

TEACHER NOTES

Quick as a Wink, Fairy Pink

Written by Lesley Gibbes

Illustrated by Sara Acton

Title: *Quick as a Wink, Fairy Pink*

Author : Lesley Gibbes

Illustrator Sara Acton

SYNOPSIS

Five little Flutter Fairies going off to bed.

Fairy Blue, Fairy Green, Fairy Gold, and Red.

But one of them is missing. Which fairy do you think?

Could it be the smallest one?

Is it Fairy Pink?

Toddlers will want to jump into bed, as quick as a wink, to have this story read to them. It is a delightful story of play, hide and seek, and finding ways *not* to go to bed.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Author

Lesley Gibbes grew up on Sydney's Northern Beaches and Wagga Wagga, in country NSW. In 1991, she graduated with a Bachelor of Education (Primary) from The University of Sydney. Between 1992 and 2008 she taught at a number of public schools in NSW specialising in dance and drama. She began writing in 2011 after taking leave to look after her children Austin and Georgia. She is a member of the Children's Book Council NSW and the NSW Writers Centre. Her first book *Scary Night*, illustrated by Stephen Michael King and published by Working Title Press, was a 2015 Honour Book for CBCA Book of the Year Award – Early Childhood. She is the author of *Bring A Duck*, illustrated by Sue de Gennaro and the soon to be released chapter book series *Fizz*, illustrated by Stephen Michael King.

Lesley says that the inspiration for *Quick as a Wink, Fairy Pink* came from her childhood belief in fairies that stemmed from the magic her parents created around the Tooth Fairy, and a childhood favourite story, 'Peter Pan', whose fairy friend Tinkerbell stirred her imagination. She says,

A belief in fairies is something that is often passed down from one generation to the next. My own children love listening to their nannie's stories about fairies in her garden and have often been seen hunting through her pots and flower garden hoping to catch sight of one. So I'm not at all surprised that I've penned a story that let's children have a glimpse into the secret, magical world of fairies.

Illustrator

Sara Acton was born in the Cotswolds in England and always loved drawing, especially people and other strange creatures. She studied BA Hons Fine Art, and after graduating, decided to train as an Art Teacher, completing a Postgraduate Diploma in Art Education at Goldsmiths in London. After teaching and practising art for many years in England and New Zealand she moved to Australia with her family. Sara now lives in a small seaside village, near Sydney, where she enjoys writing and illustrating for children in her studio. Her first picture book *Ben and Duck* won the Children's Book Council of Australia Crichton Award for new illustrators. Her other picture books include *Esther's Rainbow*, *Hold on Tight*, *Daisy and the Puppy*, *The Unexpected Crocodile* and Working Title's *Bridie's Boots*.

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WRITING AND LANGUAGE

As a former teacher Lesley knows the kind writing techniques that young children respond to, and that will help them to learn in a fun way. *Quick as a Wink, Fairy Pink* is an interactive book, enticing readers into a game of fairy-hide-and-seek. The regular rhythm and rhyme throughout the book is infectious. Children will soon pick up the pattern of the words and will begin join in (some spontaneously, and some with a little encouragement). The repetitive, predictable pattern of the text and the layout is set up in the first three pages.

Five little flutter fairies going off to bed,
Fairy Blue, Fairy Green, Fairy Gold and Red.

On the first page there are elements of humour and suspense – the text says ‘five’ but the picture shows only four fairies. Turn the page ...

... and open to a double page spread where the fifth Fairy pops out from under the bed, ‘shooshing’ the reader.

But one of them is hiding.
Which fairy do you think?
Could it be the smallest one?
Y E S !
It’s Fairy Pink.

Fairy Blue is brushing her teeth.
Fairy brush, fairy paste, fairy teeth so white.
Fairy floss, fairy rinse, fairy smile so bright.
‘Now my teeth shine like new.
It’s time for bed,’ says Fairy Blue.

The blue green, yellow and red fairies all have their own double- page spread to brush teeth, have a bath, get dressed, OR read a book, before bedtime. The rhythm and beat of the text on each these pages follows the same pattern (see left)

Between each of these pages the reader is asked to look for and find Fairy Pink.

But someone’s playing hide and seek.
Can you see her? Take a peek.
Quick as a wink, find Fairy Pink!

Lesley uses various poetic devices in the text.

