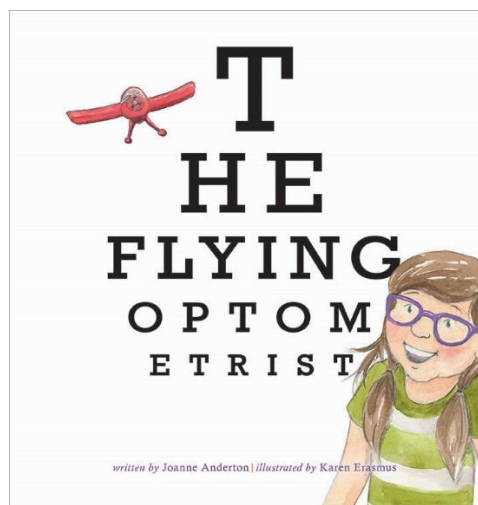


TEACHERS' NOTES

The Flying Optometrist

by Joanne Anderton and Karen Erasmus



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Recommended Year Levels: Years F–3

Author: Joanne Anderton joanneanderton.com and
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Joanne is a novelist and short story writer. Her science fiction/fantasy novels for adults have been short-listed for various awards and her first short story collection, *Bone Chime Song and Other Stories*, won both the Aurealis Award and the Australian Shadows Award for Best Collection. *The Flying Optometrist* is her first children's book. Joanne lives in Sydney.



Illustrator: Karen Erasmus www.karenerasmus.net and publishing.nla.gov.au/pages/illustrators.do?newsId=382

Karen Erasmus is a former primary school teacher who has illustrated more than 16 children's books. She works in acrylic, watercolour, pencil, ink and pastel. She also creates works of art that she exhibits and teaches drawing classes for children and adults. Karen lives in Melbourne.

The Flying Optometrist: Australian Curriculum Content

- Learning Area(s)
 - Sciences
 - Health and Physical Education
 - Mathematics
- General capabilities
 - Personal and Social Capability
 - Critical and Creative thinking
 - Ethical Understanding
- Digital Classroom
 - Year 3 'Changing Streetscapes'
<http://www.nla.gov.au/digital-classroom/year-3/themes/changing-streetscapes>
 - Year 3 'Diversity'
<http://www.nla.gov.au/digital-classroom/year-3/themes/diversity>

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES

These are activities to do before reading to prepare students for the concepts/themes explored in the book. They are not necessarily curriculum based.

- Look at the cover of the book with the class. What do you think this book will be about?
- The cover of the book is inspired by an eye chart. Have you seen one of these before? Where? Using cardboard and textas, make your own eye chart. If you stick it up on the wall, can you read the small letters at the bottom?
- Look at a map of Australia. In this story, the Flying Optometrist flew from Newcastle on the coast of New South Wales to Wanaaring, more than 900 kilometres inland. What would he have seen along the way? Wanaaring is a tiny town. Do you think living in a tiny town is different from living in a big town or city? How?
- What would it be like to go to school in a tiny town? Sometimes in the outback there is no school, so children there have 'the school of the air' instead. What do you think 'the school of the air' is? The school of the air uses radios and computers to connect children and teachers across the country. What do you think it would be like to go to school that way?

SCIENCE

Foundation

Content description: Daily and seasonal changes in our environment affect everyday life (ACSSU004)

Elaboration

- linking the changes in the daily weather to the way we modify our behaviour and dress for different conditions, including examples from different cultures

Discussion/Inquiry Questions

- In *The Flying Optometrist*, what is the weather like? Is it hot or cold, dry or wet? How do you know?
- Do you think the weather in the outback is different from the weather on the coast?
- If you visited the outback and it was hot, what sort of clothes would you take? What about if it were cold or wet?

Year 3

Content description: Science knowledge helps people to understand the effects of their actions (ACSHE051)

Elaboration

- Investigating how science helps people such as nurses, doctors, dentists, mechanics and gardeners

Activities

Optics is the science of light and includes the study of sight. Optometrists use optics to help people to see better. They find out what kinds of lenses people need in their glasses.

We also have lenses in our eyes. A lens is a piece of transparent material.

Have students try these simple experiments:

- Find out what happens when you look through different transparent materials.
 - Dip a straw or a pen in a glass of water. Look through the side of the glass. What do you notice about the straw or pen? (The straw looks broken. This is called refraction, and it's what the optometrist uses to test and correct your eyesight)
 - Look at something. Now look at the same thing through a piece of plastic. How does that change what you see?

Now, try this with a piece of cellophane. How does that change what you see?

- Place a piece of paper on your desk and hold a magnifying glass up to the window. See the way it casts sunlight on the paper? Move the magnifying glass up and down until the light is a small, bright spot. This is called a focal point.

Health and Physical Education

Foundation

Content description: Identify people and demonstrate protective behaviours and other actions that keep themselves safe and healthy. (ACPPS003)

Elaboration

- identifying characters in different texts who help the main character to stay safe and healthy

Discussion/Inquiry Questions

- Why does the Flying Optometrist visit Stephanie's town?
- Why does Stephanie need to see him?
- What other characters in the book also need his help? Why?

Years 1 and 2

Content description: Communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing. Describe ways to include others to make them feel they belong (ACPPS019)

Elaboration

- exploring how people feel when they are included and excluded from groups and activities

Discussion/Inquiry Questions

- Why didn't the other children choose Stephanie for their cricket team? How do you think she felt when they didn't choose her? Do you think the children should have asked Stephanie to play on their team?
- When Stephanie has her new glasses, how do her friends treat her? How do you think that would make her feel?

Mathematics

Year 1

Content description: Give and follow directions to familiar locations (ACMMG023)

Elaboration

- understanding that people need to give and follow directions to and from a place, and that this involves turns, direction and distance

Discussion/Inquiry Question

The Flying Optometrist follows maps and listens to the radio in his plane to hear directions from air traffic control. He also looks out his window and makes sure he can see the landscape below to help him find his way. He uses roads and landmarks as his guide, matching them to his maps so he knows where he is and which way he's going.

Imagine you are flying across the countryside and looking at the landscape below. What sorts of landmarks can you see?

Activity

Draw a map from home to school. Include some landmarks.

In pairs, ask students to give each other directions of how to get from their homes to school. Encourage them to include the landmarks in their directions.

Concluding Activity: Creative Response

Imagine you live in a town so small that it only has one street. Create a drawing, painting or collage of that street. Remember to include your own house. What other places would be important to include?

FURTHER READING

Kristin Weidenbach and Timothy Ide, *Tom the Outback Mailman*. Sydney: Hachette Australia, 2016.

Raewun Caisley and Karen Blair, *Hello from Nowhere*. Melbourne: Penguin Group (Australia), 2014.