



Paper-Flower Girl

Text by MARGRETE LAMOND

Illustrations by MATEJA JAGER

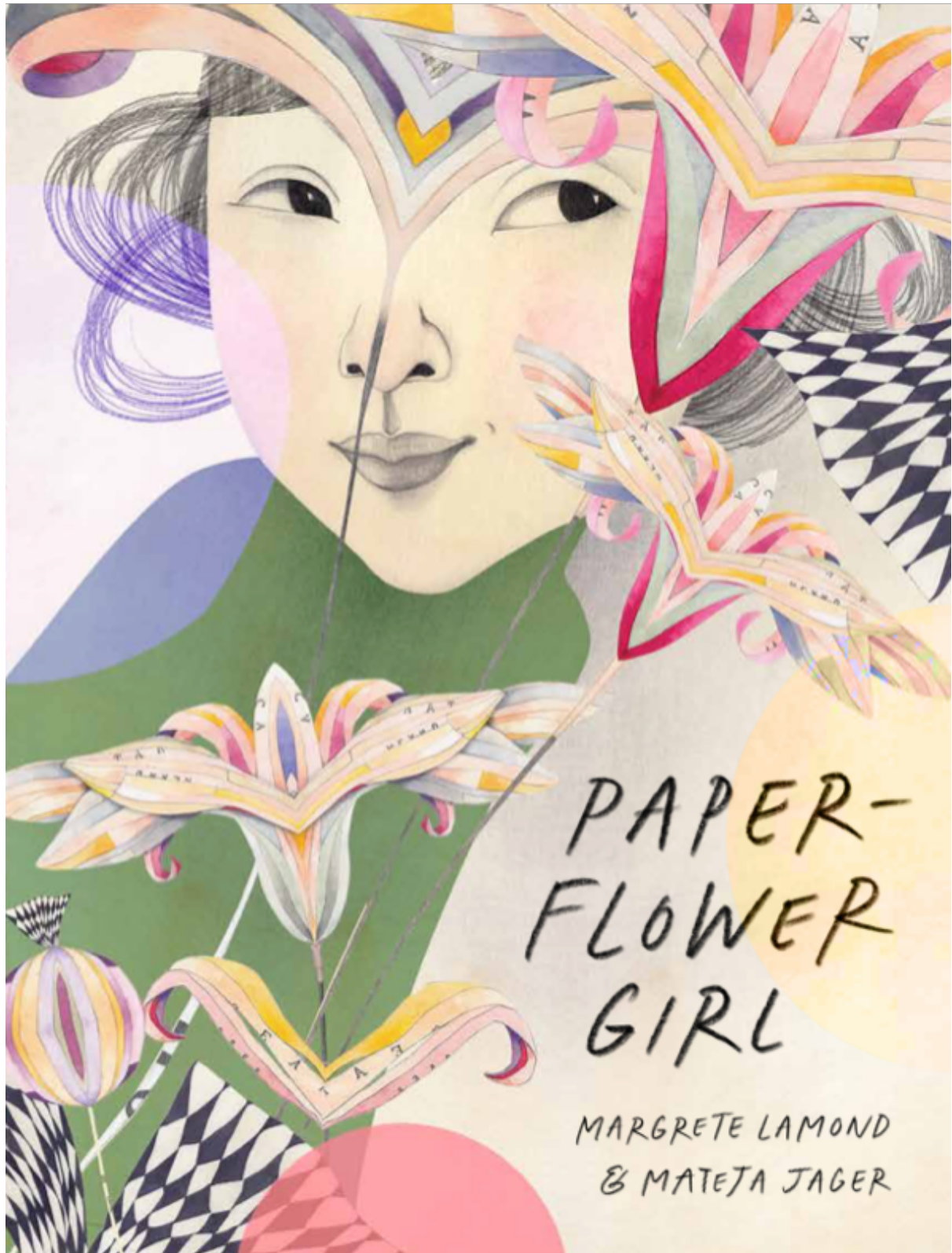
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Synopsis:

Paper-flower girl is an inspiring picture book about the need to follow your heart and the courage to say no and be true to yourself. At the beginning of the story Paper-flower girl is creating beautiful flowers with paper down on the plain. She is summoned up the hill by the Giant who orders her to change her art to meet his prescriptive directions. Before long Paper-flower girl realises she and the Giant want very different things and she is very unhappy Up the Hill.

