

# SPARE KISSES



PIP  
HARRY

YISCAH  
MARCATILI

TEACHERS RESOURCES

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## Teachers Resources by Robyn Sheahan-Bright

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# INTRODUCTION

At Nan's place there are so many marvellous things, earrings and bracelets, and glittering rings. But most special of all are Nan's spare kisses, always ready for let-downs and misses. This is a warm-hearted celebration of the endless supply of love (and treats!) that grandmothers have for their grandchildren.

Eve's Nan has lots of spares. A spare key in her pot plant for after-school drop-ins. Seats at the table for morning tea pop-ins. A collection of teacups in all shapes and sizes. And always, yes, always, delicious surprises. Most special of all are Nan's spare kisses that make everything right.

From CBCA award-winning author Pip Harry and illustrator Yiscah Marcatili, this vibrant text is a tribute to grandmothers everywhere!

## THEMES & CURRICULUM TOPICS

Several themes are covered in this book which might be related to the Australian Curriculum, including:

### HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES (HASS)

<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/humanities-and-social-sciences/hass/>

### GRANDPARENTS

**Discussion Point:** This book describes a close relationship between a grandmother and her granddaughter, Eve. Nan always has 'spares' for whatever one might need, whether it be spare cups, food, art supplies or something else. But most of all she has kisses – to spare! Invite students to share the things their grandparents share with them. (If they don't have a grandparent, or don't see their grandparents regularly, they may have an elderly friend or relative they could discuss instead).

**Discussion Point:** Invite students to discuss some of the activities they engage in with a grandmother. Do they bake together? Do they garden together? Do they knit or crochet together? Going on bush walks, to a museum/art gallery, painting or reading, or going to the footy together?

**Discussion Point:** What do you call your grandmother? Granny? Nana? Nonna (Italian)? nǎi nai (Chinese)? Nani (Indian)? yiayia (Greek)?

**Activity:** Interview your grandmother and find out more about her past life and their own memories.

**Activity:** This text also explores the inevitable decline of a grandparent. When she slips and hurts her hip, she is sent to hospital where Eve visits her and finds her changed.

'Nan is in bed looking crinkled and sad, without her lipstick or her favourite bag.'

In the final frame she is using a walking stick. Discuss with students the concept of aging and how being active in mind and body helps the elderly to maintain their wellbeing

## **ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/english/>

The text of this book might be studied in relation to the following aspects:

**Activity:** This story is told in third person, although from Eve's first person point of view. What do you think Nan's view of her granddaughter might be? Write about an incident in the book from her point of view.

**Activity:** This is a rhymed text, for example:

'For broken toys and broken hearts,  
cancelled plans and wobbly starts.  
Wrong answers, lost races,  
failed tests, last places.'

Encourage students to employ rhyme in the texts they write in response to this book. [See also **Worksheet 2.**]

**Activity:** Write a short story about a grandmother and her grandchild.

**Activity:** Test your students' **comprehension** by asking them questions about the written and visual text. [See also **Author's Notes** below.]

## **VISUAL LITERACY**

<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/the-arts/visual-arts/>

The visual text of a book combines with the written text to tell the story using the various parts of the book's design and illustrations, as explored below:

**Activity:** The **cover** of a book is an important part of its message. This one depicts the grandmother holding Eve in her arms and both with hands held high scattering 'kisses' into the air. Design your own cover for this book.

**Activity:** The **endpapers** contain a repeated series of letters, 'xo', which is shorthand for kisses and hugs. What other pattern might the endpapers have contained? Design your own endpapers relevant to this text.

**Discussion Point: Patterns** appear in each of the illustrations, on clothing, on crockery, on floor mats, upholstery and even on Grandma's walking stick! Encourage students to use patterns in the images they draw in response to this book.

**Activity:** Creating characters entails studying **facial expressions and 'body language'**. What do these images tell you about the feelings between grandma and Eve?

