

Teaching notes

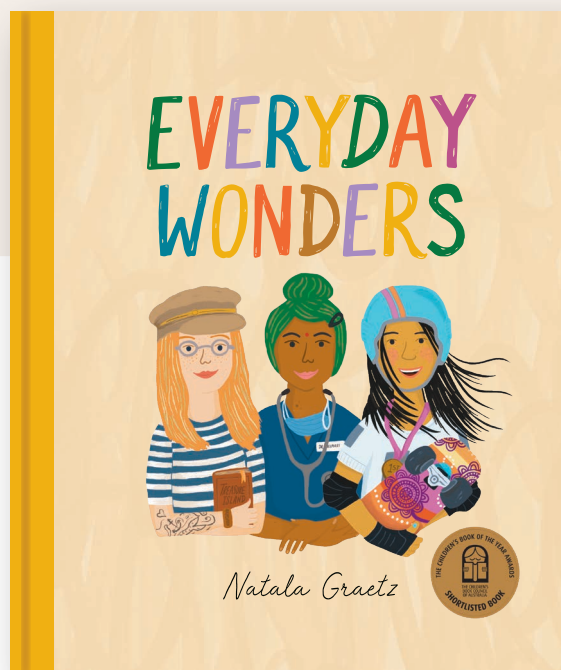
EVERYDAY WONDERS

Plot

*Isla sails the high seas,
Vivienne takes care of bees,
Izzy is good at fixing cars,
Farah loves gazing at stars...*

Everyday Wonders heroes the people around us – our neighbours, doctors, local beekeepers and car mechanics. It's based on the belief you don't need to be famous or a Nobel Prize winner to be important in this world.

It includes 15 fun, delightful and inspiring short stories about everyday, whimsical and unique characters of all ages, from around the world.



Themes

- Everyday people
- Individuality
- Diversity
- Kindness
- Cleverness
- Bravery
- Curiosity
- Professions and hobbies



Author: Natala Graetz

Illustrator: Natala Graetz

Age: recommended for 2-9 years

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Everyday Wonders

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Interview with author and illustrator

Natalia Graetz is a Brisbane-based graphic designer, author and illustrator. Her debut children's book, *Everyday Wonders*, is the result of a project she created during a pandemic lockdown that turned into a series of whimsical and unique stories about women. Her hope is that children and adults alike will capture a sense of joy through reading the book, and be reminded of just how important their story is.

What was your inspiration for writing *Everyday Wonders*?

"I started out drawing 50 characters and their stories. I based it on the idea that you don't need fame, fortune or some fabulously sensational life to feel and be important. Each character was a simple sketch with a short story that went with it (a rhyming stanza).

I noticed there were lots of books about famous women but I was more interested in telling stories about everyday characters and their personalities. You will notice in the book, there is a touch of magic to some of them - a bit like how *Mary Poppins* inspired me as a child - like Vera bottling smells and memories! I'd love every child to know they are an everyday wonder with their own quirks, hobbies and unique personality."

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How did you create the illustrations?

"I created the illustrations using an iPad and Apple pencil. Each drawing started off as a simple sketch and then, I started to create each 'world' they lived in. The program I used is called Procreate. Once I was happy with the illustrations, I then transferred them onto my computer and designed the book. I work as a graphic designer, so I was able to layout my design with text and images to create a book ready for the printer."



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Discussion topics

- What is an everyday wonder to you?
- Do you have a favourite character and why?
- Turn to the last page of the book with the icons. Can you point out some familiar objects and match them with their characters?
- Did you know you are an everyday wonder too? What is something you love to do?

Maybe you love swimming like Astrid, or playing a musical instrument like Anita, or you are learning to skateboard like Lana, or you love gazing at stars like Farah.



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Activity ideas

Write your own everyday wonder story

If you were to create your own story, what would it be about? Think about what you love to do, a hobby or a time that you felt a strong emotion. You might want to talk about a time when you felt nervous, or were trying something new. For older students, you can help them create their own rhyming stanza.

Draw your own everyday wonder self-portrait

If you were to draw your own self-portrait, what would it include? Think about your amazing face and all its unique qualities. You might have glasses or a freckle or 10! It can be magical too! You might want pink hair or love to imagine you are in a unicorn submarine like Maggie's story. Let your imagination go wild! You might include things you love such as a hobby, your family and friends, or maybe a favourite animal/pet or a special place you like to visit.

Create a memory in a bottle

Turn to the story about Vera. Do you have a favourite memory that you would like to bottle up? Maybe it's something that reminds you of a happy time. Maybe it's the smell of the ocean that reminds you of a holiday. Maybe it's the smell of a flower that reminds you of a grandparent. Draw a large bottle. Inside the bottle, draw a picture of your favourite memory. Label the bottle by writing the name of the memory or smell. Don't forget to draw the lid! You could also use a physical bottle and collect flowers, herbs or spices to create your own special scent.

Create your own poster for the environment

Turn to the story about Willow. When you think of our planet and the animals that live in it, what message would you like to tell the world about? Maybe it's a simple message for your school like "pick up your rubbish" or "look after our wildlife". Create a poster using your message.



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