Teacher notes by Robyn Ewing AM © 2024

Robyn Ewing is Professor Emerita, Teacher Education and the Arts, Co-Director, the CREATE Centre, University of Sydney, and a former primary teacher.



Teachers' Notes for *Paper-flower Girl*, Dirt Lane Press, An imprint of WestWords

Before reading

About Margrete Lamond, Author

Margrete Lamond is an author, editor, publisher, researcher and an independent story coach. She is 'excited by all things in the world of words and illustrations and, most particularly, by the magical integration of words and illustrations as they manifest in picture books' (<https://margretelamond.com>).

She has 20 of her own books published, been a full-time publisher of books for children and young adults for more than twenty years. Her first book for Dirt Lane Press, *The sorry tale of fox and bear* was short-listed for the NSW Premier Literary Awards and *Just one bee* was an Honour Book for the CBCA Picture Book of the Year.

About Mateja Jager, Illustrator

Mateja Jager is a Slovene illustrator and designer. She is a passionate about creativity through drawing. Her small creative business [Pinkety](#) is based in Sydney. Mateja writes:

It all started with a passion for drawing, greeting cards and children's book illustrations more than a decade ago and it has been slowly growing since then.

Alongside illustrating, Mateja has worked on various different creative projects including graphic design and fashion. Her unique style combines traditional drawing, collage and digital media.

Illustrations

Background to the illustrations

The Artwork is exceptional, at times almost creating an additional narrative thread, at others extending the feelings and actions of the characters. Variations in colour palette reflect the changing mood, emotions and dialogue between the girl and the giant. Use of changes in perspective and positioning is creative and original. (Children's Book Council Australia Judges' comments, 2024).

Introduction

This exquisite, high-quality picture book captivates from the soft, detailed cover and beautiful endpapers through to the very end. Language is poetic and evocative, successfully using a range of literary devices (repetition, rhythm, rhyme) to create

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mood and atmosphere. Vocabulary is sophisticated taking the reader on a journey with the unfurling story of the girl, her creativity and the giant and his demands. Bolding and changes in size and positioning of the text is utilised effectively, enhancing the message.. (Children’s Book Council Australia Judges’ comments, 2024).

These teacher notes align with the Australian Curriculum: Years 3-6 (NSW Stages 2 and 3). Each of the activities described below are layered and can be easily adapted or extended and elaborated if the unit is developed for earlier or later grades. See attachment 1 for a summary table of relevant Australian Curriculum English content descriptions. Each learning experience builds on the previous to engage learners and richly explore content and themes of the text. Estimated lesson timings are only indicative.

Duration: Three to four weeks with 2 lessons a week

General Capabilities: Critical and creative thinking, Literacy, Personal and Social Capability.

Resources: A class set of the books (6-8 copies) would be ideal, butchers paper, textas, crayons. Art materials including paint, clay, collage, craft materials for final response activity.

Themes: creativity, emotions, individual action, hope, following your heart/being true to yourself, courage

Literature

Connecting with the text

#1 Lesson Aim: Making connections with the text.

Evidence of Learning: Learners make text-to-world or text-to-self connections.

Time: 30 - 40 mins.

Learning activities:

Prior to introducing the book, the teacher may wish to explore with learners:

- how giants are represented in fairy tales;
- metaphors (What are they? Why and when do we use them?); and
- paper-flower making
- origami.

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Building context and field knowledge could support deeper engagement in the activities suggested for later in the unit.

