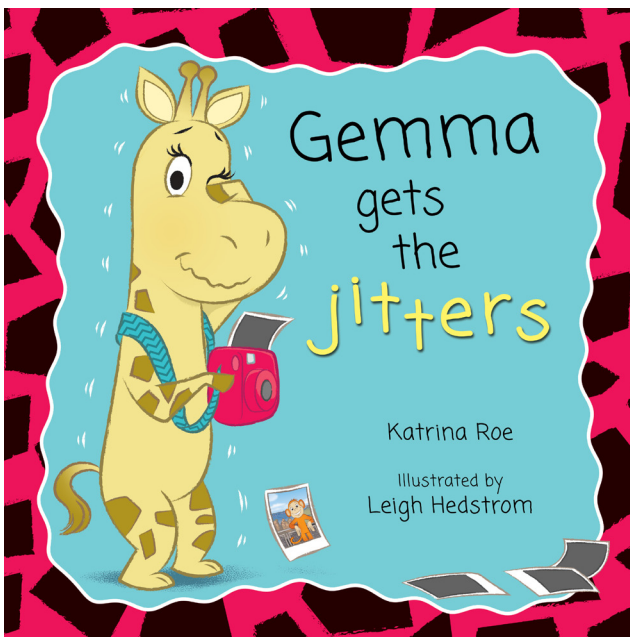




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Stories you'll want to share

## Teacher's Notes



### Gemma Gets the Jitters

Katrina Roe / Leigh Hedstrom

ISBN: 978-1925563139

Recommended retail: \$19.99

Reading level: Ages 0-7 Picture Book

### Book Summary

Gemma has a new camera!

She is visiting the mountains and wants to get the perfect photo. But at the top of the lookout, Gemma gets the jitters.

Will she let her fear of heights stop her from achieving her dream?

Join Gemma, Marty and their friends as they help Gemma overcome her jitters.

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## Reasons for Studying this Book

According to adolescent and child psychologist Collett Smart, 'It is completely normal for young children to experience fears and anxieties at certain times in their lives.' Learning to deal with anxiety is important to building resilience in children. In addition, approximately 2-9 percent of children in Australia have anxiety disorders. Support from friends, family, teachers and other students can help children develop 'healthy habits when confronted with an anxiety-provoking situation.' *Gemma Gets the Jitters* is a vital resource to help schools create an emotionally supportive environment that promotes emotional well-being. *Gemma Gets the Jitters* also promotes positive, open, caring relationships and co-operative problem-solving between friends.

In addition, *Gemma Gets the Jitters* relates to the National Curriculum in the Key Learning Areas of English and Health and Physical Education.

## Themes

Overcoming anxiety

Supportive friendships

Persisting through difficulties

Setting and achieving goals

## About the Author



Katrina Roe is a broadcaster, journalist and children's author.

Her early years were spent on the Hay plains, one of the flattest parts of Australia, which may have contributed to her fear of heights. She didn't see a mountain, or go up a tall building, until, like Gemma, she went on a school excursion to the Blue Mountains in Year 5. She still remembers her first thrilling and terrifying trip on the Scenic Skyway and the Scenic Railway!

All Katrina's books are based on her real life experiences. Her first picture book *Marty's nut-free Party* (2012) was based on her daughter's experience of living with a peanut allergy. It was shortlisted for the Speech Pathology Book of the Year Award and the Caleb Prize.

Her second book, *Emily Eases Her Wheezes*, about living a healthy and active life with asthma, was listed as a Notable Book in the 2015 CBCA Book of the Year Awards. Her third book *Same*, a true story about her brother, Charlie, who has cerebral palsy, was a finalist in the 2016 Caleb Prize.

*Gemma Gets the Jitters* was published by Wombat Books in 2017. You can find out more at [www.katrinaroe.com](http://www.katrinaroe.com).

## About the Illustrator



Leigh Hedstrom, also known as Flee, is a Sydney-based freelance illustrator with an education in Fine Arts.

