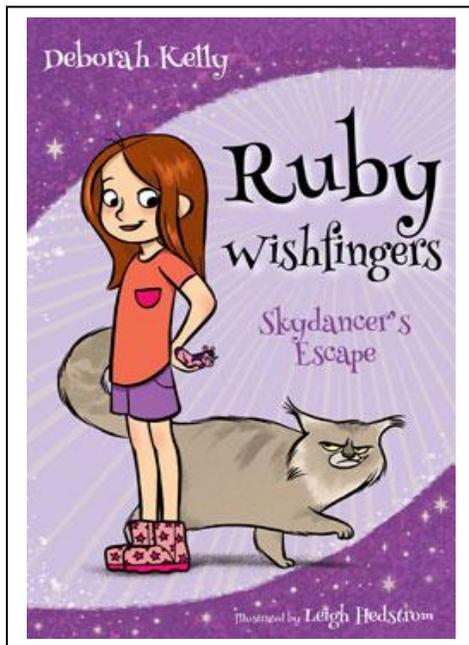


# Wombat Books

Stories you'll want to share

## Wombat Books Teacher's Notes



### Ruby Wishfingers: Skydancer's Escape

Deborah Kelly / Leigh Hedstrom

ISBN: 9781925139631

Recommended retail: \$9.99

Reading level: Ages 6-10

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## **Introduction**

*Ruby Wishfingers* is an exciting new adventure series for children aged 6-10. With a cast of loveable characters, each book in the series takes the reader on a thrilling adventure with plenty of twists, turns and humour along the way.

*Ruby Wishfingers: Skydancer's Escape* incorporates several important themes that are relevant to all children: Imagination, Want vs Need, Family Relationships, Family Origins and Being Different.

Ruby Wishfingers is suitable for primary-school-aged children and can be used to support several *Key Learning Areas* across the Australian Curriculum including English, Creative Arts, Personal Development, Human Society and its Environment and Science and Technology.

## **Story Summary: *Ruby Wishfingers: Skydancer's Escape***

Ruby Wishfingers is an ordinary girl with an extraordinary name. Only nobody else seems to think so. That is until Ruby Wishfingers wakes up with a strange feeling in the tips of her fingers. She soon finds out that there is far more to being a Wishfingers than having a funny name. Ruby has inherited the power to wish for whatever she wants from her great, great, great, great grandfather, the magician. But Ruby soon learns that some wishes create more trouble than good.

Ruby Wishfingers will take you on a magical adventure, featuring talking cats, pocket-sized unicorns and jellybean rain.

## **Key Learning Areas**

Ruby Wishfingers is a useful book to support the following Key Learning Areas across the curriculum

ENGLISH: In Foundation to Grade 2 of the Australian Curriculum, children use literary texts to relate to their lives, and form a growing appreciation of story. With the fun, family elements of Ruby Wishfingers, the following curriculum can be explored:

(ACELT1575) Recognise that texts are created by authors who tell stories and share experiences that may be similar or different to students' own experiences.

(ACELT1577) Respond to texts, identifying favourite stories, authors and illustrators.

(ACELA1460) Understand that spoken, visual and written forms of language are different modes of communication with different features and their use varies according to the audience, purpose, context and cultural background.

### **Themes**

The following important themes are addressed in Ruby Wishfingers: Skydancer's Escape.

**IMAGINATION:** The sky's the limit! Especially when it comes to wishes. Ruby Wishfingers will stimulate children's imaginations as they ponder what they might wish for and how they might have dealt with some of the problems Ruby faced in her adventure.

**WANT VS NEED:** What's important to you? Ruby Wishfingers provides children with the opportunity to think about the things they might wish for. Children can compare the things they want versus the things they need, and the things they value most. Sharing these ideas can lead to discussions of how these values differ between people of different genders, ages, cultures and backgrounds.

**FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS:** Grandparents and grandchildren. Ruby has an especially strong bond with her Grandmother, which provides a positive example of a grandparent/grandchild relationship. Ruby Wishfingers can provide children with the opportunity to strengthen their ties with older generations within their own family by encouraging them to ask questions about the lives of those in previous generations.

**FAMILY ORIGINS:** Every family has a story. In the story we get to know Ruby but we also get to know her family over more than one generation. This is an opportunity to discuss families and their histories, and encourage children to ask questions of their own parents, grandparents or extended family. Ruby Wishfingers got her magic from Great, Great, Great, Great Grandfather Wishfingers, the magician: a story Ruby is told by her Granny. Children can discover more about their family's origins and significance of names and perhaps even look into family trees.

**BEING DIFFERENT:** Differences are to be celebrated! The story encourages children to think about and discuss what they consider ordinary and extraordinary. Children might

also like to think about their own special talents or gifts. The book presents an opportunity to discuss examples of different cultures and how something ordinary to one culture or group of people could seem extraordinary to another. For example: what people wear in other cultures, or what people in eat in other cultures, etc.

## About the Author



**Deborah Kelly** is the author of popular picture books including *The Bouncing Ball*, *Jam for Nana* and *Dinosaur Disco*. She writes short stories for children and material for the educational market. She has more picture books due out in 2017. She also writes Haiku poetry, which has been published in various forms. Deborah loves to visit schools, libraries and festivals to talk about writing and share her books. *Ruby Wishfingers: Skydancer's Escape* is her first chapter book for children.

Deborah's website: <http://www.deborahkelly.com.au>

Deborah's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/DeborahKellyChildrensAuthor/>

## About the Illustrator



**Leigh Hedstrom**, also known as Flee, is a Sydney based freelance illustrator with an education in Fine Arts. She lives in an 'arty' household with husband Ben Hedstrom (art teacher, painter and recent Archibald Prize finalist) and their son, James.

