

Amira's Magpie

By Kate Gordon & Illustrated by Krista Brennan

Publisher: Wombat Books

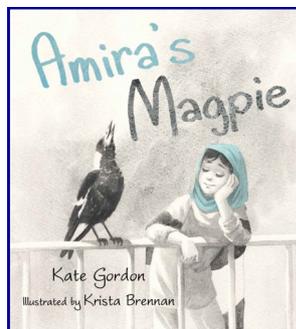
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Amira has a magpie. He is the most beautiful, strangest of creatures...

Amira imagines her magpie flying across the world, to visit the family she left behind when she escaped her homeland. And as she flies, she flies with him and she is free.

Amira's Magpie is a story of friendship, family and escape; of bravery and resilience in the face of hardship. It is the story of hope we find in small happiness's, even when it seems like all hope is lost.



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

Themes:

- Family
- Friendship
- Resilience
- Hope

Discussion Questions and Activities:

- Discuss the characteristics of a good story. i.e. What is the plot? Who is the central character? What is the conflict/problem in the story? How is that problem solved (resolution)?
- Discuss the role of illustrations in picture books. Are there things we only learn from the illustrations, not from the text? Do the illustrations follow the text? Do they enhance the story? How? Do the illustrations make us feel things that the words don't, and vice versa?
- How does the character use her imagination? How do we see this in the illustrations? Why do you think she imagines the Magpie in the way she does?
- When the magpie is not nearby Amira imagines him far away. How does this help her relate to her surroundings and remember her family?
- How else can the imagination be used in general, whether at school, at home, with friends, learning new skills and more? What are some different forms of creativity? How do you like to express yourself creatively?
- How is a sense of time conveyed in the book? What are some other ways of showing time passing?
- What cultural perspectives are represented in the story? What cultural differences are relevant to the story?
- Thinking about your own culture, do you relate to having been in a different culture? What do you think it would be like to go to a live in a brand new culture?
- Find examples of descriptive language in the book.
- Write a poem about magpies or flying. Demonstrate various uses of descriptive language, such as adjectives, alliteration, assonance, similes, metaphors, onomatopoeia etc. This can be an acrostic poem.
- Have students come up with a list of interview questions for Amira. They can then take turns being the interviewer and the interviewee in a roleplay. Students can also compile a list of questions for the author.
- Rewrite the book from the perspective of the grandfather.
- Describe what the magpie sees as they fly across the world to the grandfather.
- Write about a time when you have been far from home or missed someone. What message would you have sent to them with an animal messenger?
- Look out your window. What are you able to see? Compare it with what Amira can see.