

Jacaranda Magic

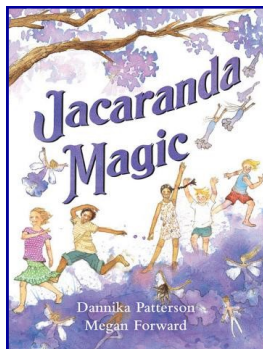
By Dannika Patterson & Illustrated by Megan Forward

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Five friends are feeling bored on a hot sticky day. Just when they think they'll never find anything fun to play, a simple gust of wind changes everything...



Teacher Notes have been based on those supplied by the publisher. A full version is available on our website.

Themes:

- Imagination
- The value of boredom
- Outdoor play
- Movement and coordination
- Environmental Awareness and Urban Sustainability
- Change (emotional and physical awareness)
- Cultural Diversity

Discussion Questions:

Before Reading

- Look at the front cover of Jacaranda Magic and ask: What do you think this story might be about? What sort of story do you expect? What clues to the title and illustrations give you?
- What are the children doing? What makes you think that?
- Do you think the fairies and mermaids are real or imaginary? What makes you think that?
- Do you know what a 'jacaranda' is?
- What do you think might be 'magic' in this story?

After Reading

- Is this story imaginative (pretend) or informative (real)? How do you know? Which parts are real and which are imagined? - Are jacaranda trees real? - Do jacaranda trees have purple flowers? - Can children climb trees? - Do jacaranda trees turn into rockets?
- Look at the first illustration and the last illustration in the book. Do you think the children feel the same at the beginning of the story and the end? Discuss what happened to change the way they feel.
- Look at some of the other illustrations in the book, where Will, Charlotte, Priya, Lizzie and Finn are using their imaginations. Discuss what the character/s may be feeling as they engage in various scenes of imaginative play, encouraging children to name these emotions.
- Each child in the story was able to imagine the jacaranda tree and flowers being or becoming different things. Could their friends see what they were imagining? Is imagination the same for everyone or different? Discuss the acceptance of other people's ideas and points of view.
- Which of the imaginary scenes/games in the book would you most like to join in and play? Would you release genies from their bottles, fly a rocket to space, captain a ship, climb a dragon's neck to have tea in a marshmallow cave... or something else? Discuss what makes an imaginary game fun and if there are any rules or limitations to imagination.
- The children in the book are outside, having fun in nature. Where is your favourite place to spend time outside? Doing what? With who? Discuss some of the things you can do/see/experience spending time outside in nature that you can't do indoors?

Activities:

- Have students cut random shapes out of purple, green and brown-coloured paper to represent the various parts of a jacaranda tree. Ask them then to assemble the shapes into a picture to tell a story about what they imagine the tree could become, using interconnecting drawing if necessary.
- Rhythm awareness: using a pencil, a ruler or your hands, choose a page in the book and tap to count the beats in each line. Are there the same number of beats in each line or different?