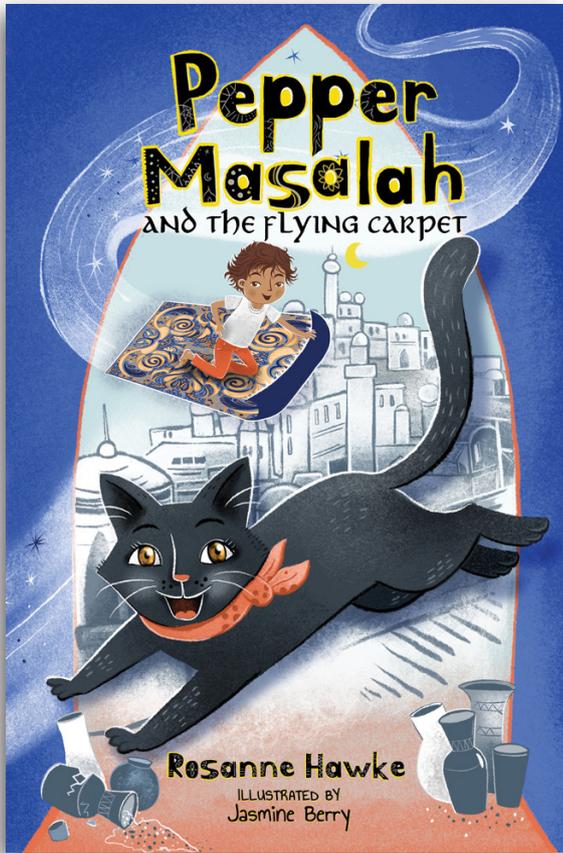


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# Teachers' Notes

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## PEPPER MASALAH AND THE FLYING BIRD

Rosanne Hawke / Jasmine Berry

**ISBN:** 9781761111105

**Recommended retail:** \$11.99

**Reading level:** 6 to 8

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### BOOK SUMMARY

Pepper Masalah and her human, Zam, are whisked away on a flying carpet and find themselves in a faraway land. On this adventure they land in the Arabian peninsula and struggle with traders who won't return their carpet! Can their bond and their new friends help them find their way home?

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## THEMES

Arab culture • Arab geography • Children encountering difficult situations • Friendship and Kindness • Bombay & British short hair cats • Courage • Fantasy and Adventure in the real world

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**Rosanne Hawke is available for author talks and workshops.  
Contact Wombat Books for more information.**

*Pepper Masalah 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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Author Rosanne Hawke has been a teacher, a creative writing lecturer and a volunteer/aidworker in Pakistan and the UAE from 1981 to 1991. She spent two years in Al Ain, UAE (near the Omani border) between 1983-1985. She returned to Pakistan in 2006 on an Asialink Fellowship. She began writing in Pakistan and has over 35 books published.

Many of her books are set in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Azad Kashmir or about Afghans and Pakistanis in Australia. These include *Shahana*, *Marrying Ameera*, *Beyond Borders* and *Taj and the Camel Trek*. She lives in rural South Australia; loves reading and cats, and has been kissed by a camel.

### AUTHOR NOTES

When we were with a mission in the Middle East, we lived a few years near the border of Oman. My husband was helping build a hospital in the desert at Al Ain, UAE. We saw camels every day as some lived next door. We took our kids to play in the huge orange sand dunes. They loved rolling down them. We visited a village over the border in Oman and saw a water canal just like the one Zam and Pepper see. We saw the same mud houses. Once we stayed in an old house that had a wind tunnel on the roof to help cool the house.

Slave labour or trafficking is alluded to gently because of the age of the readers. But in every country there are people like the camel driver in this book who will take children to work for them. In the UAE boys could be taken to be trained to race camels.

My love of cats grew from childhood. I remember eating from the cat's bowl, trying to be a cat. We always had a farm cat, usually an orange tabby tom. They were always called Tom. The cats I've had in the last 20 years have helped inspire the Pepper Masalah series. Q, a tuxedo cat was clever and collected hairpins and could open certain doors. Harry was an easy going farm cat and went missing after a freak storm! That was when I first thought of Pepper's story. My daughter helped me think up a good name for a cat in the story. We came up with Pepper Masalah. Then I bought a black cat. I looked at Bombay cats first, then decided on a British Shorthair. I named the kitten Pepper Masalah. He was beautiful, intelligent and had a purr like a generator. And he loved carpets. You can find out more about my cats on my new website.

