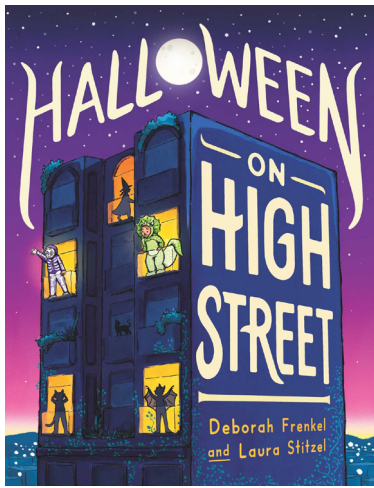




Teacher Notes

Halloween on High Street

Written by Deborah Frenkel and Illustrated by Laura Stitzel

Teacher notes prepared by Emma Egan

Publication details

Publisher: Affirm Press
ISBN: 9781923419193
Size/format: 32 pages, HB
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Reader ages: 4-8 years

About the Illustrator

Laura Stitzel is a Melbourne-based illustrator, author and animator. Her work spans publishing and television, with credits in background art, character animation and storyboarding for studios producing content for Disney, PBS, Adult Swim, Fox Entertainment and Netflix. She is the author-illustrator of *Moonlight Mums* and *Mr Mo Starts to Grow*, and has illustrated numerous picture books and book covers.

About the Book

A Halloween full of heart!

Every year, Nell and Dash try to celebrate Halloween on their busy street, but it never quite works. There's too much traffic, too many strangers and not enough fun.

But this year, they try something new. With a little courage and plenty of help, High Street might just become the spookiest street of all!

A warm-hearted tale about creativity, persistence and the magic that happens when everyone comes together.

About the Author

Deborah is a Sydney-born, Melbourne-based writer who lives in an extremely messy but happy house full of books and half-painted walls. When she's not writing for kids, she's usually copywriting for TV commercials, billboards, and the labels of shampoo bottles. If she wasn't a writer, she'd probably be an engineer, having spent her childhood (and some of her adulthood) making machines out of toilet rolls and string. Fairies and ferries are equally magical to her.

Curriculum Connections

EYLF V2.0

- Outcome 1
- Outcome 2
- Outcome 3
- Outcome 5

Year 1

- AC9E1LE01
- AC9E1LE02
- AC9E1LE05
- AC9E1LY02
- AC9E1LY05

Foundation

- AC9EFLE01
- AC9EFLE02
- AC9EFLE05
- AC9EFLY02
- AC9EFLY05
- AC9EFLA08

Year 2

- AC9E2LE01
- AC9E2LE02
- AC9E2LE05
- AC9E2LY02
- AC9E2LY05

Why Teach This Book?

This story provides a wonderful opportunity to explore how communities grow when people share ideas, help one another and work towards a common goal. High Street Halloween is a wonderful story about noticing a problem, having the courage to share an idea and discovering what can happen when everyone plays a part.

As Nell and Dash set out to create a Halloween celebration for their neighbourhood, children see that even small ideas can grow into something meaningful. Along the way, the story encourages conversations about belonging, teamwork and the many different people who help a community thrive. It shows children that even a small idea can make a difference when someone is brave enough to share it and others choose to help.

The illustrations and characters provide many opportunities for classroom discussion, helping children explore relationships, teamwork and the role people play in their communities. It supports learning across literacy, personal and social capability, and civics while encouraging children to recognise that everyone has something valuable to contribute.

Themes

- Community - Discovering how people with different skills and backgrounds can work together to create something special for everyone.
- Belonging – Exploring what it means to feel connected to a place and how shared experiences can help build a sense of belonging.
- Collaboration – Recognising that great ideas often become possible when people listen, contribute and work as a team.
- Initiative – Seeing how one small idea can inspire others and create positive change within a community.
- Perseverance – Learning to keep going even when things don't go to plan and trusting that effort can lead to unexpected success.

Concepts

- Citizenship – Understanding that everyone can contribute to making their community a better place, no matter their age.
- Perspective – Recognising that different people may experience or view the same place in different ways.
- Planning – Exploring how careful thinking, organising and preparation can help turn an idea into reality.
- Problem-solving – Identifying a challenge, considering different possibilities and finding creative solutions.
- Celebration – Discovering how shared traditions and special events can bring people together and strengthen connections.
- Environment – Considering how the spaces where we live, work and play can influence our experiences and how we can help improve them.
- Participation – Recognising that communities work best when people contribute and help each other.