- Rhythm – (pace, tempo),
- Rhyme - (the similarity of ending sounds existing between two words),
- Alliteration – (repetition of consonant sounds)
- Assonance – (repetition of vowel sounds),
- Imagery - (words or phrases that appeal to any sense or any combination of senses)
- Meter – (the recurrence of a pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables),
- Repetition – (the repeating words, phrases, lines, or stanzas),

ILLUSTRATIONS

TEACHER NOTES

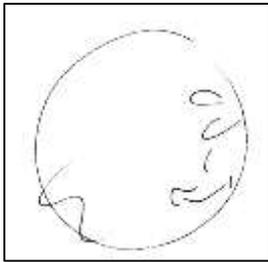
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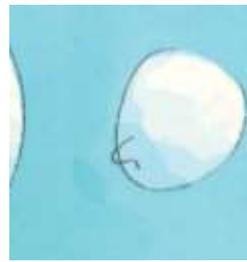
Illustrated by Sara Acton

Sara Acton used watercolour, ink and collage for the illustrations in this book. She has used simple loose lines, and soft colours, to capture the warmth and humour of the text. The pictures are airy – floating around and across a white background – perfect for a Fairy story. Sara played around with many ways of interpreting the characters and the setting, and wondered whether to work in a mythical world or a real life setting depicting imaginative play. She says:

As I worked further on the character studies, I thought the idea of the characters enjoying dressing up, playing and at the end of the book, dreaming of being an actual fairy was an interesting approach to the story. For Fairy Pink's bedcovers I painted a pattern of clouds, that becomes part of Fairy Pink's dream when she drifts off to sleep. I followed this dream-like sequence through into the endpapers.



Preliminary sketch – Fairy Pink hiding in a bubble



Final illustration – Fairy Pink hiding in a bubble

Sara has created warm and appealing characters, using simple, fluid lines to show movement, body language and facial expression. In the busy, getting-ready-for-bed scenes of each fairy, she has filled the pages with small vignettes. Each page is busy, and the pace flowing, to match the beat of the rhyming text. For moments of stillness and quiet Sara uses gentle enclosing lines and a closer perspective. This helps to slow down the pace and emphasise a pause in the action. For example, when Fairy Pink is discovered on the 'Peek-a-boo!' page, and, also on the following page where she is finally tired and slowly climbing the stairs to bed. Sara has developed a group of unique characters who like different colours, and enjoy doing different things. She has also added an extra character to the story - Fairy Pink's dog. Each time Fairy Pink is lost the dog searches for her, and always gives away her hiding place.

DISCUSSION POINTS AND ACTIVITIES

Quick as a Wink, Fairy Pink is a lovely book to help children discover the joys of reading.

- The story draws inspiration from the everyday lives of young children – playing, dressing up, pretending, being cheeky, being funny, being independent, and engaging in the daily routines of bedtime, including avoidance tactics. Show the children the cover and tell them what the story is about.
- Ask them to talk about what happens at bedtime at their place. Read the story.
- Does this story remind them of what happens when they are getting ready for bed? Do they ever hide? What are their favourite hiding places?
- Children and adults will have fun with this book - reading aloud, capturing the rhythm and the

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pace of the predictable beat. The title immediately sets a rhythmic tone. *Quick as a Wink, Fairy Pink* has to be said quickly, with the slightest pause and change of pace, after *Wink*.

- Different patterns of text recur throughout the story, for example, the rhythm and beat of the text for each bedtime routine. Copy the words from each of these pages and join them together to make one poem with four stanzas. As you read the children will spontaneously join by saying the words, tapping their feet, clapping...
- Children will soon learn the refrain: *But someone's playing hide and seek. Can you see her? Take a peek. Quick as a wink, find Fairy Pink!*
- Lesley says, ...*the inspiration for Quick as a Wink, Fairy Pink came from my childhood belief in fairies that stemmed from the magic my parents created around the Tooth Fairy and a childhood favourite story, 'Peter Pan', whose fairy friend Tinkerbell stirred my imagination...* Have a talk about fairies.
- She also says, *Kids will love the bedtime antics of little Fairy pink and parents will identify in their own children her tactics to avoid going to bed.* Ask the children to write or tell a story about what they do to avoid going to bed.
- Lesley says she loves writing in rhyme as it helps build and support early phonic skills and helps with prediction in the text. With the children to find rhyming words - look at the ends of lines, and also within lines to find examples of alliteration and assonance (see explanation above).
- Ask the children to choose a page from the book and to put the words into action – eg, Fairy Pink hiding behind a plant, Fairy Green having a bath. There are lots of scenes to choose from,
- Sara says, *Colour is an important aspect of the book and I experimented with colours for each fairy that complimented with each other and used these to create an overall palette for the book.*
- Colour is a very important part of the story: Sara says, *I explored contrasting soft watercolours, with more intense ink and collage to add an element of colour that 'popped' off the page.* Talk about the colours she has used, and about other colours that could be chosen. Which colours? Draw or paint pictures of fairies in different colours With the children, find the bright colours in each drawing. Make your own drawing using soft and bright colours and using collage.
- With the children, follow the dog through the book from beginning to end.
- Tell parents and carers about *Quick as a Wink, Fairy Pink*.
- Visit Lesley Gibbes' and Sara Acton's websites to find out more about them and their work.
<http://www.lesleygibbes.com>, www.saraacton.org

Enjoy sharing this delightful book with your children!