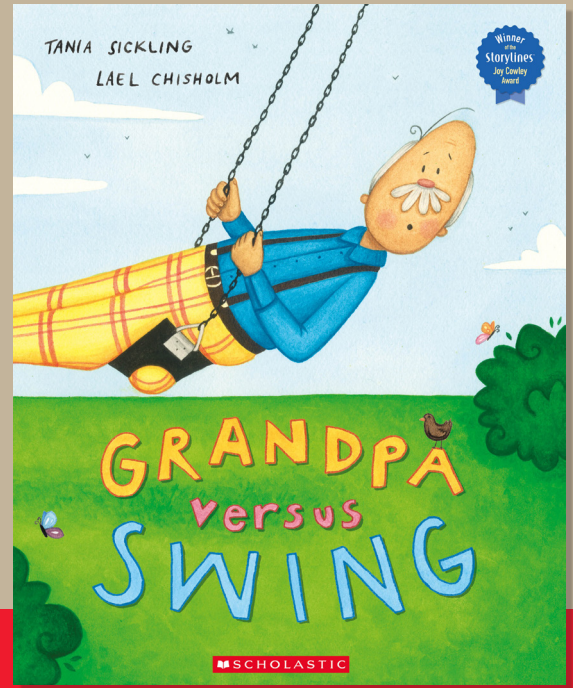


Grandpa versus Swing

By Tania Sickling

Illustrated by Lael Chisholm



• Reading • Writing • Social Studies • Thinking Skills •

Synopsis

Grandpa is a competitive sort. He's the first up the monkey bars, first down the slide, and the last to be found when they're playing hide and seek. When Grandma calls "Dinner!" he's off down the road and first at the table, except for the day when new swings are installed at the playground. Grandpa doesn't care that the swings are made for smaller bottoms. He leaps in and soars high in the sky. However, when he tries to get out, he finds he's stuck. He then erupts into giggles, which sets off the grandchildren, spluttering until their noses run. Then Grandma yells, 'Dinner!' and Grandpa suddenly finds it's no longer hilarious. The children try everything to pull him out but it's not until Grandma turns up with her trusty toolkit to dismantle the seat that he is released. They all go home for tea and Grandpa has a new favourite story to tell.

About the Author

Tania Sickling lives in a seaside village north of Auckland with her husband and three children. She used to teach ESOL and literacy to adult learners. Nowadays, she reads lots of books and likes to play with words. Her first book is *Grandpa versus Swing*, which won the 2020 Joy Cowley Award.

About the Illustrator

Lael Chisholm has loved drawing ever since she was old enough to hold a pencil. After leaving school she entered the 2017 Storylines Gavin Bishop Illustration competition and won, which led her to illustrate *Granny McFlitter, the Champion Knitter* with Gavin Bishop's mentorship. It was shortlisted for the New Zealand Book Awards for Children & Young Adults. Lael has since illustrated another *Granny McFlitter* book and *The Hug Blanket*, which has been shortlisted in the 2021 Children's Book Awards.



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Writing and Illustration Style

A hilarious picture book that rejoices in a playful grandfather's good-natured competitiveness. It also serves to illustrate the old adage 'Look before you leap!' – literally. Written in rhyme (a-b-c-b) with stanzas of 4-8 lines per page. The author has used alliteration and assonance (*bounded and bounced / featherweight fighter / floundered and flounced*). She has also used a mix of description, dialogue and narration to tell the story in the past tense. The main character is the grandpa, but the story is narrated by the grandchildren. The hero of the story, however, is the grandmother who saves the day at the end. The setting begins at the grandparents' house, and moves to the nearby playground.

Illustrator Lael Chisholm has created the artwork in watercolour paint. Some pictures are full double-page spreads, while others are vignettes alongside single-page spreads. Text is displayed on white space, in speech bubbles or over the pictures. The brightly coloured pictures are stylised with expressive dots for eyes, button noses, small mouths, and oval-shaped heads.

Shared Learning and Discussion Points

During the shared sessions, encourage students to ask questions to clarify their understanding of characters and events. Have them make predictions, inferences and relate to their own experiences. Read the passages aloud and have students read alongside or by themselves.

ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

Look at the cover and read the blurb.

- Where is this story set? How can you tell?
- Who is the main character in the story?
- What does the word 'versus' mean? What might it mean is going to happen in this story?

Comprehension questions

- What do you learn about the main character from the first paragraph? (p.3)
- What activities does Grandpa like to do with his grandchildren? (p.4)
- Who do you think is calling out, 'Dinner!' (p.5)
- When Grandpa races for the swings, what do you predict will happen? (p.6)
- Why are the grandchildren worried about the swings? (p.7)
- Why do you think Grandpa takes no heed of their warnings? (p.8)
- What do you think the author means when she says, '...by then he'd committed'? (p.9)
- The grandpa obviously has a lot of fun swinging for 30 minutes but what do you think the grandchildren might be feeling as they watch him? (pp.10-11)
- Why is Grandpa jiggling, wiggling and hopping? (p.11)
- Can you find some examples of alliteration and assonance on this page? (p.13)
- When you look at the expressions of all the characters on this page, what do you think they are feeling? (p.14)
- Why has Grandpa got the giggles, and what often happens when you start giggling? (p.15)
- What does 'We all did our best to stay solemn' mean? Why do the children try to be solemn? (p.16)
- What burst uncontrollably and how do the author and illustrator show that? (pp.16-17)
- Name some of the sound words used on this page. (p.19)
- How do the author and illustrator show that Grandma has to call very loudly for the grandchildren and grandfather to hear? (p.20)
- Why does the grandfather suddenly think the 'swing thing's no longer hilarious'? (p.21)
- How do the children try to help Grandpa get off the swing? (pp.22-23)
- What does 'a beacon of hope' mean? Who is it? (p.25)
- What does it say about Grandma that she has her own toolkit? (p.27)
- What does 'begoggled' and 'begloved' mean? (p.28) How does Grandma rescue Grandpa? (p.29)
- How did everyone show their appreciation? (pp.30-31)
- How does the author end the story with a positive note? (p.32)



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ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1: RHYME TIME!

Discuss the rhyme scheme in *Grandpa versus Swing* (a-b-c-b). Encourage your students to identify the rhymes. Create class lists of rhyming pairs. Divide the words into pairs with the same spelling pattern (e.g. slide/hide) and pairs with different spelling patterns (e.g. power/hour). Encourage the students to think of more words to add to each pair (e.g. slide, hide, ride, tide). Display the lists where the students can see them. Then model creating a new sentence pair using rhymes from the lists. The sentences could be about Grandpa or a topic you are studying. Encourage the students to write their own sentence pairs, which can then be shared with the class. They could also be illustrated and displayed on the wall.

ACTIVITY 2: CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Ask the students to consider Grandpa's character and then fill in the chart, giving evidence from the story.

Describe Grandpa's Character	Grandpa's traits	Show evidence from the book
	Competitiveness	p4 He's first up the monkey bars, and first down the slide.

ACTIVITY 3: WHAT IF?

Ask the students, 'What if you were Grandpa, stuck in the swing?' Ask them to write about their experience and then present it to the class in character. Some students might prefer to be Grandma or one of the grandchildren and write about the situation from their point-of-view.

ACTIVITY 4: STATIC IMAGE

Design an alternative front cover for the book. The front cover needs to include the book's title, and names of the author and illustrator. Include a dynamic illustration showing a scene from the book. Write the name of the book lengthways down the spine. Then write a new back-cover blurb.

Written by Maria Gill



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