



TEACHERS' RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED FOR

Lower primary: ages 5–8; years k to 3

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KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **Learning areas:** English
- **General capabilities:** Literacy, Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social capabilities, Ethical Understanding, Intercultural Understanding.
- **Cross-curriculum priorities:** Sustainability

REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

- Language and literacy
- Creative and critical thinking
- Intercultural understanding
- Sustainability themes

THEMES

- Family, community and culture
- Diversity
- Friendship
- Sustainability and nature
- Community gardens
- Pets
- Play
- Grandparents and parents

PREPARED BY

Penguin Random House Australia
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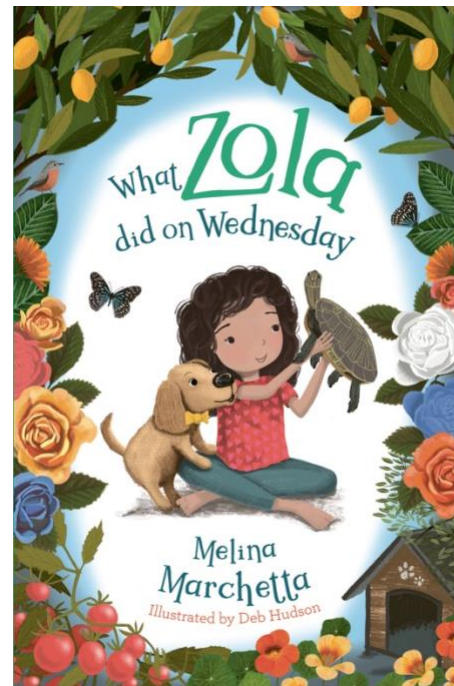
PUBLICATION DETAILS

ISBN: 9781760895174 (paperback)
9781760147624 (ebook)

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What Zola did on Wednesday Melina Marchetta

Zola loves living on Boomerang Street with her mum and her nonna. Every day of the week is an adventure. But Zola has a problem. No matter how much she tries, she can't keep out of trouble!

PLOT SUMMARY

Seven-year-old Zola lives with her nonna and her mum, and their well-behaved dog, Monty. Every day of the week is a new adventure for Zola, especially in the sprawling backyard where Nonna is growing every vegetable imaginable and nurturing the best roses in the street.

In the house behind them lives her cousin Alessandro who can visit through a little door in the back fence with his adorable but naughty dog called Gigi, who is also a cavoodle like Monty.

But Zola has a problem. No matter how much she tries, she can't keep out of trouble. Like on Wednesday, when Zola has a plan to help find her friend Sophia's missing turtle but Gigi leads the neighbours on a chase around the street . . .

Luckily, Zola's family and friends are around to make things right in the end, to help her accept responsibility and, best of all, to have lots of fun.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Melina Marchetta is the bestselling author of ten novels, which range from beloved young adult fiction and fantasy through to contemporary and crime fiction, and a book for younger readers. Her much-loved Australian classic *Looking for Alibrandi* was made into an award-winning film. She lives in Sydney with her daughter and her dog in a neighbourhood very much like Zola's.

Q & A ON ZOLA WITH MELINA MARCHETTA

Melina Marchetta's new series is perfect for beginner readers. Why did she write the What Zola Did books? My eight-year-old daughter is a very reluctant reader. When she was in Year 1 she especially struggled with literacy so I wrote it for her. Although the character is named Zola (who is named after a young friend), she is very much based on Bianca. And I'm always searching for diversity in books for any age.

What does Bianca think of the series? She is very excited about it. Apart from our dog Gigi being in it, so are the dogs next door, as well as my nephew whose middle name is Alessandro. In the books Alessandro lives behind Zola and they hang out via a little gate in the fence. We will soon move into a house that will be separated by a similar door, so they are both excited. The other night Bianca read a chapter to my mum and her cousin and they were very charmed.

Is Zola's Nonna Rosa similar to anyone in your family? My mum is a bit like Nonna Rosa. We went on holidays once and left our dog Gigi with her and she had to build a barrier around her entire garden. The moment we let Gigi loose in the backyard, she jumped the barriers and went for a dig-a-thon. It's all we heard the whole time we were away.

