

## *Willow's Gumboots*

### Teacher Notes and Classroom Resources



*Willow's Gumboots* by Beverley McWilliams and Hélène Magisson

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Willow loved her gumboots. She wore them wherever she went. The gumboots were there in the garden, at the beach and even at parties. But one day Willow discovered that something was wrong with her beloved gumboots.

#### **Before Reading**

- Look at the front cover and the end papers. What do you think the story might be about?
- From the illustration on the front cover, what season do you think it is and why?
- Do you have gumboots? When do you usually wear your gumboots?

#### **After Reading**

- What is your favourite article of clothing? Describe it and explain why you like it.
- Most people wear gumboots on rainy days, but Willow likes to wear hers all the time. What are some of the more unusual places Willow wears her gumboots?

- Why do you think Willow hid her gumboots?
- Do you think gumboots make good plant pots and why?
- Can you think of any other household objects that could be turned into plant pots?
- Have you ever grown your own seeds? What did you grow? What seeds would you like to plant if you made gumboot plant pots?

## Themes

### Letting go

Have you ever had a favourite piece of clothing which became worn or you outgrew? How did you feel when you couldn't wear it anymore?

Do you think turning gumboots into plant pots is a good idea? Why?

What else can you do with items you have outgrown or don't need anymore?

### Nature

Willow's Gumboots celebrates a love of nature and the outdoors.

What activities do you like doing outside?

Do you have a favourite season and why?

Go on a nature scavenger hunt in the school grounds or local area. Use attachment 1 to record what you find.



### Upcycling

Upcycling helps the environment by reducing waste and giving life to unwanted items.

Read the information at the back of the book to learn more about upcycling and its importance.

Discuss the difference between upcycling and recycling.

Come up with your own ideas of everyday items that can be upcycled. Can these items be recycled as well?

Why do you think gumboots make great plant pots? Can you think of anything else that could be upcycled to make plant pots?

## Language



*'She leapt into **crystal clear** puddles  
and sunk into **mucky, marshy mud.**'*

Alliteration is when two or more words start with the same sound like 'crystal, clear,' and 'mucky, marshy mud.'

The author uses a lot of alliteration in *Willow's Gumboots*. Find some more examples from the book.

*'She bounced, **hopped, ran and flopped.**'*

*Willow's Gumboots* is not a rhyming picture book, but the author still uses rhyme and rhythm in the text such as 'hopped' and 'flopped.' Can you find other pairs of rhyming words?

## Literacy

### Narrative Writing

In picture books, the illustrations tell the story as well as the words. From the words, we know that Willow wears her boots in the garden, at the beach and at parties. Looking at the illustrations, what activities does Willow do in her boots which we are not told in the words?

Write your own short story using pictures but no words.

### Procedural Writing

At the end of the book there are step-by-step instructions for making your own gumboot plant pots. This is an example of a procedural text.

A procedural text gives the reader instructions on how to do or make something. We can find examples of procedural texts in our everyday life such as recipes, instruction manuals and directions.

Can you think of any procedural texts you have come across recently?

Write a procedural text. You can use one of the following ideas or choose your own.

- How to get ready for school
- How to make a cheese sandwich
- Directions to the school yard from your classroom



## Art

Design and colour your own gumboots using the template in attachment 2. Draw some flowers inside the gumboots. These pictures could be used to create a wall display in the classroom.

Following the steps in the back of the book, make your own upcycled plant pot. If you don't have old gumboots or shoes, you could use something else, such as a tin can (but remember to make drainage holes).

## About the author & illustrator

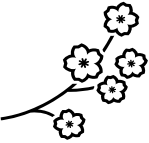





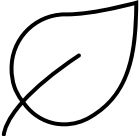
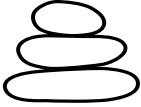
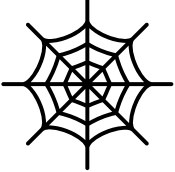
Beverley McWilliams is a children's author from South Australia with a passion for historical fiction. Her debut picture book *Born to Fly* published by MidnightSun Publishing was a CBCA notable book. Beverley has published two middle-grade historical novels with Pantera Press: *The Reindeer and the Submarine* (2022) and *Spies in the Sky* (2023). *Spies in the Sky* is shortlisted for the Readings Children's Prize and longlisted for the Booklinks Award for Historical Fiction. Beverley is the event coordinator for the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (South Australia).

Hélène Magisson is a critically acclaimed French-Australian illustrator of many books for children. Before Hélène turned to book illustration, she was a painting restorer in Paris, where she was also trained in the art of medieval illumination. Hélène's children's books are widely known and loved across the world. Her timeless style lends itself beautifully to classics, such as *The Velveteen Rabbit* (New Frontier, 2021), and also universal contemporary stories, such as *Before You Were Born* (HarperCollins, 2020). Hélène is frequently recognised by the Children's Book Council of Australia. Most recently, she was awarded the CBCA 2020 Notable Picture Book of the Year Award for *Little Puggle's Song*, written by Vikki Conley.

**Attachment 1:**

**Nature Scavenger Hunt**

Look for the items in each box. Circle the box when you spot an item.

 <p>A Flower</p>	 <p>A Tree</p>	 <p>A Bird</p>
 <p>An insect</p>	 <p>A nut, fruit or seed</p>	 <p>A Feather</p>
 <p>A Leaf</p>	 <p>A Smooth Rock</p>	 <p>A Spider Web</p>

**Attachment 2:** Design and colour your gumboots. Draw some flowers inside.

