warmth to the final work.

6. As these notes discuss, the book is about memory and the passing of time; it's about the changes that occur as a life is lived. The ocean is symbolic of many of the ideas explored in the text. What do you hope that children will take from this book?

It's my great hope that children will make their own meaning from this book. As the teachers reading these notes will already know, children are reflective, curious and philosophical thinkers. I hope that *Book of Hours* serves as an entry point for children to explore their own ideas about time; memories; the important people, animals, and environments in their lives; and the moments that make up each day.

"The Book of Hours: A Medieval Bestseller."

Stein, Wendy A. In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*.

About the Author

Clare McFadden is a writer, artist and educator. She has worked in arts education with children, young people, and communities in both Australia and the United States. Her first book, *The Flying Orchestra*, was awarded the CBCA Crichton Award, was selected as one of the "50 Books You Can't Put Down", was adapted for the stage as the headlining work at the "Out of the Box" Festival and listed as one of the Australian Booksellers' Association's 50 Favourite Children's Books. Clare is the Director of Education at Write the World - a writing community for young writers ages 13 - 18. She holds a Master's Degree in Education from Harvard University.

<https://www.claremcfadden.com/>

About the Writer of the Notes

Dr Robyn Sheahan-Bright AM operates justified text writing and publishing consultancy services, and publishes regularly on children's literature, Australian fiction, and publishing history. She was inaugural director of and is a Life Member of the Queensland Writers Centre, and was co-founder of Jam Roll Press. Her publications include *Paper Empires: A History of the Book in Australia* (1946-2005) (2006) co-edited with Craig Munro and *Hot Iron Corrugated Sky: 100 Years of Queensland Writing* (2002) co-edited with Stuart Glover. In 2012 she was recipient of the CBCA Nan Chauncy Award for Outstanding Services to Children's Literature. In 2014 she received the Queensland Writers' Centre's Johnno Award. In 2021 she was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia.



Teacher Notes



A. Critical Literacy: Before and After Reading the Book

- The title of this book refers to the *Christian Book of Hours* popular in the Middle Ages. After you have read the book, discuss the title. What other title might the book have had?
- Examine the images that feature on the cover, and discuss what the book might be about, and any other suggested message in the cover design. It consists of three images depicting a child at home with her mother, an older child rowing a boat on the open sea with her father, and then leaving on an ocean liner as a young adult. [See also D. Visual Literacy Activities below.]
- Read *The Flying Orchestra* by Clare McFadden and discuss common themes and style in her work.

B. Themes & Curriculum Topics

NOTE: A list of references to use as a starting point for activities in this section can be found below in the Bibliography.

• Memory

Discussion Point: Read this book closely and discuss the memories that the character reveals. Some relate to objects; some to animals or people; some to place or landscape; some to minor and major events.

Activity: Invite students to share a memory of significant earlier events in their lives; or to bring an object to class with which they associate a particular memory (which might be a shell picked up on a beach; an ornament that belonged to a relative; a photograph; or any number of other objects); or to mention an important person (or animal) in their lives; or to discuss places that mean a lot to them, and why.

Discussion Point: The fallibility of memory is inevitably suggested by such a book. What we remember may be partly fable or what we've been told happened by others, and partly inspired by photographs, rather than actual memories, as well. The frames in this book are deliberately bordered as if to cement this impression of snapshots. Examine the later image of her stepping through the door and what we see on either left or right in this image, as opposed to earlier 'contained' small frames depicting 'memories'.

• Life's Journey

Discussion Point: This book celebrates the changes that occur in a person's life – some deliberate and others accidental. It also celebrates milestones such as birth, learning to eat by oneself, learning to navigate skills such as rowing a boat, leaving home for the first time. What other milestones are recorded in this book?

Discussion Point: It celebrates the small moments in a life, too – sharing meals, playing with a family pet, etc. What small moments are recorded in this book?

• Travel

Discussion Point: What makes people leave their homes to travel to foreign places?

• Home

Discussion Point: In this book, both homes (past and present) have views of the ocean. There is a distinct sense that the memories of childhood and adulthood are inextricably linked by this view. Warm memories of that childhood are precious but the view of the ocean was enticing, and ultimately led to the protagonist leaving for foreign climes. Discuss the concept of home as it is explored in this book.

• Book of Hours

Discussion Point: 'Book of Hours' refers to a Christian prayer book used to pray at each of the canonical hours of each day. It also recorded a calendar of religious feasts and associated prayers and was popular in the Middle Ages. The title might equally, though, have been Book of Seconds, or minutes, days, weeks, months, years ... Why is this the title of this book?