Rich Vocabulary

Word / Child-friendly meaning / Talk About It

Mingled

- Mixed together to become one.
- In the story, the sizzle of sausages mingled with music. What other sounds or smells might mingle together? Can you think of a time when different sounds mixed together around you?

Permits

- Special permission that lets people do something.
- Can you think of a time when you had to ask permission before doing something? Why was it important?

Pedestrian

- A person who is walking, especially near roads or streets.
- Where have you seen pedestrians? How can we help keep pedestrians safe?

Mural

- A large picture or artwork painted on a wall.
- If you could create a mural for your school or community, what would it show?

Foyer

- An area or entrance just inside the front door of a building.
- What buildings have you been in that have a foyer? What do you notice about them?

Prehistoric

- From a very long time ago, before people wrote down history.
- Dash has a prehistoric smile because he's dressed as a dinosaur. What other prehistoric animals do you know?

Glimmer

- A small sign, tiny light or little bit of something.
- Have you ever had a glimmer of hope or seen a glimmer of light? What does that mean?

Story Stops

Story Stops are carefully chosen moments to pause during reading. They encourage students to predict, observe, discuss and wonder. This helps them become active, thoughtful readers.

Story Stop 1 – Look Closely

When: Before reading the book.

Ask:

- Spend a minute exploring the cover and endpapers.
- What do you notice about where Nell and Dash live?
- What clues tell you this story might be about more than just Halloween?
- What do you wonder before we begin?

Teacher Tip

Encourage children to notice the setting as well as the characters. The illustrations often give clues about the story before the first page is even turned.

Story Stop 2 – Talk Together

When: After Nell and Dash decide to give High Street 'the biggest treat ever'.

Ask:

- What problem are Nell and Dash trying to solve?
- Do you think their idea could work? Why or why not?
- If you wanted to bring your community together, what could you do?

Teacher Tip

Invite children to explain their thinking rather than simply agreeing or disagreeing. There are many ways to solve a problem, and every idea is worth exploring.

Story Stop 3 – Pause & Predict

When: After Nell and Dash hand out invitations but nobody seems to notice.

Ask:

- How do you think Nell and Dash are feeling?
- What do you think they might do next?
- What clues helped you make your prediction?

Teacher Tip

Predictions become more meaningful when children use both the words and the illustrations as evidence for their thinking.

Story Stop 4 – Think Like the Author

When: After "A glimmer of Halloween!"

Ask:

- Why do you think the author chose the words "A glimmer of Halloween" instead of simply saying people arrived.
- How does this moment change the feeling of the story?
- Why do you think the author made us wait so long before everything came together?

Teacher Tip

This is a great opportunity to explore how authors build suspense. Sometimes readers need to experience disappointment before the most satisfying moments in a story.

Story Stop 5 – Connect

When: After everyone joins the celebration.

Ask:

- Have you ever been part of a special event that brought lots of people together?
- How did it make you feel?
- What do you think helped make this celebration such a success?

Teacher Tip

Children's connections don't have to be about a party. Encourage them to think about any time people worked together, such as a school event, sporting day or community celebration.

Story Stop 6 – Wonder

When: At the end of the story.

Ask:

- I wonder what other celebrations High Street might create together.
- I wonder what Nell and Dash's next big idea will be.
- I wonder how High Street has changed because of one simple idea.

Teacher Tip

Leave time for children to build on each other's ideas. Wondering doesn't need a right answer – it's an opportunity to imagine, questions and think beyond the final page.

Dialogic Questions – Before Reading

Picture Walk

- What do you notice on the cover?
- Where do you think Nell and Dash live? What clues helped you work that out?
- What details can you spot that tell you this story might take place in a busy neighbourhood?
- What do you notice about Nell and Dash? What do their expressions tell you?

Wonderings

- I wonder why the children are dressed up.

- I wonder what might happen on High Street.
- I wonder why the title includes the words High Street Halloween.
- What questions do you have before we begin reading?

Prediction

- What do you think this story might be about?
- Why do you think the author Deborah Frenkel chose High Street as the setting?
- Do you think the children will have a problem to solve? What makes you think that?
- What do you think might happen on Halloween?

Vocabulary

- What is a high street? Have you heard those words before?
- What do you think a pedestrian is?
- What do you think the word mural might mean?
- Have you ever heard the word foyer? Where do you think you might find one?

