



# TEACHERS' NOTES

## RECOMMENDED FOR

Lower Primary  
(ages 6–9; years 1 to 3)

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## KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **Learning areas:** English, Mathematics, Geography, Civics and Citizenship, The Arts, HSE, Science
- **General capabilities:** Literacy, Problem solving, Personal and social capability, ethical understanding, relationships

## REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

- Understanding friendships and relationships
- Valuing people of all ages in our society
- Awareness of multiculturalism and community
- Developing ethical thinking

## THEMES

- Friendships and relationships
- Senior citizens
- Problem solving
- Responsibilities
- Pet care
- Family life
- School life
- Celebrations

## PREPARED BY

Penguin Random House Australia and Jacqueline Harvey

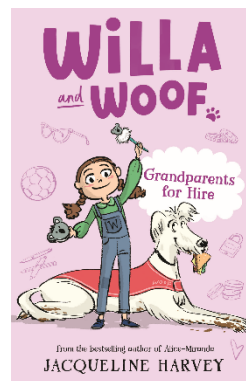
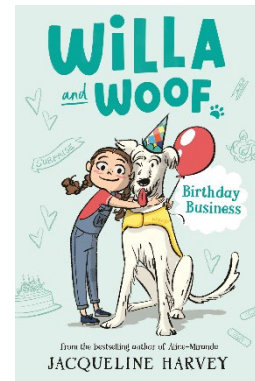
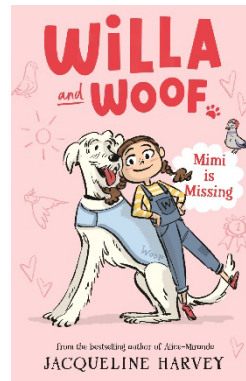
## PUBLICATION DETAILS

ISBN: 9781761043314 (1: Mimi is Missing)  
9781761043321 (2: Birthday Business)  
9781761043338 (3: Grandparents for Hire)

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## Willa and Woof Jacqueline Harvey

## PLOT SUMMARY

*Adventure, imagination and loads of fun!*

Eight-year-old Willa Jane Tait and her trusty sidekick (and best four-legged friend) Woof live on Cricklewood Crescent, in a sunny, seaside suburb called Hibiscus Gardens.

Across the road is Tae Jin Miller, Willa's best same-age friend. Her best old-age friend, Frank Pickles, lives in the retirement village called Sunset Views next door. There's always something interesting happening in the neighbourhood.

Willa has a vivid imagination, a head full of ideas and a strong desire to do the right thing – all of which often land her in trouble of her own (accidental!) making.

Join Willa and Woof on their adventures!

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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Jacqueline Harvey has had a passion for storytelling since she was a child and writes books filled with adventure, mystery, humour and heart. A former teacher, she is the author of the popular Alice-Miranda, Clementine Rose and Kensy and Max series, which have sold over one and a half million copies in Australia alone. Joining these beloved characters are Jacqueline's newest works – *That Cat* and the Willa and Woof series.

## AUTHOR'S INSPIRATION

Jacqueline says:

I've had such fun coming up with the characters and storylines for Willa and Woof. The tales are centred around eight-year-old Willa Tait and her three best friends.

Willa is probably the closest character I've ever written to me as a child. She has a lot of crazy ideas, but ultimately she just wants to do the right thing.

When I was little, my grandmother used to take me with her to the Masonic Nursing Home at Glenfield, where she was in charge of the Ladies Auxiliary. I loved

nothing more than doing the rounds to chat to the residents or helping at bingo. I was always keen to hear their stories – even if they weren't always quite as keen to see me!

Willa and Woof is about the joy of everyday childhood adventures and the friendships you make along the way. It's been wonderful finding Willa's voice and meeting her friends and neighbours, and I hope that you will enjoy meeting them all too.

### Questions

1. Jacqueline based the character of Willa on herself as an eight-year-old. If you were to base a character on yourself, what do you think they'd be like?
2. Reading about Jacqueline's inspiration, which elements of the Willa and Woof stories do you think are made up for the series, and which come from Jacqueline's life?
3. Can you think of other novels that are based on a character with lots of different best friends? How do you think the Willa and Woof stories would be different if Willa only had only one best friend instead of three (Woof, Tae and Frank)?

