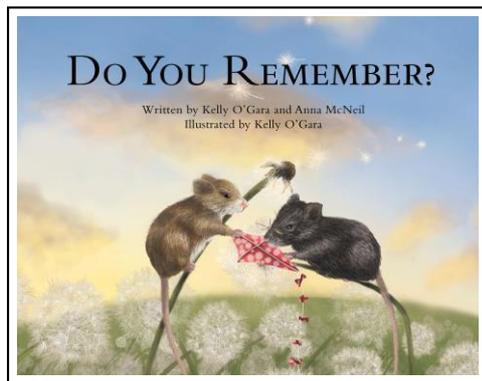




Teacher's Notes and Ideas

Prepared by Wombat Books



Do You Remember?

by Kelly O'Gara and Anna McNeil

Illustrator: Kelly O'Gara

ISBN: 9781925139242

Recommended Retail: \$24.99

Recommended Age: preschool, early school age

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Introduction

Do You Remember? is a story about a child who becomes confused as their grandparent begins to act differently; forgetting little things at first and eventually forgetting the people they love around them. The book explores the changes experienced by a loved one who is suffering from dementia and provides a simple explanation of the condition to help children understand what is happening. It focuses on the loving relationship between children and their grandparents and the importance of spending time together, even through times of change.

Following the story are a series of simple tips which provide ways for children to spend time with loved ones who have dementia.

Story Summary

A little boy spends time with his grandma in the fields. They are close and she often shares stories about her life with him. The boy visits his grandma's house and they often watch the mist rise together in the mornings. Over time, however, the boy begins to notice changes in his grandma's behaviour; she is hiding things in strange places around the house, leaving the tap running, confused about the time and finding it difficult to read.

The boy is unsure why she is acting differently. Eventually the grandma starts to become more confused and gets lost as she tries to find her late husband, and the boy becomes fearful.

One day she is taken to a new home (a nursing home) and the boy becomes more confused than ever. He feels so lonely and doesn't know why she has left him. His mother explains she needs to be cared for as she has a condition called dementia. She gives him a journal and he begins to draw pictures of the stories his grandma used to tell him. He gets carried away and begins painting not only the book but also the table, down onto the floor and out the door. He paints a mural along the trees based on the stories of her life.

The boy visits his grandma at the nursing home and although fearful at first, realises his grandma is still his grandma and is also lonely. He spends time with her, reading her books in the sunshine and takes her for walks along past the mural of her life. Some days she remembers the stories, other times she doesn't but enjoys the walk.

Eventually the grandma passes away, but the boy realises that she will always live on through his memories of her, and through the memories painted in the mural for all to enjoy.

Key Learning Areas

Changes that occur within a person who has dementia.

Feelings experienced by a child who is noticing the changes in a loved one but doesn't understand.

Ways to continue spending time with someone who has dementia.

Values Addressed/Themes

Relationships

Memories

Family

Confusion and loneliness

Love

Related Text/Resources

<https://fightdementia.org.au>

https://fightdementia.org.au/sites/default/files/helpsheets/Helpsheet-AboutDementia01-WhatIsDementia_english.pdf

https://fightdementia.org.au/sites/default/files/helpsheets/Helpsheet-AboutDementia04-InformationForFamilyAndFriends_english.pdf

http://www.alz.org/documents/national/brochure_childrenteens.pdf

About the Author and Illustrator



Kelly O'Gara is a Sydney based illustrator and Visual Arts teacher with a passion for everything creative. She recently completed a double degree in Bachelor of Design/Art Education at the College of Fine Arts UNSW, and loves experimenting with both traditional and contemporary drawing methods. Her first children's book, *Do You Remember?* was painted digitally, although she also uses watercolour and coloured pencils to create her drawings. With her teaching background, Kelly emphasises the power and importance of imagery and believes children's books play a vital role in a child's development.

She enjoys the unusual and the interesting, and is particularly inspired by the natural world.