Are you a passionate gardener? I'm a terrible gardener. The problem is that I love gardens, so I would be the happiest person in the world if I had a personal gardener. Once in a while I tell myself that I'm going to grow tomatoes. I've done that successfully once, but it's all about the quality of the soil. I also love eggplant and capsicum.

What is your favourite scene in the first book? My daughter is a busybody about what the neighbours are up to so I love the scene where Zola and her cousin are on the trampoline reporting on what neighbouring kids are doing.

The illustrations are just gorgeous. How did you feel when you first saw them? I've never had illustrations in my novels before so the visuals have always been in my head. I love Deb's illustrations because she has

captured the personalities of humans and dogs perfectly.

What other types of adventures will Zola have during the rest of the week? My father passed away recently and prior to that he had purchased a little yellow boat to fix up for his grandchildren. My cousins and my parents' neighbours and my nephews are determined to work on it, so one of the books will be based on the little yellow boat and what happens when Zola and Alessandro and the dogs get into the paint!

There are seven books in the What Zola Did series.



Each one is like a warm hug and is filled with beautiful illustrations by Deb Hudson.



ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Deb Hudson grew up in the country on a hobby farm with a large veggie patch surrounded by fruit trees. She was the youngest of six children, hence the need for a big vegetable garden. Each child tended their own row in the garden, keeping it free from weeds, rabbits, the sheep and other smaller bugs.

Drawing and creating have always been a big part of her life. As a child her mother said she was 'off with the fairies' in her own little dream world, and was often dancing about in dress-ups, talking to imaginary friends and drawing.

Deb feels a lovely connection to the joy of the community garden in the Zola series. She finds that



drawing plants and the lovely shapes, textures and colours of flowers feeds her imagination and inspires her creativity. Deb also loves to draw people and the emotion of their relationships.

Deb illustrated her first children's book *The Golden Thread* in 2018. She has also created greeting cards, crockery, calendars and packaging.

Deb is passionate about drawing bright, happy and colourful images that evoke emotion and thought in the viewer – the dreamy, joy and wonder-filled moments of the everyday. She has been drawing and creating since she was a little girl and lives in the fabulous city of Melbourne, Australia, with her husband, three children, an energetic border collie and a bright yellow canary.

Questions

1. Before reading the book, discuss what you think this story is going to be about.
2. After reading it, were you surprised by the story? Why or why not?

WRITING STYLE

The What Zola Did series of books are very satisfying ones to read aloud. One of the reasons for this is the distinctive rhythm, word sounds and choices, and the overall language used by the author Melina Marchetta and the way in which she dramatises conversations, called 'dialogue'. We call this the author's voice. Take turns reading this book aloud in class. Make sure you emphasise the words in bold. Can you hear Melina's voice telling you the story? Be sure to give each of the characters their own voice when reading out the dialogue.

Questions

- What do you think of Melina's writing style and voice as an author? Did you like it? Why? Did you like the dialogue?
- Did the story make you laugh? When?
- Were there some moments where you felt sad? Why?
- How did you feel after you finished the story?
- Have you had experiences just like Zola? What did you do to make things right?

CHARACTERS

There are so many characters to love in this story: Zola, Alessandro, Nonna Rosa, Zola's mum, Bianca, Omar and Leo and the rest of Zola's neighbours and teachers and friends at school, and of course, the loveable dogs that belong to Zola and Alessandro: well-behaved

Monty and naughty Gigi. And Bianca and Omar's fluffy cat, Tim Tam, and Leo's dog Maggie and his mum's police dog Vesper.

- Which characters were your favourites? Why?
- Create your own characters and write a story about them. What happens to them? Do they get in trouble? Are there any pets involved? What do they look like? Where do they live? What does it look like? Who else lives there? Do they have lots of neighbours?
- Write a story in which Vesper the police detection dog solves a crime or Zola and the gang teach all the dogs in the neighbourhood some exciting tricks. Perhaps there's a performance at the end?

