



# TEACHERS' RESOURCES

## RECOMMENDED FOR

Primary school readers (ages 8–11; years 3 to 6)

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## KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **Learning areas:** English
- **General capabilities:** Literacy; Critical and Creative Thinking; Ethical understanding; Intercultural Understanding

## REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

- Bestselling and award-winning author Elliot Perlman has tackled big themes in his first book for children, including a gentle treatment of themes of social inclusion, anti-racism and anti-bullying.
- A charming, heartwarming and thoroughly entertaining story for young readers – whether you're a cat person or a dog person, you will adore reading about the unlikely friendship between a naive but loveable Dalmatian and a pampered cat called Catvinkle, who tries her very best to be selfish and lazy, but turns out to have a heart of gold.

## THEMES

- Friendship and family
- Empathy, diversity and difference
- Identity and belonging
- Kindness and helping
- Animals
- Amsterdam

## PREPARED BY

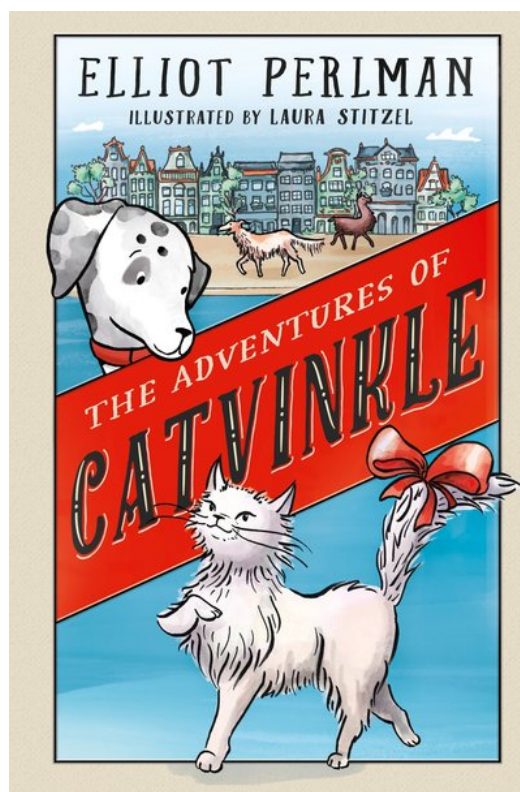
Penguin Random House Australia and Elliot Perlman

## PUBLICATION DETAILS

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## The Adventures of Catvinkle

By Elliot Perlman

Illustrated by Laura Stitzel

## PLOT SUMMARY

Catvinkle is used to being top cat, completely pampered by Mr Sabatini the barber. So she is horrified when Mr Sabatini brings home a wide-eyed, lost Dalmatian named Ula.

Soon Ula is warming herself by Catvinkle's fire. To her surprise, Catvinkle likes the innocent, trusting Dalmatian, and she finds herself telling Ula her three secrets. But a cat and a dog can't be best friends – can they?

Catvinkle must choose. Will she be brave and join her new friend on a mission to help two sad children, even if it means visiting the biggest, scariest dog in Amsterdam? Or will she leave Ula to face the danger alone?

**A tail-spin of a tale that will make you howl with laughter – and remind you that if you aren't open to adventure, you might never meet your best friend.**

'An instant children's classic' – *Sunday Age*

'Engaging and fun' – *Children's Books Daily*

## PLOT SYNOPSIS

Catvinkle is a supremely contented, pampered cat living in a beautiful house on a cobblestoned street in Amsterdam with her friend, the barber, Mr Sabatini. But her world is turned upside down when Mr Sabatini brings home the wide-eyed lost Dalmatian, Ula, one chilly morning.

Sharing both her room and Mr Sabatini's attention with Ula the dog is bad enough, but when Catvinkle suddenly finds she really *likes* the innocent, trusting Ula – so much that they run the risk of becoming best friends – her world is in danger of spinning out of control. How will the respective cat and dog communities handle this? Will Catvinkle and Ula need to keep it a secret? With whom do you share your best secrets, anyway?

There's the National Kitten Baby-Shoe Dancing Competition coming up; a big scary grey dog to avoid; two sad children who need their help urgently; advice from Lobbus, the plucky Russian wolfhound, to absorb; a nasty, arrogant rabble-rousing cat who needs to be managed; and a ubiquitous llama named Roy who persists in wanting to play backgammon at the most inappropriate times.