With over ten years of experience illustrating for educational and children's media, Leigh specialises in the creation of appealing characters for print, web, animation and advertising. *Marty's Nut-Free Party* marked Leigh's first venture into hardcover picture books. She is also the illustrator of *When I See Grandma* and *Emily Eases her Wheezes*.

## Questions and Reflections

### Imagination:

If you had magic fingers, what would you wish for and why?

If you could change your name, what would it be and why?

### Want Vs Need:

What is the difference between wants and needs? List some of the things you need. Now list some of the things you want. Compare your answers with a friend, a sibling, a neighbor. Are they the same for everyone? Why do you think some of our needs are similar, but our wants are different?

Do you think Ruby made good choices with her wishes? What would you have done differently?

### Family Relationships:

Who are the members of your immediate family? Your extended family?

Granny Wishfingers is Ruby's *confidante*. Do you have someone special in your life that you can talk to (it doesn't necessarily have to be a family member)?

### Family Origins:

Do you know where your parents were born? Your Grandparents? Your Great Grandparents? Where did they live and what did they do for a living?

What is a family tree?

Is it important to know your family history? Why?

### Being Different:

What is the difference between ordinary and extraordinary?

Is it good to be different to other people? Why?

What makes you special or different to other people?

Skydancer is Ruby's favorite toy. Do you own something that is very precious to you? Where did it come from and why is it special?

Do you believe in magic? Why do you think Ruby's dad doesn't have wish fingers?

### **Classroom Activities:**

Listed below are ideas for activities in the classroom related to the **Key Learning Areas**.

### **ENGLISH**

Write a story where you wake up in the morning with wish fingers and have the ability to make wishes for a whole day!

Write a Book Review of *Ruby Wishfingers: Skydancer's Escape* for a friend who hasn't read the book yet.

Write a paragraph introducing your favourite character from the story to a friend.

Choose a character and write five questions you would like to ask them. Role play with a friend and pretend you are each other's characters to answer each other's questions.

### **CREATIVE ARTS**

Imagine you are the illustrator of *Ruby Wishfingers-Skydancer's Escape*. Choose a scene from the story to illustrate.

*Class project:* Create a mural of Ruby's garden when it is made of treats. There could be lollipop flowers, spearmint grass, honeycomb bees and sour worms. Perhaps you can come up with some more ideas!

### **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Skydancer is very special to Ruby. Do you have something that is special to you? Where did it come from and why is it special? Bring it to school or draw a picture of it. Prepare a short talk to share with your class.

Ruby's mum collects antique tablecloths and plays the piano. Ruby's dad loves to grow vegetables. Ruby loves to draw and paint. Do you have a hobby, or interest, or a sport

you enjoy? How does it make you feel? Prepare a short news item to share with the class about your particular interest.

Granny Wishfingers is Ruby's *confidante*- a person she can talk to about anything at all. Do you have someone special you can talk to? What do you talk to them about? Write a letter to your *confidante* to tell them about your day.

### **HUMAN SOCIETY AND THE ENVIRONMENT:**

Interview a grandparent to find out about their childhood.

Who are the members of Ruby's family? Research your own family and draw a simple family tree.

### **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

Ruby found out that the cheetah is the world's fastest land animal. Pick a favorite animal and use the internet to find five interesting facts about it to share with the class.

Ruby's dad grows vegetables in the garden. What kinds of vegetables could you grow in your backyard? What conditions do they need to grow? Are there any *other* ways humans have developed to grow vegetables and fruit (e.g. hydroponics)?

Ruby Wishfingers has her very own website! Head to [www.rubywishfingers.com.au](http://www.rubywishfingers.com.au) to explore the website and learn more about Ruby Wishfingers' world.

## Ruby Wishfingers: Skydancer's Escape Work Sheet

1. Circle the words that mean *extraordinary*

Exceptional      Amazing      Plain      Wonderful      Marvelous      Dull  
Unusual      Boring

2. Speech marks (“”) show us when someone is talking. For example: “I tried to turn it off but he bit me on the ankle,” explained Granny. Put speech marks in these sentences:

- a) Wow, breathed Ruby. Was he any good?
- b) I wish, declared Ruby in her most mysterious voice, that Skydancer was a *real* unicorn!
- c) Ruby! Called Dad. What are you up to, in there?
- d) I'm never going to get it back, Ruby groaned, slumping against the wall.
- e) Uh, yes Mrs Cottlesloe, stammered Ruby.

3. Scrambled sentences: Unscramble the following sentences.

- a) of out Ruby skin jumped almost her
- b) have stingers honeycomb Did bees honeycomb ?

4. Sequencing Events: The following events are out of order. Number the sentences to show the correct order.

- \_\_ Ruby wishes Skydancer was pocket pet sized
- \_\_ Skydancer gallops off down the driveway
- \_\_ Ruby wishes to run as fast as a cheetah
- \_\_ They make it across the highway
- \_\_ Ruby can't keep up with Skydancer
- \_\_ Ruby smells something warm and freshly baked
- \_\_ Ruby jumps on Skydancer's back

5. Use the following words to complete the sentences:

**sticky      thud      leap      higgedly-piggeldy      jumped**

- a) Ruby hit the ground with a \_\_\_\_
- b) Ruby had been in \_\_\_\_ situations before, but never anything like this.
- c) With a spring and a \_\_\_\_ she was flat on Skydancer's back.
- d) One or two things might be a little \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_.
- e) Granny's hands flew over her mouth. She \_\_\_\_\_ up and down on the spot.

**Please check out our very special Ruby Wishfingers website for more fun activities.  
[www.rubywishfingers.com.au](http://www.rubywishfingers.com.au)**