

Brave Adventures, Little Girl Teaching Notes



REFERENCES

Seeya, Achi and their daughter Iresha, who is Anika's mother, were all born in Sri Lanka, an island country in South Asia. Sri Lanka is home to many different cultures and languages. Seeya and Achi both speak the Sri Lankan Sinhala language. In Sinhala, the word for grandfather is *seeya*, and the word for grandmother is *achi*. Anika calls her mother's parents Seeya and Achi.

A **Jack-A-Bee** is a Jack Russell/Beagle mixed breed dog. Anika thinks her grandparents' Jack-A-Bee, Spud, is the best dog in the world.

A **kindergarten** in Australia is a place where preschool children play and learn.

A **doctor** is a person who treats injuries and illnesses in other people.

Tom and Jerry is an American cartoon comedy series created in 1940. It's based on the rivalry between its two main characters, Tom the cat and Jerry the mouse.

A **water monitor** is a large lizard native to South and Southeast Asian countries, including Sri Lanka.

The **pola** is a weekly village market/fair that is an important part of Sri Lankan country life. It is a regular meeting place for the village community.

Engineers are people who invent, design, build, test and seek to understand machines, systems, structures and materials.

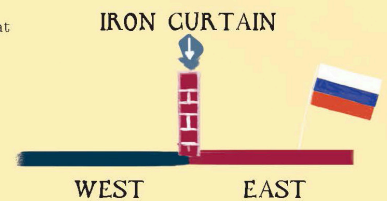
Pamplona is the capital of Navarre, Spain. The city is famous for the medieval tradition of Running of the Bulls in an annual festival, where bulls are led through the old streets of the city by runners.

Enzo Ferrari was a world famous Italian motor racing driver and the founder of the Ferrari automobile and factory in Italy.

The modern **Olympic Games** are international sporting competitions held every four years. The 1960 Summer Olympic Games were held from 25 August to 11 September 1960 in Italy's capital city, Rome.

The term **Iron Curtain** referred to the boundary between Western Europe and Eastern Europe of Russia and the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). The division began at the end of World War Two in 1945 and lasted until the breakup of the USSR in 1989.

An **atlas** is a collection of maps of the planet Earth or part of Earth.



Synopsis

Visiting her grandparents is always an adventure, and Anika can't wait to show them what she's learned in Kindergarten. But things don't always go to plan. Can her Grandfather, Seeya, help Anika overcome the fear she sometimes feels when trying new things? And what fantastical stories will he tell of his adventures that can help her feel brave?

Brave Adventures, Little Girl is a gorgeous, heart-warming picture book which helps children understand and articulate their fears and learn how to cope with these fears, with the help of a loving family. It depicts the tender, affectionate relationship between a little girl and her grandparents as well as providing a glimpse into Sri Lankan culture.

About the Author

Iresha Herath is a proud mother of a gorgeous daughter, senior lawyer, playwright, and now children's book author. Her accomplished legal career spans 20 years, with her now working as a Senior Executive and Chief Legal Officer for a 6000-staff health service. Iresha's theatre company 9minds has produced several acclaimed plays in Australia and spearheaded arts-based social justice advocacy, with a lauded video campaign for marriage equality. In recent years Iresha and her family have focused on the redevelopment of her late father's childhood home in Sri Lanka to a boutique hotel, The Notary's House, which she hopes will attract artists from across the world. The house, her father and her daughter all have starring roles in *Brave Adventures, Little Girl*.

About the Illustrator

Oscar Fa is a freelance French artist specialising in concept art and digital illustration. He undertakes projects such as book cover design, illustrated books, children's picture books and concept art. He has always been curious and passionate about painting, and tries to fill his days with colour!



Topic 1 Talking About and Understanding Your Fears

Ask the children to name some of the things that they are afraid of and write their ideas down on the board.

Some common childhood fears include:

- The dark
- Ghosts
- Being alone
- Dogs
- Insects
- The water/swimming
- Thunderstorms

Ask the children why they (and many other people) would be afraid of these things. By helping the children articulate their fears you are giving them the key to understanding why they are scared of certain things.

One discussion isn't going to be enough to overcome their fears, but it is a start. The inability to explain why something upsets or scares them often exacerbates the fear so by talking through the problem you are making sure the children feel heard and giving them the first tool to manage their fears.