[www.rosannehawke.com](http://www.rosannehawke.com)

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## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

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Jasmine Berry grew up in beautiful Albany, Western Australia. She has been drawing to impress the other kids, since she was old enough to hold a colouring pencil.

But lately, she crafts these exciting and magical worlds with her computer, iPad and many coffees.

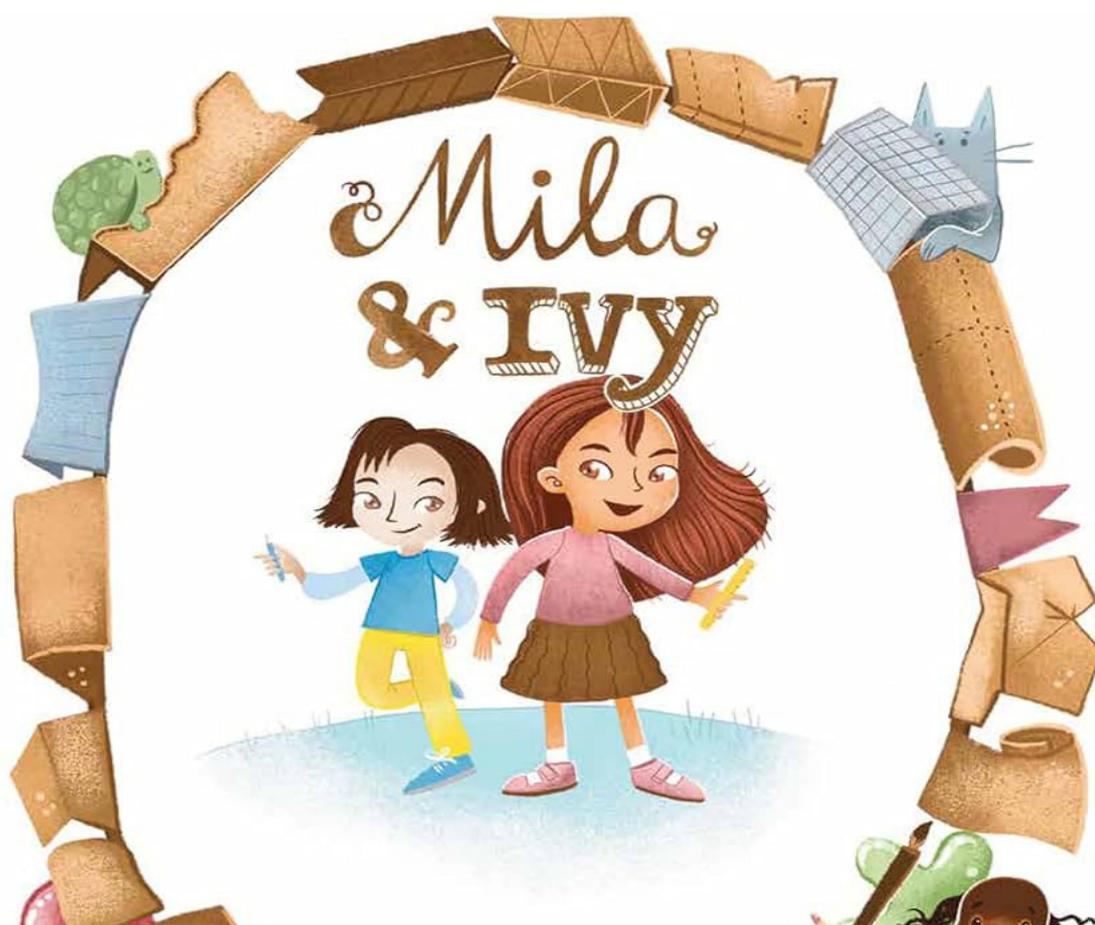
She lives in Perth with her husband and with two adorable cats, and a rather large collection of succulents.