C. English Language & Literacy

• Plot & Structure

Discussion Point: The structure is cyclical with 'In the beginning' opening the text, and 'The beginning' at the end of the book. What does this repetition suggest to your students?

• Style & Use of Language

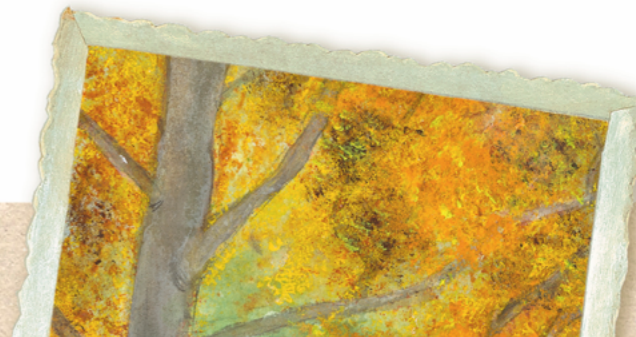
Discussion Point: The text of this book is a lyrical poem in its spare and evocative use of language. 'In the beginning there is a hard-boiled egg, a dog with a bursting heart...' Discuss the language devices used in this text.

• Writing Exercises

Activity: Invite students to write a story based on the memories they have shared in class.

Activity: Write an acrostic poem using the letters in the word 'Memories' to reflect some of the ideas conveyed in this book.

Activity: Discuss non-linear narrative timelines with students, and then plot a simple non-linear story together. [See Bibliography.]





• Further Reading Ideas for Class Discussion

1. Read and compare these three texts to *Book of Hours*:
 Godwin, Jane *Don't Forget Ill.* by Anna Walker. Puffin, 2021.
 Smith, Sydney *Do You Remember?* Neal Porter Books, 2023.
 Teckentrup, Britta *The Memory Tree* Orchard Books, 2014.
2. Locate and read other picture books about memories. [See Bibliography.]
3. Visit websites about the nature of time. [See Bibliography.]
4. Research some of the other concepts and references mentioned in the Q&A with Clare McFadden.
5. Create a classroom display of books about memory and time.

D. Visual Literacy & Visual Arts Activities

Every element in a picture book is designed to contribute to its meaning; elements are brought together into a sequence of images which tell a story in a filmic manner. Text and images should work together – images extend the text's meaning. Encourage students to read both the written and the visual text closely, and to interpret them creatively. How do the images add to the written text?

- **Activity:** Examine the cover (front and back). After reading, discuss the cover's relationship to the internal written and visual text.

- **Activity:** The endpapers depict the ocean's waves. Invite students to create their own watercolour images of the ocean.

- **Activity:** Examine each double page spread and invite students to interpret its meaning and content. [Consider some of the General Discussion Points 1–5 below regarding aspects of book design.]

- **Pp 1** The Title Page depicts a mother sitting holding a baby at a kitchen table set only for one, with a single boiled egg in an eggcup.

The double page spreads then begin with a series of three frames:

- **Pp 2–3** Depicts the mother and child at the same table – in the first frame the baby is now a toddler eating a boiled egg, in the second frame three boiled eggs are being taken to the table by the child who is now older, and in the third frame a father (who has presumably been away at sea?) joins them, and the child, who is now approaching her teens, is reading a letter. A small puppy peeks from the edge of the first frame. The idea of change and time passing is skilfully conveyed.

- **Pp 4–5** Depicts the same child outdoors with her beloved dog, and each of three frames depict her aging as in the previous double page spread. This frame also reveals that their cottage is perched on a cliffside with a magnificent view of the ocean.

- **Pp 6–7** Depicts the child playing by the sea, then in a rowboat, with her father pushing her out into deeper water, and finally her parents waving her off as she travels away on a larger ferry boat, in the third frame. The dog grows in each frame as the child does.

- **Pp 8–9** Depicts the mother and child watching three men on the beach below hauling out a rowboat (presumably one of them is her father?) with the rowboat, then a huge ocean liner bedecked with streamers is about to set off on a long voyage, and then the girl is seen reading a letter from home with her suitcase ready to be unpacked at her feet.

- **Pp 10–11** Depicts the child climbing a tree, then observing a similar row of trees as she arrives in a foreign place, and then working in some foreign country.