About the Co-Author



Anna McNeil was born in Boston, America and currently works and lives in Sydney as a Registered Nurse. She enjoys travelling and plans to spend a year overseas in Europe and America.

From an early age she was always interested in creative writing and excelled in English at school. Despite this she decided to pursue a career in Nursing. She recently completed a Bachelor of Nursing at the University of Sydney and hopes to complete a Diploma in Midwifery in the future.

Do You Remember? co-written and illustrated by Kelly

O'Gara, is Anna's first picture book.

Discussion Questions

- Does anyone have memories of times they have spent with their grandparent? What happened in your memory?
- Who sometimes struggles to remember things? Do you think this is different from someone who forgets things because they have dementia?
- Can anyone explain what dementia is?
- After reading the story, can anyone tell me some things that can happen to someone who has dementia?
- Does anyone know someone who has dementia?
- Do you think dementia is contagious?
- How did the little mouse feel when he started noticing changes in his grandma? Have you ever felt like that before?
- Why did the little mouse start painting pictures? What were the pictures of?
- Why was the grandma mouse moved to a new home eventually? What type of home was it?
- Does anyone have a relative who is in a nursing home? Do you know how they feel about it?
- What did the little mouse realise when he finally built up the courage to visit his grandma at the nursing home? Did the grandma enjoy his visit?
- What did the little mouse do with the grandma when he visited her?
- After reading the tips at the end of the story, what are some things you could do with your grandparent?
- What are some things you learned from reading this book?

