

Classroom Resources



Written by
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Illustrated by
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Suitable for
Ages 3-7

Themes

Compromise and acceptance
Family Traditions
Ways We celebrate



Contents of this pack

- Overview of *Polly's Grand Party Plan*
- Key themes
- Questions to ask before we begin reading
- While we are reading: discussion in key curriculum areas
- Final reflections
- Four activities

Description

Polly's sixth birthday would be here any day

(Well actually thirty-five sleeps away)

She was counting down till the thirteenth of May

There'd be a party! Yippee! Hooray!

Polly was making a plan ...

For dreamers everywhere comes a relatable picture book about throwing the perfect birthday party ... even when things don't exactly go to plan.

About the author

Jane Godwin is the highly acclaimed author of over 20 books for young people across all styles and ages. Her work is published internationally and she has received many commendations. Jane is dedicated to pursuing quality and enriching reading and writing experiences for young people, whether it's as a writer, a publisher or a speaker/facilitator in schools. She lives in Melbourne.

About the illustrator

Evie Barrow is an Australian artist and illustrator living in Melbourne. In 2019 her first illustrated picture book was published: *Horatio Squeak*, written by Karen Foxlee. Along with children's book work, her illustrations have featured in magazines *frankie*, *Broadsheet* and *Flow*, and in the book *Shout Out to the Girls*.

Find this book at our website:

<https://affirmpress.com.au/publishing/pollys-grand-party-plan/>



Key themes

Compromise and acceptance

Polly originally envisioned a *very* grand party with *all* the games and *mountains* of her favourite foods!

Her dad has other ideas...

Whilst she might not get the party that she originally envisioned she still has a wonderful sixth birthday party!

Family Traditions

Polly's family has a tradition — she is allowed to invite her age plus one numbers of guests to her party. This is not a tradition that Polly welcomes into her party planning as she wants to invite *everyone*!

What other birthday traditions does her family have that you might not have in your house?

Ways We Celebrate

Polly plays games and shares food with her friends to celebrate her birthday. These are common ways of celebrating a birthday. What are some other things that we might celebrate throughout the year? What traditions are there in your family and what do you do to celebrate?

Questions to ask before we begin reading

- This book is called *Polly's Grand Party Plan*. What do you think is the difference between a party and a *grand* party?
- What sorts of things happen at a party? Think about games, food, and other things that you would expect to find if you went to a sixth birthday party.
- Do you think that the picture on the front cover would appeal to both boys and girls or just girls? Why do you think this?
- Examine the front cover for clues. What sorts of things do you think that Polly has planned for her birthday?



Questions to ask while we are reading

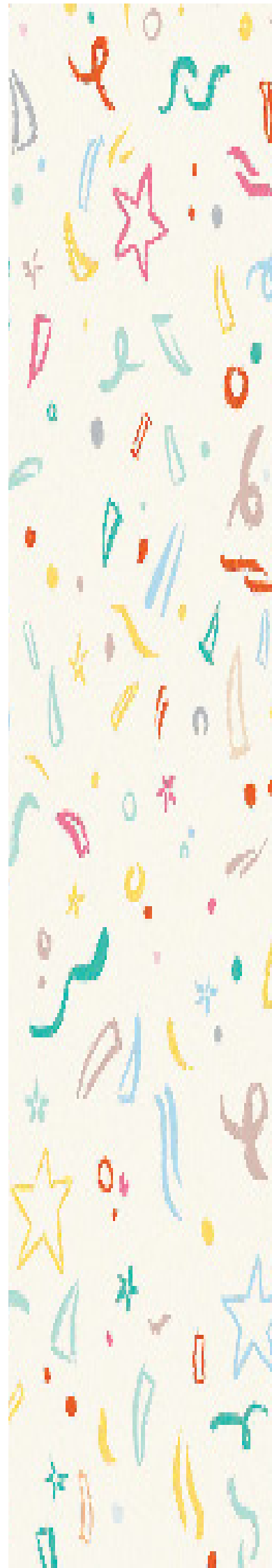
Curriculum areas:

