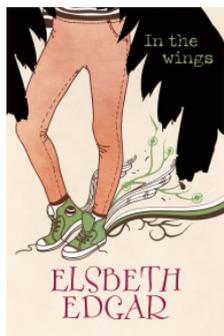


Walker Books Classroom Ideas



In the Wings

Author: Elsbeth Edgar
ISBN: 9781922077325
ARRP: \$16.95
NZRRP: \$18.99
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*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

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Outline:

Ella Jamison dreams of acting. But it's an impossible dream when you suffer from stage fright. Stuck in the backstage crew for the school play, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Ella watches her friends and conceited new boy Sam tread the boards. But first impressions can be deceiving. And help can arrive when you least expect it.

Author/Illustrator Information:

After completing her university course (majoring in French Literature) and teaching for one year, Elsbeth Edgar travelled overland from Katmandu to London. For four years she spent the winter months working in London and the summer months traveling in Europe. When she returned to Melbourne she taught English as a second language to the first wave of Vietnamese refugees for several years, before moving to Canberra to study for her Graduate Diploma in Librarianship. Elsbeth took time off to raise her children before returning to library work when her children were all at school. She has always written but, once she had children, began writing stories for them and in turn rediscovered her love of children's literature.

How to use these notes:

This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

These notes are for:

- Primary years 5-6
- Secondary year 7
- Ages 10+

Key Learning Areas:

- English

Example of:

- Narrative fiction

Themes/ Ideas:

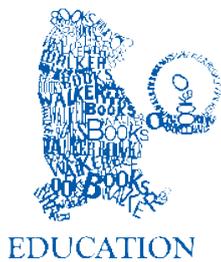
- Theatre
- Family
- Relationships
- Friendship
- Overcoming hardships

National Curriculum Focus:*

English content descriptions:

Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
ACELA1504	ACELT1613	ACELA1782
ACELT1608	ACELT1615	ACELT1619
ACELT1609	ACELT1616	ACELT1620
ACELT1795	ACELT1618	ACELT1621
ACELT1610	ACELT1800	ACELT1803
ACELT1611	ACELT1709	ACELT1622
ACELT1612	ACELY1816	ACELT1625
ACELT1798	ACELY1710	ACELT1805
ACELY1698	ACELY1711	ACELY1719
ACELY1699	ACELY1801	ACELY1720
ACELY1796	ACELY1714	ACELY1721
ACELY1700	ACELY1715	ACELY1723
ACELY1705	ACELY1717	ACELY1725
ACELY1707		ACELY1728

*Key content descriptions have been identified from the Australian National Curriculum. However, this is not an exhaustive list of National Curriculum content able to be addressed through studying this text.



Walker Books Classroom Ideas

Discussion Questions and Activities

Before reading

Before reading *In the Wings*, view the cover and title and identify the following:

- The title of the book
- The author
- The publisher
- The blurb

Read the blurb on the back cover. What is the purpose of a blurb? What does this blurb tell you about the story? View some book covers on the internet or in your school library (without reading the description) and write a blurb for them.

Based on the cover, what do you think this story is about? How do you think it will begin/end?

Examine the structure and features of the book. Identify the following:

- Chapter headings
- Title page
- Dedication
- Page numbers
- Paragraphs
- Quotation marks

What are the themes in *In the Wings*? Write a statement of belief for each theme, then assess how *In the Wings*' treatment of these themes makes you feel.

Keep a "Vocab Journal" while reading the novel. Make a note of any words you come across that you don't know and look up their meaning. Also keep track of any words or phrases that you particularly like and write a note next to each explaining why you like that word/ phrase.

What is the literary device used in the title where the same words can have two meanings? What are the two meanings of *In the Wings*? Why would the author use this device? Can you think of any other books or movie titles that use this device?

What kind of text type is *In the Wings* (i.e. narrative, procedural, persuasion, information). What features of the text make this apparent?

During reading

During the first half of the novel there is a mystery of stolen money and a stolen iPod. After reading each chapter, write down the clues that have been discovered and any suspects you may have. Continue to make notes until the culprit is discovered. Did you guess the right person? What clues led you to believe that character was the thief?

Up until chapter 21, Ella has a very poor opinion of Sam. Do you think her opinion is fair? Discuss the phrase "don't judge a book by its cover" and how it applies to judging people. What are the dangers involved in making assumptions about people based on their appearance or first impressions?

After reading

At the end of chapter 1, Ella is surprised to see her grandfather's appearance. What do you think Ella was expecting to see?

Some books have a tagline on the cover that is used to entice readers. Look at a selection of book covers in your school library or on the internet that have tag lines then create a tagline for *In the Wings* that hints at what the story is about and attracts readers.

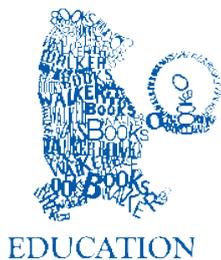
In small groups, create a character map for a person from the book. Each group should look at a different character: make sure you include Ella, Harry (Ella's Grandfather), Jeremy, Sam and Gina.

Draw a picture of the character in the centre of the page and then around them include:

- adjectives to describe their personality
- information about their family, hobbies, skills, fears, ambitions, etc.
- what role they play in the novel
- how they change throughout the novel
- three quotes from the book which give insight into their character (make sure you use quotation marks).

Re-form into new groups made up of one member from each of the original groups. Each group member should present their character while the other members of the group take notes. At the end, students should have notes on all of the characters in the book.

The play that is performed in the novel is William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Read the play or watch a film adaptation to familiarise yourself with the story that the characters of *In the Wings* are experiencing. In small groups, perform a scene from the play for your class.



Walker Books Classroom Ideas

What is stage fright? In what situations does it occur? As a class, brainstorm ways you can overcome stage fright. Design a brochure to help people who suffer from stage fright.

Ella's relationship with her family members changes throughout the novel. What factors lead to Ella learning to appreciate her family and love them despite their faults?

At the beginning of the novel Ella feels quite lonely. List some adjectives that can describe loneliness. List some activities you can do to feel better when you are feeling lonely.

What are values? How do people develop values? List the values of the main characters from the novel. Do you think that values affect friendships? Can people still be friends if they have different values?

Design a poster and programme for the school play. Include a list of the actors and the roles they are playing, the crew, information about the play and information about how this production has been interpreted from the original play.

Write another chapter for the book set during a meeting of the newly-formed theatre group where they are discussing what play to perform next.

Write a book review on *In the Wings*. What did you like/dislike about it and why? Who would you recommend this book to? Is it similar to any other books you have read? Share your book review with your classmates to see how their opinion of the book differs from yours.

In chapter 29, Sam storms off the stage during rehearsals with Ella. Rewrite this scene from Sam's perspective. Think about what would have been going through his mind at the time and the emotions he was feeling.

Elsbeth Edgar uses many similes and metaphors in her writing. Find three examples of each in the book. How does the use of these literary devices add interest to the novel? Write a short story using as many similes and metaphors as you can.

Whose voice is the narrative told through? How would the story be different if it were told in third-person, rather than first?

Research Elsbeth Edgar in your school library and on the internet. What other books has she written? Are they similar or different to *In the Wings*?

Other books by Elsbeth Edgar



The Visconti House
9781921529016
AU\$16.95/NZ\$19.99
Classroom ideas available



On Orchard Road
9781921720291
AU\$16.95/NZ\$18.99
Classroom ideas available

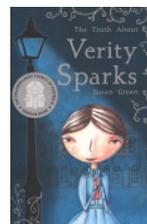
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