- **Pp 12–13** Depicts three fragments of the past – the child playing beneath a clothesline as her mother rescues the washing on a rainy day, playing the piano on the ship's deck while children dance to the music, and lighting lamps in a different household.

- **Pp 14–15** Depicts a small child playing on the beach with a toy boat, she cherishes the same boat sitting on a double bunk on the ocean liner, and then as an adult is seen giving the boat to a small child (presumably hers) on another beach.

- **Pp 16–17** Depicts stargazing – the child on her father's shoulders, the ocean liner in a sea of stars, and the same girl, now a mother, showing her child the stars on another headland, presumably in Australia? Two birds feature on the right hand side of the frame.

- **Pp 18–19** Depicts dinner – as a child with her mother, as the young woman aboard ship with a varied group of people from every walk of life and many cultures, and in her new household with her partner and child.

- **Pp 20–21** The format changes at this point, with an evocative painting of the sky as a double page spread, described as 'space between'.

- **Pp 22–23** Depicts the child being read to by her father, then she is seen as a young woman standing at the rail on the ocean liner (seeing the reflection of her family waving her goodbye in the face of the moon), and then as an older adult farewelling a young traveller boarding a plane (presumably her child now grown-up).

- **Pp 24–25** The child is seen, in another double page spread, now as an old woman resting in a chair.

- **Pp 26–27** A magical double page spread depicts the old woman waving a white handkerchief and about to step through a door on the edge of a cliff; the viewer can see her childhood on the left and the new life she has led overseas on the right.

- **Pp 28–29** Another evocative spread depicts on the right, the old woman with arms out ready to catch her childhood dog, with her childhood self on the left, and the huge ocean liner in the background. The image captures all the stages of her life in one spread.



- **Pp 30–31** The old woman is viewed from behind sitting on a seat overlooking the ocean with the toy boat and the dog in sketched form beside her.

General Discussion Point 1: The standard picture book format is generally 32 pages; *Book of Hours* is 32 pages and is landscape in format. Most double page spreads here consist of three small images which are filmic in style. They are akin to photographs or snapshots of three stages in the character's life. Later in the book several full double page spreads appear. Discuss picture book conventions used here, and how they contribute to the reader's understanding of meaning.

General Discussion Point 2: The medium used is acrylic paints on rag paper, and collage. Discuss the effect of these mediums and material. [See Q&A above.] Then invite students to experiment with this form of art.

General Discussion Point 3: Perspective and spatial construction are used in these snapshots of scenes from a life – some are close-ups and some panoramic views of the action. How does perspective contribute to meaning in any of these images?

General Discussion Point 4: How does colour in an image suggest emotions? Blue is a significant colour in this text. How would you describe the palette of colours used in this work?

General Discussion Point 5: Sub-Text is used in picture books to enhance textual meaning; images say what the text does not. For example,

- the 'boiled egg' of the first few pages is suggestive of new life as we are witnessing one of the first memories of her childhood;

- a small toy boat appears in several images, suggestive of travel, but also symbolic of the memories she holds dear of a childhood spent by the sea; the boat also appears in her suitcase and on board the ocean liner, and she passes it on to her own child later in the text;

- the child's small dog appears as an expression of love and companionship;

- several images are bordered by the striped border that appears on an airmailed letter, relating to the twin ideas of separation and connection [See also Q&A with Clare McFadden above];

- the child of the story is always wearing blue as she ages and becomes an old woman; it not only identifies her, but this colour might be seen as a reflection of the ocean which is such a central symbolic theme in the visual text.

- 'Oceans. There is always the sea.' The text is book-ended with endpapers depicting waves in the ocean. The child lives on a headland overlooking the ocean. She spends her childhood on a rowboat with her father; a ferry takes her to the mainland, and she travels via an ocean liner to another country where she lives near another beach and coastline. It also links her old life and her new one. The ocean represents travel and change, and adventurous freedom. What else does the ocean symbolically represent in this picture book?

What other details did your students observe in the images?

- *Activity:* Create a classroom response as a book – Prepare for this by discussing the conventions of picture book design above. Each child could then draw or paint images of significant memories.

- *Activity:* Create a diorama of the kitchen which features in the book.

E. Geography

- *Activity:* This book provides opportunities to discuss places and landscape. The child grows up on a beautiful headland on an island, in a cosy cottage. The narrator then emigrates by ship and journeys to a foreign place (Australia) where the weather is very different. Discuss the geography and the weather experienced in her childhood home and her adopted home. How are they different? How are they the same?

