
Teachers' Notes

DRAGON GUEST HANDBOOK

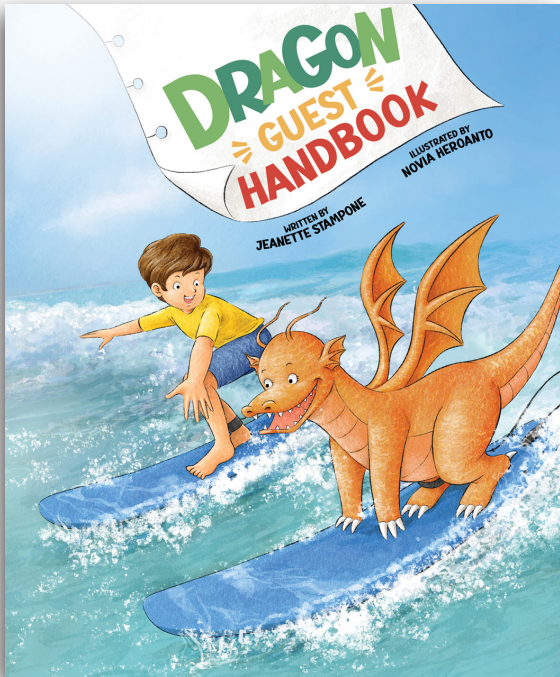
Jeanette Stampone / Novia Heroanto

ISBN: 9781761111686

Recommended retail: \$26.99

Reading level: 5 to 8

BOOK SUMMARY



You should always be prepared for when a dragon tourist lands in your backyard.

Your visitor will need to meet the family, learn table manners and go sightseeing. Will you qualify as a top host?

While this hilarious book is full of silliness, it also explores language barriers and non-verbal communication. The heartwarming ending leaves readers with a beautiful message of embracing differences, and how a hug has universal meaning.

THEMES

Language barriers • Acceptance • Friendship • Culture •

Diversity • Communication • Non-verbal communication •

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Dragon Guest Handbook 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



Jeanette Stampone was born in a spooky three-hundred-year-old house in England. She grew up with stories of local legends, pixies, ghosts, and fairies. These childhood experiences inspire Jeanette to writing fun, imaginative and quirky stories. Jeanette now lives in a small country town in Western Australia with her husband and two boys.

Dragon Guest Handbook will be Jeanette's second picture book, followed by *Shadow and the Girl*, released by Red Paper Kite in 2022.

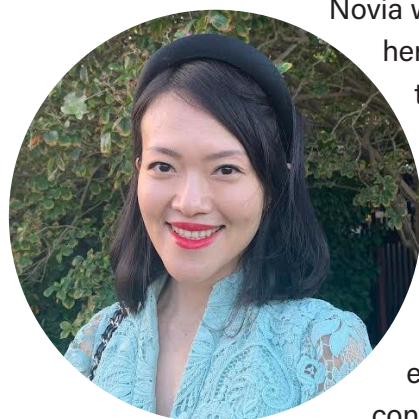
Jeanette is an active member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI) and the Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA).

Website: <https://jeanetestampone.com>

AUTHOR NOTES

This story was inspired by the fact that I arrived in Australia on 'holiday' and never left! As an English-speaking visitor, I found it easy to communicate. However, as I developed the story, I wondered what it would feel like to not only speak a different language, but also have different ideas about what is culturally acceptable. The dragon character allows children from any non-English speaking background to identify with those feelings, and to understand that diversity is a thing to embrace, not fear. It was a lot of fun to write this story and I love how the illustrator, Novia brought my vision to life.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR



Novia was born in Samarinda, Kalimantan Timur, Indonesia. As a child, expressing her thoughts through words was never her forte. However, when her Mama taught her the art of drawing, it began to open her heart to relate to others through strokes and colours. Even after constantly moving jobs and countries, integrating new cultures and meeting new people, the passion for drawing has never left her, but rather, has driven her to share it with the younger generations.

