

CATCH a spark!

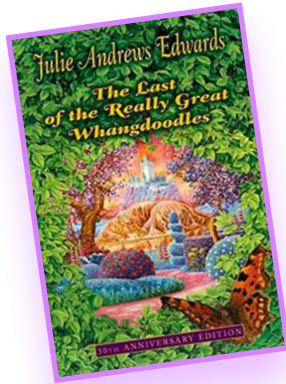
Using children's literature to SPARK CREATIVITY

The Last of the Really Great Whangdoodles

Written by Julie Andrews Edwards

288 pages / Grades 2-7

A brilliant professor and three wonderful children search for the most extraordinary creature in the world, the Whangdoodle by venturing to Whangdoodleland while avoiding a scheming prime minister and relying on determination and skill. There is no better story for the imagination and to keep children rapt with attention. A whimsical story that all students - and teachers - will fall in love with while learning many life lessons.



C

Context

The book is very rich in **vocabulary**.

Superb mentor text for **descriptive writing** and **visualization**.

A strong consideration to **endangered animals** / species and the way we treat the environment.

Regular acknowledgement and reference to various areas of **science** including **genetics**

A

Arts

The book very purposefully does not have illustrations to foster a sense of imagination among readers.

There is regular reference to all the **artistic senses** - sight, sounds, touch, form, movement, energy, language, texture, and so many more that naturally come through the writing.

T

Themes

Power and importance of imagination

Open minds of children compared to adults

Determination

Courage / Bravery

Trust

C

Create

Use the vivid descriptions of each character and place to illustrate the book.

Take the Professor's challenge and really notice things. Keep a notebook of all the things you suddenly notice through both sight and sound.

Create your own "scrappy cap". When do you think you need to use it?

Make a Whangdoodleland Word Book for all the new words you learn.

The book has SO many inspirations. Endless possibilities!

H

Heart Words

"Whatever man imagines is possible."

"There aren't many people in this world who really know how to look."

"Peace, love and a sense of fun."

"If you remain calm in the midst of great chaos, it is the surest guarantee that it will eventually subside."

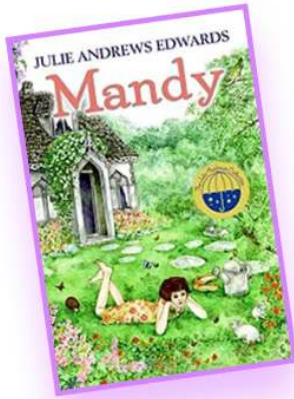
"Miracles...do not just happen. A miracle is the achievement of the impossible..."

"If you truly wish to accomplish something, you should allow nothing to stop you, and chances are you'll succeed."



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Mandy

Written by Julie Andrews Edwards

320 pages / Grades 2-7

Mandy is a ten-year old orphan who discovers an abandoned cottage beyond the walls of the orphanage. In her longing for a home of her own, she transforms this one and strives to keep it all for herself. A secret admirer and a series of events that happen one stormy night at the cottage will change her life forever. This is a delightful story about a desire for independence, yet also a longing for family and love.

C

Context

The book is very rich in **vocabulary**.

Superb mentor text for **descriptive writing** and **visualization**.

Plants, gardening, the **power of nature**.

Looking at a greater world around you, as well as understanding one different from your own, in this case, **life as an orphan**.

Point of view and perspective. Have students place themselves in Mandy's shoes, along with the other characters as they arise.

A

Arts

The **artistry and beauty of nature**.

This is explored in many different ways, from the visualization of the grounds where the cottage is, to the garden that Mandy creates and the descriptions of her flowers and colors.

Words and language as art and their descriptive qualities.

T

Themes

Hope

Family

Love

Independence

Belonging

Home

Caretaking

C

Create

Design a garden. Consider plant/flower choices including color, height and variety. After creating this independently, design a collaborative garden and plant it together.

Begin a collection, much like the shells that line the inside of the cottage (which was a real cottage as seen by the author).

How will you showcase your collection and create something bigger with it?

What is an area you could transform for a community project, like Mandy does with the cottage? Make a plan for this.

H

Heart Words

"...sometimes she felt as though she must surely break apart with so much going on inside her. It was as though she were searching for something, though what or where it was she could not say."