She lives in an 'arty' household with husband Ben Hedstrom (art teacher, painter and recent Archibald Prize finalist) and their five-year-old son, James.

With over ten years of experience illustrating for educational and children's media, Leigh specialises in the creation of appealing characters for print, web, animation and advertising.

*Marty's Nut-Free Party* marked Leigh's first venture into hardcover picture books. She is also the illustrator of *When I See Grandma*, *Emily Eases her Wheezes* and the *Ruby Wishfingers* series.

## Key Curriculum Areas

### CURRICULUM AREAS AND KEY LEARNING OUTCOMES

#### Foundation (Kindergarten/Prep)

##### English/Health and Physical Education

ACELT1575	ACELA1429	ACELA1434	ACELY1653
ACELT1577	ACELA1430	ACELA1786	ACPPS004
ACELT1783	ACELA1432	ACELY1651	ACPPS005
ACELT1578	ACELA1435	ACELY1652	

#### Year One

##### English/Health and Physical Education

ACELA1444	ACELA1451	ACELT1582	ACELY1656	ACPPS020
ACELA1787	ACELA1452	ACELT1584	ACELY1788	
ACELA1447	ACELA1458	ACELT1586	ACELY1660	
ACELA1449	ACELT1581	ACELT1832	ACPPS017	

#### Year Two

##### English/Health and Physical Education

ACELA1461	ACELT1833
ACELA1462	ACELY1665
ACELA1463	ACPPS017
ACELT1591	ACPPS020

## Questions and Reflections

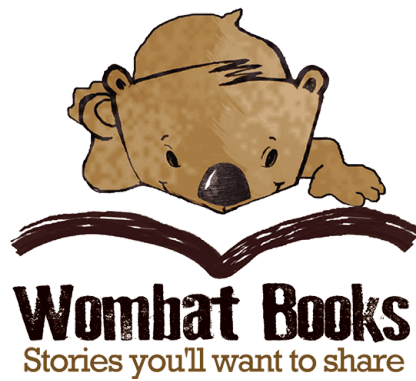
Have the teacher read the book out in class, making sure everyone can see the illustrations. Alternatively, students can take turns at reading each page aloud.

### Listening, Reading, Viewing and Speaking

1. Before reading, discuss the cover and/or first page. Who is the main character? How is she feeling? What do you think the word 'jitters' means? What could the book be about?
2. What does Gemma feel in her body when she gets the jitters? (eg. legs went to jelly, felt dizzy, feeling sick, pounding heart)
3. Gemma is scared of heights, what other things could people be afraid of? (eg. dogs, the dark, nightmares, deep water, spiders, snakes, getting lost). Is there anything that makes you feel anxious or afraid?
4. Using the pictures to help you, what feelings does Gemma experience throughout the book?
5. Why do you think Gemma tells Marty how she feels? What would have happened if Gemma had kept her feelings to herself?
6. What do Gemma and her friends do to help her feel ready to climb the bridge?
7. Gemma takes small steps to help her feel brave. Can you think of other ways you could use this approach to overcome your fears? eg. fear of dogs, the dark, or deep water
8. Gemma's friends help her face her fears. Can you think of some people who can help you when you feel anxious or afraid?
9. How do you think Gemma feels at the end of the story? Why?
10. Do you think Gemma will always be scared of heights? Why or why not?

### Writing and Creating

1. Draw a picture of something that makes you feel anxious or worried? (eg. dark, dogs, being alone, nightmares, monsters under the bed, being sick, hospital, glass lifts, escalators, doctors, going to the dentist, getting a needle, deep water, tall bridges...).
2. Draw a picture of something or someone that helps you feel safe.
3. Gemma has to be very brave to do the Bridge Climb. Write a short story about a time you were brave.
4. Gemma becomes interested in photography when her aunt sends her a camera. Can you think of a new skill or hobby you would like to learn? What would you need to do it? Write or draw the steps you could take to get started.



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