

# Wombat Books

Stories you'll want to share

## Wombat Books Teacher's Notes

### Ruby Wishfingers: Toad-ally Magic



Deborah Kelly / Leigh Hedstrom

ISBN: 9781925139631

Recommended retail: \$9.99

Reading level: Ages 6-10

Wombat Books, PO Box 1519, Capalaba BC Qld 4157 [www.wombatbooks.com.au](http://www.wombatbooks.com.au)  
07-32451938 [info@wombatbooks.com.au](mailto:info@wombatbooks.com.au)

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## Introduction

*Ruby Wishfingers* is an exciting new adventure series for children aged 6-10. With a cast of loveable characters, each book in the series takes the reader on a thrilling adventure with plenty of twists, turns and humour along the way.

*Ruby Wishfingers: Toad-ally Magic* incorporates several important themes that are relevant to all children: Imagination, Wants Vs Needs, Family Relationships, Family Origins, Being Different, Actions and Consequences, Family Celebrations and Environmental Issues.

*Ruby Wishfingers* is suitable for primary school aged children and can be used to support several *Key Learning Areas* across the Australian Curriculum including English, Creative Arts, Personal Development, Human Society and its Environment and Science and Technology.

### **Story Summary:** *Ruby Wishfingers: Toad-Ally Magic*

Ruby Wishfingers is an ordinary girl with the extraordinary ability to wish for whatever she wants just by blowing on the tips of her fingers.

In *Ruby Wishfingers: Skydancer's Escape*, Ruby learnt to be careful what she wishes for, but now she is about to learn another important lesson about wishes and magic.

In *Ruby Wishfingers: Toad-ally Magic* Ruby's fingertips are tingling with magic again and her head is full of plans for the holidays. Then Mum announces that Ruby's horrible little toad of a cousin is coming to stay. But some problems can't be wished away. Ruby's wish for her cousin to turn into a real toad breaks magic's most important rule. And when rules are broken—especially magic ones---there are unexpected consequences!

Join Ruby and her little brother Jellybean on another extraordinary adventure exploring a winter wonderland, experiencing life as a slimy toad and finding out what happens when magic falls into the wrong paws!

## Key Learning Areas

*Ruby Wishfingers: Toad-ally Magic* is a useful book to support the following Key Learning Areas across the Australian Curriculum.

English: In foundation to grade 2 of the Australian curriculum, children use literary texts to relate to their lives and form a growing appreciation of story. With the fun, family element in *Ruby Wishfingers*, the following curriculum can be explored:

(ACELT1575) Recognize that texts are created by authors who tell stories and share experiences that may be similar or different to the students' own experiences.

(ACELT1577) Respond to texts, identifying favorite stories, authors and illustrators.

(ACELA1460) Understand that spoke, visual and written forms of language are different modes of communication with different features and their use varies according to the audience, purpose, context and cultural background.

## Themes

The following themes are addressed in *Ruby Wishfingers: Toad-ally Magic*.

**Imagination:** The sky's the limit! Especially when it comes to wishes. *Ruby Wishfingers: Toad-ally Magic* will stimulate children's' imaginations as they ponder what they would wish for and how they might have dealt with some of the problems Ruby faced in her adventure.

**Want Vs Need:** What's important to you? *Ruby Wishfingers: Toad-ally Magic* provides children with the opportunity to think about the things they might wish for. Children can compare the things they want vs the things they need, and what they value most. Sharing these ideas can lead to discussions of how these values differ between people of different genders, ages, cultures and backgrounds.

**Family Relationships:** Ruby has an especially strong bond with her grandmother, which provides an example of a positive grandparent/grandchild relationship. *Ruby Wishfingers: Toad-ally Magic* can provide children with the opportunity to strengthen their ties with older generations within their own family, by encouraging them to ask questions about the lives of those in previous generations. *Ruby Wishfingers: Toad-ally Magic* also explores the relationship

between Ruby and her cousin Todd and how this changes dramatically through the course of the story. This might encourage children to discuss the relationship they have with other members of their extended family, for example cousins.

**Family Origins:** Every family has a story. In *Ruby Wishfingers* we get to know not only Ruby but her whole family across more than one generation. This is an opportunity to discuss families and their histories and to encourage children to ask questions of their own parents, grandparents or extended family. Ruby Wishfingers got her magic from her Great, Great, Great, Great Grandfather Wishfingers, the magician: a story Ruby is told by her Granny. Children can discover more about their family's origins and significance of names, and perhaps even look into family trees.

