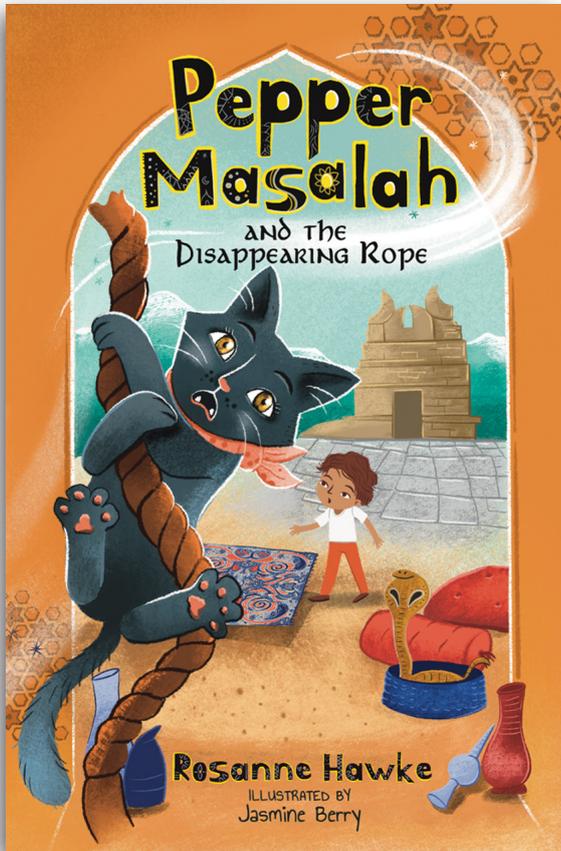


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# Teachers' Notes

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## PEPPER MASALAH AND THE DISAPPEARING ROPE

Rosanne Hawke / Jasmine Berry

**ISBN:** 9781761111624

**Recommended retail:** \$11.99

**Reading level:** 6 to 8

### BOOK SUMMARY

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In the 4th book, the carpet flies Pepper Masalah and Zamir back in time to find its original owner in Moghul India, who is none other than the ailing Emperor Shah Jahan. They land in Lahore and find the Lahore Fort where a magician is doing a disappearing rope trick. Pepper climbs the rope to escape a bazaar dog and their problems start in earnest. They have arrived in Hindustan at a time of intrigue and Zam is accused of stealing the carpet and is put in the dungeon. How will Pepper and her new friends rescue him? And how can they return home without the carpet? They are lost in time.

### THEMES

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South Asian culture • India and Pakistan geography • Friendship and Kindness •  
Bombay & British short hair cats • Child labour • Fantasy and Adventure in the real world • Historical timeslip

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**Rosanne Hawke is available for author talks and workshops.  
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*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 Ameerah*, *Beyond Borders* and *Taj and the Camel Trek*. She returned to Pakistan in 2006 on an Asialink Fellowship. Rosanne lives in rural South Australia and loves walking, reading and cats. She now has a black and white cat called Sheherazade.

### AUTHOR NOTES

For seven years I lived in Pakistan which in 1557 was called Hindustan and was ruled by the Mughal Emperor, Shah Jahan. I have travelled to Lahore where I saw the Lahore Fort. Shah Jahan was born there and was known to visit Lahore often. I saw snakes in baskets and monkeys doing tricks. In Pakistan I ate food that wasn't greatly different in taste from the food people ate centuries ago. Mughal clothes were similar to what I wore in Pakistan: Shalwar qameezes.

Child labour is not always trafficking. In this book, the emperor is fond of Hari and Noori and has taken them into the fort to work as servants as they would be worse off in the streets. There were no orphanages, so poor children had to rely on kind adults to help them. But in every country there are people like Darsh who don't care about children in need and will even put them in jail, as Jay has been.

My love of cats grew from childhood. I remember eating from the cat's bowl, pretending 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 some 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, Emma 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, happy and had a purr like a generator. And he loved carpets.

You can see pictures of 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.

