

A Very Quacky Christmas

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A VERY QUACKY CHRISTMAS

By Frances Watts

Illustrated by Ann James

BOOK SUMMARY

We wish you a quacky Christmas ...'
Samantha Duck is getting ready for Christmas. 'I'm going to give presents to animals all over the world!' Her friend Sebastian tells her not to bother. 'Christmas is not for animals,' he says. But with the help of her farmyard friends, Samantha sets out to prove that Christmas is for everyone. A joyous tale of giving and sharing from two award-winning Australian creators.

CURRICULUM LINKS AND KEY LEARNING OUTCOMES

- English
- Health and Physical Education
- History (Year 3)
- General Capabilities – Personal and Social Capability, Intercultural Understanding

APPROPRIATE AGES 2-7 Years

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Frances Watts was born in Switzerland and grew up in Australia. Her bestselling picture books include *Goodnight Mice!* (illustrated by Judy Watson), the winner of the 2012 Prime Minister's Award for Children's Fiction; 2006 CBC Honour Book *Kisses for Daddy* (ill. David Legge); and 2008 Children's Book Council of Australia award-winner *Parsley Rabbit's Book about Books* (ill. David Legge). Her young adult novel *The Peony Lantern*, set in nineteenth-century Japan, was short listed for a NSW Premier's Literary Award 2016.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Over 35 years, Ann James has collaborated with many authors, illustrating picture books that almost always feature animals! In fact, her own pets are characters in *The Midnight Gang*; *Dog In, Cat Out*; *The Way I Love You* and *Chester and Gil*.

Ann's playful approach to illustrating is evident in her choice of media and techniques. Some of her memorable picture-book characters are in *Lucy Goosey*; *I'm a Dirty Dinosaur*; *I'm a Hungry Dinosaur*; *Bird and Bear* and *Bird and Bear and the Special Day*.

REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

'*A Very Quacky Christmas*' tells us that Samantha is an inspirational character. Bringing a big heart and determination to the table Samantha the duck will have students rethinking the meaning of Christmas.

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KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

English – Year 1

- Identify the parts of a simple sentence that represent 'What's happening?', 'What state is being described?', 'Who or what is involved?' and the surrounding circumstances (ACELA1451)
- Explore differences in words that represent people, places and things (nouns, including pronouns), happenings and states (verbs), qualities (adjectives) and details such as when, where and how (adverbs) (ACELA1452)
- Discuss how authors create characters using language and images
- Discuss features of plot, character and setting in different types of literature and explore some features of characters in different texts (ACELT1584)
- Recreate texts imaginatively using drawing, writing, performance and digital forms of communication (ACELT1586)
- Create short imaginative and informative texts that show emerging use of appropriate text structure, sentence-level grammar, word choice, spelling, punctuation and appropriate multimodal elements, for example illustrations and diagrams (ACELY1661)
- Innovate on familiar texts by using similar characters, repetitive patterns or vocabulary (ACELT1832)
- Make short presentations using some introduced text structures and language, for example opening statements (ACELY1657)
- Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning about key events, ideas and information in texts that they listen to, view and read by drawing on growing knowledge of context, text structures and language features (ACELY1660)

History (Year 3 Outcome)

- Celebrations and commemorations in places around the world (for example, Chinese New Year in countries of the Asia region, Bastille Day in France, Independence Day in the USA), including those that are observed in Australia (for example, Christmas Day, Diwali, Easter, Hanukkah, the Moon Festival and Ramadan)

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Health and Physical Education

- [Identify](#) and practise emotional responses that account for own and others' feelings ([ACPPS020](#))
- [Recognise](#) similarities and differences in individuals and groups, and explore how these are celebrated and respected ([ACPPS024](#))

General Capabilities

- Personal capability - understand relationships
- Intercultural understanding – recognising culture and developing respect, interacting and empathising with others, reflecting on intercultural experiences and taking responsibility

THEMES

Christmas

Samantha and Sebastian explore the idea of Christmas in different communities. The book provides an excellent platform for exploring who can celebrate Christmas and why we celebrate Christmas.