**Being Different:** Differences are to be celebrated! The story encourages children to think about and discuss what they consider to be ordinary and extraordinary. Children might also like to think about their own special talents or gifts. The book presents an opportunity to discuss examples of different cultures and how something ordinary to one culture or group of people might seem extraordinary to another. For example, what people wear or eat in other cultures.

**Actions and Consequences:** Have you ever done something you regretted? How did you put things right again? In *Ruby Wishfingers: Toad-ally Magic*, Ruby learns that when you break rules—even magic ones—there are consequences. As a result of turning Todd into a real toad and breaking magic's Golden Rule, Ruby loses the use of her wishes. Getting them back so that she can change her cousin back into a boy will be more difficult and dangerous than she expected. This could lead to classroom discussions about actions and consequences in specific situations.

**Family Celebrations:** *Ruby Wishfingers: Toad-ally Magic* is centred around Jellybean's very first birthday party. Birthdays are an important occasion to celebrate in some cultures. This could lead to discussion about the occasions we celebrate and how we celebrate them. How do these occasions and ways of celebrating differ between families and cultures?

**Environmental Issues:** In *Ruby Wishfingers: Toad-ally Magic* cane toads are taking over Mrs Cottesloe's garden. Cane Toads are pests—they are not native to Australia and can cause significant damage to Australian flora, fauna and the environment. This might lead to a discussion of native animal species versus those who have been introduced and what kind of threat they pose to the Australian environment.

## Questions and Reflections

### Imagination:

If you had magic fingers, what would you wish for and why?

If you could change your name, what would it be and why?

### Want Vs Need

What is the difference between wants and needs? List some of the things you want. Now list some of the things you need. Compare your answers with a friend, a sibling or a neighbour. Why do you think some of our needs are similar but our wants are different?

Do you think Ruby made good choices with her wishes? What would you have done differently?

### Family Relationships

Who are the members of your immediate family? Your extended family?

Granny Wishfingers is Ruby's *confidante*. Do you have someone special in your life that you can talk to (it doesn't necessarily need to be a family member)?

### Family Origins

Do you know where your parents were born? Your grandparents? Your great grandparents? Where did they live and what did they do for a living?

What is a family tree?

Is it important to know your family history? Why?

### Being Different

What is the difference between ordinary and extraordinary?

Is it good to be different to other people? Why?  
What makes you special or different to other people?

Skydancer is Ruby's favourite toy. Do you have something that is precious to you? Where did it come from and why is it special?

Do you believe in magic? Why do you think Ruby's Dad doesn't have wish fingers?

### **Actions and Consequences**

Have you ever done something you regretted? How did others react? Did you try to put things right? How?

### **Family Celebrations**

Are there any special occasions that your family celebrates? What are they and how do you celebrate these occasions?

Do you know anyone who celebrates something different to what you celebrate?

### **Environmental Issues**

In *Ruby Wishfingers: Toad-ally Magic*, cane toads are taking over Mrs Cottlesloe's garden. Cane toads are not native to Australia and because they have caused lots of problems since they were introduced here, they are considered a pest.

What does native species mean? Can you name a native Australian bird, animal or plant species?

What does introduced species mean? Can you name a species that has been introduced to Australia?

What kinds of problems could introduced species cause in the Australian environment?

## Classroom Activities

Listed below are ideas for activities in the classroom related to the *Key Learning Areas*:

### English

Write a story where you wake up in the morning as your favorite animal. What will you eat or drink? Where will you go? What kinds of things will you be able to do and what sorts of challenge might arise? What kinds of dangers might you need to look out for?

Write a book review of *Ruby Wishfingers: Toad-ally Magic* for a friend who hasn't read the book yet.

Write a paragraph introducing your favorite character from the story to a friend.

Chose a character from the story and write down five questions you would like to ask them. Role play with a friend and pretend you are each other's characters to answer each other's questions.

### Creative Arts

Imagine you are the illustrator of *Ruby Wishfingers: Toad-ally Magic*. Chose a scene from the story to illustrate.

In small groups, create a board game in which the object is to get your 'toad' (counter) from Mrs Cotteloe's garden, back to the safety of Granny Wishfingers' bucket. Create some obstacles along the way, for example: 'Henry caught you! Go back three spaces.'