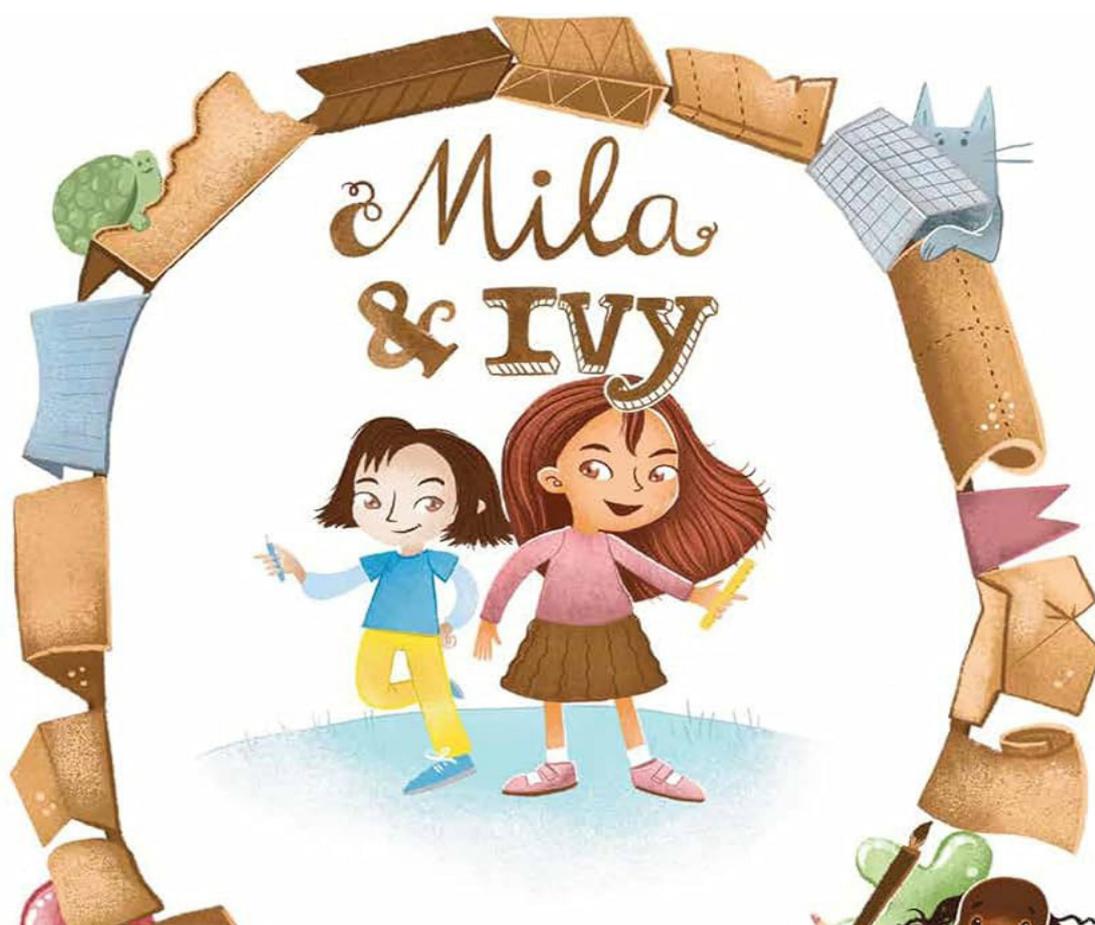
She lives in Perth with her husband and with two adorable cats, and a rather large collection of succulents.

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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Pepper Masalah is a series promoting friendship and kindness. But it uses its themes of fantasy and adventure to also explore culture, the environment and different real world issues. In this book it explores themes of child and bonded labour in an age appropriate way. Additionally, it teaches children about the different cultures and geography about the regions Pepper and Zam go to. In this book it introduces Pakistani and Indian culture in an age appropriate and fun story.

## 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. After several stories now with Pepper Masalah and Zam how has your impression of them changed from their first story till now?
3. What do the challenges of the story do to change Pepper and Zam's characters? Do they become wiser? More resilient?
4. Ask students how they perceive Pepper and Zam's situation. Do they come through in the end?
5. Pepper's flying carpet has taken them somewhere new. Where (or when) have they landed this time?
6. What adventures would you like Pepper and Zam to have next? Where could they go and what might they do there?
7. What does the class know about the country and culture of India or Pakistan? What did they learn during the course of the story?
8. Ask students if they had their own flying carpet, where would they want it to take them.

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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### DISCOVER

- Geography: discover where India is. Draw a map. What countries are nearby?
- History: The Mughal Empire was a Muslim empire which ruled over what is now Pakistan, India, and at times Afghanistan and Bangladesh, from 1526 to 1858. It was then taken over as a British colony. The Mughal Empire was established by the Turks, a collection of people that came from the Turkey-Azerbaijan-Uzbekistan region. India at the time had a reputation of being the only known source of diamond mines. They had resisted previous invasions but fell to the Turks. The empire was also sometimes called Hindustan. This new empire developed cultural elements like the Urdu language, standardised the rupee currency, refinement of architecture that resulted in landmarks like the Taj Mahal, and cultivated classical music that led to inventions such as the sitar.
- Read picture books on the Mughal Empire and its people. How did they live, what did they wear, what did they eat? Check out '[Mughal India for Kids](#)' and find some facts that interest you.
- What are some of the different religions and backgrounds that mixed in the Mughal Empire? As a class reflect on how that impacted the culture and how it reflects in India and Pakistan today.
- Try making an Indian curry with chapattis. You could make it in class or at home and bring it in. Here's a [chappati recipe](#), and a [curry recipe](#). If you don't like curry there are other Indian recipes you can try [here](#), all kid friendly.
- Choose a cat fact from the cat file and find more information to write a report about it.
- Have you learned any new cat facts between this book and the last book? Can you discover more? Choose one to share with the class or your family.

