



Wombat Books
Stories you'll want to share

Teachers' Notes



Amanda Commander: The Yellow Dress

Coral Vass

ISBN: 9781761110788

Recommended retail: \$12.99

Reading level: 6 to 8

Book Summary

Amanda has picked her dress for the Year 3 BBQ and Disco. It's yellow with long sleeves and has pockets! Amanda is so excited to wear it, but when she discovers that Eve Kelly is going to wear the same dress, she calls on the Dolphin Squad to help her out. In their mission to get Eve to wear a different coloured dress, however, the Dolphin Squad find that there might be something amazing to be had out of wearing the same dress...

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Reasons For Studying This Book

The Amanda Commander is a series promoting kindness, loyalty and friendship. It models positive friendships and behaviour. They provide examples of practical and creative problem solving and helping others. And the series celebrates creativity, art and craft.

The series is great for beginner readers and aims to help children understand concepts that can otherwise seem complex. Amanda Commander wishes to instil the values of inclusion, compassion and empathy in children. and celebrates diversity and multiculturalism. It also wants to encourage outdoor activities and fun; canoeing, surfing, kayaking, boating. The smaller chapters will boost confidence in young readers.

Themes

Family and friendship and craft	Problem solving Kindness and helping others	Creativity, art Forgiveness
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About the Author:



Coral Vass is an award-winning Australian children's author. She has always loved telling stories and has been writing books for over ten years.

Her awards include the 2018 Speech Pathology Awards for Best Book for Language and Literacy Development Indigenous Children, the 2019 CBCA Book of the Year Eve Pownall Award and the 2021 Caleb Picture Book of the Year Award. Coral has also been shortlisted for the 2020 REAL Awards.

Coral loves to visit schools, where she runs writing workshops and shares the power of story. She is an ambassador for Reading Out of Poverty and is passionate about giving all children an equal opportunity to read.

Key Curriculum Areas:

CURRICULUM AREAS AND KEY LEARNING OUTCOMES

Year One

English, Humanities and Social Science

ACELA1444	ACELA1451	ACELT1582	ACELY1656
ACELA1787	ACELA1452	ACELT1584	ACELY1788
ACELA1447	ACELA1458	ACELT1586	ACELY1660
ACELA1449	ACELT1581	ACELT1832	ACELA1454
ACHASSIO22			

Year Two

English, Humanities and Social Science

ACELA1461	ACELA1463	ACELT1833	ACELA1454
ACELA1462	ACELT1591	ACELY1665	
ACHASSIO38			

Year Three

English, Humanities and Social Science

ACELT1594	ACELY1676	ACELA1488	ACELY1675
ACELT1596			
ACHASSK093	ACHASSIO59	ACHASSK070	ACHASSIO80
ACHASSIO60	ACHASSIO56		

Teaching Points and Activities

This book may be used in whole class, small group or independent learning activities in schools.

Please note, the following suggestions and activities are suited to a variety of year levels spanning Foundation to Year 6 primary aged children. Some activities may be applicable to early secondary school students, as well.

Knowledge and Literal Understanding

Pre-reading Questions

1. Show the cover to the class and ask the students what they think the book might be about.
2. Read the back cover blurb. Does this give them more of an idea of what the book could be about?
3. Ask students if they can recognize the setting of this story from the cover image.

After-reading Questions

4. Ask students if Amanda or her friends remind them of anyone they know: a friend, a sibling, themselves perhaps.
5. What is their first impression of Amanda?
6. How does Amanda change over the course of the story?
7. Ask students how they perceive Amanda's situation. Does she come through in the end?

Discussion Questions

General

- If you were in charge of the Year 3 Disco, what theme would you choose? How would you make it different from Amanda's Year 3 Disco?
- Think of some secret code words for the following:

We need to talk.

I'm upset.

I'm annoyed.

I have some exciting to tell you.

- How different would the story have ended if the six girls all wore the same outfit, without even realising it, like Eve joked?
- Describe the words in Chapter Eight which show the girls were nervous about going to the Year 3 Disco.
- Should Amanda have been honest and told Eve that she was already wearing her yellow dress with long sleeves and pockets to the Year 3 Disco? How do you think it would have turned out?