What's a cat to do? It's just lucky Catvinkle can fly.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Elliot Perlman's *Three Dollars* won the Age Book of the Year Award, the Betty Trask Award (UK), the Fellowship of Australian Writers' Book of the Year Award and was shortlisted for the John Llewellyn-Rhys/Mail On Sunday Book of the Year Award (UK) as well as for the Miles Franklin Literary Award. Perlman also co-wrote the screenplay for the film of *Three Dollars*, which received the Australian Film Critics' Circle Award for Best Adapted Screenplay as well as the A.F.I. Award for Best Adapted Screenplay. *The Reasons I Won't Be Coming*, a collection of stories, was a bestseller in the US where it was named a *New York Times* Book Review 'Editors' Choice' and received the Steele Rudd Award in Australia.

Perlman's second novel, *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, was a bestseller in France where it was described as 'one of the best novels of recent years, a complete success' (*Le Monde*). In Germany it was called a 'literary sensation' (*Deutschlandradio*). It was a bestseller in the United States where it was named a *New York Times* Book Review 'Editors' Choice' and 'Notable Book of the Year' and a *Washington Post* 'Editors' Choice'. In the UK it was described as 'a colossal achievement ... a tour de force' (*The Observer*) and named a *Sunday Telegraph* 'Book of the Year'. In Australia it was shortlisted for the Miles Franklin Literary Award as well as for the Queensland Premier's Award for Fiction.

Perlman's bestselling *The Street Sweeper* was called 'Excellent ... harrowing, humane and brilliant' (*The Times* (UK)) and 'a towering achievement: a strikingly modern literary novel' (*Entertainment Weekly* (US)). His most recent novel, *Maybe the Horse Will Talk*, '[is a] thriller-like, stylish, compelling novel [that] manages at once to limn injustices wrought by corporate acquisitiveness, misogyny and discrimination, and to affirm the transformative capacity of empathy' (*Weekend Australian*). Perlman is the recipient of the Queensland Premier's award for Advancing Public Debate.

Perlman's first novel for children, *The Adventures of Catvinkle*, '[is] an instant children's classic, that you enjoy as much as the little ones you know, and that you start giving as a gift because of its inherent, feel-good message' (*Sunday Age*), '[a] charming and whimsical tale ... [replete with] gentle lessons ... about empathy, bravery and friendship' (*Books+Publishing*), 'a book you can cherish,' (*Sydney Morning Herald*) '[where] themes of social inclusion, anti-racism and anti-bullying are treated gently' (*Magpies*). It was a Children's Book Council of Australia Notable Book 2019, and was shortlisted for the 2019 Children's Peace Literature Award. The sequel, *Catvinkle and the Missing Tulips*, is now available.



## AUTHOR'S INSPIRATION

Elliot says:

My primary aim in *The Adventures of Catvinkle* is to make children and their parents laugh.

But I'm also dealing gently with issues of racism and xenophobia and the need generally to be morally brave against a prevailing tide of bigotry and bullying. Given everything that's going on in the world today, it seemed particularly important and even urgent to make sure we're sending these kind of messages to children.

In the mid-2000s I was based in New York and found myself promoting my novel, *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, in Holland. The book tour was based in Amsterdam and it occurred to me that with its picturesque streets, old houses and canals, Amsterdam looked like the perfect setting for a children's novel. One didn't have to invent the backdrop, it was already there.

While going for a walk along the cobblestone streets by the canals, I saw a cat sleeping lazily in a bay window that was bathed in sunlight. It was hard to imagine any living creature looking more content. I learned that 'winkle' (pronounced vinkle) in Dutch means 'shop' and mused to myself that the place with the blissed-out cat in the window had to be a 'Catvinkle'.

This triggered the thought of a blissed-out, slightly selfish cat having its world turned upside down by the unexpected arrival of an animal long reviled by cats – namely, a dog.

But then I wondered, what if the dog was so lovely, sweet, innocent and friendly that the cat couldn't help itself but fall head over heels for the dog. What then? How would they negotiate the tricky worlds of the cat and dog communities' expectations?

It seemed like the perfect premise to use humour to show children the absurdity of racism, xenophobia and homophobia and to encourage them to stand up for themselves against bullying and nasty, intimidating 'group-think'.

My sister and her family were temporarily living in the UK at the time. I wanted to spend time with them, taking advantage of the proximity between Holland and the UK, and particularly to cement my relationship with my then four-year-old niece. Since I'd been living in NY I hadn't had the opportunity to spend much time with her, so as soon as the Dutch book tour was over I went to Bristol to spend a few days with them. It was in the course of taking my little niece for a walk that I began to tell her a very nascent version of the story that became *The Adventures of Catvinkle*.