Prior Experiences

- Have you ever celebrated Halloween? What did you do?
- What kinds of celebrations happen in your community?
- Have you ever lived in or visited an apartment building? What was it like?
- If you could plan a celebration for your neighbourhood, what would you choose?

Dialogic Questions – During Reading

Inference

- How do you think Nell and Dash are feeling right now? What makes you think that?
- What clues tell you how the other people on High Street are feeling?
- How can you tell that Nell and Dash haven't given up? What clues helped you notice?

- What do you think the characters might be thinking, even though they don't say it?

Illustrations

- What do you notice in the illustrations that the words don't tell us?
- What details help us understand what High Street is like?
- How do the illustrations change as the story moves towards Halloween?
- If there a page that made you stop and look a little longer? What did you notice?

Connections

- Have you ever wanted to make something better for other people? What did you do?
- Have you ever worked together with other people to make something happen?
- Does this part remind you of another book you've read or movie you've seen?
- What would you do if you were one of the people living on High Street?

Prediction

- What do you think will happen next?
- How do you think Nell and Dash will solve this problem?
- Do you think other people will become involved? Why do you think that?
- What clues helped you make your prediction?

Wonderings

- What are you wondering about as we read?
- Is there anything you're still curious about?
- What question would you like to ask Nell or Dash?
- I wonder what could happen if the characters gave up instead of keeping going.

Dialogic Questions – After Reading

Reflection

- How did High Street change from the beginning of the story to the end?
- What do you think Nell and Dash discovered about themselves?
- What moment in the story do you think was the turning point? Why?

Evaluation

- What did you enjoy the most about this story?
- Was there a part that surprised you? Why?
- Would you recommend this book to a friend? Why or why not?

Author's Purpose

- Why do you think Deborah Frenkel and Laura Stitzel chose to tell this story through a Halloween celebration?
- What do you think the author Deborah Frenkel wanted readers to think about after finishing the book?
- Why do you think the story focused on people working together instead of one person solving the problem alone?

Favourite Moment

- Which page would you like to step into? Why?
- Which moment in the story will you remember the most?
- Was there a character who stood out to you? What made them memorable?

Extension Thinking

- If you could organise a community celebration, what would it be and why?
- What is one small change you could make to help your school or community?
- If the story continued, what do you think Nell and Dash's next big idea might be?

Learning Experiences

These learning experiences invite students to extend the ideas from the story through creativity, investigation and personal reflection.

Our Community Celebration (Create)

Imagine your class has been asked to organise a special celebration for your school or local community. Draw and label your ideas:

Think about:

- What will people do?
- Who could help?
- What decorations, food or activities would you include?
- How will everyone feel welcome?

Challenge:

Add one unique idea that would make your celebration different from any other.

Community Helpers in Action (Perform)

Choose one of the community members from the story, such as Rose, Bibek, Kim, Vin or Eduardo. With a partner, act out how they helped prepare for the celebration.

After each performance, ask the class:

- Which character was being portrayed?
- How did they help the community?
- Why was their role important?

Challenge:

Create a new community helper who could have joined the celebration. Perform how they would contribute.

A Community Takes Teamwork (Investigate)

Nell and Dash's idea only worked because many people helped. Create a class chart showing everyone involved in the celebration.

Investigate:

- Who helped?
- What was their job?
- Why was their contribution important?
- Which jobs happened before the celebration? Which

happened during it?

Challenge:

Think of another community event. Who would need to help make it successful?

A Letter to Nell and Dash (Respond)

Imagine you were one of the people who came to the High Street Halloween celebration. Write a letter to Nell and Dash.

You might include:

- What you enjoyed most
- How the celebration made you feel
- Why you are glad they didn't give up

Challenge:

Suggest an idea for next year's celebration.

My Community, My Ideas (Explore)

Every community has things that make it special and things that could be even better. Think about your own school or neighbourhood.

Draw or write about:

- One thing you love about your community
- One thing you would like to improve
- One idea that could bring people together

Talk about:

- How could your idea make a difference?
- Who could help make it happen?
- What would be the first step?

Challenge:

Create a simple action plan showing how your idea could become a reality.

Book Check

Before You Close the Book...

- One idea I'll keep thinking about...
- One connection I made...
- One thing that surprised me...
- One question I still have...