## PRE-READING QUESTIONS

1. Study the cover of the book. After looking at the illustration, what do you think the story will be about?
2. The illustration is just one element that makes up the front cover – what are some other elements that create the full cover?
3. The designer of the book has used a lots of smaller illustrations in a darker colour than the background. Do you think the cover would look as effective if the illustrations were a different colour to the background? What about if they weren't there at all?
4. What does the cover tell you about the characters in the book? Are there other things you can learn about the story from just looking at the cover?
5. Read the blurb on the back. Why do you think short, simple sentences were used to tell people about the story?
6. Read page 1 of the book. Why do you think it's important that we learn about Willa and her three best friends on the very first page? What does this tell you about the kind of person Willa is?



## CHARACTERS

### Willa

Eight-year-old Willa Tait has a vivid imagination, a head full of ideas and a strong desire to do the right thing – all of which often land her in trouble of her own (accidental!) making. With the help of Woof, Tae and Frank, Willa's usually able to set things right again.

#### Questions

1. Do you know anyone who is always determined to do things on their own?
2. No matter the scrape, Willa is always able to find a path to achieving what she set out to do. Why do you think this is?

### Woof

Woof is Willa's best four-legged friend. His real name is Wilfred, but when Willa was little she couldn't quite wrap her tongue around that, so 'Wilfred' became 'Wilf' and 'Wilf' became 'Woof' and it stuck.

#### Questions

1. Did you know that it's quite common for pets to have names that aren't the ones we usually call them? Ask your friends and family whether any of their pets have 'real' names that are different from the names you know, and how the nickname came about. Jacqueline Harvey has a cat whose real name is Balthazar but she calls him Bally, Bally Puss or Boo for short.
2. Woof is an Albino Irish Wolfhound. From the author's descriptions of Woof in the story, what do you learn about this breed of dog? Do some more research and write down three facts about Albino Irish Wolfhounds.
3. If you could have a dog, what sort would you like and why? What would you call your dog?

### Tae

Tae Miller is Willa's best same-age friend. He lives across the road. His name means 'person of greatness' in Korean, so Tae spends a lot of time trying to figure out what kind of person of greatness he's going to be.

#### Questions

1. Why do you think it's so important for Tae to live up to his name? What kind of person of greatness do you think he should try being?
2. Lots of names have meanings, just like Tae's. For example, the name Willa is often associated with protection. Do you think Willa's name suits her? Research what your name means, then discuss with your class.

### Frank

Francis Pickles is Willa's best old-age friend. He lives in a villa at Sunset Views Retirement Village. There's a gate in Willa's side fence that leads straight into Frank's yard, so it's easy for Willa to pop over and visit!

#### Questions

1. Why do you think Frank and Willa get along so well?
2. Frank's hobby is breeding racing pigeons. What is a hobby? Do you have any hobbies? Share one of your hobbies with your class and find out what hobbies they have.

## KEY STUDY TOPICS

### Friendship

Jacqueline Harvey says: 'Willa and Woof is about the joy that can be found in intergenerational friendships.' This is seen in Willa's friendship with Frank. They respect each other and enjoy each other's company even though they are at very different stages of life. Both characters learn from each other throughout the stories. Willa and Tae are also friendly with a lot of the staff and residents of Sunset Views, as well as their Cricklewood Crescent neighbours who all vary in age. They show that friendship is an important part of a community and that friends don't just need to be people your own age.

The trio that is Willa, Tae and Woof also show the importance of friendship. Willa and Tae lean on each other for ideas and support, and both characters just want the best for each other which shows true friendship. Woof also plays an important part in their friendship, accompanying them on adventures and helping them solve problems (and sometimes causing them!).

#### Questions

1. Do you have any friends that are a different age to you? If so, what do you like about this friendship and what do you learn from them that you might not learn from someone your own age?

#### Activities

2. What characteristics do you think are important in a friend? For example, generosity, humour, honesty. Make a mind map of all the qualities you would like in a friend.



## Family

Family plays an important part in the Willa and Woof stories. Willa's family is comprised of her mum, Tess, who works in the office at Willa's school; her dad, Dan, who is a plumber with his own business (he also enjoys baking) and her brother Sam, who is fifteen. He plays a lot of different sports and he loves to cook too. Sam is very kind to Willa and they all get along well. Willa has three grandparents as well. Her poppy (her mum's dad) died but she has lovely memories of him.

Tae is an only child. His mother, Soo-Min, is South Korean Australian. She's a nurse at Sunset Views Retirement Village. His father, Mark, is a former television soap star. Tae's grandmother on his father's side lives nearby and they visit her often.

Frank Pickles lives alone. His wife sadly passed away before Willa was born. She had Alzheimer's disease. Frank looked after her at their villa until she had to go into high care at the nursing home section of Sunset Views. Frank has a son called Glen who is married to Lily. She's from England. They live in Manchester in England with their two children Maisie (who is the same age as Willa) and Angus (who is two years younger). Frank misses his family a lot but Willa is happy to be a stand-in grandchild.