In all the years that followed, my niece would periodically remind me that I had to write down the story of Catvinkle. While I always wanted to write Catvinkle for children, I was soon consumed with the research and writing of *The Street Sweeper*, a large and dark novel for adults that deals with much of twentieth-century history, particularly the civil rights movement in the US and the Holocaust in Europe. It led me to Auschwitz six times and took five and a half years to complete. When I was finished I wanted to take a break from writing anything dark.

But the trouble was that in the time it took me to write *The Street Sweeper*, the world had only got darker. In the US came Trump and all over the world a resurgence of tolerance for racism, xenophobia and homophobia, including in places where either that would have been unthinkable or where one might have expected the bruise of totalitarianism to still be sensitive to the touch. I felt angry, horrified and powerless, and wondered where one even begins to counter these socially corrosive tendencies. Then the answer emerged for me, screaming, through the events of my personal life.

The answer is, of course, children. You begin with children.

It was into this world that my own two children were born. In addition to completely upsetting my work routine, stealing my sleep and ruining my clothes, they reminded me several times a day just what a tonic, a buzz it is to make children laugh, to see them smile the smile of understanding as something dawns on them and to see their eyes widen with fascination. But perhaps more than anything else, making children laugh is exhilarating.

When my second son arrived, just eighteen months after his brother, my niece – who is now almost seventeen – suggested that perhaps now was the perfect time to write Catvinkle.

As I do in most things, I listened to her and I sat down to write *The Adventures of Catvinkle*.



## COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Use the following questions as you read the book with your class, to explore the setting and deepen your understanding of the characters and their motivations.

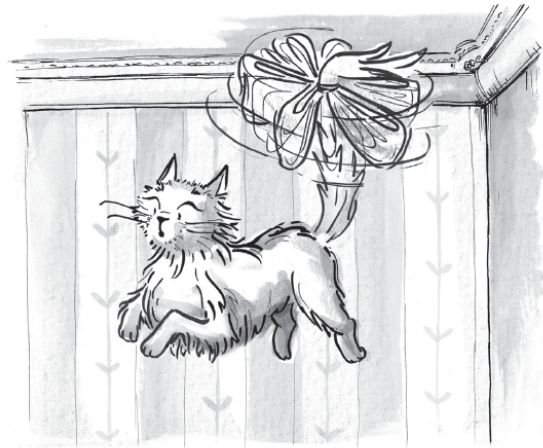
### Part One: The Surprise

1. What are Catvinkle's two favourite things in her room? (p. 6)
2. When Mr Sabatini goes out for breakfast, what animal does he see behaving kindly to another animal, not usually seen in Amsterdam? (pp. 9–10). What does this act of kindness make him wonder about Catvinkle? (p. 10)
3. Catvinkle is too sleepy to go out for breakfast with Mr Sabatini so he goes out alone. Who does he meet when Catvinkle is not with him? (pp. 10–11)
4. A lot of grown-ups are put off by the wet smell of Ula's fur. Why do you think this isn't a problem for Mr Sabatini?
5. Can you think of more than one reason why Mr Sabatini invited Ula to come back to his house? (pp. 9–12)
6. Why is Catvinkle so surprised to see Ula in her room? (p. 13)
7. Why does Ula need somewhere to stay? (p. 26)



8. Ula tells Catvinkle that Mr Sabatini told her she could come and live with him in his house. (p.27) Is that true? Why did she say it?
9. Catvinkle tells Ula that the only animals who can live with Mr Sabatini are animals she says can live there. (p. 28) Is that true? Why did she say that?
10. Have you ever heard somebody say something you knew wasn't true just because they wished so much that it was true? Have you ever told somebody something you knew wasn't true because you wished so much that it was true?
11. What reason does Catvinkle give Ula for never having let any other animals live with them? (p. 30) Is this the real reason?