Now living in Sydney (Dharug Country), she aims to incorporate her expertise as a former early childhood teacher and graphic designer, to continue this passion through children's book illustrations. Her inspiration flows from the candid interactions, conversations, and ideas of the young children she has taught and her toddler at home.

She envisions herself as a bridge between early years education and the creative art sector to nurture empathy and creativity through her drawings, and stories.

ILLUSTRATOR NOTES

When reading the manuscript, I felt a deep personal connection between the main characters and myself, which were the dragon and the boy. The dragon arrived on her own, without knowing the norms, the culture and the language of the people. She came with full enthusiasm, ready to explore her surroundings. She looked at everything with a fresh pair of eyes. However, what she called explorations was classified as mischief as she crossed boundaries and defied the norms of society. But this helped her express herself and find joy within her experiences. The dragon can reflect my inner child by carrying that same adventurous nature. Moving between towns and countries on my own, I constantly learnt local dialects, languages and local cultures. Often, I made meaning through explorations and trial and error, whilst establishing meaningful friendships through reaching out to different kinds of people.

The boy, on the other hand, was also excited and interested in showing the dragon around. He was not overpowering and was kind without prejudice. He introduced the dragon to his family and the various local attractions, yet he also listened to her interests and expanded on them; He became the bridge between the dragon and the human world. How he integrated the dragon into the human world reminded me of the pedagogy in early childhood about active listening, inclusivity, and cultural connections. Being born and raised in Eastern cultures, it was a norm to fit into society by abiding by the rules and expectations of the majority. However, when I became an early childhood teacher in Australia, I learned to embrace each person and celebrate their interests and uniqueness.

But what I found was the most significant aspect of the book is the universal language of love. The dragon may not understand the written and verbal words of the boy and others, but she felt loved when she received hugs with warm smiles. Sometimes, most authentic heartfelt things are unspoken, just like the art of drawing itself.

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REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

This book is written in second point of view, in the style of an instructional manual. This provides an opportunity for students to imagine that a dragon really has landed in their backyard, with step-by-step instructions to follow.

The book is fun and silly, immediately capturing the attention of young students. However, upon studying the text and illustrations a little deeper, children will identify cultural barriers, non-verbal communication tips, and ways to make people feel welcome.

In our beautifully diverse country, *Dragon Guest Handbook* opens conversations about what we can all do to make friends with people (or dragons) who don't speak our language.

KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

Curriculum Areas and Key Learning Outcomes.

FOUNDATION

English, Visual Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

AC9EFLE01	AC9EFLA02	AC9EFLA06	AC9EFLE02
AC9EFLA03	AC9EFLA07	AC9EFLY02	AC9EFLE03
AC9ADFD01	AC9ADAF01	AC9ADAFE01	
AC9HSFS03			

YEAR ONE

English, Visual Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

AC9E1LA01	AC9E1LA06	AC9E1LE02	AC9E1LY02
AC9E1LE03	AC9E1LA03	AC9E1LY05	AC9E1LE01
AC9E1LE05			
AC9AVA2E01	AC9AVA2D01		
AC9HS1S04			

YEAR TWO

English, Visual Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

AC9E2LA01	AC9E2LA03	AC9E2LA02	AC9E2LE03
AC9E2LY01			
AC9AVA2E01	AC9AVA2D01		
AC9HS2S04			

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

1. Ask students if any of the characters reminds them of anyone they know: a friend, a sibling, themselves perhaps.
2. Ask students what they think of the story outcome. Do they agree with the ending?
3. What are some of the issues within the story, like migration and culture shock, that are relevant today?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

GENERAL

- Why do you think the dragon enjoyed looking at the lizard at the zoo?
- Why do you think there are no words on the last spread?
- There are no words on the last spread. What do you think the three dragons are doing?
- Why do you think the author chose a dragon to visit the humans?

LANGUAGE BARRIERS

- Why do you think the dragon ignored the sign at the museum?
- If you were designing a museum, name three ways you could make it easier for people who can't read or understand English.
- If you couldn't understand the language people were speaking around you, like the dragon, how might you feel?
- What are some ways that you could communicate if you were the dragon? Brainstorm as a group.

