

Jørn's Magnificent Imagination

AUTHOR

CORAL VASS

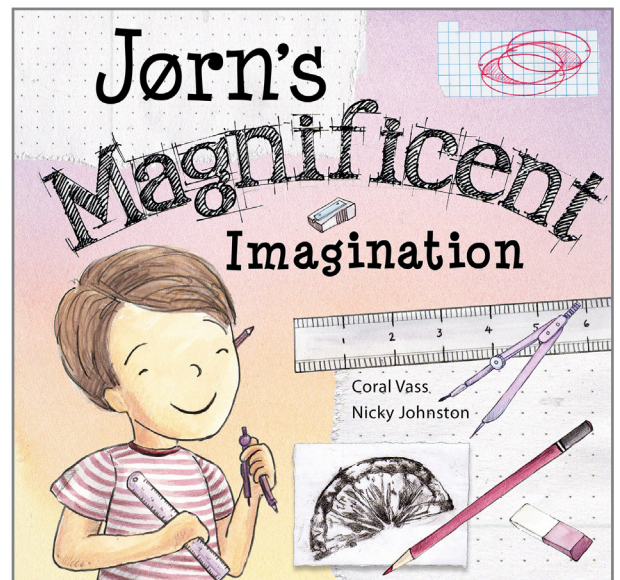
ILLUSTRATOR

NICKY JOHNSTON

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower Primary



SYNOPSIS

Was it a sailboat, a seashell, a swan or an orange peel that inspired Jørn to design Australia's most recognisable building? In this gorgeously illustrated story, we follow Jørn through childhood as he discovers his love of building and creating, gathering ideas from everything around himself. When he grows bigger, so do his ideas, and something begins to take shape... can you guess what it might be?

Jørn's story is about embracing dreams, believing in your own abilities, and the power of new ideas. Written in honour of the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Sydney Opera House, it is also a topical springboard for educators and families into how the iconic landmark came to be. In celebrating the incredibly talented Jørn Utzon, it shows children that there are no limits to what they might achieve if they follow their dreams.

In a world of screens and busyness, *Jørn's Magnificent Imagination* is an important reminder of the joy in taking the time to dream and create, a reminder which might just benefit children and their carers alike. Charming and heart-warming, it will enthrall and inspire young readers, encouraging them to look at the world around them and use their imagination to its full potential.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Coral Vass is an award-winning Australian children's author who has been writing books for over ten years. She is also an ambassador for Reading Out of Poverty and is passionate about giving all children an equal opportunity to read.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Nicky Johnston has several bestselling titles published in Australia and overseas. As a primary teacher and acclaimed presenter, Nicky's aim is to inspire young children to use their imagination and develop their own ideas.

THEMES

- Imagination and ideas
- Iconic Australian landmark—The Sydney Opera House
- Embracing and believing in dreams
- Overcoming obstacles
- STEAM concepts

STUDY NOTES**BEFORE READING**

- Look at the cover of *Jørn's Magnificent Imagination*. What do you notice? What does it make you wonder? What do you think this story might be about? How does it make you feel?
- Who do you think Jørn is? Do you think this story might be based on real life or imagined events? What makes you think this way?

DURING READING

- What do the first few pages tell you about Jørn? How does he go about collecting ideas? What do you think he will do with these ideas?
- Where does Jørn find materials to use for his ideas and creations?
- Do you think Jørn can use his ideas for real structures, although they might seem unusual or unrealistic? Why or why not?
- Have a look at the diagrams and drawings for Jørn's new idea. Can you think of a structure that he might be planning?
- What other clues in the illustrations tell you what and where this structure might be built?
- Why do you think some people didn't like Jørn's design?
- Do you know the name of this famous building?

AFTER READING

- What did you learn about Jørn Utzon? What were his strengths? What are some personality traits about him that you can infer? Refer to the timeline of his life and work at the end of the book.
- What is the main idea of the story? What are the important themes or messages in the book?
- How did you feel about Jørn's project (ie. surprised, delighted, inspired, determined, excited, etc)?
- Why do you think Jørn wanted to design and build the Sydney Opera House? What was the problem, or solution to a problem, he was trying to resolve/achieve?
- What sorts of challenges did Jørn face along the way? How do you think he overcame these?
- How did Jørn's first ideas help him to develop something 'magnificent'? Can you explain his process?
- Do you think it mattered that some people didn't like Jørn's design at first? How do you think people's opinions have made an impact on how the world views this iconic landmark today?
- Thinking about where Jørn found his ideas (in nature), where might you look to find your own ideas? How could you use ideas found in nature to inspire projects in science, art, writing or engineering? Students could turn and talk to a partner about one idea or object using the 'I see, I think, I wonder' approach. Will they plan to create, experiment or write about a new, 'magnificent' idea?
- What do you like about the illustrations in the book? How do they show all the aspects, thoughts and ideas that went into the design of the Sydney Opera House (and Jørn's other projects)? What kinds of media, colours and techniques has the illustrator used to reflect the 'design' nature and era of the story?
- Make a list of terms in the text relating to engineering/architecture/building. How many can you find? Can you add your own related terms to your list?
- What is meant by the term, 'masterpiece'? How was Jørn's design for The Sydney Opera House a masterpiece? What does 'iconic' mean? Brainstorm other iconic landmarks within and outside of Australia.
- Discuss the sentiment by Jørn Utzon: 'The architect's duty to society is to bring joy to the people from the surroundings they create.'
- What else would you like to learn about Jørn Utzon and the Sydney Opera House?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

