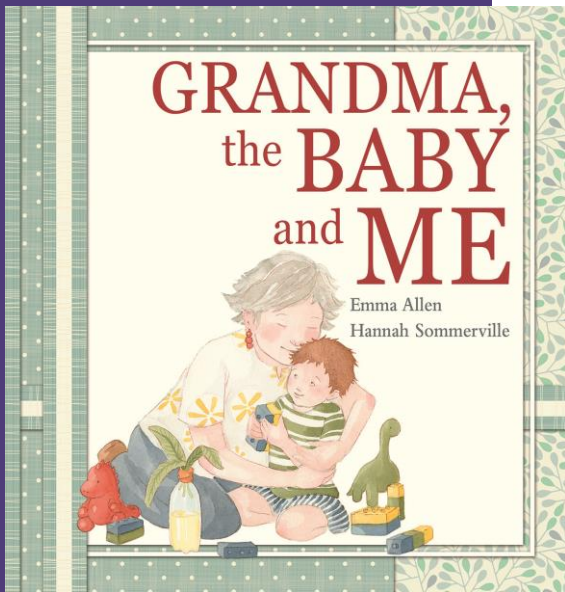


# Teachers' Notes

## Grandma, the Baby and Me

Written by Emma Allen  
Illustrated by Hannah Sommerville

Teachers' Notes by Rae Carlyle



### OMNIBUS BOOKS

Category	Picture Book
Title	Grandma, the Baby and Me
Author	Emma Allen
Illustrator	Hannah Sommerville
Publication date	September 2014
Format	250 x 240 mm
Extent	32 pp
Binding	Hardback
Printing	Colour
ISBN	978 1 86291 873 3

#### Previous publications

**Emma Allen**  
*The Terrible Suitcase*  
(Omnibus Books, 2012)

### Contents

Introduction.....	2
About the Author .....	2
About the Illustrator.....	2
Activities .....	3

## Introduction

---

Things are changing in Henry's house. Grandma has been staying there and looking after him, but now Mum and Dad are coming home from the hospital with the new baby. When they arrive Grandma says 'Here's trouble.' Henry wonders what she means, but over the next few days he finds out. Adjusting to having a new baby in the house is not easy for Henry, but somehow his Grandma, and knowing that he is special to her, helps make everything better.

## About the Author

---

Emma Allen is the author of *The Terrible Suitcase*, which won the Early Childhood category in the 2013 CBCA Book of the Year Awards. It was also shortlisted in its category for the WA Premier's Literary Awards in the same year. *Grandma, the Baby and Me* is only Emma's second picture book.

As a trained speech pathologist specialising in early childhood, Emma decided to follow her passion and study literature, and graduated from the University of Canberra in 2012. She now combines writing with looking after her three children.

Emma lives in Canberra with her husband Richard and their family.

## About the Illustrator

---

Hannah Sommerville was brought up in a household where creative pursuits were highly valued. Having always enjoyed telling stories through pictures, Hannah drew diligently during her formative years before earning a Bachelor of Creative Arts (Visual Arts and Graphic Design) at the University of Wollongong.

She now lives with her husband on the South Coast of New South Wales, where she is focusing on illustration while raising our two young children.

Hannah works primarily in watercolour and pen. This is her first picture book.

Hannah's website and blog can be found at [www.hannahsommerville.com](http://www.hannahsommerville.com)

# Activities

---

## English

When Mum and Dad arrive at Henry's house with their new baby, Grandma says 'Here's trouble.' Henry says it too, but 'wondered what we meant.'

- 1) As a class discuss:
  - What do you think Henry's grandma means when she says 'Here's trouble'?
  - Why do you think she said it?
  - What else could she have meant (but probably didn't)?
  - What are all the ways that the baby did turn out to be 'trouble' for Henry?

'Here's trouble' is a saying, a common phrase that people can use to mean different things. Henry's grandma wasn't saying that the baby was trouble, but was saying that when a new baby arrives in a family, things can be difficult and different for a while. There are a lot of other common sayings where the meaning of the words is not exactly the same as the meaning of the phrase. Some examples are:

- What's up?
- I had a blast!
- Catch you later.
- Take a seat.
- She's a barrel of laughs.
- Goodness me.