12. How does Catvinkle claim to know that the baby wanted her to have his baby shoes? (pp. 32–35)
13. How many secrets does Catvinkle have? (pp.36–39)
14. What are Catvinkle's secrets? (pp. 39–49)
15. What is the name of the cat that beat Catvinkle at the previous year's National Kitten Baby-Shoe Dancing Competition? (p. 42)
16. What are the names of the children who had come to get their haircut and who did they come with?
17. How does Catvinkle fly? (p. 51)



### Part Two: The Plan

1. Was Catvinkle enjoying having Ula around and, if so, why? Is it more than the fact that she likes Ula's musky smell? (p.63)
2. What did Catvinkle plan to tell any other cats or kittens who learned that she was living with a dog? (p.63)
3. Catvinkle says (p. 64) that dogs aren't as naturally good at living inside and with people. Is that right?
4. Ula has never before eaten salmon. What does she wonder she might turn into if she eats it? (p. 66)
5. What does Catvinkle scoop onto her tongue and where does she get it from? (p. 69)
6. How do Catvinkle and Ula feel about human children? (p. 71) Catvinkle suggests that sometimes there's only one way to find things out from human beings. What is that? (p. 70)
7. Why was Ferdi crying? (p. 74)
8. What does Catvinkle suggest to Anja and Ferdi? (p. 75)
9. What made Anja and Ferdi laugh? (p. 79)
10. What is Catvinkle's part in the plan and what is Ula's part? (pp. 80–81) Do you think it's fair to Ula?

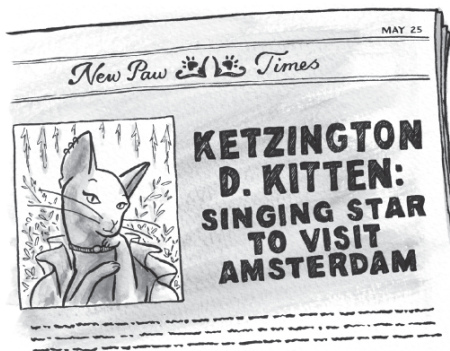


11. What is Catvinkle's explanation for dividing up the plan to get the children's ball back in the way she has? She says has four reasons. (pp. 81–82)
12. Why does Catvinkle think that Ula won't be scared of Grayston? (p.82) Do you agree with her reasoning?
13. How does Ula argue against Catvinkle's reasoning that Ula won't be scared of Grayston? (pp. 83–84)
14. How is Lobbus the brave dog Lobbus related to Ula? (pp. 84–86)
15. Why is Lobbus concerned about Catvinkle's plan? (p.91)
16. What is Lobbus's idea to test Catvinkle? (p. 92)
17. What reasons does Catvinkle give Ula for not wanting to meet Lobbus to talk about the plan? (pp. 93–94)
18. How does Catvinkle feel about having Lobbus come to visit? (p. 96)
19. What is panic (p. 103) and what is Lobbus's advice to Ula concerning panic? (pp. 104–106) Do you think it's good advice?
20. What is Lobbus's plan to get the ball back? (p. 106)
21. Lobbus talks to Grayston about negotiating. What is negotiating? Does Lobbus care if he's really teaching Grayston about negotiating or does he actually have another reason for talking to him about it? (pp. 109–112)
22. What does Ula say to herself that Lobbus taught her to try to keep the panic away while she looks for the children's ball? (p. 113)
23. What is responsible for the breath of warm wind Ula feels on her ear? (p. 114)
24. What are the reasons Catvinkle gives for coming to help Ula? (pp. 114–117)
25. Something Lobbus said to Catvinkle really stuck in her head and she didn't feel right about it. What was it? (p.116) Do you think you could achieve something or be a certain way even if someone else says you can't? Is it possible to show someone they are wrong about you?
26. What do Grayston's three puppies decide? (p. 122)
27. What do Grayston's puppies ask Ula? (p. 123)
28. Who takes the ball? (p.124)
29. What does Catvinkle do that enables Ula and Lobbus to escape, and what does it tell us about her, and about her friendship with Ula? (p. 119, and pp. 124–126)
30. When talking about the ball, what is the special kind of magic Ula and Catvinkle explain to the children? (p. 127)

### Part Three: The Competition

1. How does Catvinkle begin practising for the National Kitten Baby-Shoe Dancing Competition? Do you think visualising something first can help, or is she being lazy? (p. 135)
2. When Catvinkle falls down on the ground after flying and is sore, she says to Ula, 'Try to forgive yourself even though yours was probably the largest part in the whole incident, up there with gravity.' What does she mean by this and what's gravity? (p. 140)
3. Why does Grayston say his puppies should be proud? (p.141) Should you be proud of how you were born or is it better to be proud of what you say and do once you have been born? (pp. 141–143)
4. Grayston blames a cat, Catvinkle, for taking the ball. (p. 143) Who really took the ball?
5. Grayston's puppies love their dad, Grayston, but they think he's wrong about a few things. Is it hard to tell someone you love that you think they've made a mistake? What's the best way to do it? (pp. 141–146)