Big ideas

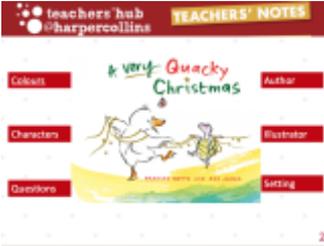
Explore taking big ideas to the next level just like Samantha. Christmas themes and project based learning are a perfect match. By creating local, achievable projects students can learn to work in teams to achieve a goal.

Maker movement and sustainability

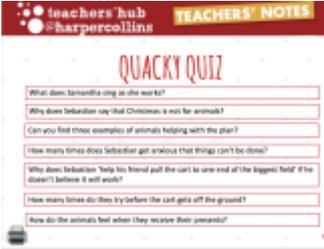
Students will enjoy using the book as a Launchpad to explore making their own sustainable Christmas presents. Inventing, creating and making presents for classmates, friends or family allows plenty of scope to use this book for STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths) activities, craft or any other kind of making and tinkering.

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CLASSROOM IDEAS AND ACTIVITIES

Activity	Notes & Curriculum Links	ICT Integration/Worksheet
Cover Story	<p>Discuss the cover text and illustrations. The purpose of this discussion is to introduce the author and illustrator, uncover prior knowledge or create interest in the story.</p> <p>Guiding Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think the book is about? What can you tell from the cover? • What are the ingredients of this book? • What do you think the title means? • Where is the book set? How do you know? • Who are the main characters? • How do you think the illustrations were created? 	<p>2 IWB</p> <p>Cover Story Brainstorm</p> 
Read and Retell (ACELT1584)	<p>Read the story with the students, stopping to highlight interesting ideas and student reflections.</p> <p>Guiding Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think will happen next? • Do you agree with Sebastian that Christmas is not for animals? • Would you exclude anyone from Christmas? Why? • What do you like about Christmas? 	<p>3 IWB/Printable</p> <p>Read and Retell</p> 

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was there anything about the story you didn't really understand? Did the author leave anything up to your imagination? <p>Have the students retell the story in their own words.</p>	
<p>Quacky Quiz <u>(ACELY1660)</u></p>	<p>Depending on the level students can answer a quiz or use these questions for discussion.</p>	<p>4 IWB Quacky Quiz</p> 
<p>Wacky Words <u>(ACELA1778)</u></p>	<p>Get students thinking about the authors choice of words.</p> <p>Guiding Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did you learn any new words? Which words do you think describe the true meaning of Christmas? Which words describe how we celebrate Christmas? <p>Create a word wall with pictures of all the words listed on the Word Wall slide. Depending on the age and level students you may choose to use only one or two lists.</p>	<p>5 IWB Word Wall</p> 

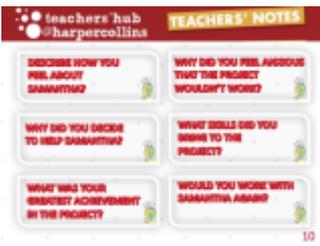
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<p>Sensible Sentences <u>(ACELA1451)</u></p>	<p>In this activity students will consider the structure of simple sentences. Select sentences from the book and deconstruct them to uncover the parts. Eg</p> <p><i>All that day, and late into the night, Samantha and Sebastian wove the flowers into daisy chains. (Note that this sentence structure is woven into the story to help build tension within the story.)</i></p> <p><i>'Christmas is about sharing,' said the donkey. I would be happy to share my cart with you.'</i></p> <p>Guiding Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is happening? • What state is being described? • Who is involved? • What else can we find out from this sentence. <p>Students can reinforce this knowledge by adding the appropriate parts to the sentences in the worksheet.</p>	<p>6 IWB/Printable</p> <p>Sensible Sentences</p> 
<p>Writing Techniques <u>(ACELA1448)</u></p>	<p>Writers often repeat the same concepts throughout the story, sometimes they even repeat the same sentences. In this activity, you'll look more closely at the way the author has structured the writing to make it interesting.</p> <p>Guiding Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you find examples of where the writer has repeated a sentence? 	<p>7 IWB/Printable</p> <p>Writing Techniques</p> 