Discussion Questions

Family and Friendship

- Have you ever worn the same outfit as someone else? How did you feel?
- Draw different emoji faces that show the different emotions Amanda could have been feeling knowing Eve was going to wear the same dress as her. (e.g.: jealousy, anger, sadness...)
- What does it mean to 'have someone's back'?
- Can you remember a time your friends 'had your back'? What happened and how did it feel? Can you remember a time you 'had someone else's back'? What did you do?
- Think about this quote- 'The strongest shape is a triangle. Each side supports the others.' How does this describe Amanda, Lu and Mai's friendship?
- What are the advantages and disadvantage of having a friendship group of three?

Problem Solving

- Have you ever tried to change someone's mind? Were you successful or not? How did it turn out?
- What would you do if you found out someone else was wearing the exact same outfit as you to an important event?
- Amanda's mum describes Lu as PRAGMATIC. What does she mean? Do you think Lu is pragmatic too?
- When Amanda said in Chapter Seven: 'We're stronger when we are together,' what do you think she means?
- In what ways is a team stronger than an individual?
- Why is it important to express how we are feeling? Do you find this easy or hard to do? Is it always easy to know exactly how we are feeling?

Creativity, arts and craft

- Try to write an alternative scene at the disco (Chapter Nine), considering Eve did end up wearing the same dress as Amanda.
- Imagine you are a radio announcer. Try to write a script, reporting on the Year 3 Disco.
- Using the descriptions found in Chapter Nine, draw or paint the scene at the Disco.
- Design a poster for the Year 3 Disco.

Kindness and helping others

- List all the ways Lu and Mai helped Amanda.
- What does Amanda mean when she says, 'Lu could always read my mind'? Do you have a friend like that?
- Do you think Amanda should have worn a different dress to the Disco, believing Eve was going to wear her yellow dress? Why or why not?
- Do you think it mattered if the girls wore the same outfit?
- Find an empty jar. Write down something to be thankful for, on a piece of paper, every day for 30 days. At the end of the 30 days, read the notes in your jar.

Forgiveness

- Have you ever done something to hurt someone unintentionally? How did you feel when you found out? Do you think it's easier to say sorry when you hurt someone unintentional or on purpose? Why?
- Do you think Amanda had the right to be upset with Eve? Why or why not?
- In what ways did Amanda need to forgive Eve? In what ways did Eve need to forgive Amanda?
- Friendships can be amazing, but they can be hard sometimes too. Why do we need friends? Why is life better together with friends?
- Why is being able to forgive so important to friendships? Which do you think is more important – trust or forgiveness?

Activities

Identify your feelings.

- Think about the silver and gold cut-out sea creatures stuck on the walls at Amanda's Disco. Draw your own sea creature and cut out the shape.
- Play games with blind taste-testing ingredients from the kitchen.
- Imagine you are Amanda. Write a letter or an email to Eve telling her you are wearing your yellow dress to the Year 3 Disco.
- Ask your parents if you can have six eggs. With a texta, draw faces on each of your eggs, with these different emotions – angry, sad, nervous, happy, jealous, bored.

Make Amanda's Mum's Carrot Cake

Ingredients:

- 1 cup caster sugar
- ½ cup of brown sugar
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 3 eggs
- 2 cups plain flour
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 cups shredded carrots (5 medium)

Method:

Combine the oil, caster sugar, brown sugar, vanilla, eggs and grated carrot in a bowl.

Stir together until well combined.

Sift over the flour, baking powder, salt and cinnamon.

Stir together until combined and smooth.

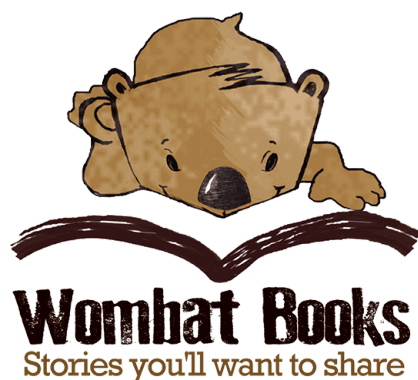
Activities

Method (Cont'd):

Pour into a 20 cm (8 inch) round cake tin lined with baking paper.

Bake for 1 hour until golden, evenly risen, and a skewer inserted in the middle of the cake comes out clean. Cool on a rack.

Serve with cream-cheese icing if desired.



Coral Vass is available for author talks and workshops. Contact Wombat Books for more information.

Amanda Commander Teachers' Notes can be used in schools (independent learning, small groups, and whole classes); at home with caregivers; and as part of mental health support programs facilitated by counsellors, psychologists, children's charities, etc.

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