



Scarlett Starlet

By Emma Quay

Book Summary:

From award-winning author Emma Quay comes a gorgeous new picture book for every little girl who loves to dance.

Scarlett loved to dance, and her house was always filled with rhythm.

Her parents would clap along, and Little Jazzy Jo-Jo's paws would tap-tap-tap in time.

But when Scarlett's dreams of dancing on a real stage finally come true, will she find her own rhythm? Will she shine like a star?

From the bestselling creator of RUDIE NUDIE comes a gorgeous new picture book for every child who dreams of the stage.

Curriculum Areas and Key Learning Outcomes:

Language and Literacy

Visual Arts

Appropriate Ages:

3-7 years

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Notes by Simone Evans

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Introduction

Scarlett loves to dance. She doesn't just *get* out of bed every morning, she *hops* out and from that moment on she is leaping, kicking and twirling around the house – dancing in and out of the shower and to the breakfast table. She can't ignore the rhythm in her head or in her feet. She also has a trusty dance partner – her little dog Jazzy Jo-Jo. Scarlett doesn't need music to dance; she just needs Jazzy's rhythmic 'tippy-tap' on the tiles of their floor. It also helps when her dad claps and taps in time as well!

Scarlett performs for her mum and dad and she is their little star. But when Scarlett wonders what it would be like to perform on a *real* stage (not just her lounge room floor!) her mum and dad set out to find her one – and they do. And since a *real* performer needs a *real* dancing costume and *real* dancing shoes... they find her those as well!

Dogs aren't allowed on the real stage so Scarlett must perform alone. She waits backstage with all the other boys and girls gathering in their best dancing costumes, stretching and twirling in anticipation for their turn under the bright stage lights. When Scarlett steps out on stage the lights are blinding but she manages to find her rhythm! She may even be able to hear her dad tapping his foot out there in the audience... and Scarlett shines. The other dancers glitter and shine too as their own mums and dads beam with pride.

Arriving home clutching a yellow ribbon and tapping away with Jazzy Jo-Jo once more, Scarlett knows she is a star.

About the Author/Illustrator

Emma Quay wanted to be a children's book illustrator from a very early age. After moving from England to Australia in 1993, she began her illustrating career and has since become one of Australia's most sought-after picture-book artists. She has won numerous awards, including the 2010 CBE Early Childhood Book of the Year for *'Bear and Chook by the Sea'* (written by Lisa Shanahan). Emma lives in Sydney with her husband and two young daughters.



More on Emma Quay www.emmaquay.com

Study Notes on Themes and Curriculum Areas

Classroom ideas meet the Early Years Learning Framework and is suitable for the following year levels: Foundation, 1 and 2.

Themes and key discussion points

a) Passion and having fun.

In this story we meet a little girl who LOVES to dance. She dances all day long, anywhere and everywhere. When you love to do something it can be called a *passion*. If you are passionate about something then it is a good idea to make sure you are doing a little bit of it as often as you can. It's important to wake up in the morning excited about the day ahead. You don't have to be perfect at something to be passionate about it. Remember that life is also about having fun.

Discussion Points: *Are there some things that you are passionate about doing?... What activities do you get excited about? Why do you think that some people get really good at their passions? What is the importance of practicing something? Is it*

easier to enjoy something that you are good at? Do we have to be perfect at everything to have fun?

b) Believing in yourself

Scarlett knows her parents believe in her but in order to dance under the bright lights on stage she also needs to believe in *herself*. She doesn't have Jazzy Jo-Jo's little paws going tippy-tap tap on the stage and suddenly it's a bigger audience than just her mum and dad.

Discussion Points: *Have you ever performed something on stage? Perhaps you have taken a risk sharing something that you enjoy doing with a friend or family member... What does it mean to believe in yourself? What might happen if you doubted yourself or lost faith in your ability to do something? Have you ever experienced this? When? Do you think that Scarlett knowing her parents believed in her, helped her to believe in herself? Why/Why not?*

Curriculum areas and key learning outcomes

a) Literacy and language during reading: questions for discussion

These questions can be discussed after the story has been read through once, or upon a second reading. They are designed to support students' engagement with the text and develop their visual literacy and comprehension skills.

1. On p. 3 Scarlett is 'flying' over the top of her parents heads. Do you think she could really fly this high? What is Emma Quay telling us in this picture?
2. Look carefully at the images of Scarlett on pp. 4 & 5. Can you name each of the activities she is doing whilst she dances the day away?