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you think this technique adds to your enjoyment when reading the story? • What other aspects of the writing do you find interesting? • Which parts of the story do you like to listen to the most? <p>Students can also practice writing similar sentences in preparation for the writing task.</p>	
<p>Story Elements (ACELT1582) (ACELT1583)</p>	<p>Now we'll look at the story. Using the graphic organiser provided discuss the elements of the story and share your opinion. You can also use the postcard to get students discussing the big ideas of the text.</p> <p>Guiding Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the main characters in the story? • Where do they live? • What is the problem? <i>Samantha wants to get presents to all the animals in the world.</i> • What is the solution? <i>Samantha asks all her friends for help and they use their special skills to make presents and deliver them around the world.</i> • Have you ever wanted to do something that other people said was impossible? What do you think that would be like? • Do you think the story has a good message about Christmas? • Would you recommend this story to others? 	<p>8 IWB/Printable Story Elements</p>  

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<p>Character Close-Up <u>(ACELT1581)</u></p>	<p>In this activity you'll create an online profile for Samantha duck. Write a list of words to describe Samantha and then use these words to write a description of her. Then draw a picture of Samantha doing something she loves.</p> <p>Guiding Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you add to Samantha's list of skills? E.g. singing • What can you tell about Samantha from the images? Eg she is good at talking to big groups of animals • Do you think Samantha is inspirational? <p>Extension Activity</p> <p>Have students create a mock online profile of themselves. Students can consider their personality, skills and interests. This would also provide an opportunity to talk about cyber-safety.</p>	<p>9 Printable Samantha Profile</p>  <p>Create your own profile template using Adobe Spark or Canva.</p> <p>https://www.canva.com/templates/resumes/</p> <p>https://spark.adobe.com/</p>
<p>Working Together <u>(ACPPS020)</u> <u>(ACPPS024)</u></p>	<p>Books can help us look at situations and think about how we would feel and how we would respond to the situation. In this activity students work in pairs or small groups to interview Sebastian and find out more about how he felt about working on the project.</p> <p>Guiding Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you think Samantha could have achieved her vision on her own? • How did Sebastian feel about the project? 	<p>10 Print & Laminate (1 between 2)</p> 

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is Sebastian an important part of the story? • Have you ever had to work with others to get something done? How did you feel? What positive emotion did you have? What negative emotions did you have? 	
<p>'A Very _____ Christmas' Project (ACELT1586) (ACELY1661) (ACELT1832)</p>	<p>Using Samantha as inspiration students will dream big and develop their own Christmas Project. As a class prepare a big surprise for a group you care about. You don't have to know the group, it could be the school, a nursing home, your family or even someone in a different country.</p> <p>Guiding Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did Samantha and Sebastian spend lots of money to buy the Christmas presents? • What skills do you have that you could use to make Christmas presents for the whole school? • Can you use those skills to create your own big Christmas project idea? <p>Easy ideas for making presents for the whole school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watercolour bookmarks – see activity • Finger knitting heart ornament • Baking Christmas cupcakes • Use any of the Harper Collins Christmas craft books to choose a craft project to work on (these are listed at the end of the lesson plan) 	<p>11 IWB</p> <p>'A VERY _____ CHRISTMAS'</p> 

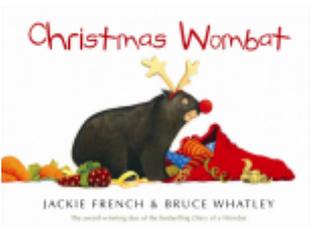
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	Students can continue making these in class or at home until you have enough.	
<p>Watercolour Painting</p> <p><u>(ACELA1453)</u></p>	<p>Discuss how the illustrations add to the world of the story.</p> <p>Guiding Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do the images add to the story? • Which images tell you more about the characters than is written in the story? Eg When Samantha is talking to a group of sheep she looks very confident in her idea. • Why do you think the illustrator choose to work with watercolour? • How does an artist create watercolours? • Can you create your own watercolour paints? • Do the black outlines add to the images? <p>Create your own watercolour paints using the video from Skill Share. Click on this link to learn how to create your paints.</p>	<p>Youtube Skill Share</p> 
<p>Watercolour Bookmarks</p>	<p>Print the bookmark template onto cardboard and have students use watercolour paints to colour the dots or create a wash or marble effect on the book. Gift these bookmarks to another class or even the whole school as part of your project.</p>	<p>12 Printable</p> <p>Bookmark template</p> 