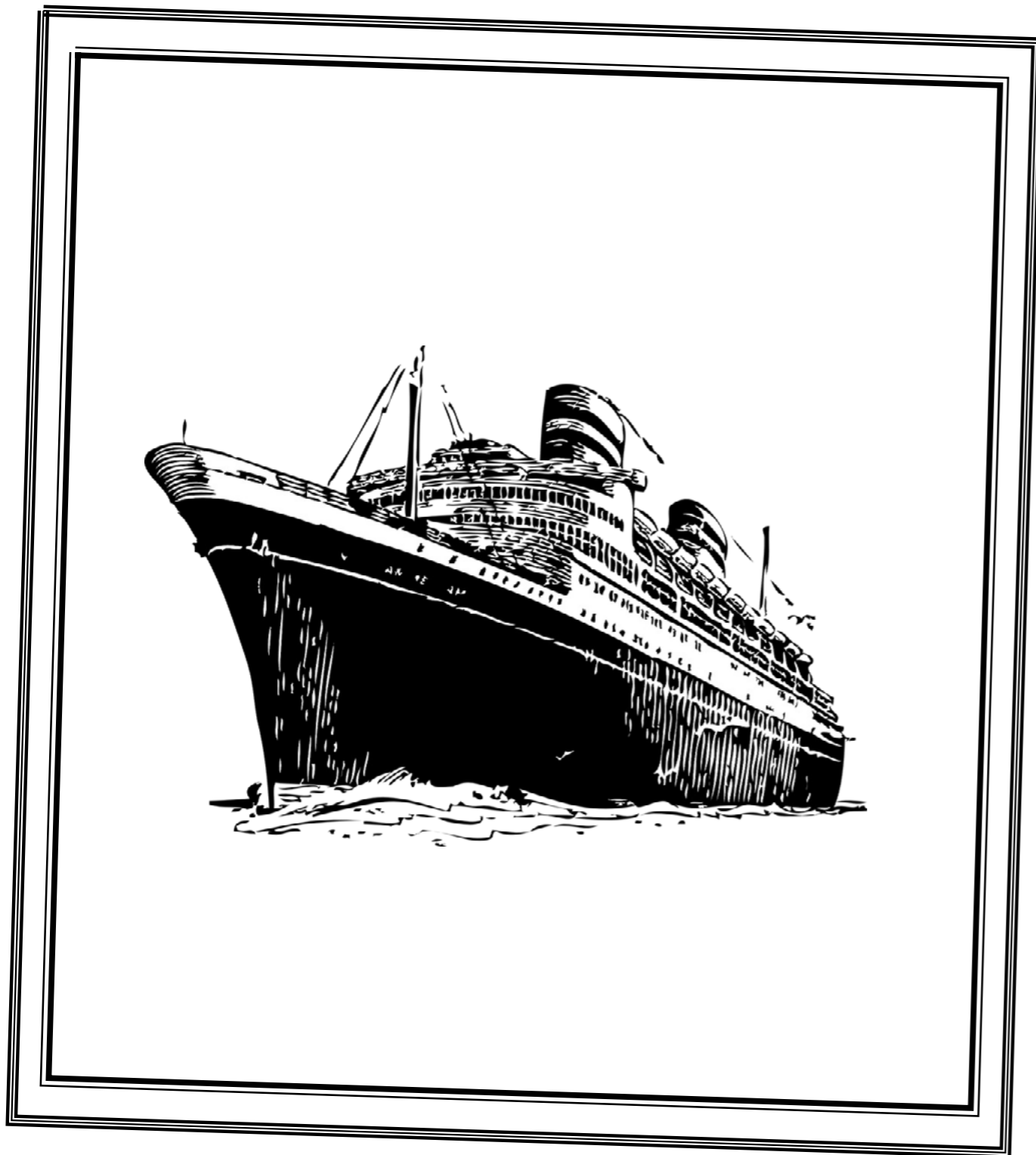
F. Further Ideas Using Technology

- *Activity:* Research online any of the topics covered in these notes.



Worksheet 1

Draw and then colour a landscape scene around this image of an ocean liner.



Worksheet 2

This quiz can be used to test comprehension of the text contained in the accompanying Teacher Notes.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the child's first memory?
2. Who is her constant companion?
3. What do the child and her father do on the beach?
4. What colour is the character wearing as both a child and an adult?
5. What toy appears in several frames in this book?
6. What is the older girl doing on the deck of the ocean liner as children dance around her?
7. What is the evocative painting of stars called in this book?
8. What four types of boats appear in this book?
9. One page depicts three dinners? Who is sharing them?
10. What are the final words in the book?