### Personal Development

Skydancer is very special to Ruby. Do you have something that is special to you? Where did it come from and why is it special? Bring it to school or draw a picture of it. Write a paragraph about it. Have a class 'exhibition' of items, each accompanied by a short description.

Ruby's mum collects antique tablecloths and plays the piano. Ruby's Dad loves to grow vegetables. Ruby loves to draw and paint. Do you have a special hobby, interest or sport

you enjoy? How does it make you feel? Prepare a short news item to share with your class about your particular interest.

Granny Wishfingers is Ruby's *confidante*—a person she can talk to about anything at all. Do you have someone special you can talk to? What do you talk to them about? Write a letter to your confidante to tell them about your week.

Imagine you are in charge of throwing a birthday party for a family member or friend. Prepare a party plan. Who will you invite? Where will the party be held? What sorts of things will you need to make or buy? Will it be a surprise party? If so how will you keep it a surprise? What kinds of decorations and food will you have? What sort of gifts might people bring?

### **Human Society and the Environment**

Interview a grandparent or elderly friend to find out about their childhood.

Who are the members of Ruby's family? Research your own family and draw a simple family tree.

### **Science and Technology**

Ruby found out that cane toads are pests. In pairs, find out about another plant or animal pest that is doing damage to the Australian environment. Prepare a short talk to present to the class.

The weather in *Ruby Wishfingers: Toad-ally Magic* changes dramatically throughout the story.

Do some research to find out about weather around the world. Where is the coldest place in the world? The hottest? The wettest? The driest? How have people adapted to live in these conditions?

If you had to pick one of those places to live, which one would you pick and why?

**Ruby Wishfingers has her very own website! Head over to <http://www.rubywishfingers.com.au> to explore the website and learn more about Ruby Wishfingers' world.**



## Ruby Wishfingers: Toad-ally Magic Work Sheet

1. Circle the species that are NATIVE to Australia:

Koala	Cat	Kookaburra	Eucalypt Tree	Mouse
Horse	Kangaroo	Goanna	Sheep	

2. Speech marks (") show us when someone is talking, for example: "Peek-a-boo!" Ruby called, poking her head around the kitchen door. Put speech marks in these sentences:

- I have no doubt you will! Mrs Cottlesloe winked.
- Shut the door! Growled Jupiter. You're letting the cool air out!
- Goodness me! She yawned. I must have dozed off!
- Stop wasting my wishes! Ruby cried, pinching her nose.
- Todd grinned at Ruby. That's because he hasn't seen *ours* yet!

3. Unscramble the following sentences:

- She whatever wish the to power for wanted
- Hadn't granny's but fixed *everything* magic
- Wildfire and they're like spreading
- The thought the cousin in world Ruby worst entire I'm
- Too because nodded speak mouths their full to were everyone

4. Sequencing events: the following events are out of order. Number the sentences to show the correct order:

- \_ Ruby realises she can't wish Todd back
- \_ Ruby discovers cake crumbs on the kitchen floor
- \_ Ruby turns Todd into a real toad
- \_ Todd goes into Ruby's room
- \_ Ruby finds Todd wearing jellybeans birthday banner
- \_ Jupiter lets out a yowl
- \_ Todd kicks Ruby's ball over the fence

5. Use the following words to complete the sentences:

**beetles**

**plans**

**magic**

**horrible**

**cherry**

- a) Ruby, Mum and Granny had been busy making \_\_\_\_ for his first birthday.
- b) Cane Toads were brought to Australia to kill \_\_\_\_\_that were eating the sugar cane.
- c) The Golden Rule of \_\_\_\_ is something you must always keep in mind.
- d) But could a person grow out of being \_\_\_\_?
- e) A squashy \_\_\_\_ tomato slid down the side of her neck.

Visit <http://www.rubywishfingers.com.au> for more fun activities!

## About the Author



**Deborah Kelly** is the author of popular picture books including *The Bouncing Ball*, *Jam for Nana* and *Dinosaur Disco*. She writes short stories for children and material for the educational market. She has more picture books due out in 2017. She also writes Haiku poetry, which has been published in various forms. Deborah loves to visit schools, libraries and festivals to talk about writing and share her books. *Ruby Wishfingers: Skydancer's Escape* is her first chapter book for children.

