

Teaching Notes

Super Rabbit
by Stephanie Blake



Synopsis

Once there was a little rabbit. Simon is not afraid of anything! He's Super Rabbit! But one day, when he goes out to save the world, he comes across a situation he wasn't expecting.

The Author/Illustrator

Stephanie Blake was born in 1968 in Minnesota, USA. Her passion for writing and illustrating began in childhood when she created books for her brothers and sisters as birthday presents. As a child, she also fell in love with the books of Dr. Seuss, Ludwig Bemelmans, and William Steig. After moving to France, she discovered other writers and artists whose work continued to inspire her stories and drawings.

She lives in Paris, France, and is the author and illustrator of dozens of popular French children's books including the bestselling *Poo Bum*, *Stupid Baby*, *A Deal's a Deal*, *I Don't Want to Go to School* and *I Want Spaghetti*, published in English by Gecko Press.

Themes

This hilarious picture book, filled with bold, eye-catching illustrations, has several themes.

The first theme explores the power of imagination, bravery and learning through play. When Simon wakes up, he believes that he **is** Super Rabbit. By embodying this superhero character Simon is ready to take on the world!

Further themes illustrated are those of vulnerability, compassion and love. Tripping over the cat, a cold and dark hollow tree and a splinter in his finger briefly shake Simon's super powers. Luckily his mother is on hand to attend to her little rabbit's wound and soon he is back out embracing the role of Super Rabbit and all that may entail.

Final themes are those of emotions, resilience and self-belief. When his mother performs first aid Simon is awash with the new emotions of 'fear and pain' which he does not like. However, within moments of the little splinter being pulled from his finger Simon has transformed it into sword to flourish about and, as Super Rabbit, rushed outdoors to vanquish any unsuspecting super villains.

Activities

1. Before reading the book, look at the cover image and title. Discuss what you think this story might be about?
2. In pairs, or with an adult to help, take turns to read the story aloud to one another. Discuss which is your favourite page and why? Do you agree with your partner's choice? Why/why not?
3. Throughout the book the author has used different font sizes and spacing for different words and phrases. Why has she done this? What do they help tell the reader about the speech or action? Have they been used effectively? Find some examples from the book.
4. Exclamation marks, question marks, speech marks, ellipses, full stops and commas are all types of punctuation found in the book. Find an example of each from the book and explain their grammatical purpose.
5. 'Kapow!' is an example of onomatopoeia found in the book. Think of five other examples of this figure of speech commonly used in relation to superheroes.
6. In pairs, discuss the problem and the solution in the book.
7. Examine the illustrations in the book. Do you like the style? What colours are used? What kinds of lines and textures are used? Choose your favourite illustration from the book and create your own artistic interpretation of it, for



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example, a
photograph,

design your own illustrations for the cover and/or one page of text.

painting, drawing,
model, poem, etc. Or,

8. Choose another book by Stephanie Blake that features Simon the rabbit. Compare and contrast the illustrations. List the similarities and differences (think about colours, size, lines, textures, composition, etc).
9. Imagine you are either Super Rabbit's sidekick or Super Rabbit's supervillain nemesis. Write a story based on your adventures with or against Super Rabbit. Publish your story with illustrations.
10. In groups, adapt the book for a performance in your classroom. Devise a script, create scenery, choose music and make costumes or puppets to represent each character. Act out your adaptation for your class. If you have access to a video camera, tape it.
11. Find another book by Stephanie Blake, such as *Poo Bum* (Gecko Press, 2011), *Stupid Baby* (Gecko Press, 2012), *A Deal's a Deal* (Gecko Press, 2013), *I Don't Want to Go to School* (Gecko Press, 2014) or *I Want Spaghetti* (Gecko Press, 2015). Write a plot summary and/or a book report.
12. Review the book for your favourite magazine or website. What do you like about the book? Why? What did you dislike about the book? Why? Give it a rating, such as stars or a number out of ten.