6. Grayston loves his puppies so much that he's willing to try to change. (pp. 146–147) What's he willing to do and how does it make the three puppies feel?
7. Why is Catvinkle nervous? (pp. 148–150)
8. What is Ula's idea and why doesn't Catvinkle think it will work? (p. 151)
9. Ula guesses how cats feel about dogs and Catvinkle confirms that she's right. (pp. 151–152) How does she think cats feel about dogs?
10. How does Catvinkle feel about Ula now? (p. 152)
11. What's Ula's next idea, and what does Catvinkle think of it? How does Ula improve it? (pp. 152–153)
12. Who do they think Ula can pretend to be and how do they think they can make it work? (pp. 154–155)
13. Why does Catvinkle now think she's going to win the National Kitten Baby-Shoe Dancing Competition? (pp. 159–162)



14. Why does Lobbus think Grayston is chasing him and what does he tell him? How does Roy Llama come into the picture and what does Grayston make of it? (pp. 164–171)
15. Ula tries to take Catvinkle's mind off the National Kitten Baby-Shoe Dancing Competition by showing her the parakeets, pointing out how pretty they are. How does Catvinkle regard them? (pp. 173–174)
16. At Kittens Anonymous, Catvinkle and Ula put their plan into action once they see Twinkiepaws. What do they do? (pp. 176–179)
17. What does Twinkiepaws do to Ula? (p. 183)
18. When Ula goes looking for Lobbus we find out what Grayston really wanted. What was it? (pp. 184–189)
19. What advice does Lobbus give Ula concerning Catvinkle? (pp. 190–192)
20. Grayston comes to think Ula is a brave dog. Why does he think this? (p. 192)

21. Catvinkle doesn't seem to care if the cats and kittens accept her for who she really is; a cat who likes dogs. She wants to pretend to be another kind of cat. Why? (pp. 197–199)



22. Ula has to decide whether to listen to Catvinkle or to follow Lobbus's advice. What does she choose to do? (pp. 201–204) Do you think she's done the right thing?
23. Once Ula admits to the assembled cats and kittens who she really is, Catvinkle expects not to have any other friends. What does she discover? Who comes to support Catvinkle? (pp. 205–210)
24. What does Twinkiepaws try to do when the others arrive? (p. 210)
25. Whose voice comes from the back of the crowd? (p. 211)
26. What advice does Ketzington have for Twinkiepaws and what does she mean when she says, 'We're all mammals, aren't we?' (p. 213)
27. Twinkiepaws felt something was changing. What was changing? (pp. 213–215) Have you ever felt like this?
28. Why is Twinkiepaws in such a big hurry to make Ketzington like her? (p. 216)
29. What happened when Twinkiepaws started to dance and why? (pp. 218–220)
30. Who won the National Kitten Baby-Shoe Dancing Competition? (p. 222)
31. How does Grayston feel when he sees his three puppies playing with Anja and Ferdi? (p. 225)
32. Why does Catvinkle think Lobbus could introduce her and Ula to a new koala that was coming to the zoo? (p. 226)
33. Catvinkle got so excited that her tail started spinning and she found she was flying again. She and Ula agree that it's their shared secret. (pp. 226–227) Does anyone else share the secret?

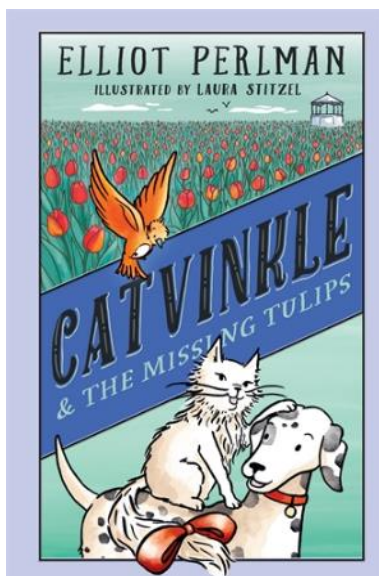
## THEMATIC CLASS DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

*Discuss the following questions as a class, to explore the themes of the story, including empathy, diversity and difference; friendship; family; and ethics.*