SUSTAINABILITY, NATURE AND COMMUNITY

- Plant some flower or vegetable seeds in some soil in an egg carton or other container. Depending on the time of year and where you live, there are lots of seeds you might choose from. Some good ones to try are tomatoes, sunflowers, carrots, peas. As a class, keep them watered and in the sun. Watch them grow. You might even like to try saving tomato seeds and follow the instructions at the end of the book. Draw a picture of your seedlings when they grow
- Start your own school community garden and enjoy it all year round, just like Zola and her family. Teachers might like to involve parents in this rewarding project that teaches children (and adults!) so much about sustainability. Organise a plant sale of seedlings you have grown as a class.
- Join in [National Tree Day](#) and plant some trees.
- Start your own knitting club, just like Zola and her community.
- If you have a dog, ask your parents to help you teach it some basic tricks or take it to obedience classes like the gang in *What Zola did on Wednesday*. Visit a dog park in your neighbourhood with your family and describe all the different dogs that you see. Find out the names for each type of dog.

FAMILY

- Draw a picture of your grandma or grandfather, or your parents or brother or sister or aunty or uncle or someone else in your family. What is special about them? What are the things you love about them? Write under it the sorts of activities they like. Are there special activities that you enjoy together? Describe them.



- Create an acrostic poem out of the name you have for them and list all the things you love about them, making sure that each starts with a letter of their name. Feel free to add lots of illustrations!

INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

There are lots of different words that mean grandmother and grandfather in different languages. In Italian, *nonna* means grandma and *nonno* means grandpa.

- As a class, research and discuss some other words for grandparents in different languages.
- You might like to find out about words for grandparents and parents in Greek, French, Chinese, Arabic, Turkish, Lebanese, Vietnamese, Thai, your local Aboriginal Australian language.
- What are the words for Mum and Dad, for brother or sister, or aunty or uncle?
- What is a word for friend?

VISUAL LITERACY

The illustrator of the Zola series, Deb Hudson, has taken great care to develop the setting of Boomerang Street and all of the characters in the books, working with the author and editor to get them just right. Here are some examples of her character studies:

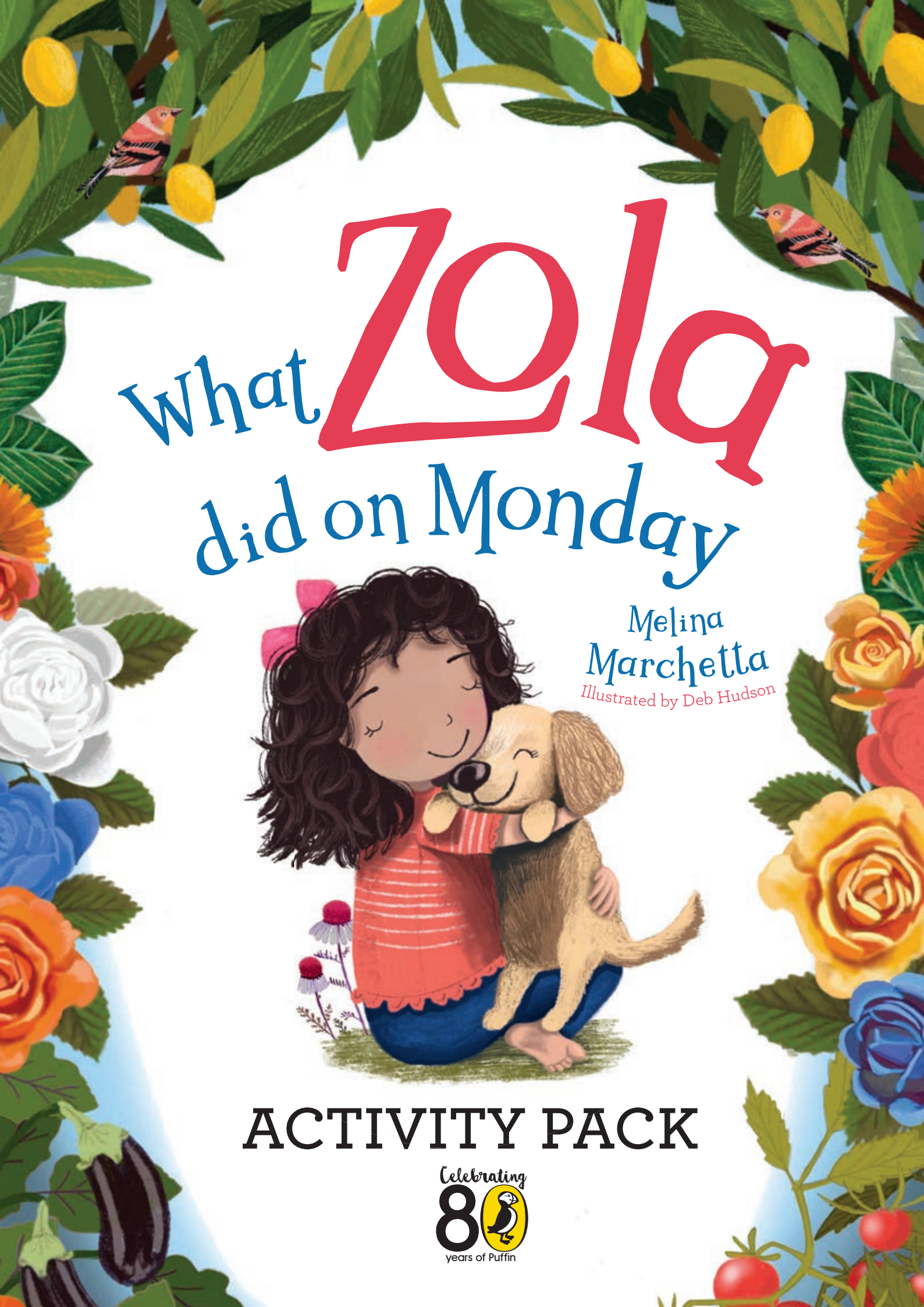
- Create your own character studies by drawing pictures of the characters from your story in the previous activity. Try drawing them in a variety of poses and with their friends, family and pets.
- Now illustrate a scene from the story, including as many of the characters that you can.
- Look at the illustrations throughout *What Zola did on Wednesday*. Pick a favourite one and describe what you see. Is there more in it than is described in the text? What are some of the extra details the illustrator has included?
- Draw your own pictures of Zola, Alessandro, Nonna Rosa, Bianca, Omar, Leo and all the pets.

ZOLA



GIGI





What **Zola** did on Monday

Melina
Marchetta
Illustrated by Deb Hudson



ACTIVITY PACK



Spot the difference

Can you spot the six differences between these two pictures?



Answers from left to right: hair bow, blossoms on tree, badge, plant, glasses, shoes

Find-a-word

Words can appear forwards, backwards and diagonally.

Q M R S O V N Y F O M A K K Y
M B O U R G J M A O P C Q N A
F H Z N X E R S O D H V I G D
E U E F D E T L O W S V K H S
F Y V L W A B A E I S R P V E
R G N O G S Y D W V L Q U J U
I W L W Y D N G A R D E N H T
D F N E B E N I H S N U S V T
A V S R S E P N I O N N O N G
Y Y U D J S T C N Z O L A O R
S X A C H O U N P K L I N L O
D Y F D Y X A L E A M P H Y W
C V V B V P S W F G R M Z H T
F H F W N V P X B P I V E Q A
F N E Z Y X W A A J J U Z V H

BLOOM
FLOWER
FRIDAY
GARDEN

GROW
MONDAY
NONNA
NONNO

SEEDS
SOIL
SUNFLOWER
SUNSHINE

TUESDAY
THURSDAY
WATER
WEDNESDAY
ZOLA

Grow a mini garden

Eggshells are great for your garden, but they're also the perfect size to grow seeds.



1. Wash out your eggshells using hot water
2. Poke a small hole through the bottom to allow for water to drain
3. Fill your eggshells up with soil
4. Choose which seeds you'd like to grow, and push them into the soil so they're covered
5. Water your seeds lightly according to their instructions and your seeds will grow in no time!