**Activity:** The **medium or style** employed is watercolour, gouache and coloured pencils. **Colours** used in this book are muted primary colours. Encourage students to use these mediums and colour palette to create their artworks. [See also **Illustrator's Notes** below.]

**Activity:** Invite students to draw, paint, or collage a scene to accompany the story about a grandmother they wrote above. Create a classroom mural using all the images. [See also **Worksheet 1** below.]

**Activity:** Create a graphic novel/comic version of a scene in this book. [See **Bibliography.**] [See also **Worksheet 4.**]

## CREATIVE ARTS

There are many creative activities suggested by this text:

1. **Celebrate Grandparents Day** with your class. Invite students to bring their grandmothers and/or grandfathers or an older friend or relative to the school and to have a special morning tea with them. You might also ask them to bring a plate of food they've made with their grandmothers or older friend or relative.
2. **Invite students to paint a portrait of their grandmother or older friend/relative** and to display an exhibition of the images in the classroom.
3. Invite students to create a '**Memory Book**' of special things they have done with their grandmother or older friend/relative. [See **Worksheet 3.**]
4. **Create a poster** to advertise this book.
5. **Create a Book Trailer as a class project** to promote this book. Brainstorm ideas and then work with your students to create this resource. [See **Bibliography.**]

## LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES

**Activity:** Research the topics above online.

**Activity:** Research the author and illustrator online. [See **Bibliography.**]

## MATHEMATICS

**Activity:** Have fun counting things in this text.

## FURTHER TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION AND RESEARCH

- Research the work of Pip Harry. Compare this to her other books.
- Research the illustration work of Yiscah Marcatili.
- Students might research this book in comparison to reading other picture books such as those listed in the **Bibliography.**
- Investigate any other topic not covered in these notes which you consider is suggested by this text.

## CONCLUSION

This book is a celebration of grandparenting and of the close relationships that can be cherished between young and older members of a family. It is a tribute to the passing on of family traditions, and to the wonderful power of 'spare kisses'.

## AUTHOR'S NOTES

My inspiration for *Spare Kisses* came from my mum, Mary. In our family she has a tradition of asking if anyone needs a 'spare kiss' ... you can be aged 50 or 5 and it's always comforting to take up her offer! It's her trademark way of offering affection, without too much pressure. I started thinking about all the other 'spare' things she and other grandparents have on hand for their grandkids - spare beds, spare toys, spare seats at the table, spare treats ... an abundance of love! This led to a rhyming story about Eve and her Nan and how Nan's spare kisses make everything right, even on the darkest night or most miserable day. It's about being loved and loving in return and the special relationship grandparents or older friends and relatives offer children. **Pip Harry**

## ILLUSTRATOR'S NOTES

When I was planning out my illustrations for *Spare Kisses*, I wanted to make sure I captured the loving connection between Eve and Nan that I felt through the story. I used the expressions of the characters to illustrate this, and the way Eve and Nan interact on each page. I also used colour to create different feelings in each illustration. I painted Nan in warm colours throughout the book to express the warmth and love that she has for Eve. The colours change from warm to cools as the story becomes sadder and it becomes warm again as Eve returns the warmth, love and spare kisses to Nan. All of my illustrations are created using watercolour and gouache paints as well as coloured pencils.

**Yiscah Marcatili**

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Pip Harry** is an Australian author, copywriter and journalist. Her verse novel *The Little Wave* won the 2020 Children's Book Council of Australia Book of the Year Award for Younger Readers. Pip's second verse novel, *Are You There, Buddha?*, was a 2022 Children's Book Council of Australia Notable Book and was shortlisted for the 2022 NSW Premier's Literary Awards, Ethel Turner Prize for Young People's Literature. Pip's novel *August & Jones*, published by Hachette in 2022, was shortlisted for the CBCA Book of the Year: Younger Readers 2023 and the 2024-2025 YABBA Awards, and won the CBCA Shadow Judging Book of the Year for Younger Readers. Pip has also written picture books *Over or Under?* (a CBCA Notable book and shortlisted for the ABIA Picture Book of the Year Award 2025), *The Inside Dog* and *Drift*, a verse novel shortlisted for the 2026 Indie Book Awards. She lives on Sydney's Northern Beaches with her family and energetic rescue kelpie. See also: [www.pipharry.com](http://www.pipharry.com)

