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# Teachers' Notes

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## ARIANA TREASURE: THE LUCKY SHOES

Jacqueline de Rose-Ahern / Karen Erasmus

**ISBN:** 9781761111846

**Recommended retail:** \$10.99

**Reading level:** 5 to 8

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### BOOK SUMMARY

Join Ariana at the Treasure Chest – come and find a special talent.

Ariana is excited for the talent show at school. She can't wait to see her friends perform, especially Maya. But Maya doesn't believe she has a special talent.

Can Ariana and the treasures from the thrift shop help her friend Maya discover her unique talent before show day?

*The Lucky Shoes* is the third book in the Ariana Treasure early reader series.

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### THEMES

Family & Friendship • Talent & Self-Discovery • Kindness & helping others • Cultural Diversity •

Courage • Problem-Solving • Confidence building • Sustainability •

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Light the Dark Pty Ltd, Trading as Wombat Books  
Wombat Books, PO Box 302, Chinchilla, Queensland 4413

ABN: 30 137 345 941  
admin@wombathrhiza.com.au

**Jacqueline de Rose-Ahern is available for author talks and workshops.**

**Contact Wombat Books for more information.**

*Ariana Treasure 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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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Jacqueline de Rose-Ahern is an international award-winning children's author who adores exploring all the world has to offer! Her appreciation of travel and uniqueness of culture has been captured in the pages of her books. Jacqueline was the recipient of the ACT Writers Centre (renamed MARION) 2017 Anne Edgeworth Fellowship. Her books have won awards in the US and have been shortlisted for the Speech Pathology Australia Book of the Year Awards. Jacqueline regularly contributes to a variety of online platforms and has appeared at several literary events, including the Canberra Writers Festival, the Goulburn Reader Writer Festival, NSW Kids & YA Festival and the Noted Writers Festival. She has also toured her books internationally. Jacqueline endeavours to encourage her readers to learn more about the world, supporting an empathetic and inclusive community. Jacqueline holds a Masters in International Development and is the founder of the Story Creators Community, assisting aspiring creatives on their creative journey.

### AUTHOR NOTE

Growing up, my mum would volunteer at a local charity shop/thrift shop. I used to go along with her. I loved how the shop would bring the community together. It was here that I was exposed to the idea of upcycling and preloved shopping, and the benefits of this for our environment and community. Today, I still like swapping items with friends, family and others in the community - items that I may no longer use or need soon become treasured possessions for others. This was the concept behind Ariana Treasure and the Treasure Chest. The stories in this series are also related to experiences I had growing up. *The Lucky Shoes*: I have always loved dancing, next to writing and reading, it's my favourite thing to do. I have tried all sorts of dancing including jazz, ballet, hip hop, tap, Latin and Irish dancing. I truly believe dance is about pure enjoyment and expression. As Seeya says in the story 'You can't mess up.' I have a Sri Lankan background, and this story is a tribute to my roots and where I originally fell in love with dance, watching the grace, athleticism and vibrancy of the Kandyan dance.



## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

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Karen has been illustrating children's books for more than a decade. She loves creating characters and scenes that engage young people and encourage reading.

During her early career, teaching in primary schools, Karen discovered her love for picture books and the unique quality they hold for focussing children's attention and bringing reading and stories to life. Illustrators like Julie Vivas, Emily Gravett and Freya Blackwood were some of Karen's early inspiration. After moving to Australia from the UK with three young children

Karen studied illustration at Chisholm TAFE which led to her first published work. She now teaches fine art to adults at the same TAFE, whilst continuing with illustration projects. She lives by the sea south of Melbourne with her husband, three children, three dogs and six chickens.

### ILLUSTRATOR NOTE

The Ariana book series was a new venture for me. I haven't tackled early reader books before and the real challenge was maintaining consistency with the characters all the way through. I particularly enjoyed creating the covers and added colour to the characters.

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## REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

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*Ariana Treasure: The Lucky Shoes* is a heartwarming tale that offers several key lessons and themes. Teachers can use the Ariana Treasure series as a tool for exploring emotional regulation, conflict resolution, and sustainability.

The Ariana Treasure series, including *The Lucky Shoes*, promotes social-emotional learning, especially through its emphasis on kindness, empathy, and the importance of supporting friends and family. In the case of *The Lucky Shoes* teachers can use this to prompt discussions about cultural heritage, anxiety and nerves, and bravery, helping students work through their own nerves and build confidence in a supportive environment. Another significant theme is talent and creative problem-solving. This teaches students that embracing their own talents and working through their emotions and any problems that arise can allow them to grow and shine.