Garden hunt

The garden is an exciting place with lots of bugs buzzing, the sun shining, things growing and things hiding. Explore your garden or backyard and write down all of the fun things you see and find.

In my garden

Colour in



Melina
Marchetta
Illustrated by Deb Hudson





Melina
Marchetta
Illustrated by Deb Hudson

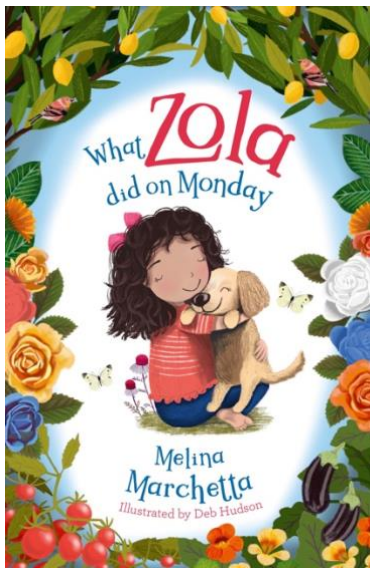




Melina
Marchetta
Illustrated by Deb Hudson



FURTHER READING FROM PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA



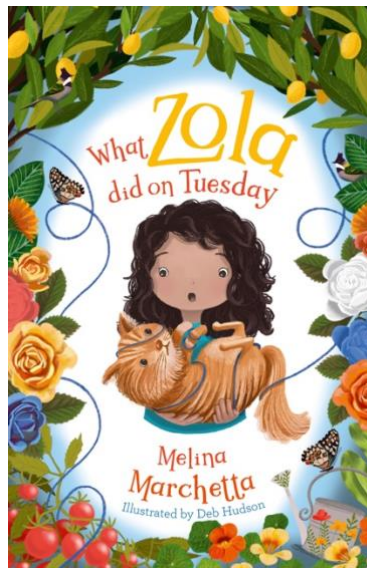
What Zola did on Monday
by Melina Marchetta

Why this story? Read the fun-filled and heart-warming first story in the What Zola Did series by Melina Marchetta.

Zola loves living on Boomerang Street with her mum and her nonna. Every day of the week is an adventure. But Zola has a problem. No matter how much she tries, she can't keep out of trouble. Like on Monday, when Gigi gets into Nonna Rosa's veggie garden . . .

Luckily, Zola's family and friends are around to make things right in the end, to help her accept responsibility and, best of all, to have lots of fun.

Teachers' resources available.



What Zola did on Tuesday
by Melina Marchetta

Why this story? Read about more of Zola's action-packed and funny adventures in book two in the What Zola Did series!

Zola loves living on Boomerang Street with her mum and her nonna. Every day of the week is an adventure. But Zola has a problem. No matter how much she tries, she can't keep out of trouble. Like on Tuesday, when Zola tries to help Nonna knit a scarf . . .

Luckily, Zola's family and friends are around to make things right in the end, to help her accept responsibility and, best of all, to have lots of fun.

Teachers' resources available.



Running with the Horses
by Alison Lester

Why this story? Read it as another example of a stand-out chapter book for young readers by one of Australia's most beloved children's book creators.

Nina lives with her father above the palace stables at the Royal Academy of Dancing Horses. She loves watching the famous white stallions as they parade for the crowds, but her favourite horse is a mare called Zelda – an old cab horse Nina often pats on her way home from school.

When Nina's world changes dramatically, she and her father have to flee from the city. Their journey over the mountains with Zelda and the stallions seems impossible, with danger at every turn. It will require all of Nina's bravery, daring and faith in an extraordinary old horse.

An unforgettable story of courage, adventure and friendship.

Teachers' resources available.

ORDER FORM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	SCHOOL YEAR	RRP	QTY	TOTAL
What Zola did on Monday	Melina Marchetta	9781760895150	K-3	\$12.99		
What Zola did on Tuesday	Melina Marchetta	9781760895167	K-3	\$12.99		
What Zola did on Wednesday	Melina Marchetta	9781760895174	K-3	\$12.99		
Running with the Horses	Alison Lester	9781760892760	1-3	\$16.99		
TOTAL						

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