ANSWERS

1. A boiled egg.
2. Her pet dog.
3. They take the rowboat out to sea.
4. Blue.
5. A toy boat.
6. She is playing the piano.
7. Space between.
8. Rowboat, ferry, toy boat, ocean liner.
9. One is shared by the child with her mother, then as a young woman she is sharing a meal aboard ship with a varied group of people, and then she is depicted as an adult in her new household with her partner and child.
10. The beginning.

Bibliography:

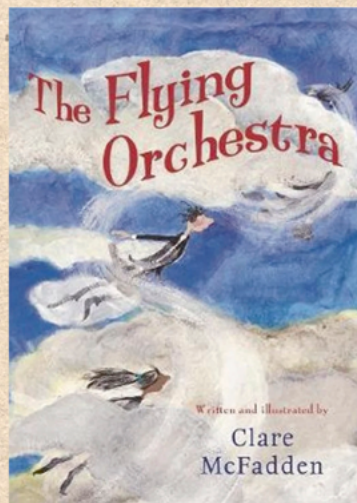
Picture Books

- Baker, Jeannie *Belonging* Walker Books, 2007, 2004.
- Baker, Jeannie *Window* Walker Books, 2002, 1991.
- Blackall, Sophie *Farmhouse* Hachette, 2022.
- Brosgol, Vera *Memory Jars* Pan Macmillan, 2021.
- Bunting, Eve *The Memory String* Ill. by Ted Rand. Clarion Books, 2015.
- Crawford, Joanne *I Remember* Ill. by Kerry Anne Jordinson. Magabala Books, 2018.
- Fox, Mem *Wilfrid Gordon Macdonald Partridge* Ill. by Julie Vivas. Omnibus Books, 1984.
- Godwin, Jane *Don't Forget* Ill. by Anna Walker. Puffin, 2021.
- Godwin, Jane *All Through the Year* Ill. by Anna Walker. Viking, 2010.
- Godwin, Jane *A Life Song* Ill. by Anna Walker. Puffin, 2023.
- Harrison, Penny *The Little Things* Ill. by Hannah Somerville. Little Hare, 2023.
- Laden, Nina *Once Upon a Memory* Ill. by Renata Liwska. Hachette, 2013.
- Sarihi, Sepideh *My Favourite Memories* Ill. by Julie Völk. Transl. by Elizabeth Lauffer. Blue Dot Press, 2020.
- Smith, Sydney *Do You Remember?* Neal Porter Books, 2023.
- Teckentrup, Britta *The Memory Tree* Orchard Books, 2014.
- Watkins, Ross *One Photo* Ill. by Liz Anelli. Penguin Random House, 2016.

Websites

- 'Book of hours' *Britannica*
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/book-of-hours-prayer-book>
- 'Book of Hours' *Wikipedia*
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book_of_hours
- Bowles, Emilee Newman 'Writing a Non-Linear Timeline' *Eschler Editing*
<https://eschlerediting.com/writing-nonlinear-timeline/>
- Hammond, Claudia 'What we get wrong about time' *BBC 4* December, 2019
<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20191203-what-we-get-wrong-about-time>
- Hindman, Sandra 'Explaining Books of Hours' *AbeBooks* January 24, 2022
<https://www.abebooks.com/books/rarebooks/explaining-books-of-hours>
- 'Interview with Children's Author/Illustrator Clare McFadden' *Books for Little Hands* August 26, 2011
https://booksforlittlehands.blogspot.com/2011/08/interview-with-childrens_26.html
- 'Non-Linear Storytelling; Non-Linear Writing Tips and Examples' *MasterClass*
<https://www.masterclass.com/articles/non-linear-writing-tips-and-examples>
- 'The concept of time: how to teach it and why it is difficult' *Edukania*
<https://edukania.com/the-concept-of-time-how-to-teach-it-and-why-it-is-difficult/>

This work is a philosophical meditation on the mysteries of time passing. It is a stunning tribute to the power of childhood memories to transcend time, distance and life's travails.



Also by Clare McFadden:
The Flying Orchestra

**WALKER
BOOKS
CLASSROOM**



Free education resources written
to the Australian curriculum.

classroom.walkerbooks.com.au