The Ariana Treasure series carries a strong environmental message, focusing on sustainability and the reuse of items. The Treasure Chest operates on donations, and Ariana and her friends make use of various recycled items. This presents an excellent opportunity to discuss the importance of reusing materials, reducing waste, and being environmentally conscious. The Treasure Chest also celebrates diversity and multiculturalism, highlighted in *The Lucky Shoes* with Ariana learning about her best friend, Maya's, cultural heritage. This diversity is woven throughout the narrative, offering a natural avenue for discussions about inclusivity, cultural appreciation, and the ways in which diverse experiences and perspectives enrich our communities.

The Ariana Treasure series is well-suited for beginner readers, with short chapters, clear illustrations, and plenty of white space. This makes it a perfect text for young readers, offering opportunities to practice reading comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary. Its themes are relevant across various subject areas, making it a valuable resource for a wide range of educational contexts.



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## KEY CURRICULUM AREAS & LEARNING OUTCOMES

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### YEAR ONE

#### English, Humanities and Social Science

**AC9E1LA06** - understand that a simple sentence consists of a single independent clause representing a single event or idea

**AC9E1LE02** - discuss literary texts and share responses by making connections with students' own experiences

**AC9E1LY02** - use interaction skills including turn-taking, speaking clearly, using active listening behaviours and responding to the contributions of others, and contributing ideas and questions

**AC9E1LA07** - understand that words can represent people, places and things (nouns, including pronouns), happenings and states (verbs), qualities (adjectives) and details such as when, where and how (adverbs)

**ACELT1584** - Discuss features of plot, character and setting in different types of literature and explore some features of characters in different texts

**AC9E1LA03** - explore how texts are organised according to their purpose, such as to recount, narrate, express opinion, inform, report and explain

**AC9E1LY11** - use short vowels, common long vowels, consonant blends and digraphs to write words, and blend these to read one- and two-syllable words

**AC9E1LY05** - use comprehension strategies such as visualising, predicting, connecting, summarising and questioning when listening, viewing and reading to build literal and inferred meaning by drawing on vocabulary and growing knowledge of context and text structures

**AC9E1LA10** - understand that written language uses punctuation such as full stops, question marks and exclamation marks, and uses capital letters for familiar proper nouns

**AC9E1LE01** - discuss how language and images are used to create characters, settings and events in literature by First Nations Australian, and wide-ranging Australian and world authors and illustrators

**AC9E1LA09** - recognise the vocabulary of learning area topics

**AC9HS1S04** - discuss perspectives related to objects, people, places and events

**AC9E1LE05** - orally retell or adapt a familiar story using plot and characters, language features including vocabulary, and structure of a familiar text, through role-play, writing, drawing or digital tools

### YEAR TWO

#### English, Humanities and Social Science

**AC9E2LA01** - investigate how interpersonal language choices vary depending on the context, including the different roles taken on in interactions

**AC9E2LA03** - identify how texts across the curriculum are organised differently and use language features depending on purposes

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**AC9E2LE05** - create and edit literary texts by adapting structures and language features of familiar literary texts through drawing, writing, performance and digital tools

**AC9E2LA02** - explore how language can be used for appreciating texts and providing reasons for preferences

**AC9E2LE03** - discuss the characters and settings of a range of texts and identify how language is used to present these features in different ways

**AC9E2LY01** - identify how similar topics and information are presented in different types of texts

**AC9HS2S04** - discuss perspectives related to objects, people, places and events

## **YEAR THREE**

### **English, Humanities and Social Science**

**AC9E3LE01** - discuss characters, events and settings in different contexts in literature by First Nations Australian, and wide-ranging Australian and world authors and illustrators

**AC9E3LY02** - use interaction skills to contribute to conversations and discussions to share information and ideas

**AC9E3LY01** - recognise how texts can be created for similar purposes but different audiences

**AC9E3LE02** - discuss connections between personal experiences and character experiences in literary texts and share personal preferences

**AC9HS4K09** - diversity of cultural, religious and/or social groups to which they and others in the community belong, and their importance to identity

**AC9HS3S07** - present descriptions and explanations, using ideas from sources and relevant subject-specific terms

**AC9HS3S05** - draw conclusions based on analysis of information

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## TEACHING POINTS AND ACTIVITIES

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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

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### 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

1. Ask students what is their first impression of Ariana and Alex.
2. Ask students what is their first impression of the Treasure Chest.
3. Ask students what they might find at a place like the Treasure Chest (a thrift shop).
4. Have you ever lost something precious to you? How did it make you feel? Did you find it in the end?
5. How does Alex change over the course of the story?
6. Do you have a favourite book?