Now shift the conversation to the fear of doing something new specifically.

- Do any of the children have this fear?
- Why do they think that so many people are scared of trying new things?
- It will help if you can think of an example of when you were scared to try something new but went ahead anyway and describe the positive outcomes of facing your fears.
- Now ask about the hobbies, activities or lessons that the children like.
- Try to bring the discussion round to the idea that these activities (art, music, sport etc) were once something new and scary but have now become familiar and favourite pastimes.



Topic 2 Cultural Discussion: Sri Lanka

Anika's grandfather is from Sri Lanka, a little teardrop-shaped island in the Indian Ocean. Ask the children if they know anything about Sri Lanka or if they have visited themselves. N.B. You can let them know that they already know two Sri Lankan words, even if they didn't realise it! 'Seeya' means grandfather and 'Achi' means grandmother in Sinhalese, one of the main languages spoken in Sri Lanka.

Tell them a little bit about Sri Lanka, you can start with some of the facts below:

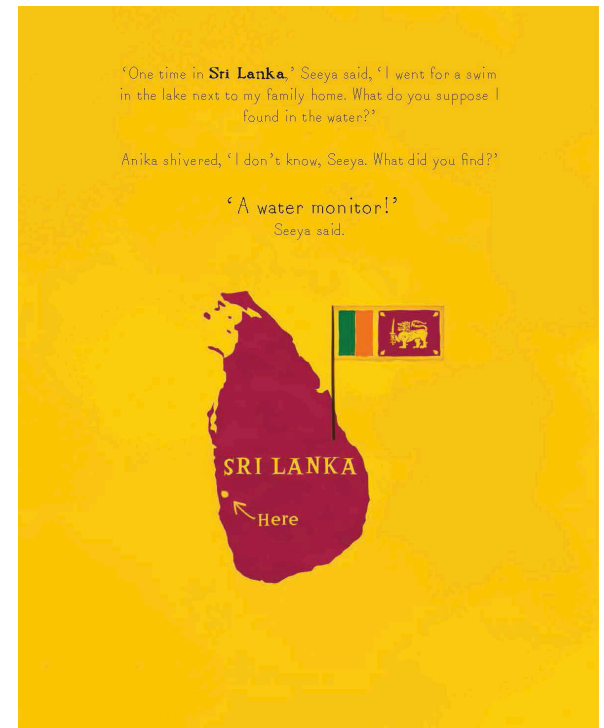
- Sri Lanka is also known as the pearl of the Indian Ocean due to its natural beauty and wide variety of precious gemstones
- The literacy rate in Sri Lanka is the best in South Asia at 92%.
- Sri Lanka is home to a huge variety of wildlife, you can see leopards, elephants and crocodiles on safari (or a water monitor which is, like Seeya said, a very big lizard).
- The oldest human-planted tree in the world is in Sri Lanka.

What do they think after hearing a little bit about Sri Lanka? Does it sound like a fun place to visit?

Now start up a more general discussion.


- Ask the children if they have been to any of the other countries mentioned in the story or indeed anywhere else in the world.
- Have any of the children lived in another country? What was different to where they live now? What was similar?
- Are there any countries that they really want to visit and why? Give an example of your own to get the discussion started.

This a great way to start raising awareness about other cultures and help the children learn a little bit more about one another.



Drawing Activity

Anika had an amazing day with her grandparents, ask the children to draw their own day out with their grandparents in the space below. They can divide the page up to make a little comic strip or they can focus on a single moment of their day.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for children to draw their day out with their grandparents. The box occupies the majority of the page below the text.

Craft Activity: Story Stones

Anika loves listening to her Seeya's stories, so why not help the class create their own stories by painting some story stones?

What you will need:

- Rocks (if they have a smooth surface they will be easier to paint)
- Acrylic paints
- Paint brush
- Water

Instructions

This is a relatively simple activity, after you've collected your rocks you can get right on to painting whatever you would like on them.

Give each member of the class a stone, you could split them up into groups and ask one group to paint characters, another to paint scenery and another to paint objects.

When they are finished (and the paint has had a little time to dry), work together to use the characters and scenes on the rocks to create a narrative.

