

## **Arthur and the What-Ifs**

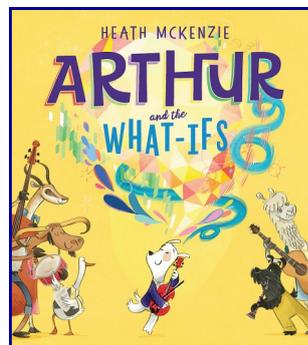
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Arthur is a dog with a secret. More than anything in the world he loves to play his violin, but he's too scared to do it in public because, well, what if he's bad? What if people laugh? What if he makes a fool of himself?! WHAT IF? But the song in his head and the dream in his heart just won't stay quiet. So, when he's invited to take part in a jam session, he creates the ultimate disguise - a post box costume! And when it falls apart, Arthur doesn't.



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

### **Themes:**

- Taking Chances
- Creativity
- Believing in Yourself
- City Life

### **Discussion Questions:**

- Arthur doesn't want anyone to see him playing his violin. What does he think will happen if he plays in front of other animals? Why does he feel this way?
- There are lots of different animals in this book. How many different animals do you recognise? Which is your favourite?
- "What-if" thoughts are very normal. We often get worried in unfamiliar situations, but we don't need to be afraid of taking chances. When you are in scary situations and start to have "what-if" worries, how do you remind yourself to be brave?
- Arthur lives in a big city called Melbourne. Can you find all the clues in the book that tell you where it is set? Do you live in a big city, or a small town, or something in between? What special things about the place you live would you like to see in a book? Or, if you live in Melbourne, what other places could have appeared in Arthur's story?
- The violin is Arthur's way of expressing his creativity. What are some of the other ways you can be creative?
- Think about a time when you were nervous about performing in front of a group of people. It might have been a school concert, a dance recital, or even reading your work out loud to your class. What did you do to stop feeling nervous? How did you feel when it was over?

### **Activities:**

- In every new situation, we can have positive "what-if" thoughts and negative "what-if" thoughts. Here is an example...
  - ◇ Situation: You're invited to have lunch with an elephant
  - ◇ Negative "what-if" thought: What if the elephant accidentally sits on me?
  - ◇ Positive "what-if" thought: What if the elephant gives me a ride on his back?Here are two new situations. For each, write one positive "what-if" thought and one negative "what-if" thought:
  - ◇ Your first day at a new school
  - ◇ Going on stage for your school play
- Every morning, Arthur goes to the train station and catches a train to work. How did you get to school this morning? Draw a picture of yourself going to school and write a sentence describing what's happening in the picture.