Magabala Books

Teacher Notes
Alfie's Big Wish
written and illustrated by David Hardy
Teacher Notes prepared by Christina Wheeler

OVERVIEW
When Alfie's friends leave the bush, he feels abandoned and lonely. All of the other kids are much older than him. Who can he play with? After spending the day all alone, he sees a shooting star and decides to make a wish. But will his wish come true?

Alfie's Big Wish is a simple and uplifting story about the power of friendship and the hope that comes from making a wish.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR
DAVID HARDY is a descendant of the Barkindji people of Brewarrina, north west of NSW. He is an accomplished freelance artist and illustrator. For many years he worked in feature film animation with Walt Disney Animation Studios. David now lives in Sydney with his wife and two children.
Alfie's Big Wish follows the success of Alfie's *Search for Destiny* published in 2013.

THEMES
Friendship
* Alfie's greatest wish is to find a soul mate – a friend who truly understands him.

Wishes
* Alfie makes a wish, but has to be patient in order for that wish to eventuate.

Poetry
* Rhythm and rhyme underpin the text.

WRITING STYLE
Alfie's Big Wish is written in third person, past tense. It is suitable for an early childhood audience and newly independent readers. Rhyme is a key feature of the writing style.

LINKS TO THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM
These notes have been written in context with the Australian Curriculum. The appendix highlights a selection of relevant cross-curriculum priorities, general capabilities and content descriptors across a range of year levels that the following activities address.

CULTURAL NOTES

An effective way to include Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander information is to regionalise it within your curriculum. Educating your students about their own local history, bringing to life the Indigenous past of your region and using local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages (wherever possible) within the school and classroom context is a wonderful way to start.

CLASSROOM IDEAS

- Before reading, examine the cover carefully. What might Alfie's big wish be? If you could wish for anything, what would it be? Why?
- Retell *Alfie's Big Wish* in your own words.
- Practise 'reading pictures'. Discuss how the illustrations add more meaning to the written text.
- Write your own sentences about a special friend of yours. Illustrate your sentences to show what it is that makes that friendship so special.
- Use *Alfie's Big Wish* to introduce parts of speech such as verbs, nouns and adjectives. You could also discuss parts of sentences such as capital letters at the beginning of sentences and full stops at the end.
- Use the rhyme in *Alfie's Big Wish* to teach the phonics of words. Count the syllables in each line.
- Have students read parts of this text orally to check for fluency, self-correcting and comprehension.
- Alfie's body language tells us a lot about his emotions. Discuss how the illustrations are used to help convey added meaning.
- Have you ever felt like Alfie? Write a reflection about a time you felt lonely.
- In small groups, discuss what makes a good friend. Share your ideas with the class.
- Alfie's wish takes a while to eventuate. Reflect on a time when a wish of yours took a long time to happen. How does this make the wish even better? What lesson can we learn from this?
- Is Alfie's friendship with Myrna really because of a wish? Discuss the importance of being a good friend yourself to enable meaningful friendships to form and last.
- How important are friends in your life? What makes your friends so special? In what ways are you a good friend?
- Why don't Alfie and Myrna care who wins the games they play? What does this tell us about their friendship?
- Choose your favourite page opening. In small groups, explain what you like about this page.
- Retell *Alfie's Big Wish* as a longer story. Include things that are happening in the illustrations as well.
- Create a story map of *Alfie's Big Wish*, showing where the plot peaks and troughs.
- Perform this story as a class. Invite other classes to watch your dramatization.
- Using rhythm and rhyme, write your own poetry about friendship.
- Read the first book in this series, *Alfie's Search for Destiny*. Compare it with *Alfie's Big Wish*. How are the books similar and different? How has Alfie grown and changed? Represent your ideas on a mind map.

Appendix – Links to the Australian Curriculum

Year Level	English - Language	English - Literature	English - Literacy
F	• Understand that punctuation is a feature of written text different from letters; recognise how capital letters are used for names, and that capital letters and full stops signal the beginning and end of sentences (ACELA1432) • Explore the different contribution of words and images to meaning in stories and informative texts (ACELA1786) • Recognise rhymes, syllables and sounds (phonemes) in spoken words (ACELA1439)	• Identify some features of texts including events and characters and retell events from a text (ACELT1578) • Recognise some different types of literary texts and identify some characteristic features of literary texts, for example beginnings and endings of traditional texts and rhyme in poetry (ACELT1785) • Replicate the rhythms and sound patterns in stories, rhymes, songs and poems from a range of cultures (ACELT1579)	• Deliver short oral presentations to peers (ACELY1647)
Yr 1	• Identify the parts of a simple sentence that represent 'What's happening?', 'What state is being described?', 'Who or what is involved?' and the surrounding circumstances (ACELA1451) • Explore differences in words that represent people, places and things (nouns, including pronouns), happenings and states (verbs), qualities (adjectives) and details such as when, where and how (adverbs) (ACELA1452)	• Listen to, recite and perform poems, chants, rhymes and songs, imitating and inventing sound patterns including alliteration and rhyme (ACELT1585) • Recreate texts imaginatively using drawing, writing, performance and digital forms of communication (ACELT1586)	• Respond to texts drawn from a range of cultures and experiences (ACELY1655) • Read supportive texts using developing phrasing, fluency, contextual, semantic, grammatical and phonic knowledge and emerging text processing strategies, for example prediction, monitoring meaning and rereading (ACELY1659)
Yr 2	• Identify language that can be used for appreciating texts and the qualities of people and things (ACELA1462) • Identify visual representations	• Compare opinions about characters, events and settings in and between texts (ACELT1589) • Identify, reproduce and	• Discuss different texts on a similar topic, identifying similarities and differences between the texts (ACELY1665)

of characters' actions, reactions, speech and thought processes in narratives, and consider how these images add to or contradict or multiply the meaning of accompanying words (ACELA1469)	experiment with rhythmic, sound and word patterns in poems, chants, rhymes and songs (ACELT1592)	• Rehearse and deliver short presentations on familiar and new topics (ACELY1667) • Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning and begin to analyse texts by drawing on growing knowledge of context, language and visual features and print and multimodal text structures (ACELY1670)