- **Teacher introduces text** and conducts a **'book walk'** talking about the pictures. **Learners** share their connections with a partner noting one thing they **see**, what they are **thinking about**, and what they **wonder** about the world in the story - is it like their worlds? Use think-pair-share and then share ideas with the whole class.
- Teacher engages learners in **predicting** what the story might be about and could record their predictions.
- Class discusses and teacher records learners' observations and wonderings about the front and back covers and the endpapers.

Literature and Context

Extending connections with the text

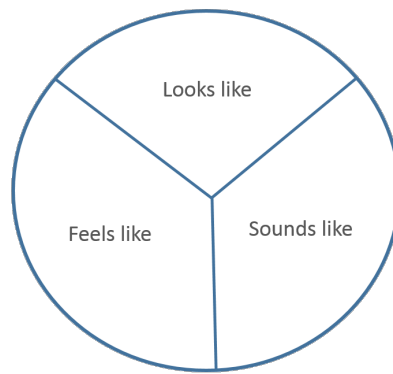
#2 Lesson Aims: Exploring the text in context of our community, school and 'me'; building a rich vocabulary.

Evidence of Learning: Students make text-to-world or text-to-self connections.

Time: 40 minutes.

Learning activities:

- **Teacher reads the first 5 openings from *Down there the plains ...to...minus and plus*.**
- **Discussion.** Learners think-pair-share and record what the images suggest to them. They begin to identify **words that describe the landscape and the contrasts of the plain and the hill**. Teacher identifies other new words in the text and explores what they mean (eg 'glades', 'nook', 'dapple', 'gleam', 'interlacing', 'filaments', 'unfurling', 'snatch' and 'peddle'...). Learners can enact the meanings of these words. Create a 'words chart' for the wall that can be added to throughout the unit.
- **Looks like, sounds like, feels like.** Learners jointly construct a Y chart about what they see, feel and hear about the two settings of the plain and the hill. What do they notice and infer from the use of colours and shape?



Rich assessment task: Role on the Wall

In small groups learners create two large outlines of Paper-flower girl and the Giant. Inside one outline they start to compile the characteristics of the girl and the Giant in the other. The physical attributes can be listed on the outside of the outline. These initial thoughts can be added to as the story continues to build character profiles.

Character

Exploring purpose

#3 Lesson Aims: Exploring the purpose behind the text and the qualities two main characters.

Evidence of Learning: Learners can embody both main characters and discuss their qualities.

Time: 45 mins

Learning activities:

- **Sculptures.** Explain to the students that they are now going to sculpt each other (see Attachment 2). Model sculpting as a class. In pairs students decide who is A and who is B. A sculpts B
- **In pairs learners decide who is A and who is B. A sculpts B as Paper-flower girl. B sculpts A as the Giant.**
- **All learners sculpted as the girl make a circle to form a gallery exhibition. The sculptors walk around the circle to view all the sculptures. Discuss similarities and differences. Repeat the gallery exhibition so learners can also closely observe the Giants.**
- **Learners draw the character they were sculpted and annotate.**

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- **Transformations:** In their pairs, learners stand back to back in a relaxed position. On the count of 5 they transform into Paper-flower girl and think about how their sculpture reflects the girl and her qualities and feelings. On 5 more counts they transform into the Giant and again think about how their embodiment reflects the qualities and feelings of the Giant. After 5 more counts they are back to themselves.
- **Teacher reads** the next 5 openings from *Down there...to...FRIGHTS!*

Examining Literature

Exploring character & emotion through the visual and the words

#4 Lesson Aim: Exploring character through visual images and words.

Evidence of Learning: Learners identify characters' attributes and differences. They can explore characters' emotions.

Time: 50 mins.

Learning activities:

- **Teacher reads the story again through to *FRIGHTS!***, asking learners to focus on how the two characters, paper-flower girl and the giant are depicted.

Visual literacy Revisit the visual technique, 'social distance' which addresses the relationship between the viewer and how the subjects or objects or landscapes in the story are represented depicted.