You can find Jasmine at any of the links below! On Jasmine's website she has some freebies you can access for her Pepper Masalah books.

Instagram: [@jasmineberryart](https://www.instagram.com/jasmineberryart)

Twitter: [@jasmineberryart](https://twitter.com/jasmineberryart)

Web: [www.jasmineberryart.com](http://www.jasmineberryart.com)



Jasmine has also illustrated the picture book *Mila & Ivy* for Wombat.

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## REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

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The Pepper Masalah is a series promoting friendship and kindness. But it uses its themes of fantasy and adventure to explore culture, the environment and different real world issues. In this book it explores themes of child labour and slavery in a very veiled and age appropriate way. It also teaches children more about cats and about Arab culture and geography. The setting in the desert also tackles climate and a new environment.

## KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

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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
ACHASSI022	ACHGK005		

### YEAR TWO

English, Humanities and Social Science

ACELA1461	ACELA1463	ACELT1833	ACELA1454
ACELA1462	ACELT1591	ACELY1665	
ACHASSI038	ACHGS013	ACHGK012	

### YEAR THREE

English, Visual Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

ACELT1594	ACELY1676	ACELA1488	ACELY1675
ACELT1596	ACELY1680	ACHGK017	
ACHASSK093	ACHASSI059	ACHASSK070	ACHASSI080
ACHASSI060	ACHASSI056		

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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 if Pepper or Zam remind them of anyone they know: a friend, a sibling, their pet, themselves perhaps.
2. What is their first impression of Pepper Masalah? Of Zam?
3. How does Pepper change over the course of the story? Does Zam change too?
4. Ask students how they perceive Pepper and Zam's situation. Do they come through in the end?

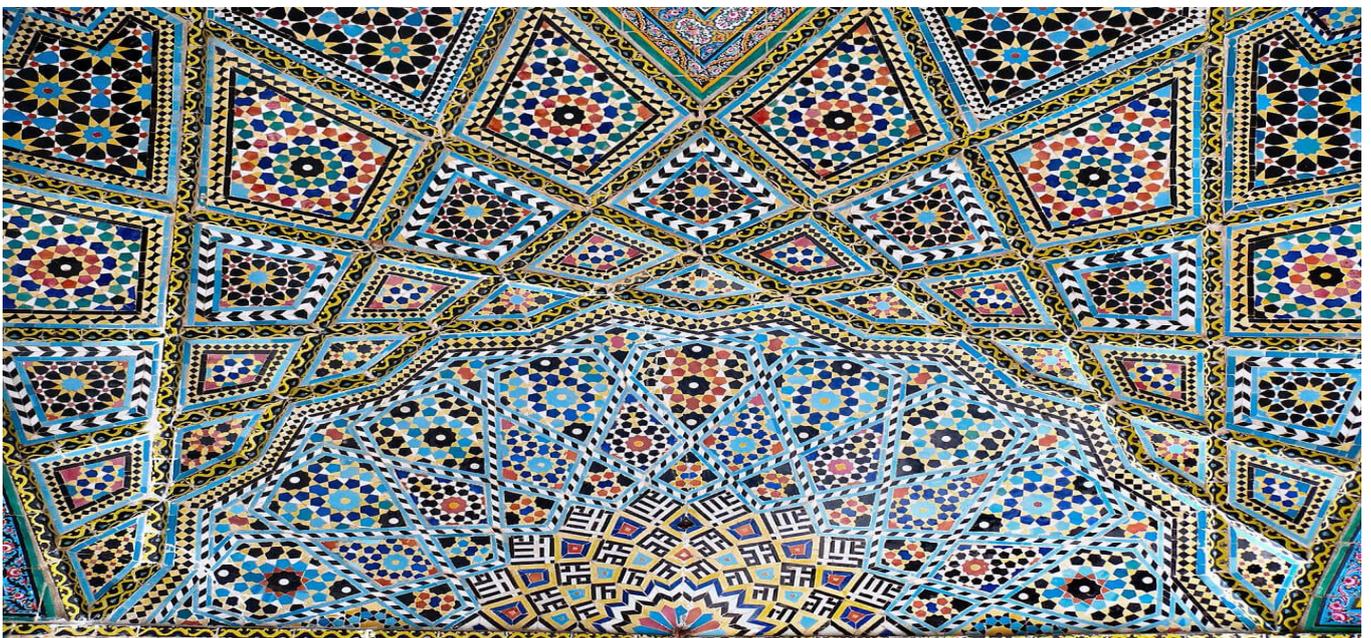
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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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### DISCOVER