- When the story begins, Catvinkle can't stand dogs. Then her eyes open to Ula's kindness, politeness, helpfulness and willingness to be involved in Catvinkle's interests. When she stopped seeing Ula as part of a group she didn't like and started seeing Ula for who Ula is, Catvinkle made a new best friend. The word *prejudice* has its origins in an old language called Latin and it means 'to judge before you know'. Should we judge something or someone before we know about it or should we learn about it first and then make up our minds?
- Catvinkle says the cats and kittens at Kittens Anonymous in Vondelpark feel 'fear, mistrust and dislike' towards dogs. But Catvinkle doesn't feel this way about dogs anymore. What has changed?
- Which is the animal that Catvinkle likes the least and who gives Catvinkle the most trouble? What kind of animal is this? Which is the animal in the story that gave Catvinkle the most help? Are people who look like you, eat the same kind of food and believe the same things always good? Can they make mistakes or do the wrong thing sometimes? Can people who seem in some way different from you be sweet, polite, kind and helpful?
- Ula tells the cats at Kittens Anonymous, 'Think of how many more friends you could have if you allowed dogs into your world. And anyway, are we really so different from cats? If you put a fresh water bowl in front of us, do we not drink? If you put a comfy wicker basket beside a warm fireplace, will we not crawl in and get snuggly?' (p. 204) What does Ula's speech tell you about being accepting of others? Do you think people who seem in some way different from us also have lots of things in common with us, things that are the same? Make a list of the things all humans (or animals!) have in common, such as our needs, wants and feelings.
- Ula had never eaten salmon before she met Catvinkle because it's traditionally cat food. When Catvinkle offered her some she found that she loved it. Can it be good to try new things sometimes? Have you ever tried something, gone somewhere or eaten something different and really enjoyed it? Or have you ever not liked something at first and then tried it again and found you really like it? Does different mean bad or good or does it just mean 'not the same'?
- At the end of the story in Vondelpark, Catvinkle is helped by a number of animals. How many of the animals that say they are Catvinkle's friends are cats? Do you think people who are in some way different to you can help you? Has that ever happened to you? How did that make you feel? Have you or any grown-ups in your life ever helped people that are different to you? How did that make you feel?
- If Catvinkle had followed the thinking of all the other cats and kittens she would never have found her new best friend, Ula, and a lot of other friends. Do you think it's good to think about things and make up your own mind about something or should you just do what everybody else does and say what everybody else says?
- At the beginning of the story Catvinkle seems interested in friendships only with cats. By the end of the story she's hoping to be able to get her new friend Lobbus to help her meet the new visiting koala. What has changed her thinking?
- Lobbus, whose friends include Roy Llama, is interested in meeting different animals from all over the animal world to learn about their lives and what it's like to be an animal different from himself. Do you like meeting people different from yourself? Can you learn from it?
- What does Catvinkle learn about what friendship means? Is it just sharing a space or spending time with someone, or is there more to a friendship – such as helping, being kind, putting the needs of others above your own, and finding things in common that you can do together?
- Grayston loved his three young puppies very much and thought the best thing he could do was to keep everyone away from them. Is that what the puppies wanted? Can children sometimes teach grown-ups things about being open-minded and being free to make new friends?
- The story in *The Adventures of Catvinkle* suggests that anyone can do the right or the wrong thing, no matter what kind of animal they are. What do some of the characters such as Catvinkle and Grayston learn about doing the right thing? What choices do they make to change the way they act and think?
- Twinkiepaws seems like a bit of a bully. Together Catvinkle and Ula stand up to her and then some of the cats and kittens begin to think differently about dogs. Have you ever met a bully? What do you think is the best way to deal with a bully?



FURTHER READING FROM PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA

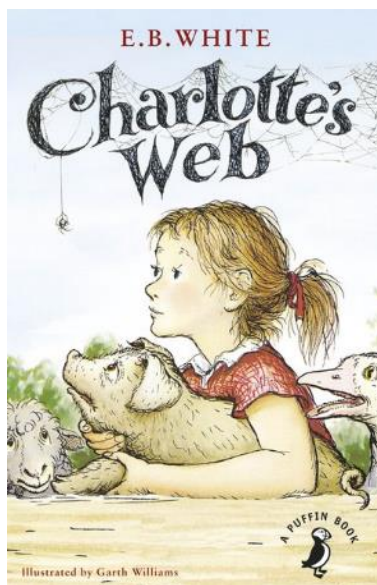


*Catvinkle and the Missing Tulips*  
by Elliot Perlman

Award-winning novelist Elliot Perlman's second book of Catvinkle's adventures is another wise, wonderful and warm-hearted tale.

When best friends Catvinkle and Ula are asked to defend two sheep accused of eating Amsterdam's tulips, they're not sure what to believe. The sheep say they're innocent, but they do look very sheepish.