Activities

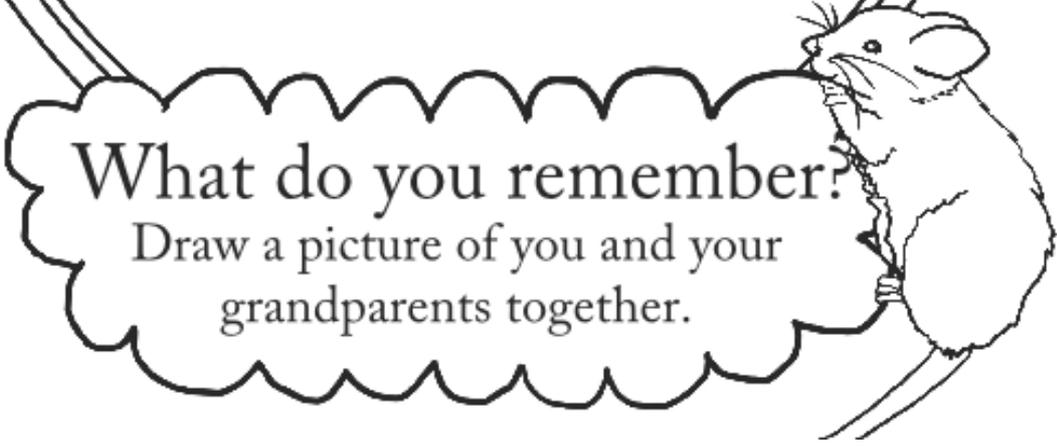
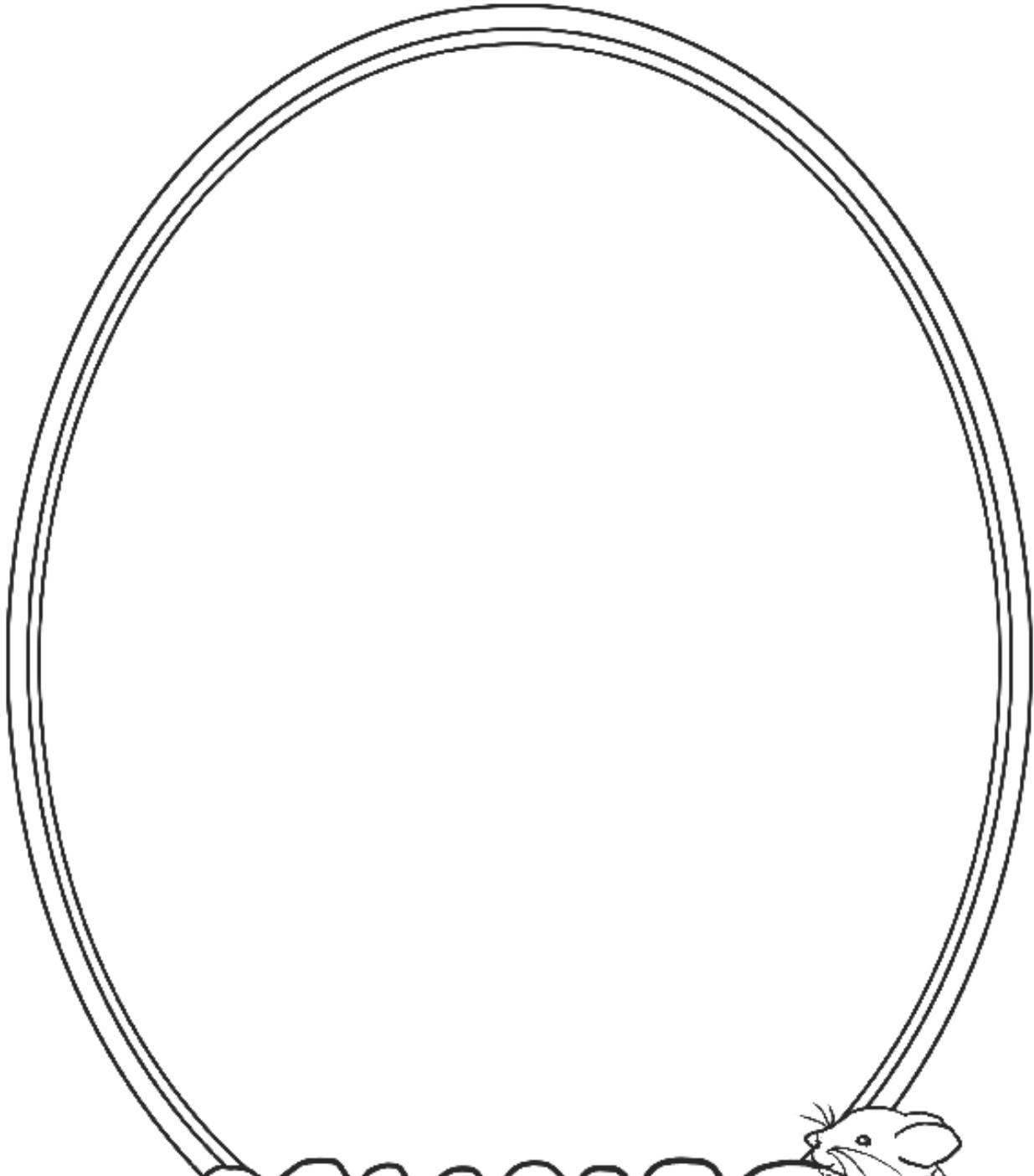
Create a scrapbook of family memories:

Encourage children to bring in family photos and help them arrange the images in a blank book. Use coloured papers, paints, stickers and stamps to decorate the pages and write small blurbs about who is in the photographs, where they are and what they are doing.

Children can take this scrapbook when visiting their grandparent and look through it with them. Encourage the children to talk to them about the memories in the photographs, even if their grandparent may not remember some of the details.

Recall and draw exercise: (see below for provided drawing page)

Ask the children to think of a memory they have of a time they spent with their grandparent/s. Encourage them to draw a picture of this memory and the activity they were doing. Following this, either help them write down next to the image, or discuss as a class what happened in the memory and how they felt at the time. Get them to think of some stories their grandparent used to tell them and share as a class.



What do you remember?
Draw a picture of you and your
grandparents together.

