

Teacher's Notes



My Nonno Loves

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

RECOMMENDED FOR

Primary-aged readers (ages 2+, grades P-2)

KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- Learning areas: English
- General capabilities:
 - AC9EFLA01
 - AC9E2LA01
 - AC9E1LE02
 - AC9E2LE05

THEMES

- Traditions
- Love
- Connection
- Belonging
- Home
- Family
- Grandparents

SYNOPSIS

How do you tell someone you love them when you don't always speak the same language?

Easy!

In *My Nonno Loves*, Adelle Frittitta explores all the ways that families connect. In this brightly illustrated picture book, a child and their nonno express their love for each other through shared experiences and moments of connection. From the garden to the kitchen, the joyous illustrations and the heartwarming text reveal various points of connection – the things we're able to share no matter how much we're separated by age, language or gender.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ ILLUSTRATOR

Adelle Frittitta is a Melbourne-based teacher of art and design, a DIY crafter, lover of beef noodle soup and flower gardener (she tries). She studied Creative Arts at Deakin University, majoring in painting, and has a Dip.Ed in Secondary Education from ACU. You'll often find her wearing colourful skirts, eating doughnuts and rummaging through op shops with her kids, Ivy and Maro.

Claudia Frittitta is a Melbourne-based freelance designer and illustrator with several years' experience in strategic branding and packaging design. Her passion lies in creating contemporary, playful and innovative design, and she signed as an artist with The Illustration Room in 2022. In her spare time, she tends to her growing house plant collection.

THEMES

My Nonno Loves explores themes of family, love and belonging. Although the two characters are different in many ways – in the language they speak and their age – shared experiences and passions allow them to connect. Invite students to reflect on their own experiences of connection. What are some of the ways that they connect with people who are different to them?

WRITING STYLE

Similes

A simile is when we say that one thing is like another in order to reveal something about it. For example, Nonno's grin is like a _____? What other similes can you find in the story?

Writing in Italian

Although the story is written mostly in English, the author includes some Italian words. You probably already know that *Nonno* means *Grandfather*, and *Nonna* means *Grandmother*.

What does *Benvenuti* mean? How does the author reveal the meaning without over-explaining?

In a group, discuss some of the reasons that authors include words in other languages. What kinds of clues do they provide to help readers who don't speak that language understand the meaning of the words?

You might include other dual-language books in this discussion, including:

- *Wilam: A Birrarung Story* by Aunty Joy Murphy, Andrew Kelly and Lisa Kennedy
- *My Two Blankets* by Irena Kobald and Freya Blackwood
- *A Lemon for Safiya* by Jemima Shafei-Ongu and Nisaluk Chantanakom



COMPREHENSION

- What sound does the coffee make as it's brewing?
- What does Nonno say is the secret to a happy day?
- How does the main character know when to chuckle?
- What do you notice about the characters' expressions when they're spending time together? How do you think they're feeling? What else in their body language supports this feeling?
- What seeds do the child and their nonno plant in the garden?
- Who does Nonno love? What does he say keeps him handsome?
- What are some of the traditions that Nonno loves?
- How does Nonno show that he's listening?
- Why do you think 'he [Nonno] doesn't understand everything I say'? What are some of the ways that the main character and their nonno communicate without language?

WRITING EXERCISE

Think about someone who loves you. How do they show it? Write about it, using the pattern from the book as a template:

My __ (PERSON) __ loves __ (ACTIVITY) __. Together, we __ (DESCRIPTION OF YOU DOING THE ACTIVITY TOGETHER).

My __ (PERSON) __ loves __ (ACTIVITY/PERSON). They say, __ (SOMETHING THEY LOVE TO SAY ABOUT THIS PERSON/ACTIVITY).

My __ (PERSON) __ __ (A HABIT OF THEIRS THAT YOU LOVE). Their __ (SOMETHING ABOUT THEM) __ are like __ (SIMILE TO DESCRIBE THIS THING).

My __ (PERSON) __ __ (HOW THEY SHOW THEIR LOVE TO YOU). It's their way of saying *I love you*.

My _____ loves _____ Together, we _____

My _____ loves _____ They say, _____,

My _____ Their _____ are like _____

My _____ It's their way of saying *I love you*.

ILLUSTRATION STYLE

Think about the way that the illustration in the story reveals the relationship between the two characters. Look at the picture of Nonno reading the newspaper, for example – which details in the illustration seem to represent Nonno? Which represent the narrator? Which reflect the similarities between the two?



Love and family are key themes in the story, and the settings of the story reflect this. Explore the settings in the book – the home, the garden, the kitchen. What do you notice? How do these settings reflect these themes?

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

- In the book, the narrator's nonno helps them to make a windchime from precious shells. Think of an object that represents the relationship you have with someone like Nonno. Make your own windchime that represents your relationship with this person.
- Think of someone in your life who is like Nonno. What do you call them? Describe a special tradition that you have with them and draw an illustration to accompany your description.
- Nonno loves so many special things. When he hands the main character a plum, it's his way of saying *I love you*. Make a list of other non-verbal ways that people say 'I love you'. Write a short story or draw a picture that shows the way you express your love.
- Think of a place that makes you feel happy and at home. Draw a picture, using the book as inspiration to play with colour and detail to bring this setting to life.

RELATED READING

Grandmother From the East, Grandmother From the West
By Jacinta Liu and Freda Chiu

What Do You Call Your Grandpa?
By Ashleigh Barton and Martina Heiduczek

There's Only One Grandpa Like You
By Jess Racklyeft

Grandad's Island
By Benji Davies

11 Words for Love
By Randa Abdel-Fattah and Maxine Beneba Clarke