To win this case, Catvinkle will need the help of a wolfhound, a llama, two travelling koalas, a pair of Russian bears . . . and a very special bird.



*Charlotte's Web*  
by E.B. White

This is the story of a little girl named Fern who loved a little pig named Wilbur and of Wilbur's dear friend, Charlotte A. Cavatica, a beautiful large grey spider.

With the unlikely help of Templeton the rat, and a wonderfully clever plan of her own, Charlotte saves the life of Wilbur, who by this time has grown up to be quite a pig.

A time-honoured children's classic.



*What the Raven Saw*  
by Samantha-Ellen Bound

The raven doesn't want you to read his story. What if you find out the location of his treasure? Or worse, what if you learn his secret – that ravens can talk?

But you should read it, even though the raven wants to be left alone. A pesky pigeon, a beady-eyed weatherhen, a ghost boy and a lovestruck scarecrow will make sure this story isn't just about one grumpy raven. With their help, the raven will uncover a thief, sing his own song, and discover there's more to life than being magnificent.

Just promise that you won't steal his treasure.

*Teachers' resources available.*

## CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHEET: Elliot's 'What If' Game (Part 1)

Think of something that has happened to you that caused something else to happen to you. For example, you might have been running for the bus and slipped in a puddle. Slipping in the puddle caused you to miss the bus. Let's call running for the bus and slipping in a puddle **Event 1** and missing the bus **Event 2**.

Try playing the 'what if' game. What if **Event 2** happened first and **Event 1** happened afterwards? What if you missed the bus and had to walk to your destination, and, so as not to be late, you tried running but *then* slipped in the puddle and got wet. How would your story change?

Now imagine an **Event 3** related to these events. What could that be? **What if** you caught the bus at the next stop but you're all wet from the puddle? Let's call catching the bus at the next stop all wet from the puddle **Event 3**. Can you put Events 1, 2 and 3 together next to each other to make a story?

Here's another example:

**Event 1:** **What if** one morning you woke up in your bedroom and you had turned into a dog but you could still talk in your own voice?

**Event 2:** **What if** your family came into your bedroom and they weren't surprised you were a dog and thought that you had turned yourself into a dog on purpose just to get out of going to school. Your school clothes won't fit a dog but still you are expected to go to school.

**Event 3:** **What if** nothing else in the world had changed except that you now seem to be a talking dog?

Now it's your turn. What three **What if** events might be the base of your story? You might like to base this on something that's happened to you, or imagine something completely new.

Try writing a story showing and telling the reader what would happen next. Remember to put one event after another after another and so on until you are finished. After each event ask yourself, '**What if** something else happened?'

	Elliot Perlman's example	Your story
<b>Event 1</b>	Running and slipping in a puddle	
<b>Event 2</b>	Missing the bus	
<b>Event 3</b>	Catching the bus at the next stop ... all wet from the puddle!	



## CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHEET: Elliot's 'What If' Game (Part 2)

Here's the secret to writing a story. When you have one event causing another event causing another event (and so on until the story is over) you will have a story. The next step is to make it a *great* story, by adding the details that will keep readers interested in reading more!

When you are writing your story, it's helpful if you tell the reader what the characters in the story can **see, hear, touch, smell or taste**. It's also really helpful to tell the reader how the characters **felt** when the events happened.

Think about how you'd add description into the three events you've listed in Part 1. What kind of **questions** could you ask to add detail to your story? What **description** might you add to answer those questions? Can you put the answers to these questions together in your story to show the reader what happens next?

Try answering some of the questions about Elliot Perlman's example, then come up with your own.

	Elliot Perlman's example		Your story	
	Questions to ask	Description to answer the questions	Questions to ask	Description to answer the questions
<b>Event 1</b>	What did it feel like to slip in the puddle? Did you just get a little wet, or are you soaked? Did you hurt yourself when you fell?			
<b>Event 2</b>	How close were you to not missing the bus? Did the doors close <i>just</i> before you got there, or was the bus gone before you even reached the stop. How does missing the bus make you feel – are you frustrated, resigned, or something else?			
<b>Event 3</b>	Who's on the bus that's noticing you all wet from the puddle? What do they say to you? How does that make you feel?			



## CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHEET: Elliot's 'What If' Game (Part 3)

Now it's time to put it all together. Write your story so far in the space below, remembering to answer your 'what if' questions with each **event** you came up with in Part 1, and adding in the **description** you brainstormed in Part 2.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

What might come next? Write down some 'what ifs', and see where your story takes you!