ACCEPTANCE

- Do you think the dragon meant to upset people?
- Was the boy accepting in the story or was he rude to the dragon?
- How do you think the boy would react if another dragon came to visit?
- Do you think the boy's parents would react differently next time? Why?
- How does this relate to treating real immigrants or visitors in our world? How might you be accepting of someone coming to Australia? How could you show this?

FRIENDSHIP

- Name three ways you could be friendly to someone if you can't speak their language.
- Does friendship go beyond language and culture? How so?
- How do you think the boy felt when the dragon decided to go home? Reflect on what it might be like to have a friend from another country go home.

CULTURE & DIVERSITY

- What does the dragon do differently to humans? Why might the dragon do things differently?
- Why would people be afraid of the dragon?
- Are people afraid of people coming to Australia? Why or why not?
- What do you think the dragon enjoyed most about their visit? Why?

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- Reflect on someone coming from another country to Australia and think about what things might be different here compared to what they're used to. Can you come up with some things that might be different? Make a list. If you have specific examples, share them with the class.
 - Some people who live somewhere new experience 'culture shock'. Do you have any stories you know about 'culture shock'?

COMMUNICATION (VERBAL & NON-VERBAL)

- What is the difference in using words and not using words? Is there any benefit to either one?
- Is using words or not using words better? Explain why. You can also discuss this as a group.
- Can you come up with a list of what some people do that is non verbal communication? For example, gestures, body language, facial expressions, are all forms of non verbal communication.
- What are some things that are in verbal communication that are important? For example, tone of voice, volume, and pace are all things that change meaning.
- Are there times that someone can only use verbal or non verbal communication? For example, someone who is deaf, someone who can't understand the language, someone who is blind, when you have to be in a quiet place, when there's too much noise to hear.
- How does the boy show the dragon he cares, without using words?
- How might you do the same thing?
- Are there other forms of communication that aren't using the voice or the body? What about writing? Has writing changed over the years?
- What do you think might be in the envelope at the end of the story?

ACTIVITIES

DRAGON WINGS

- Below is a print out for dragon wings. You can use to fashion your own, though you may need to experiment to get the right size for your child. Cut out your wings. You can paste onto poster board if you wish and cut out again to make them more solid.
- Provide multiple items for decoration. You can use a paintbrush dipped in glue (or mod podge) to get the decorations to stick.
- You'll need some elastic or ribbon to attach the wings on but you can use a stapler to attach them (or a hot glue gun).

FLYING DRAGONS

- A STEM based dragon craft that [can be found here](#).

OTHER DRAGON CRAFTS

- [Paper Plate Dragons](#)
- [Cupcake Liner Dragons](#)
- [Pipe-Cleaner Dragons](#)
- [Dragon Masks](#)
- [Dragon Eggs](#)

NO WORDS CHALLENGE!

- The most classic of games is Charades, and feel free to play that game as it is but there are other no word challenges you can do!
- Write down all the emotions you can think of on different slips of paper and put them in a hat. Someone pulls a slip out of the hat and has to communicate that emotion to the group without words.
- Put a timer on for 30 seconds to 1 minute and try to have a nonverbal conversation back and forth with a partner.

OTHER LANGUAGES CHALLENGE!

- Make a list of some languages you would like to look up and then find the word 'hello' in each language!
- You can find some activity sheets and games [here](#).
- Here are a quick few for you to check later.

Filipino – Kamusta	Maori – Kia ora
Bengali – Hyālō	Hmong – Nyob zoo
Japanese – Kon'nichiwa	Arabic – Marhabaan
Portuguese – Olá	Zulu – Sawubona
Spanish – Hola	French – Bonjour
Korean – annyeonghaseyo	Greek – geia
Xhosa – Mholweni	Vietnamese – xin chào
German – Hallo	Mandarin Chinese – Nǐ hǎo
Thai – S̄wạs̄dī	Swahili – Jambo
Italian – Ciao	Haitian Creole – Bonjou



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