### Questions

1. Who's in your family? Can you trace your family origins to countries other than Australia?
2. What jobs do the members of your family do?

### Activities

1. Draw your family tree.
2. Can you think of a job you'd like to do when you grow up? Why would you like to do that job? Draw a picture of yourself dressed to do that job. Make sure you add all of the equipment you would need and label your illustration.

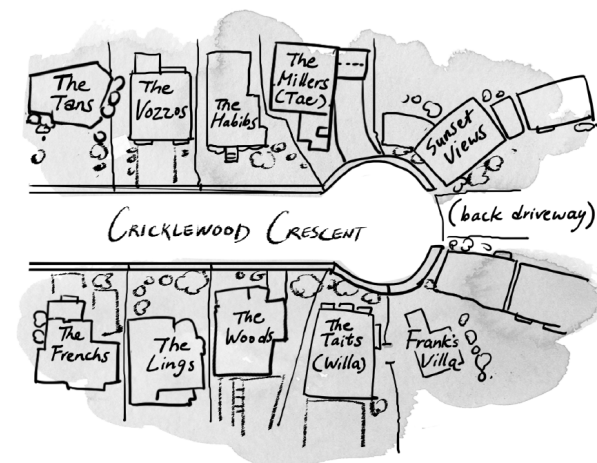
## The Neighbourhood

### Questions

1. What sort of neighbourhood do you live in? Is it in the city or the country? Are the houses close together or far apart?
2. Willa lives in a cul-de-sac. That's a dead end street. There are only eight houses, as well as the back entrance to Sunset Views. Willa knows everyone who lives in her street. How many of your neighbours do you know? Is it important to know your neighbours?
3. Do you know any other names for streets? For example cul-de-sac, road, lane.

### Activities

1. In *Birthday Business* there is a map of Willa's street, Cricklewood Crescent, with all the households named. Draw an aerial view map of your street (or your part of the street, if it is a very long street). Label the households that you know.



## Food and Cooking

### Questions

1. Willa's dad and brother both enjoy cooking. Her dad is a baker while Sam is learning to cook lots of different recipes. What dish would you like to learn how to cook?
2. There are families with all different backgrounds in Willa's street. Every year they get together for a street party and everyone brings a dish to share. If you were going to take a dish to a party, what would it be and why?

### Activities

1. Can you name a traditional food that food that comes from:
  - Lebanon
  - South Korea
  - China
  - England
  - Italy
2. Have a class lunch party where everyone brings a dish that represents their cultural background. Write the recipe on the sheet provided and share a copy with your class for a class recipe book.

## Visual literacy

The illustrator of the story, A. Yi, has taken great care to create images that enhance our understanding of what Willa's world is like. Through the illustrations, we see all different sides of Willa and her friends, meet



different characters and see different parts of the Hibiscus Gardens neighbourhood.

The illustrations and the text work together, showing us emotion, humour and adding extra information that isn't present in the words alone.



### Questions

1. When making the book, A. Yi created illustrations based on a draft of Jacqueline Harvey's story. Then

Jacqueline revised the story to make sure the text and illustrations worked together perfectly. Do you think they've achieved this? What would reading the book without the illustrations be like?

### Activities

1. Pick a scene from the book to illustrate. It could be a particularly funny idea (like the sharpest rock in the world in *Mimi is Missing*), a character portrait (like those of Woof in all the books) or a full scene (like the hiding guests in *Birthday Business*).
2. Look at the illustrations in the books. Do you have a favourite? Try and describe it to a classmate. Was it harder than you expected to try and describe an image with words? Were there things in the illustration that you couldn't describe?
3. Draw your own pictures of Willa, Woof, Tae or Frank. Try drawing them with different facial expressions, or with different poses than what you see in the books.

## ORDER FORM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	SCHOOL YEAR	RRP	QTY	TOTAL
1: Mimi is Missing	Jacqueline Harvey	9781761043314	1-3	\$12.99 each		
2: Birthday Business		9781761043321				
3: Grandparents for Hire		9781761043338				
<b>TOTAL</b>						

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<p>NAME: _____</p> <p>SCHOOL: _____</p> <p>ADDRESS: _____</p> <p>STATE: _____</p> <p>POSTCODE: _____</p> <p>TEL: _____</p> <p>EMAIL: _____</p> <p>ACCOUNT NO.: _____</p> <p>PURCHASE ORDER NO.: _____</p>	<p>PLEASE SEND ORDER FORMS TO YOUR LOCAL EDUCATION SUPPLIER.</p>
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