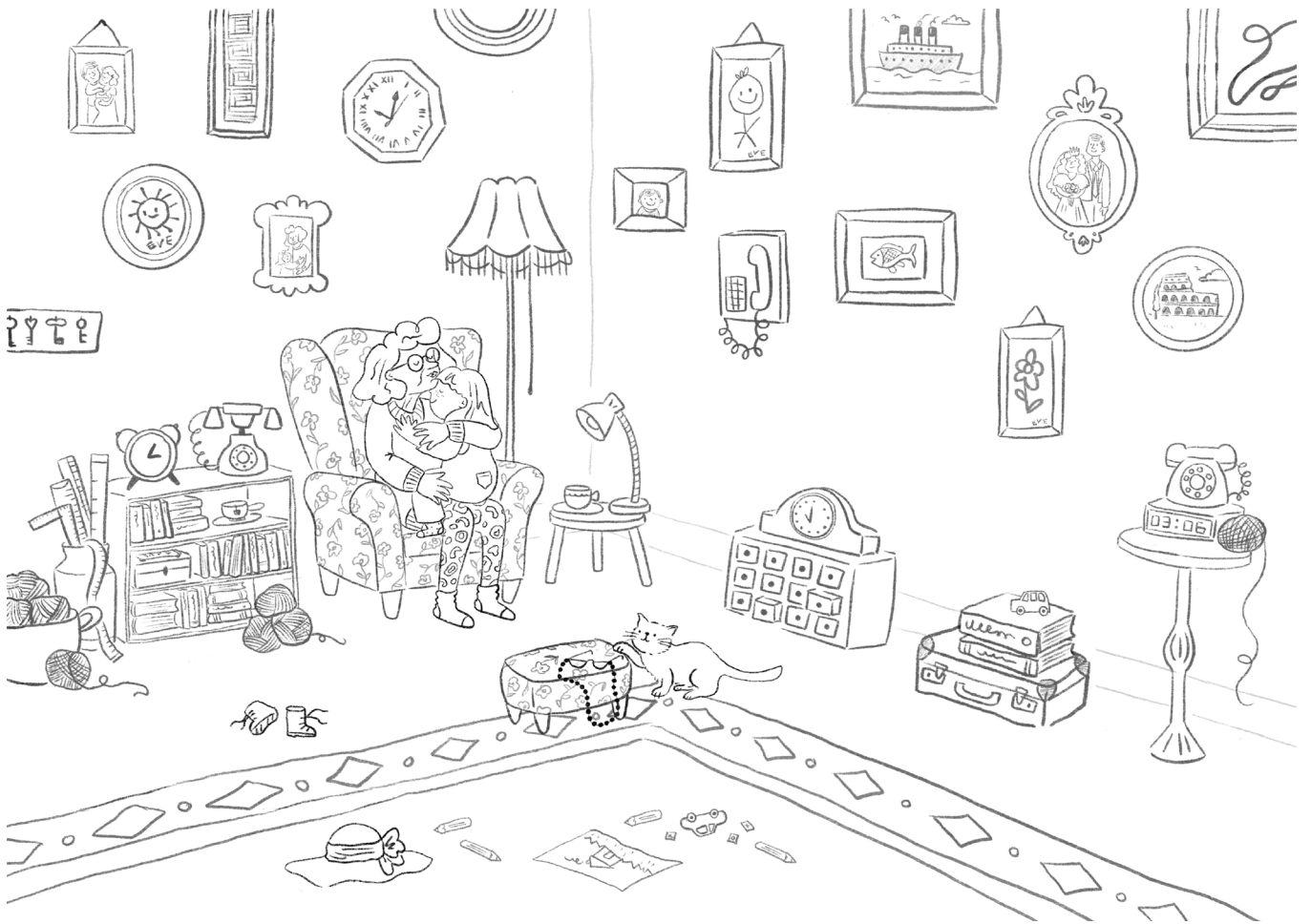
## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