### CREATE

- What would you like to do if you could go back to Mughal India? Where would you go and who would you meet? Would you dress in a shalwar qameez? Write a story or draw a picture.
- Think about one of the cultural facts you learned earlier about Mughal India. How could you investigate it more through a story? Choose a main character in the story, a person or an animal, and write a story with the cultural fact as part of it.
  - **Writing tip:** when writing an animal character like Pepper, she needs to have cat behaviour but can have the emotions of a human so that readers will empathise with her.
- Would you like to go back in time? Which historical period would you choose? Would you go on a carpet or in a time machine? Who goes with you? You can make a play, comic book, or a short story about this adventure you've come up with.
- Mughal designs were often full of flowers, creatures, and nature. They appeared on things like pen boxes, shawls, buildings, and clothes. Bring in a shoebox or a smaller box and make a design for a building or a trinket box. You can use these photos as [inspiration](#). Or these [here](#).
- While some Mughal carpets were Persian-like, a series of Indian designs were cultivated. These included landscape carpets, animal carpets, elaborate latticeworks inspired by Italian work, and

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several floral themed prayer rugs. Again, flowers featured a lot in this artistic work. Taking a look at some Mughal designs you can create your own rug design. Some sources to look at are [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

## DISCUSSION

- If you have read all Pepper's books so far, can you trace the carpet's abilities in flying? For example, in the first book it looks like the carpet can't remember to fly and is riding on the wind. What did it learn in Book 2 and Book 3? What new skill does the carpet have in this book?
- Pepper and Zam are going through a lot of changes and intense moments. Can you find instances where they still remain kind? How are they kind and in what ways does this kindness impact the events of the story?
- What sort of a person is Darsh? Why does he act the way he does?
- Why does the emperor give Pepper the carpet?
- Do you think Jay will be released from prison? What do you think his life will be like when he sees his mum and baby sister again?
- Do you think Hari and Noori will still live in the fort? What good things could happen for them?
- Pepper Masalah's Cat Fact Files are different in this book than in Pepper's other books. Why do you think this is?
- How does the news section make you feel? Sometimes hope can be hard to grasp onto. When is it hard for you to be hopeful?

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## ACTIVITIES

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### KALAMKARI

Kalamkari is an artform that was developed in India based upon methods used in Persia. Cotton fabric is handpainted using only natural dyes. There are two types - one where the painting is done freehanded and the other is block painting.

First you have to stiffen the fabric by using buffalo milk and drying in the sun. Afterwards, certain colours of the design (like red and brown) are outlined with something to set the dye and it is then placed in a bucket of red dye. When you pull it out you cover everything in wax except for the parts you want to be blue, and put it back into indigo dye. The wax is then scraped off and remaining areas are painted by hand.

These methods are similar to Indonesian batik.

So to make our own paper kalamkari we need lead pencils, black pens, watercolours, paintbrushes, water, PVA glue, and paper.

1. Start with your paper. Draw whatever design you like. A typical kalamkari design would be a peacock or some flowers but the design is up to you.
2. After drawing with a lead pencil, once you're happy, decide which parts you want to not be coloured in. Whatever you cover in glue will not get paint on it. This mimics the wax. Using a paintbrush coated in glue, fill those in.
3. Go over any other lines in black pen.
4. Choose your colours in the watercolours and paint it in. The parts outlined in glue will stand out and not be coloured in.

### TAJ MAHAL 3D CRAFT

Using [this template](#) and [these instructions](#) you can create a Taj Mahal that is 3D on your page!

### HAMA BEADS

Also called fuse beads, melt beads, seed beads, iron beads or perler beads.

Using hama beads you can create some flower patterns like they did in artwork in the Mughal Empire. Try looking up 'daffodil', 'marigold', 'poppy' or 'peacock' hama designs.

If you can't find any you like, here are some linked:

[Poppy](#)

[Daffodil](#)

[Marigold](#)

[Peacock](#)

Or if you want a challenge you could try making a 3D daffodil! [Instructions are here.](#)