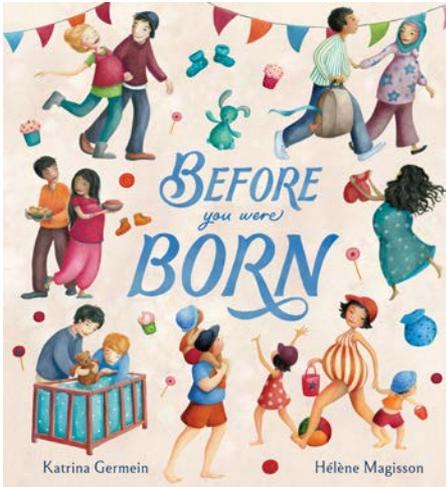


# Classroom Resources



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**NOTES BY:**

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## Before You Were Born

Katrina Germein and Hélène Magisson

### BOOK SUMMARY

A wonderfully inclusive book to celebrate the anticipated birth of a child.

*Before you were born  
and while you grew,  
there was a party  
just for you.*

Created by talented duo Katrina Germein and Hélène Magisson, this heartwarming picture book captures the excitement and anticipation of the arrival of a baby.

Filled with love, hope and happiness, *Before You Were Born* celebrates the universal joy of new babies in all kinds of families.

### KEY LEARNING OUTCOMES

- ACELA1444
- ACELT1787
- ACELT1582
- ACELT1660

### THEMES

- Families
- Belief Systems
- Health and Wellbeing
- Identity
- Belonging

**Recommended Ages:** 2–5 years

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# Classroom Resources

## Before Reading

### What is a celebration?

Invite students to share any special celebrations they have had with people older than they are. Record their responses on the board.

- Why do people get together for such celebrations?
- What kinds of activities take place at special celebrations?
- What kind of food do they eat? What do they drink?
- Does everyone gather around a table or in a special place?
- Do these celebrations happen regularly, or only to celebrate a specific event?
- Does anyone say anything special? Why?
- What makes these celebrations special and memorable?

Using what you have drawn on the board as inspiration, invite students to draw a picture of a special celebration they remember. Include a table or special mat for people to gather around. Add four favourite foods eaten and include drinks. Include all the special people who attend and label them. Draw expressions on their faces.

### What have I seen?

Examine the picture below. Ask students:



- What is happening in this picture?
- Have you ever known anyone, perhaps a parent or relative, who was pregnant?
- How did you feel about the arrival of a new baby?
- What feelings do people feel about the arrival of a baby?

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## During Reading

### Making memories

- What do you notice about the illustrations on the front cover?
- What do you think the book will be about?
- Look at the images on the back cover and the last pages. What do you think the book will be about?

Read *Before You Were Born*.

Think about important celebrations in your family. Re-read the book.

- Now that we have read the book – what is this story about?
- Write down all the ways of celebrating the coming birth a new baby that you can find in the book.
- Ask students to go home and ask their carer or parent if they had a celebration to celebrate their birth. If they did, what happened and who was there?

## After Reading

### How meaning is made

Look at the body language and facial features of the characters on each page. Characters' actions, body language and facial expression provide information about their feelings. As a class, discuss the characters' feelings through their facial expressions, body language and actions.

- Discuss and name the expression or body language, for example: hugging, touching, arms outstretched, giggling, cuddling, snuggling, laughing, smiling, solemnness.
- What emotions are associated with each expression or piece of body language?

Go on a hunt for all the words that rhyme in the text. Ask students to listen out for words that sound the same at the end and ask them to tell you at least two words that rhyme from the text.

- Write all the rhymes on the board.
- Discuss why the words rhyme (ie: the ends of both the words sound the same).
  - Look at the word endings – are they all the same?
- Give each student a card with a rhyming word written on it from the text.
  - Ask each student to speak their word aloud. Once everyone has spoken, students then go and find another person in the classroom with a word that rhymes with their word.
  - See if, as a pair, they can generate another rhyming word. Ask students to write a four-line poem with at least two lines that end with a rhyme.

Colours contribute a lot to the feelings that an image creates.

- Choose one spread from the book. What colour is dominant?
  - Is it a warm colour? Or cold?
  - What emotion/s do you think this colour conveys to the reader?
- Identify all the colours you see on the page you have chosen.
  - How do the colours work together to evoke emotion in the reader?
- Why do you think there are many different colours in each spread of the book?

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## Being a family

*Before You Were Born* is about family and how all families are different but they are held together by love.

- Ask students to draw a 'family' portrait. Ask them to include all the people they consider part of their family, even if they're not people they are related to.
  - Ask students to design and make a card for a member of their 'family' explaining why they love them.

## About the Composers

Katrina Germein is a bestselling picture book author whose books have been published around the world. Popular titles include *Big Rain Coming* and *My Dad Thinks He's Funny*, which was Highly Commended in the Prime Minister's Literary Awards. In 2019 Katrina received a Speech Pathology Book of the Year Award for *Let's Go Strolling*. Many of her other stories are CBCA Notable Books. Katrina is an ambassador for Raising Literacy Australia, a Books in Homes Role Model and a Premier's Reading Challenge Ambassador. She has an energetic dog named Mango and summer is her favourite season.

Hélène Magisson started her artistic career as a painting restorer in Paris, where she was also trained in the art of medieval illumination.

Hélène has lived in Africa, France and India and she is now settled in Brisbane with her family.

In 2013, Hélène started a new career in children's book illustration. Since then, she has illustrated several books including classics such *The Velveteen Rabbit* by Margery Williams Bianco and more contemporary stories like *Slowly! Slowly!* by T.M. Clark, which was a CBCA 2018 Notable picture book of the year.

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