### THINGS TO THINK ABOUT DURING READING

- Is Ariana 'adjusting the curtains' or is she curious to see the new boy in her neighbourhood?
- Ariana loves and misses her grandfather: reading his book and seeing his handwriting helps her feel close to him.
- Mum laughs remembering her dad (Ariana's grandfather) and says, 'He was cheeky that way.' What does 'cheeky' mean? What does she think her dad may have put inside the book to get people to come to the thrift shop?
- 'I think of him all the time.' Ariana says of her grandpa. How do you think she may be feeling?
- What do you think grandpa did to 'make a difference' for people in the community?
- What is your first impression of Alex? Does he seem happy, confident? He mumbles his name. Does he seem shy or reluctant? Has his mum made him come to the door?
- When Ariana asks Alex for her book back, does she tell him why it is important to her?
- Why is Alex so angry and unfriendly? Why will he not give Ariana her book back? (p.37/38)
- How does grandpa's hidden message (p.45 – 52) in the book help solve everyone's problems?

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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### GENERAL

- How would you describe Ariana's personality? What makes her a good friend?
- What are some words you would use to describe Maya at the beginning and end of the story?
- How does Seeya's presence affect Maya during the talent show? What role does he play in her success?
- What was in the mysterious box that arrived at the Treasure Chest Thrift Shop? How did it help Maya?
- How did Ariana help Maya prepare for the talent show? What role did the tap shoes play in this process?
- Why do you think going last in the talent show was both good and bad for Maya?
- What does the note with the lucky tap shoes teach us about dance? How does this message help Maya?
- What does Seeya mean when he says, "Dance is special. It helps pass down stories from one generation to the next"?
- What do you think is the most important lesson from the story? How can you apply this lesson in your own life?
- How do you think performing or sharing something you love with others can help build your confidence?
- Have you ever tried something new, like Maya did with dance?
- What was it like to learn something for the first time?
- Do you have a family member or friend who has taught you something important, like Seeya taught Maya?
- What does the ending of the story tell you about Maya's growth and her relationship with her friends and family?
- How do you think Ariana and Maya's friendship will continue to grow after the talent show?
- Why is it special that Maya and Ariana decide to learn Kandyan dance together over video calls?

### FAMILY & FRIENDSHIP

- Why does Maya want to impress her Seeya (grandfather)?
- How does Seeya support Maya during the talent show?
- How do you think Maya feels when Seeya watches her dance?
- How does your family make you feel proud?
- How does Ariana help Maya when she feels worried?
- What does Ariana do to cheer Maya up when she feels like she has no talent?
- Can you think of a time when you helped a friend? How did it make you feel?
- Why is it important to have a friend who encourages you?

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## TALENT & SELF-DISCOVERY

- Why does Maya think she has no talent at first?
- How does Ariana help Maya find her special talent? How does Ariana help Maya see that everyone has a talent?
- How does Maya feel when she dances and does it well?
- Have you ever tried something new and realised you were good at it? What was it?
- What talent do you have that you're proud of? How did you discover it?
- How does Maya's view of her own talent change from the beginning of the story to the end?

## KINDNESS & HELPING OTHERS

- How does Ariana help Maya get ready for the talent show?
- What does Seeya do to help Maya when she's nervous about dancing?
- Can you think of a time when you needed help from a friend or family member? How did they help you?
- What can you do to help a friend or family member who might need support, like Maya did?
- Why is it important to help others, even if you're not sure how?
- How does helping someone make you feel?
- What other characters in the story help Maya, and how do they support her?

## CULTURAL DIVERSITY

- What kind of dance does Seeya teach Maya?
- Where is he from?
- Why does Maya want to learn more about her family's culture?
- How do you feel when you learn about other people's cultures or traditions?
- What is Kandyan dance, and why is it important to Maya's culture?
- How does Seeya use dance to teach Maya about her heritage?
- Why do you think it's important to learn about and share other cultures?
- What did you learn about Sri Lankan culture from Seeya's story?
- How can we celebrate different cultures and traditions in our own lives?

## COURAGE

- How does Maya show courage by performing in front of everyone?
- How does Ariana help Maya feel brave when she's nervous about performing?
- Have you ever felt nervous about doing something? What helped you feel brave?

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- How does Maya's performance change once she lets go of her fears and begins to enjoy the music?
  - What made Maya feel nervous about performing in the talent show?
  - What do you think it takes to be brave?
  - What do you do when you feel scared to try something new?
  - In what ways does Maya show her courage, despite being unsure of herself?

## PROBLEM-SOLVING

- What do Ariana and Maya do when the tap shoes go missing?
- How does Seeya's help make Maya feel better about performing?
- What would you do if something went wrong before an important event?
- How do the characters work together to solve the problem of Maya losing her tap shoes?
- What does this teach us about teamwork?
- What was the solution for Ariana and Maya's problem?
- Why do you think it's important to stay calm and think of solutions when something goes wrong?
- Have you ever had to solve a problem with a friend? How did you work together to find a solution?