3. On p. 7 Scarlett is dancing for her parents in the lounge room. They are her audience. Do you perform for your parents in the lounge room? What do you perform?
4. What kind of dog do you think Jazzy Jo-Jo might be?
5. Why do you think dogs aren't allowed on the 'real' stage?
6. On p. 17 the light is blinding Scarlett. Do you know the special name for this type of stage light?
7. What colour does Scarlett love to wear? Do you know the dictionary definition of the word 'scarlet'? You may like to look it up...
8. Jazzy Jo-Jo references a style of music and dance – Jazz. Do you know anything about Jazz? What do you know?

b) Literacy and language after reading: oral language activities

• Creating similes

'Scarlett shone. Like a star.' (p. 3) The expression 'shining like a star' is a figure of speech called a simile. A simile compares one thing with another, usually beginning with *like* or *as*. Similes allow writers to play with vocabulary and create strong images for the reader.

Activity:

What are some other things that shine? Go around the class and suggest some of your own 'shining' similes. For example, Scarlett shone like 'a freshly polished coin' or 'a diamond'. If the class has a good imagination then the possibilities are endless! These similes can be recorded and displayed on the classroom wall.

• Identifying verbs

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Because movement is so important in this story, Emma Quay uses lots of interesting **verbs** to describe the way Scarlett moves. This helps the reader form a strong picture in their mind.

Activity:

Look carefully at pp. 4 & 5. There are five different verbs on these pages to describe Scarlett's movements as she goes about her day. Identify these as a class. Try and use these verbs in some different sentences.

- **Repetition and rhythm**

Sometimes a writer may choose to use **repetition** to create **rhythm**.

Repetition also draws attention to the words that are repeated so strengthen a theme or idea.

Activity:

Close your eyes and listen to your teacher read pp. 8, 9 & 10.

Scarlett was their star.
But a star needs a stage,
And Scarlett did wonder:
What would it be like to dance on a stage?
A real one,
With an audience –
To watch,
To clap.

Not just Mummy and Daddy.

'A stage,' said Scarlett.
'A stage,' said Daddy.
'A real one,' said Mummy.

Think about what effect this repetition has on you. How do the words create their own kind of **rhythm**? Which words are repeated? (*star, stage, real*). What does this do to you – the reader?

- **Onomatopoeia**

Onomatopoeia is the creation of words that mimic sounds. Emma Quay uses an important onomatopoeia in this story and it is used more than once (pp. 6 & 30).

'Jazzy Jo-Jo's paws went tippy-tap on the tiles.

Clip, clip, tippy-tap, tap, tap.

Activity:

As a class, brainstorm a variety of different animals and the sounds they might make if they danced with Scarlett. What sounds would a dancing elephant make? A pigeon? A tiger? Challenge yourself to include animals like snakes and fish that don't have any feet! Think carefully about what sounds they would make and as a group create and record some Onomatopoeia sentences.

- **Alliteration**

Alliteration is the repetition of the same sound or letter at the beginning of words in a sentence or name. The name of Scarlett's dog Jazzy Jo-Jo is lots of fun because it is an alliteration of the letter 'J' and it also tells us something about the dog's character (she likes Jazz dancing!).

Activity:

Dream up some silly names for a pet that use alliteration and tell us something unique about their character.

b) Visual Arts

- **Moving pictures.**

Even though Emma Quay's illustrations are two-dimensional and fixed on the page, she captures movement beautifully in her drawings so we feel like Scarlett really is dancing. Look carefully at the illustrations on pp. 28 & 29 and consider what drawing techniques give the reader the sense that Scarlett is *moving*.

Activity:

Choose one of the dancers from p. 15 and create a small flipbook of the dance you imagine they performed on the stage. Try to include as many dance moves as possible in your flipbook.

Flipbooks are easy to make. Small (business card sized) pieces of paper can be stapled or held together with a bulldog clip before adding the drawings. Teachers can access some good flipbook tutorials here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Njl-uqnmBGA>

<http://www.marthastewart.com/265876/paper-movies>

- **Shining stars.**

The image of a star shining bright against the night sky is often used to describe someone who is doing something they are good at.

Activity:

Create a class of shining stars. Each student identifies a passion that they have (something that they love to do) before creating a small pencil drawing of themselves doing this activity. The pencil drawing should be an **outline only** and must be drawn on a piece of **a5 black cardboard**. Students then carefully go over their pencil outline with a glitter pen (gold or silver). Drawings can be 'framed' with metallic gold or silver cardboard, cut in the shape of stars. These can be suspended from the classroom ceiling to create a night sky of shining student stars.

Bibliography

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About the Author of the Teachers' Notes

Simone Evans attended Newtown High School of the Performing Arts before completing a Bachelor of Media and Communications at Charles Sturt University and later, a Graduate Diploma of Learning & Teaching with the University of Southern Queensland. She has helped produce theatre and festivals in Australia and England, taught primary school classes in sunny Byron Bay and is now the Education Coordinator at Belvoir Street Theatre in Sydney.

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