"...you're strong and not afraid to go looking for your life."

"She had found what she had been looking for her whole life."



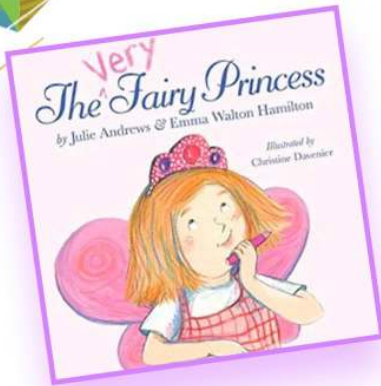
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The Very Fairy Princess

Written by Julie Andrews Edwards & Emma Walton Hamilton
32 pages / Grades K-2

Geraldine KNOWS she is a fairy princess and has all the reasons to prove it. Even though fairy princesses always bring their sparkle and energy, they still have dirty fingernails and scraped up knees! It is impossible not to smile as you follow Gerry through her day and all of the happiness she spreads with her vivid imagination and creative energy. This is the first in a large and delightful series.



C

Context

Reading and writing with expression.

Finding joy in the ordinary things.

A perfect book to help teach **character** and **personality traits**.

Writer's craft and **word choice**.

A

Arts

Words and language as art and their descriptive qualities.

Discuss the **artistic style** of the illustrations. Why do they work so well with the story?

What colors (besides pink) best go with Gerry? What instruments would you choose to match her?

T

Themes

Self-confidence

Independence

Personality

C

Create

All children have imagined they were someone else...a superhero perhaps?

Write the story of how they know they are that other person. What language and vocabulary can they use to back up their thinking? How would that other person approach everything in the course of the day?

Create a play with the Very Fairy Princess as the main character. It may help to read more books in the series to get even more of a sense of her.

What would the musical score be like for this story? Why?

H

Heart Words

"...a sparkly feeling of just knowing in my heart."

"You just have to let your sparkle out."



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Simeon's Gift

Written by Julie Andrews Edwards & Emma Walton Hamilton
40 pages / Grades K-6

A beautiful fairy tale/fable that celebrates the beauty and sounds of nature and all the gifts it has to share as discovered by Simeon, a musician on a quest to prove his love and to better himself by exploring the world. Stunning language and illustrations make this book important and accessible to readers of all ages, as there will be different takeaways and messages depending on the age of the student. A book not to be missed!



C Context

Rich and vibrant **vocabulary**. The power of **word choice**.

Evoking feeling through language.

Medieval time period and the differences from today.

Sounds of nature and being aware of the world around you.

Elements and terms of music including harmony, melody, tone and so many more.

A [full teaching guide](#) is available from the authors.

A Arts

The artistry and illustrations of **Gennady Spirin**. A Russian watercolor artist, he brings worlds to life through stunning creative realism. His work in this book is said to be an "illuminated manuscript" and very renaissance in it's style to match the story.

Music as a way to bring life to a story and to complete a vision. The story was performed with a symphony behind it, narrated by Ms. Andrews and is available on YouTube.

T Themes

Generosity

Creativity

Confidence and Self-Doubt

Kindness

Trust

Wonder

C Create

Write a melody to go with the story. Discuss your artist choices.

Go on a nature walk and gather a list of sounds you hear. Using technology, create a "natural symphony" comprised of your collected sounds. Be still and hear as much as you can.

Create your own song for others to sing. What will it be about? Who will it be a gift for? How would you collect new sounds and experiences to make part of your unique song? What color is your song?

H Heart Words

"Simeon suddenly heard the entire soul in his head and in his heart."

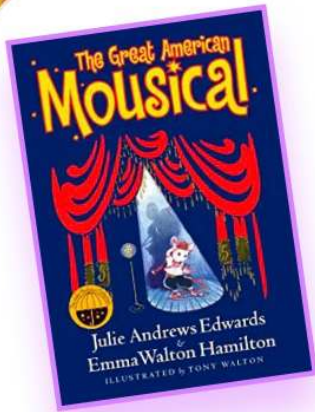
"...a true and brave heart can find a way, if it will only trust in all the wonder's under God's canopy."

Really look at the illustrations with awe and a sense of wonder. Which speaks to your heart the most. Why?



