

Pepper Masalah and the Temple of Cats

AUTHOR

ROSANNE HAWKE

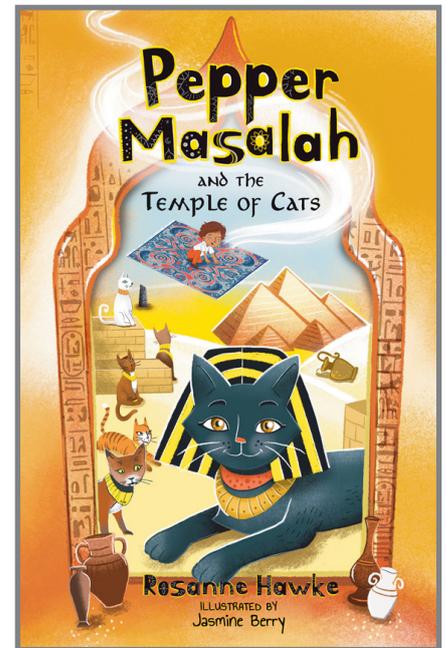
ILLUSTRATOR

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower to Mid Primary



SYNOPSIS

Pepper Masalah's flying carpet lands in Ancient Egypt where Pepper and Zam are taken to a temple full of cats by a girl called Tabia. Pepper is in danger as the people want to make her into a mummy as she is so special. To make it worse the carpet has floated away on the Nile and Pepper and Zam are stuck in time.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rosanne Hawke has been a teacher, a creative writing lecturer and a volunteer/aidworker in Pakistan and the UAE from 1981 to 1991. She spent two years in Al Ain, UAE (near the Omani border) between 1983–1985. She returned to Pakistan in 2006 on an Asialink Fellowship. She began writing in Pakistan and has over 35 books published. Many of her books are set in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Azad Kashmir or about Afghans and Pakistanis in Australia. These include *Shahana*, *Marrying Aameera*, *Beyond Borders* and *Taj and the Camel Trek*. She lives in rural South Australia; loves reading and cats, and has been kissed by a camel.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Jasmine Berry grew up in beautiful Albany, Western Australia. She has been drawing to impress the other kids, since she was old enough to hold a colouring pencil. But lately, she crafts these exciting and magical worlds with her computer, iPad and many coffees.

She lives in Perth with her husband and with two adorable cats, and a rather large collection of succulents.

You can find out more about her at the following Instagram: [@jasmineberryart](https://www.instagram.com/jasmineberryart); Twitter: [@jasmineberryart](https://twitter.com/jasmineberryart); And at her website: www.jasmineberryart.com.

THEMES

- Ancient Egyptian Culture
- Geography of Egypt/The Nile
- Friendship and kindness
- Bombay/British shorthair cats
- Courage
- Fantasy/adventure in history

STUDY NOTES**BEFORE READING**

- Show the cover to the class and ask the students what they think the book might be about.
- Read the back cover blurb. Does this give them more of an idea of what the book could be about?
- Ask students if they can recognise the setting of this story from the cover image.

WHILE READING

- Ask students if Pepper or Zam remind them of anyone they know: a friend, a sibling, their pet, themselves perhaps.
- Ask the class to discuss what their first impression was of the following characters:
 - Pepper Masalah
 - Zam.
- How does Pepper change over the course of the story? Does Zam change too?
- Ask students how they perceive Pepper and Zam's situation. Do they come through in the end?
- Pepper's flying carpet has taken them somewhere new. Where (or when) have they landed this time?
- Pepper is a very clever cat with the ability to talk to Zam. For those with pet cats, when have they shown their smarts? Ask students what they think their cats would say?
- So far, Pepper and Zam have been to the Arabian Peninsula and Egypt. Where do the class think they'll go next? Where do the students want to see the characters go?
- Pepper and Zam are in Ancient Egypt. Do any students know any fun facts about Ancient Egypt? Share some facts with the class. What are some of their favourite ancient civilisations?
- Ask students if they had their own flying carpet, where would they want it to take them.

AFTER READING

- Ancient Egyptians used to revere cats. Research why this was so.
- Do you think the crocodile could be dangerous?
- Do you think the water in the river has affected the carpet? In what way?
- Only Tabia and Mosi can understand Pepper and Zam, like Hamood could in the first book. Why do you think this is happening?
- Sefu says Pepper is sleek and strong, black with apricot eyes. What breed of cat do you think Pepper might be? Can you find a picture of how she may look?
- Why is Pepper so special to Sefu? Why does he want Pepper and the carpet?
- Why did the Ancient Egyptians make mummies from people and some animals that died?
- Why did the Ancient Egyptian cats wear necklaces? Do you think modern cats would wear necklaces? Why or why not? Could it be dangerous?
- Why does Zam have the skill to climb up the outside of the temple?
- How are Pepper and Zam kind to the temple cats?
- Pepper Masalah's Cat Fact Files are different in this book than in Pepper's first book. Why do you think this is?
- What new information in the news section gives more understanding about the carpet?

Discussion Questions and Activities

- Discover where Egypt is. Draw a map. What countries are nearby? How far away is it from Australia?
- Read various books on Ancient Egypt and its people. How do they live, what do they wear, what do they eat? Google 'Ancient Egypt for Kids' and find some facts that interest you.
- The Ancient Egyptians loved garlic. They also ate green vegetables, lentils, figs, dates, onions, fish, birds, eggs, cheese, and butter. Their staple foods were bread and beer. Bread was actually so important in Egyptian society they had fourteen hieroglyphs (written picture words) for bread. They even had a type of flat bread. Breads were sweetened with dates, honey, and figs or dates. They also ate grapes. Try making an Egyptian platter with flat bread, dates, figs, grapes and cheese.
- The Ancient Egyptians were clever. Why do you think they drank barley beer and not water from The Nile?

- Choose an interesting cat fact from the back of the book. Research it to find out more about it and create a poster showing all you've learned.
- See if you can discover more cat facts not already provided in the book.
- What would you like to do if you could go back to Ancient Egypt? Where would you go and who would you meet?
- Choose an animal to be the main character in a story. Where will the story be set? What problem will the character have to solve? Will the animal talk?
- What sort of life do you think Mosi and the other cats are having now that they are free from the temple? Write a poem or paint a picture.
- Would you like to go back in time? Which historical period would you choose? Would you go on a carpet or in a time machine? Who goes with you? Write a story about what happens when you get there.
- Ancient Egyptian mummies would be completely wrapped up in linen bandages. Using a roll of toilet paper instead, compete against your class in pairs for who can make the best mummy in the shortest time.