**Yiscah Marcatili** is a multi-disciplined illustrator who loves brightening the world around her by creating cheeky characters and subtly injecting playful narratives into her work. Her illustrations are fun and whimsical, painted traditionally with watercolour, gouache and coloured pencils. Her love of illustration is only matched by her love of great coffee and comfy overalls. See also: <https://www.illustrationroom.com.au/artist/yiscah-marcatili-childrens-illustration/>

# WORKSHEETS

## WORKSHEET 1. COLLAGE THIS IMAGE

Use materials such as craft paper, foil, or pieces of fabric, to collage this image from the book. Students might also colour in or paint some part of the image.



## WORKSHEET 2. RHYMING

The following words appear in this text. Find other words to rhyme with them.

<b>Things/rings</b>	
<b>Treasures/ pleasures</b>	
<b>Around/found</b>	
<b>Sleep/sheep</b>	
<b>Flour/hour</b>	
<b>Kisses/misses</b>	
<b>Fright/night</b>	
<b>Matches/batches</b>	
<b>Hearts/starts</b>	
<b>Races/places</b>	

Then write a rhymed sentence using some of these words:

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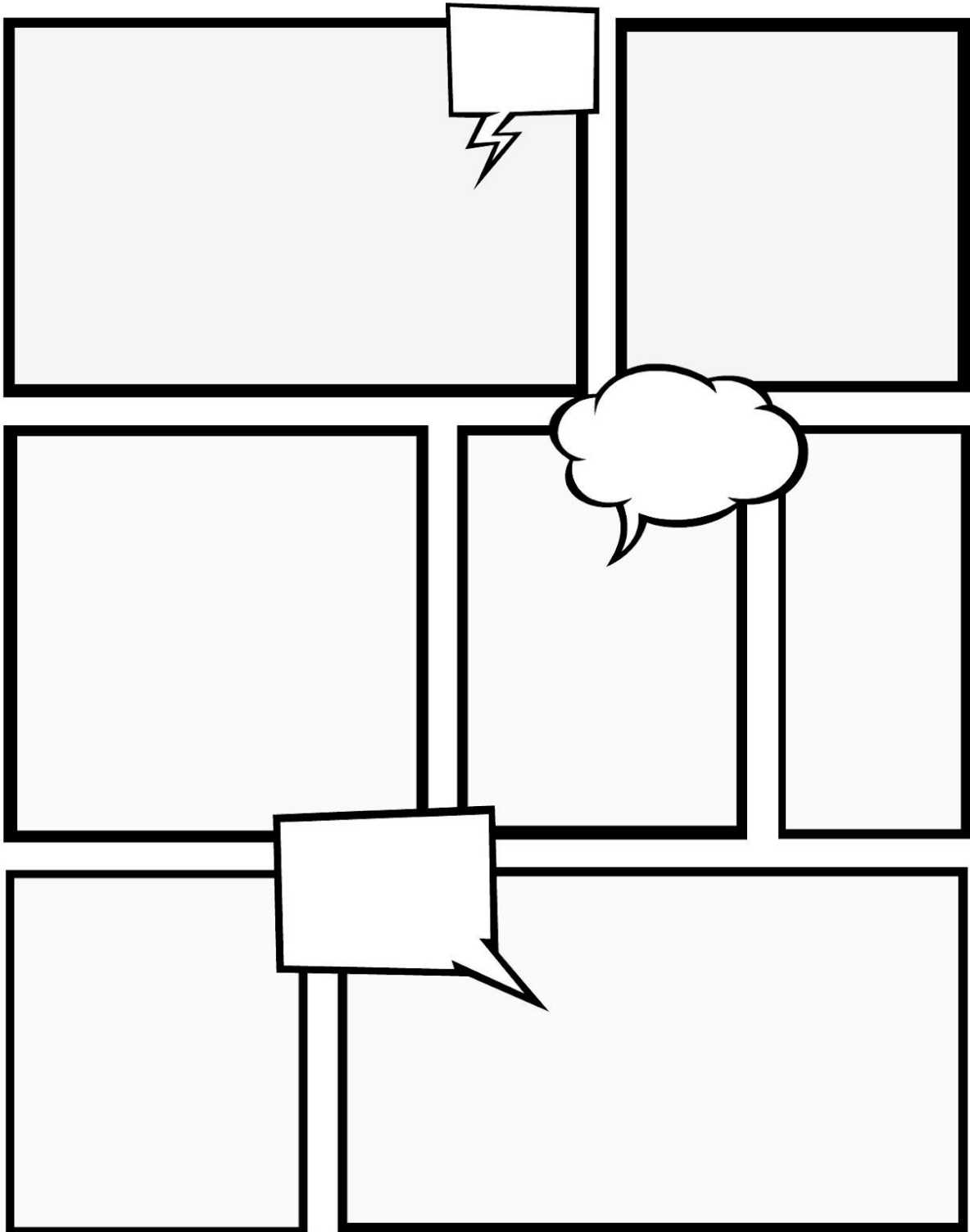
## WORKSHEET 3. MEMORY BOOK PROMPTS