ENGLISH

- Locate and write down engineering/architecture/building terms from the book. Write the selected terms around a building shape and then colour and cut out the shape to display.
 - Discuss and write or draw the meanings of some of these terms.
- Sort and write relevant nouns (names), verbs (action words) and adjectives (describing words), from words found in the book. Then use a collection of these and their own adjectives to label and describe a diagram showing parts of the Sydney Opera House.
- Write a narrative imagining you were a young engineer/architect like Jørn and collected ideas for a magnificent masterpiece. It can be as realistic or unusually imaginary as you like! Think about:
 - Where would you find ideas?
 - What would you design and build?
 - What would be the challenges/problems you face along the way? How will these be resolved?
 - Who will help?
- Create a poster, travel brochure or digital presentation with the collation of facts about the Sydney Opera House, or another iconic Australian landmark. Be sure to include a title, enticing and interesting historical and cultural facts, diagrams, pictures, a map and captions for the report.
- Complete a Venn Diagram to compare the similarities and differences between two different iconic Australian landmarks. Think about their appearances, purpose, special features, etc.

Comprehension

- Who was in the story?
- Where do the events take place?
- Where did Jørn find his ideas?
- What happened after his design won the competition?
- When did Jørn's masterpiece begin construction, and when was it complete?
- What are the differences and similarities between Jørn's initial ideas and the final structure?
- What made the architects decide to proceed with Jørn's design for the Sydney Opera House?
- How did the new Sydney Opera House make an impact on the world and for Australia?
- Why was it important for Jørn to pursue his 'magnificent' idea? How did his imagination help in making his idea a reality?
- Why is the Sydney Opera House an iconic landmark? How does it bring people together and what is its purpose?
- What are some of the features of the Sydney Opera House? Draw a diagram of this building, or use your imagination to draw a design of your own 'masterpiece'.
- Compare the design and patterns of the Sydney Opera House with Jørn's ideas found in nature.
- What ideas can you think of for designing another magnificent masterpiece with your imagination and inspiration from nature?
- Do you agree that the Sydney Opera House is a magnificent masterpiece? Why or why not?
- What is the most important thing the story is teaching us?
- What do you think about the way Jørn found and developed his ideas? How did he learn from the process?

MATHEMATICS

- The life and work of Jørn Utzon is represented as a timeline at the back of the book. Use this as a scaffold to help students complete a timeline of their own life, to show the chronological years from birth to now including descriptions of major events, milestones and achievements. Include any pictures and diagrams for each year.

HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

- From the students' research, investigate and discuss what has been discovered about Jørn Utzon and the Sydney Opera House. Some further questions and studies can include:

- Where and when was Jørn Utzon born?
- Locate Copenhagen, Denmark on a world map.
- In what year was the Sydney Opera House opened?
- Where is the Sydney Opera House located? What is the name of the land? Find it on a map of Australia, and in closer proximity within Sydney, New South Wales. Mark some other geographical features and landmarks around the area.
- What is the purpose of the Sydney Opera House? What famous history can be uncovered?
- What is the history of the area?
- What does it mean to be listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site?
- How does this building make a positive impact on Australia?
- Are there any environmental or social considerations for preserving the area around the Sydney Opera House?
- Make a class mural of the Sydney Opera House with music notes, shapes, patterns and pictures including facts and ideas on involving the community/tourists/events and keeping the area sustainable.

VISUAL ARTS

- Use a range of recycled paper and materials, and items found in nature to create a patterned collage (of the Sydney Opera House or another structure). Materials can include old magazines, newspaper, coloured and patterned paper, pieces of cardboard or fabric, leaf / shell / orange peel rubbings, and so on. Students might like to try various techniques such as sketching, painting, rubbings, etching, textiles, etc.