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The Great American Mousical

Written by Julie Andrews Edwards & Emma Walton Hamilton
160 pages / Grades 2-5

Beneath a famous theatre on Broadway in New York City, sits another theatre. The architect's model, long forgotten, has become a secret space and home for a band of theatre mice busily preparing for their own show. Their show is threatened when the main theatre is set to be demolished and their star disappears. A fast-paced fun tribute to the world of the theatre, with lovable characters and an adventure with many twists and turns.

C

Context

A journey through **musical theatre history**. Characters are all named after theatre legends and characters.

Rich and vibrant vocabulary, including many references to Shakespeare's writing.

Conservation of historic buildings and city landmarks.

Story features that help readers such as character lists, chapter titles and glossaries.

There is an in-depth teacher guide available at [The Julie Andrews Collection](#).

A

Arts

Along with weaving in theatre history, this is an incredible introduction to the world of **theatre** and all that goes in to **creating a show** from the actors to the designers and technician.

Theatre terms and vocabulary are used regularly, with a glossary of terms included at the end of the story. Be sure to take note of the chapter titles as well.

Be sure to read the interview with the authors with your students in the teacher guide cited here.

T

Themes

Friendship

Determination in the face of adversity

Courage

Teamwork and Collaboration

Resourcefulness

Perseverance

Commitment

Wonder

C

Create

Explore New York City with a map and track Adelaide's adventure. See if there was an easier route she could have taken.

For older students, challenge them to find as many musical Theatre references as they can. Start with the characters.

Through research, see if they can discover who each character was named after, and perhaps why.

Put on a show! Use the mice as your inspiration.

Write a story that puts together many characters from different stories, as was done here.

H

Heart Words

"It is amazing what he pulled off tonight....That a mouse, so small, could do something so monumental, for so many."

"A superior mouse is modest in speech but exceeds in actions."

"Big things are only achieved by attending to small beginnings."



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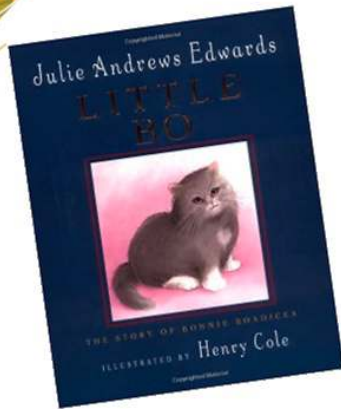
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Little Bo: The Story of Bonnie Boadicea

Written by Julie Andrews Edwards

88 pages / Grades K-5

Little Bo is a shy little kitten, given a big, brave name and about to embark on a huge adventure across the sea. The first in a small series of four adventures, Little Bo will capture readers hearts. It has something for everyone - lovable kittens, a somewhat scary and exciting world, and gorgeous illustrations. A timeless story of friendship that is a perfect read-aloud for younger students.



C

Context

The **responsibilities of owning a pet.**

Weather and transportation (mainly the seas).

Fighting for what you believe in.

The **meaning and story of names.**

When you read all four in the series, **geography** will be a natural point of conversation.

Rich and vibrant vocabulary.

A

Arts

Gorgeous, large **illustrations** will capture the reader. The illustrator, Henry Cole, has done many children's books. Gather them together and engage students in a comparison.

Engage in a discussion about **choosing what to illustrate**. While there are many full page illustrations, the book also has many smaller ones of tiny but important moments in the story. Read one chapter of the story without showing the illustrations, and ask students to name one large illustration and two small they would create.

T

Themes

Friendship

Courage

Family

Adventure

Life choices

C

Create

Have students find and share the story of their own name from their parents.

Look at the titles of the other books in the series. Ask students to write a new adventure at a different place that Bo and Billy go to. Engage students in research about their chosen city to include accurate details.

Create an adventure for their own pet to take.

Have a class pet (stuffed animal) that goes home with a different student each night along with a journal to chart their adventures in each home.

H

Heart Words

"Life is for having fun, learning things, and going on adventures. It keeps you on your paws."

"What have you done to me, gorgeous? I've never stood up to anyone as I did for you today."

Ask students to look through the illustrations, and choose which one captures their heart more than words could. Why?