Comprehension

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

Social and Emotional Development

- If Polly's birthday is the 13th of May and she has 35 sleeps to go—what date is it?
- Look at the first page. How is Polly feeling about her upcoming birthday? What words and punctuation show you how she is feeling?
- Polly debates whether a weekend party or an after-school party would be better. Which one do you think would work better and why?
- Write a list of all the foods that Polly wants to have at her party (there are lots of things she dreams about!)
- Do you think a cake that you buy or one that you make is better? Why? Do you normally make a cake or buy a cake at your house?
- Does *everybody* like cake? Have you ever been to a party where they have served something else instead of cake?
- Why do you think that Polly thinks that 'old people might need a seat' while everyone else is dancing?
- Polly and her dad compromise about the number of people Polly can invite to her party. How many is she allowed to have in the end?
- What did Polly's friend Mae bring her that was 'the best surprise ever'?
- What was not part of Polly's plan at the party, but that 'blew her away'?
- Polly's friends have to go home at the end of the party. Who stays and continues the celebration with Polly?
- Polly has her birthday on the 13th of May and the weather is sunny and warm. How do you know that this is true? Look at the illustrations for clues!
- If it is May and sunny and warm, do you think Polly lives in the northern or the southern hemisphere?
- Is Polly a big sister? A little sister? Or an only child? Look at the illustrations for clues!
- What sorts of pet does Polly's family have? What is it doing during the party?

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- Do you think Polly is going to go to sleep at the end of the book? Or is she up to something else?
 - At a party your family and friends often bring presents for you. Does Polly receive any presents? What page can you see these on?
 - What is the most important part of a party for you? Is it the presents? The games? The food? Or being with your family and friends? Be ready to justify your answer to your classmates!

Curriculum area: Literacy

Vocabulary

Make a list of these words, which may be unfamiliar to young readers, and find out what they mean:

Obstacle course

Petite fours

Jaffle

Fete

Predicted

Pinata

Consulted

Schemed

Absolute

Rhyme

Look at the first page of the story where we first meet Polly. Can you identify any rhyming words? As a class activity, break the class into groups and ask the students to work together on different pages in the book, identifying rhyming words and/or the rhyming pattern of the book once they have grasped this concept.

Point of View

Who is telling us the story? Why do you think it is important that she is rather than someone else who attends the party? How would it change the story if someone else had been the one narrating?

Visual Literacy

Polly's story is in two different parts — her planning and imagining of what her party will be like and the real world where she plans and has her party with her family and friends.

Look at the illustrations. What is different about them when Polly is imagining her party compared to when she is in the real world experiencing her party? Why do you think that the illustrator chose to do the pictures this way?



Rhetorical Questions

Rhetorical questions are questions that you ask when you do not expect an answer.

Polly asks a lot of rhetorical questions throughout the book. Why do you think she is asking so many? Is this something that you would do when you are planning something? What are some rhetorical questions that your teacher or your parents might ask you?

Curriculum area: Numeracy

- At the end of the book Polly has to wait a whole year for her birthday to come again! How many days are in a year?
- When is your birthday? Can you write it out numerically? (Day, month, year)
- How many months do you have to wait until your birthday?
- Make a class birthday calendar to display at the front of the classroom.
- Now for some calculations!
 1. How many people are in your class?
 2. How many people were born in the same month as you are?

CHALLENGE!

Can you work out the percentage of your classmates who share your birthday month with you?

Curriculum area: Knowledge and Understanding of the World

- What are some of the birthday traditions in your house? Make a class list!
- Do you think that birthdays are celebrated the same way all over the world? As a class you can discuss how cultural expectations can shape and change birthday traditions in different countries.
- Polly mentions lots of different musical instruments that could play at her party. Can you describe how to play each of these musical instruments?

Bagpipes

Drum

Cymbal

Trumpet

Tambourine

Guitar

Activity One: What is your perfect party?

Plan your next birthday party!

Things to think about:

- How many people will you invite?
- Where will you have it?
- Will it have a theme?
- How will you decorate?
- What games or activities will you have?
- What food will you serve?

Extension activity: you could ask the students to:

- Practice their **design skills** and actually make their invitations.
- Develop their **oratory skills** by writing and deliver their 'thank you for coming to my party' speech.

Activity Two: Traditions

Traditions are important in every family, but some have very different traditions to others.

What are some of the traditions you have in your house?

- For birthdays?
- Cultural celebrations?
- Things that might be important in your house
 - Shabbat on Fridays
 - Visiting grandma every summer
 - Christmas is always at Uncle Bob's house
 - Attending AFL games
- Which are the most important of these events and why?
 - Are they important to *you* or important to another member of your family?

These can be compared and discussed as a class.

Extension activity: you could ask the students to:

Create their own holiday!

What is the name of the holiday and what does it celebrate? Students can explain and justify their choices for their new holiday and its traditions.

Activity Three: Design the Cake!

A super important part of any birthday whether you are having a party or not!

You are going to design and draw your perfect birthday cake.

What will it look like?

What flavour/s is it?

How will it be decorated?

A large rectangular area for drawing a birthday cake, enclosed by a dotted orange border. The border consists of small orange dots arranged in a rectangular frame. The interior of the frame is blank white space, intended for a child to draw their perfect birthday cake.

Activity Four: Design an Obstacle Course!

You will need to include at least 10 different challenges. Have fun!