Deborah's website: [www.deborahkelly.com.au](http://www.deborahkelly.com.au)

Deborah's Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/DeborahKellyChildrensAuthor](http://www.facebook.com/DeborahKellyChildrensAuthor)

## About the Illustrator

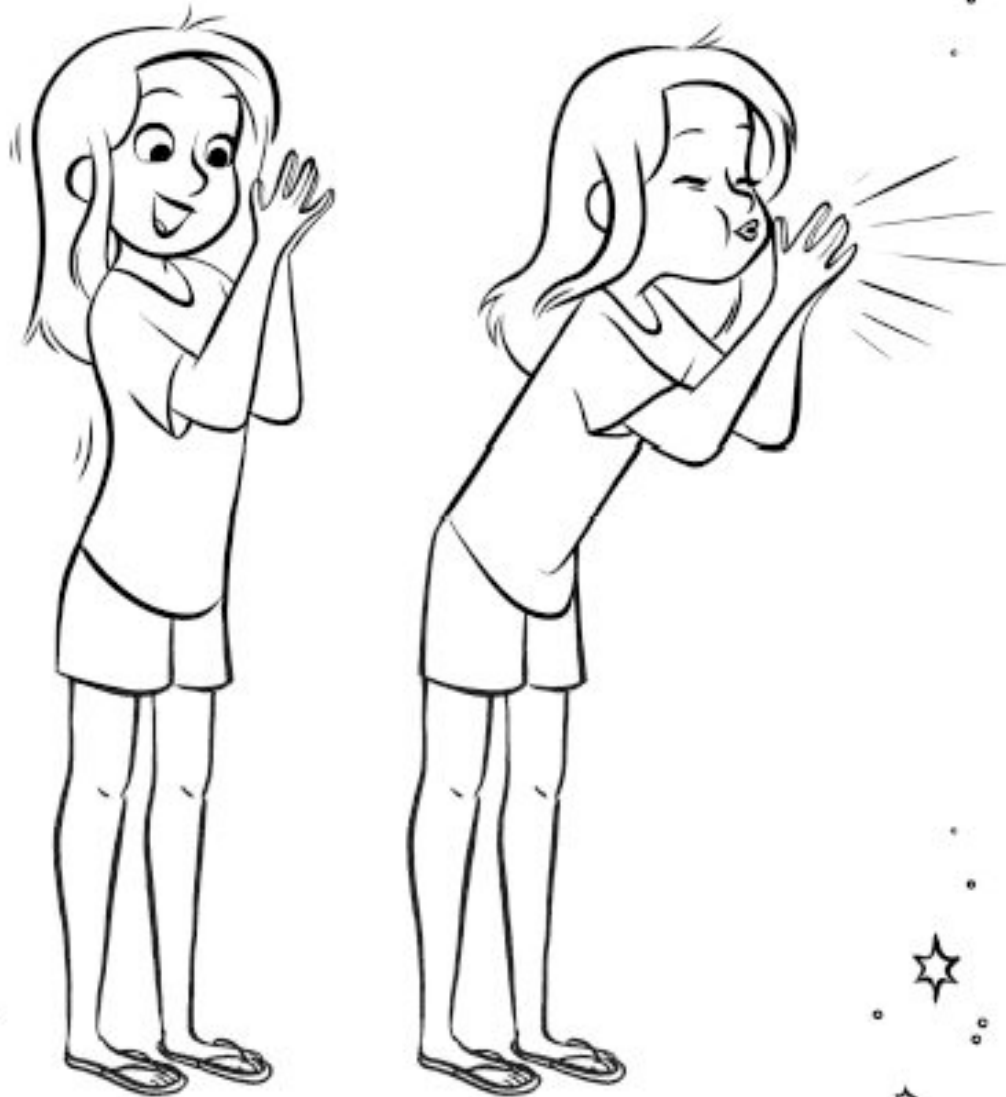


**Leigh Hedstrom**, also known as Flee, is a Sydney based freelance illustrator with an education in Fine Arts. She lives in an 'arty' household with husband Ben Hedstrom (art teacher, painter and recent Archibald Prize finalist) and their son, James.

With over ten years of experience illustrating for educational and children's media, Leigh specialises in the creation of appealing characters for print, web, animation and advertising. *Marty's Nut-Free Party* marked Leigh's first venture into hardcover picture books.

She is also the illustrator of *When I See Grandma* and *Emily Eases her Wheezes*.

# Ruby Wishfingers



[www.rubywishfingers.com.au](http://www.rubywishfingers.com.au)