## CONFIDENCE BUILDING

- How does Maya feel at the beginning of the story compared to the end?
- How does Seeya's advice help Maya dance with more confidence?
- What makes you feel good about yourself?
- How do you feel when you try something new?
- What are some things you can do to feel more confident, like Maya did when she performed her dance?
- How did Ariana help Maya feel more confident before going on stage?
- Why is it important to keep practicing things that make us nervous, like Maya practiced her dance moves?
- Finish the sentence 'practice makes...'
- What does that saying mean? Do you agree or disagree? Why is that?
- In your experience does 'practice makes perfect'?

## SUSTAINABILITY

- Have you heard about textile waste? What is it?
- Define 'textile', define 'waste', define 'desintegrate'.
- How can we work together in our community to promote sustainability?
- What does sustainability mean to you?

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- How can sustainability in your school, neighborhood, or family help make the planet healthier?
  - When Ariana chose to reuse items from the thrift shop, she made an environmentally friendly decision. How do the choices we make every day affect the planet?
  - Have you ever made a choice to be more sustainable, like using less plastic or walking instead of driving? How do you think these small actions add up to help the environment?
  - How do you think Maya's experience with the tap shoes shows that we can take care of things for others?
  - What is an heirloom?
  - Research inventions or work done to reduce textile waste and make fabrics and shoes into new things or give them new purpose.

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## ACTIVITIES

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### EXPLORE/DISCUSS

#### Questions to ask listeners/readers

- What encourages Maya to try tap dancing?
- What do you like about Ariana's encouragement of Maya and sharing of her tap-dancing skills?
- The magic shoes look lovely and shiny, does this reflect on their importance?
- The note with the shoes says they are someone's Magic Shoes. The message encourages the dancer to have fun and forget who is watching. Do you believe in the magic of the shoes or was this perhaps something that the original owner just believed about the shoes?
- The bells on the ankle bracelet are like those Maya's Seeya wears! How does this seem to 'mirror' or 'reflect' Maya's history and heritage?

#### **Discussion:** Ariana helps Maya practice and rehearse for a week. (pp 12-13)

- Why do performers practice for a performance/show?
- Is it to get the moves right?
- Is it so they know the routine really well so it seems easy?
- Is it because it is easy to get things wrong if we are nervous (doing something lots of times helps us feel familiar with it, and confident.)

### TALENT SHOW CHALLENGE

You are going to enter a school talent show.

What would you do for your few minutes on stage? Would you wear a costume, or have music? Would you do tricks or tell a joke? Perhaps you would sing or play an instrument.

### SITUATIONS!

#### **1. Oh No! I've left it behind!**

You discover you have left your costume or music at home! What would you do? Who could help you? Would you go ahead with your performance?

*'I feel I have it. These must be lucky shoes.'* (p.11)

- How does Ariana encourage and help Maya? Ariana is kind. She wants Maya to feel confident. What words does she use?

*'You definitely have it,' Ariana exclaimed.* (p.12)

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## 2. Being kind – choosing the right words

Sometimes we say the wrong thing by accident. Sometimes family or friends choose the wrong words too. The wrong words make us feel worse, not better.

So imagine you are Maya's friend and she's asked you for feedback. You can give feedback that's encouraging or not so encouraging. Draw a smiley face and a frowny face on a piece of paper, cut each of them out and attach them to a popsicle. Now when your teacher calls out the following phrases one by one, lift one of your signs. The smiley face means it's encouraging and a frowny face means it's not.

Encouraging	Not Encouraging
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ 'Great – you're learning the moves!'</li><li>▪ 'I can hear the taps. Well done!'</li><li>▪ 'Do it again! I love the sound...'</li><li>▪ 'Maya you're a natural dancer'</li><li>▪ 'Let's practice...tap tap tap...'</li><li>▪ 'I can show you more moves when you're ready!'</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ 'Yeah, you're OK but...'</li><li>▪ 'Not bad for a beginner...'</li><li>▪ 'I can do much better than that...look!'</li><li>▪ 'Haha! you look soooo funny!'</li></ul>

## AFFECTION AND FAMILY

1. How does Ariana's mum show affection and support?
2. How do Ariana and Maya show friendship and support for each other?
3. How does Maya's grandfather (Seeya) show his love – even at a distance!

## ART AND DESIGN ACTIVITY

Your community group or school is going to have a talent contest. They can't afford to have professional posters designed, but they know you are good at this sort of thing!

Design a poster – don't forget the date! Is it free to attend? What time does it start? Where is the show? Can parents come? (Say: Parents and families welcome)

**Further resources can always be found on our website.**