- 2) Can you think of any other sayings to add to the list?
- 3) What are some of the things that your grandparents or older friends or relatives say? (Try to think of things that you don't usually hear people your own age say.)
  - Choose a phrase or saying from the list and draw a picture to illustrate it. For 'I had a blast' you might draw someone holding a toy that is exploding or blasting off, or you might draw someone having a lot of fun. You could even draw both!
  - As a class, share your pictures. Describe what is happening in your picture to the class and see who can guess which phrase you illustrated.
  - Arrange the pictures in a wall display, grouped around the phrase they are illustrating.

In the story, Henry's grandma talks to them on the phone, but she also writes a letter to his mother. When Henry's mother gets the letter and tells Henry that Grandma will be there tomorrow, Henry feels much happier. Even when there isn't a new baby in the house, or someone coming for a visit, writing and receiving letters can be fun, especially when they are to or from someone we care about.

- 4) Write a letter of your own. It can be to someone who is in your class, or to a friend or family member who is important to you, and whom you don't see every day. If you write to someone not in your class, you will need to ask at home for help with finding out what their address is.

Before writing your letter, discuss as a class:

- How do you start a letter? Which words should you use and how are they arranged on the page?
- What sort of things might you say in a letter? You can tell the person you are writing to tell them what you have been doing and what is happening in your life. You can also ask questions about what they are doing and how they are feeling.
- What sort of letter would you most like to receive? Think of ways to make the letter you write one that makes the person to whom you have written feel happy about receiving it.
- What else might you want to include in your letter? (Pictures or photographs are always nice.)
- How should you finish your letter? Which words should you use, and how are they arranged on the page?

After writing your letter, discuss as a class:

- How do we send letters once they have been written?
- What do you need to write on the envelope? Why do we have postcodes, and what is the stamp for?
- Where do you post the letter once it is stamped and addressed?
- How does the letter get to where you want it to go?
- How long will the letter take to arrive, and why do you think the answer might be different for letters sent to different places?

If possible, go for a walk to the nearest post office or post box, and post your letter!

## Creative Activities

- 5) Write a short story or poem about a new baby joining your family. If you are the youngest in your family, you will have to imagine what it was like for your parents and any older brothers or sisters you have!
- 6) All families are different. Some are large and some are small. Some live all together and some have family members who live far away. Paint a picture of your family and include any close friends or pets that are important to you.
- 7) Babies need a lot of help and looking after. Bigger kids can do lots of things by themselves.
- As a class, make a list of as many things as you can think of that you can do now, but which babies can't do.
  - As a class make a big book with the format 'When Susie was a baby she couldn't \_\_\_\_\_, but now she can \_\_\_\_\_ all by herself!' Each child can choose an activity he or she can do now and illustrate it.

- 8) Henry's grandma is special to him. Not everyone has a grandma, but most people have someone in their lives who makes them feel special and loved.
  - Write and illustrate a short paragraph about a special person in your life and how they make you feel.
- 9) Ask the parents of someone in the class who has a small baby in their family if they can bring the baby to visit the class and talk about some of the things babies like and need. Be sure to think about questions you would like to ask them are before they visit.
  - After they have left, as a class make a giant card or thank you note for them, saying what your favourite part of the visit was.
- 10) Make a family of paper dolls. Use wool for their hair and scraps of cloth or coloured paper for their clothes. As a challenge, make extra sets of clothes that you can dress and undress them with.

## Health

Henry finds life with the new baby in the house to be difficult to adjust to. His mother is distracted, everyone pays the baby a lot of attention, and when his sister teases him he ends up pushing his friend over.

When he tells his mother how he is feeling, she comforts him, and his grandma arranges to visit again. Both these things help him feel better.

- 11) Why did Henry push his friend?
- 12) Why do you think Henry's stomach hurt?
- 13) As a class, discuss some of the things you do when you are upset about something or finding things difficult.
  - What are some of the things that the people around you do that help you feel better?
  - What are some things you can do to help your friends or family feel better when they are sad or unhappy?
  - In small groups, create a short comic strip showing someone who is sad, and how someone else can help them.

## Maths

- 14) There are three children in Henry's family now: his big sister Josie, Henry himself and the baby. How many children are there in your family?
  - On an eighth of an A4 piece of paper, use a marker to write the number of children in your family.
  - Draw pictures of the children in your family around your number.
  - As a class, stick the numbers to a large sheet of paper or cardboard to make a column graph.
  - Discuss the graph. What is the most common number of children in each family? What is the least common? What is the largest number of children?