- *Close up* - invites familiarity, as though the viewer is 'in' the scene
- *Middle distance* - the scene is within the viewer's reach, but they are not 'in' it
- *Long distance* - the object is out-of-reach

Teacher and students spend time as a class closely examining how the visual narrative has been created. Choose several openings to examine how the images in this sequence are framed (close ups, mid-range or long distance)? Does this affect how the reader relates to the story? Is the reader/viewer invited into the story or viewing from a distance?

- How are the characters depicted? How does this influence how we see the characters? Discuss what the learners infer from the illustrations about each character. The character profiles begun earlier can be added to.

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- How does the illustrator create hope or despair at different points in the story? What features suggest these different feelings?
- Notice the **words** - how is each character described and how do their actions and word contrast? How do they talk to each other? Explore the meaning of unfamiliar words.
- **Make a list** of the descriptive words on the board for each character.
- **In pairs improvise a short conversation** between the Giant and Paper-flower girl. These can be listened to around the class circle and/or recorded.

Responding to Literature

#5 Lesson.

Lesson Aim: Learners work collaboratively to depict critical moments in the narrative.

Evidence of Learning: Learners will identify and represent key events in the story.

Time: 45 mins.

Learning activities:

- **Still image. Freeze frames.** In small groups of 3 learners choose 3 key moments in the text to depict as still images. Model a still image with the whole class first (for information about still or frozen images, see Attachment 2). Key moments in the text could include: Paper-flower girl at the beginning of the story; the Giant watching Paper-flower girl; Paper-flower girl trying to please the Giant; her escape with the scarf, the contrast at the end...)
- **Enact images.** Once each group has chosen key moments and decided on how they will depict them, all groups enact their still images at the same time. If time the still images can be viewed individually at this point or several now and the others at another time. Teacher can **tap in** to how some of the characters are feeling at this moment in time.
- The still images can be captured on camera and images used for later writing and reflection.
- Learners can draw their favourite key moment and add thought or speech bubbles. They can write a short paragraph to describe this moment in the story.

Creating Literature

#6-7 Lessons

Aims: Group storytelling using Readers Theatre to explore oral reading and develop fluency.

Evidence of Learning: Learners will be able to use their voices and limited gestures and facial expressions to tell the story of *Paper-flower girl*.

Time: Both lessons will need 40-50 minutes each.

Learning activities:

If learners have not had an opportunity to use Readers Theatre (see Attachment 2) before, the teacher will do the scripting (see a sample excerpt below).

Storyteller 1: Down there the plain.

Storyteller 2: Up there the hill.

Storyteller 3: Down there the glades.

Storyteller 4: Moss and corn.

Storyteller 1: Dapple and nook.

If possible the teacher could use a video clip to introduce Readers' Theatre (for example: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bq0Ohvo_b1U)

Or alternatively, the teacher could ask an older group of students – perhaps from their buddy class – to provide a demonstration to introduce the concept.

Teacher distributes the script and the whole class will read through it together. Given that learners are already familiar with the text and the vocabulary, the teacher then divides the class into groups of 4.

Learners will then read through the script again in their groups and decide who will read which parts. They will then highlight their parts on their copy of the script. Learners will think about places in the script where sound effects could be added. They will underline the words they need to emphasise and directions about how they will read their parts. Learners will be encouraged to think about what they are communicating with their faces and simple gestures on the spot facing the audience. The annotated scripts can be glued into a manila folder.

These two lessons will be taken up completely with rehearsals of the Readers' Theatre script.

When ready, learners can perform their Readers Theatre for the other groups or another class.

#8 Lesson: Exploring use of metaphors

Most of us think in metaphors: they help shape our understanding of the world around us. In this story, metaphors are a central part of how meaning is communicated.

Teacher and learners discuss the deeper meaning of this story through considering a few pages of the book at a time thinking about the metaphors and themes. For example, consider:

Could this story be a metaphor for something that has happened in life? Learners could think about the choice of a Giant as a central character. What could he symbolise? What images, symbols and metaphors do giants evoke? Why?

Have learners ever felt the things that are important to them are under threat? What happened? What did they learn?