- Geography: discover where the Arabian Peninsula is. What countries are in the Arabian Peninsula?
- Read picture books on Arabian desert and its people. How do they live, what do they wear, what do they eat?
- Pick a country in the Arabian Peninsula and create a postcard as if you went there. You can write to someone you know, or a character from the book. Cut out a postcard sized rectangle, draw the place on one side, and come up with a letter on the back. If you need a template one is [here](#).
- Look up some architecture found in the Arabian Peninsula. You can discover ceramic tile work, arches, domes and towers.



- Consider the colours and shapes used in the designs, these will become important if you do some of our activities!
- Try making some bedu naan – such as this [recipe](#).
- Choose a cat fact and find out more info to write a short report about it.
- Discover more cat facts not listed.

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## CREATE

- Paint a carpet design (or you can weave one if you like!). Write a paragraph about the carpet design you chose and say which country it comes from. Does the carpet have a name?
- What would it be like to fly on a carpet? Where would you go and what would you do? Write a story.
- How do you think the carpet can fly? Write an imaginative report explaining how you think a carpet could fly.
- Create your own animal protagonist for a story. Remember to have the same care with how you create this animal character as you would when creating a person. The character can have animal behaviours but also thoughts and feelings.
- Choose a place for your animal character to have an adventure. It can be somewhere you know or somewhere far away.
- Finally, choose a problem your character will have to solve! Because the character is an animal, maybe they have a unique way to solve it that they couldn't if they were a human.

## DISCUSSION

- In the story, the carpet is flying on the wind at first. When can you tell it may be remembering how to fly?
- Why do you think Zam can now understand Pepper's meowing?
- Do you think the camel driver has a right to take Zam and Pepper? Why do some people do this. How should children stay safe?
- What do you think of having a cat as a character?
- Why do you think Hamood's family need to sell the carpet?
- What did you think of the souq, the marketplace? What do you think was an interesting stall? What else do think might be sold in this marketplace?
- What is the kindness that Pepper and Zam show for Hamood's family?
- Rosanne originally wrote Pepper Masalah's Cat Fact Files for herself while writing the story, then she thought readers might like to see this too. Do you think it's a good idea to include the cat file? Why?
- What information are you discovering in the news section? Why do you think the author included this?
- Can you guess why the author wrote this story about a lost cat and boy?

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## ACTIVITIES

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### CREATE A MIND MAP

Draw a circle for Pepper, surrounded by other circles to represent the other characters (Zam, Zam's dad, Hamood).

In each circle draw a picture of that character.

Underneath the picture write a list of adjectives to describe that character – for example: bossy, brave, kind, funny

### SCAVENGER HUNT

Write a list of some of the things found in *Pepper Masalah and the Flying Carpet*. You can either collect these objects, or if you can't find them you could draw pictures of the objects.

Hide them and give the list to someone to perform a scavenger hunt!

### CREATE A TESSELTION

Like the tiles found in Arab architecture you can create a tessellation. Watch [this video](#) and follow along.

### COLOUR IN

Alternatively you can simply colour in [this representation of Arabic tiles](#).

### WRITE A DIARY ENTRY OR LETTER

Write a letter from Zam to his dad telling him about his adventures.

Write a diary entry from Pepper's perspective, on how she felt about the events of the book.

### SAND PAINTING

For this you will need: sand, paint, large pieces of cardboard, paint brushes, containers for the sand paint.

The ratio for the sand paint is approximately 1 part sand for every 1 part paint. You want the measurements to be equal before mixing them together. So if you had 1/2 cup of paint, you'd need 1/2 cup of sand.

Adjust if necessary to get a thick consistency.

If you use colours that you would see in a picture of a desert, your sand painting can reflect the desert setting found in this *Pepper Masalah* book.