1. My favourite memory of my grandmother is...
2. My grandmother has taught me to...
3. When I visit my grandmother we like to...
4. My grandmother wears...
5. My grandmother's favourite pastime is...
6. My grandmother grew up in...
7. My grandmother is special because...
8. My grandmother likes to cook...
9. My grandmother's special talent is...
10. I love my grandmother because...



## WORKSHEET 4. GRAPHIC STORYTELLING

Create a graphic novel/comic interpretation of one of the scenes in this book. Use the layout below as the storyboard for your comic. Enlarge on a photocopier to give you more space.



Comic Book Template viewed at: <http://www.pinterest.com/pin/365706432212821426/>

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## WEBSITES – TEACHING RESOURCES

- 'Celebrate NSW Grandparents Day' *NSW Government Department of Communities and Justice*  
<https://www.nsw.gov.au/family-and-relationships/grandparents-day>
- '53 Fun Activities for Grandparents and Grandkids to Enjoy Together' *Mommy Poppins*  
<https://mommypoppins.com/boredom-busters/activities-for-grandparents-to-do-with-kids>
- 'Grandparents Day' *Queensland Government Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety*  
<https://www.families.qld.gov.au/our-work/seniors/grandparents-day>
- 'Grandparents Day in Australia' *Calendarr Australia*  
<https://www.calendarr.com/australia/grandparents-day/>

'Grandparents Day Topic' *Twinkl* <https://www.twinkl.com.au/resources/australian-resources-5---6-festivals-and-celebrations/october-events-festivals-celebrations-and-events-topics-5-6-australia/grandparents-day-australian-resources-5-6-festivals-and-celebrations>

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'19 Unique Grandparents Day Activities to Inspire Connection & Creativity'

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF THE NOTES

**Dr Robyn Sheahan-Bright AM** operates justified text writing and publishing consultancy services, and is widely published on children's literature, publishing history and Australian fiction. In 2011 she was the recipient of the CBCA (Qld Branch) Dame Annabelle Rankin Award for Distinguished Services to Children's Literature in Queensland, in 2012 the CBCA Nan Chauncy Award for Distinguished Services to Children's Literature in Australia, and in 2014, the QWC's Johnno Award. In 2021 she was appointed a member of the Order of Australia.