Are there other similar stories, including fables, myths, picture books and novels that come to mind like this story? Consider, for example, the fearsome Baobab tree that threatens the rose in *The Little Prince* (Antoine de Saint-Exupéry).

What could the hill and the plain represent?

What does the Giant's scarf symbolise?

Learners could think about how the author and illustrator help readers think about the themes of a story. What are the major themes of this story? Learners choose a metaphor or theme and respond through writing a description or a poem or drawing.

Rich assessment task:

Learners pick one of the characters to focus on and imagine they are either in the story or observing it. They then draw/paint/model/use collage to make their response. They might consider:

- What is the purpose of the story?
- How do they relate to the story/characters?

Invite students to share their ideas with each other and, once their response is created, explain their choice of colour and shape and what they were thinking when creating the piece. They can write down or record their explanation.

Bringing Learning to the Community

Create **an exhibition** in which students' collages and creative responses are presented. Include learners' descriptions of the work and explanations and their thinking as part of the display.

Other resources and connections

Related literary texts:

Bertini, A & Goldsmith, J. 2020. *Where happiness hides*. Dirt Lane Press

Chatterton, M. 2019. *Winter of the white bear*. Dirt Lane Press.

Kobold, I. & Nielson, C.2018. *The dream pedlar*. Dirt Lane Press

Making paper flowers

<https://www.countryliving.com/diy-crafts/g30930268/how-to-make-paper-flowers/#>

Attachment 1: Some Australian Curriculum Links

General Capabilities evident throughout this unit include Literacy, Critical and creative thinking and Personal and social capability.

Content descriptions below link to Australian Curriculum Year 4 English

Language for expressing and developing ideas	Investigate how quoted (direct) and reported (indirect) speech are used (AC9E4LA07)
	Explore the effects of choices when framing images, placement of elements in the image and salience of composition of still and moving images in texts (AC9E4LA10)
	Expand vocabulary by exploring a range of synonyms and antonyms and using words encountered in a range of different sources (AC9E4LA11)
Engaging with and responding to literature	Describe the effects of text structures and language features in literary texts when responding to and sharing opinions. (AC9E4LE02)
Examining literature	Discuss how authors and illustrators make stories engaging by the way they develop character, setting and plot tensions. (AC9E4LE03) Examine the use of literary devices and deliberate word play in literary texts, including poetry, to shape meaning (AC9E4LE04)
Creating literature	Create and edit literary texts by developing storylines, characters and settings. (AC9E4LE05)

Source for content descriptions: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA).

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Attachment 2: Drama Strategies

The drama strategies explored in the unit support the Australian Curriculum content descriptors for Drama. They may also be adapted to reflect students' level. For Year 4 the relevant descriptors are improvise and/or devise and shape drama using the elements of drama to communicate ideas, perspectives and/or meaning (AC9ADR4C01); perform improvised or devised drama in informal settings (AC9ADR4P01).

Drama Strategies

Conversations: Improvising an informal and brief conversation between 2 characters.

Sculpting: Participants use the body of another as 'thinking clay.' They show or instruct the 'thinking clay' to represent a character or concept, negotiating facial expressions, gesture, body position.

Still image/Freeze frame/ Frozen moment/Depiction: A particular dramatic moment is frozen/depicted to allow close study. (Also known as tableau).

Readers' Theatre: Readers' Theatre is a drama form that focuses on our voice and facial expression. Learners read from a script) using as much vocal expression as possible, as well as facial expression and limited actions they can do on the spot. Interaction is directly with the audience rather than the other readers.

Role on the wall: An important role is created on paper. Individuals write words or longer comments to define a character.

Tapping in /thought tracking: Often used in conjunction with freeze frames - tapping someone lightly on the shoulder to reveal that a character is thinking at a point in time.

Source: Adapted from the Glossary in Ewing, R. & Simons, J. with Hertzberg, M. & Campbell, V. (2016). *Beyond the script*. 3rd edn. Newtown, Sydney: PETAA).