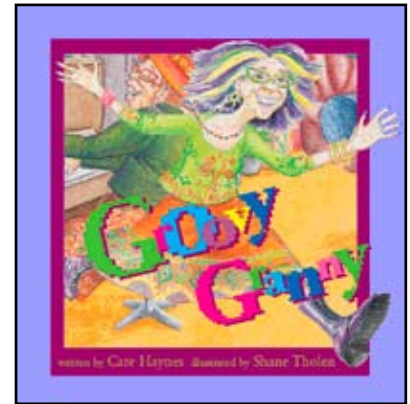


Groovy Granny

Cate Haynes with illustrations by
Shane Tholen

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Plot Outline

Groovy Granny is a celebration of the unique and precious relationship that is shared between grandparents and grandchildren. Groovy Granny is no typical grandparent. A free spirit in her day, she has maintained a childlike quality that makes her very appealing to kids: a little different, a little naughty and more than a little generous with her time for her grandchildren.

Generous, that is, until one terrible night when an accidental fire engulfs Granny's wonderful old house and robs her of all its irreplaceable treasures lovingly collected over years of travel.

The devastation of the fire transforms Granny into a 'not so' groovy Granny any more. The stark, grey walls of the replacement house mirror the deep sadness and feelings of loss that Granny is experiencing.

Fortunately, a dear friend from Granny's past, Willemina Funnywood, comes to town. With Willemina's help Granny rediscovers herself and replaces all her treasures at the local swap meet. The story ends with Granny and Willemina setting up house and sharing the most valuable treasure of all, the grandchildren.

Author's Inspiration

With the sudden and unexpected death of her mother only weeks after the birth of her first child, Cate was inspired to write *Groovy Granny* as an imaginative exploration of how her mother might have been as a grandmother, had she lived.

It was Cate's hope when writing *Groovy Granny* to highlight how much of our identity is encapsulated in our past, be that in the stories of our ancient possessions or in the elders of our family. It is her hope that, through involving previous generations in the communal rearing of our children, we are able to tap into some of the most valuable sources of learning.

Grandparents are uniquely precious custodians of history: they help us not only by bringing an understanding of who they are, and where they have come from, but through them, we ultimately learn to better understand ourselves.

Author Information

Cate Haynes was born in 1965 to a Dutch mother and an Australian father. She grew up in Nedlands, Western Australia. She is married with two children and is currently living on a property near the outskirts of Mandurah, WA. *Groovy Granny* is her first book.

Educational Adaptability

The book could be successfully used at lower primary level to teach respect and concern for others and their rights; sensitivity to and concern for other people; respect for the elderly and the value of cultural diversity.

TOPICS AND ISSUES FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

Stereotyping

Investigate how elderly people are represented in books, the media and advertisements.

- How do Groovy Granny and her friend Willemina Funnywood differ from these representations?
- How do your own grandparents compare to Granny and Willemina?

Health/Emotions

After the fire Granny is not as much fun as she was.

- Why did Granny change so much?
- What sort of things make people feel very sad and unhappy?
- Has anything happened in your life that has made you feel particularly sad?
- What made you feel better?
- How do you think Granny felt when she saw her grandchildren having so much fun with her friend, Willemina Funnywood?

Safety

The fire in the book destroyed Granny's house and all her possessions.

- How do you think the fire could have been avoided?
- Is it safe to light candles in the house?
- Are smoke alarms a good idea?
- Is there anything else Granny could have done to avert such a disaster?

Intergenerational relationships

In the book Granny and the grandchildren do lots of interesting and exciting things together.

- What sort of things do you do with your grandparents?
- Do you think Granny learns anything from her grandchildren?

Sometimes grandparents live a long way away from their grandchildren.

- What are some of the ways that grandparents and grandchildren can keep in touch?