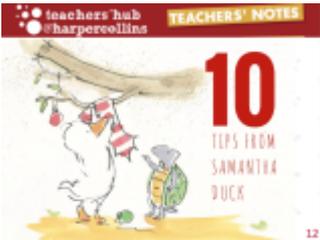
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<p>Creative Writing (ACELA1448)</p>	<p>Using the story structure recreate your own 'A VERY _____ CHRISTMAS' Depending on the level students may complete a joint construction and then move to an individual narrative.</p> <p>Using the vocabulary, writing techniques and plot structure from the story create a narrative text modelled on the story.</p> <p>Students could use their class project as a basis for the story. Start by getting the students to think about any problems they had to overcome in creating their big idea/project.</p> <p>Students could use Powerpoint or Storybird to turn their story into a picture book. Students can create illustrations using watercolours, take pictures and edit them in photoshop or use a completely different technique to create a visual world.</p>	<p>Storybird https://storybird.com/</p> 
<p>Thank you</p>	<p><i>On Christmas morning, animals all over the world woke up to find a special surprise.</i></p> <p>It's nice to appreciate the gifts we are given. In the captions write thank you in as many languages as you can.</p> <p>Guiding Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it far for Samantha and Sebastian to deliver presents all around the world? • Do you think the animals would feel thankful for the gifts? 	<p>13 IWB/Printable Thank you</p> 

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<p>Optional Activity: Christmas Anthropomorphism (ACELT1590)</p>	<p>A Very Quacky Christmas is an entertaining and endearing book, one of the techniques Francis uses to help build the story world is anthropomorphism.</p> <p>Guiding questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is anthropomorphism? • What human characteristics to the animals have? • Do turtles and ducks usually have close relationships? <p>Watch this William Wegman video for more anthropomorphic Christmas fun.</p> <p>Use photoshop to create anthropomorphic Christmas scenes of your own.</p>	
<p>Author Comparison – Jackie French (ACELT1583)</p>	<p>Many authors like to use animals in their Christmas stories. Read other stories that are similar to 'A Very Quacky Christmas' and compare the writing techniques, plot lines and characters.</p> <p>Click here to find out more about how Wombats celebrate Christmas.</p> <p>Guiding Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which Christmas stories did you enjoy the most? • What writing strategies would you like to try in your own writing? • How could you show your appreciate of the stories you like? 	

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	<p>Extension: Choose one of your favourite stories of animals celebrating Christmas. Can you create a fun craft activity, role play or worksheet for someone else to complete when they have finished reading the story?</p>	
<p>Bonus Idea</p>	<p>As an additional digital text creation activity students can work individually or in groups to create a 20 second motivational YouTube or PowerPoint. Discuss the structure of 'tips' e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with friends • Never give up... etc <p>Insert a screenshot for 10 tips slide into the start of your video or slideshow. Students can then consider how they will display their tips digitally</p> <p>Guiding Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think motivated Samantha to keep going with her idea? • How did Samantha get others to help her? 	<p>15 Youtube/Powerpoint Title Page 10 Tips From Samatha</p> 

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<http://www.harpercollins.com.au/9781409563426/100-christmas-things-to-make-and-do/#sm.0010gz2di6syedq11v82h4in92aga>

PREPARED BY

Information about the author of the notes

Concetta Gotlieb is a qualified primary teacher. Concetta is passionate about working with teachers and students to design, develop and deliver digital learning experiences to solve problems and create connections. Her teaching and learning design focuses on students as creators and producers.

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