**What if . . .** \_\_\_\_\_

**What if . . .** \_\_\_\_\_

**What if . . .** \_\_\_\_\_

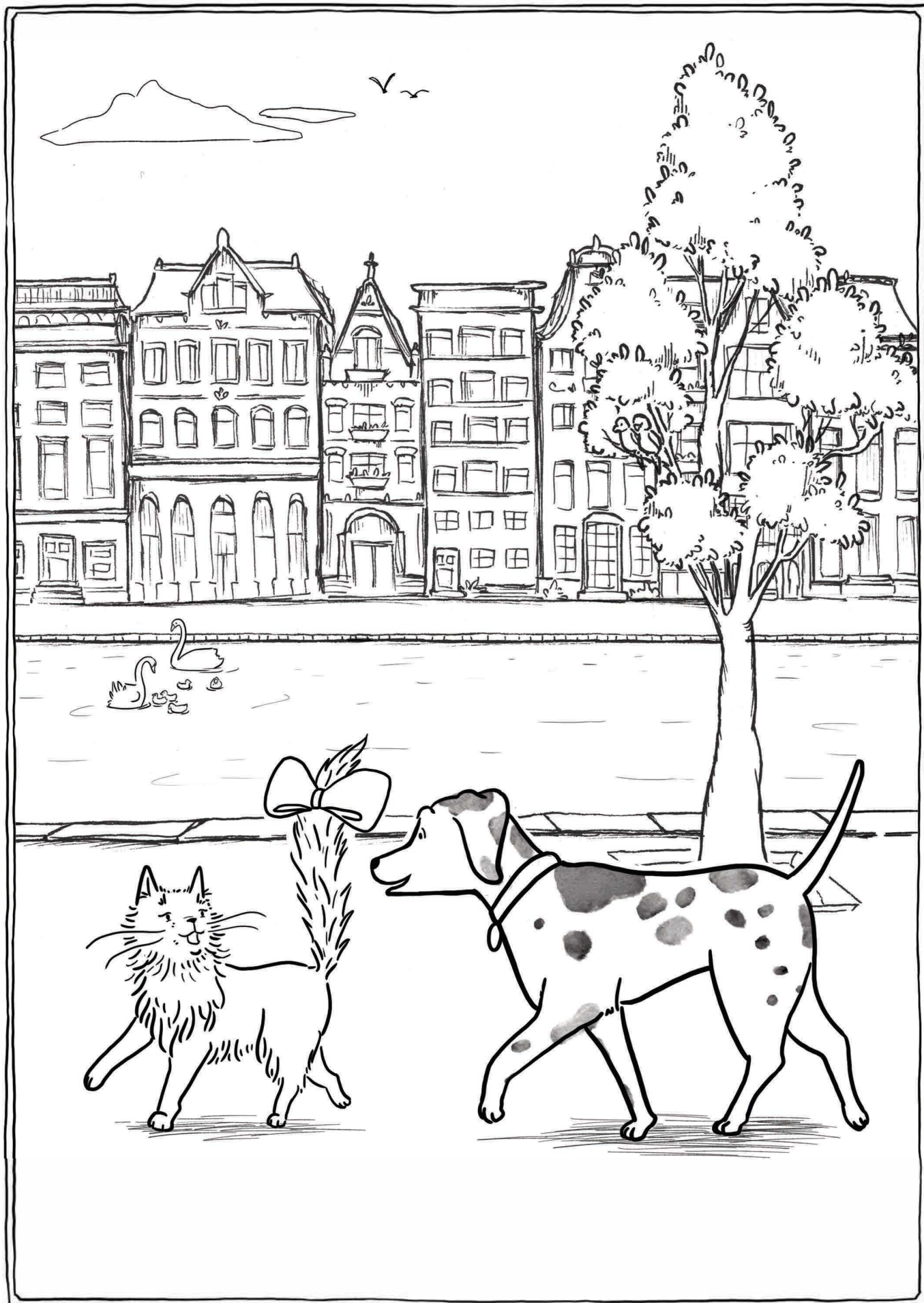
**What if . . .** \_\_\_\_\_

**What if . . .** \_\_\_\_\_

### What if...

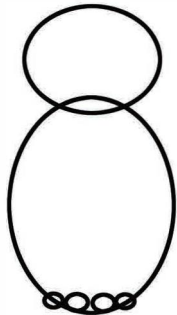


Catvinkle and Ula are taking a stroll by the canal.  
Can you colour in this scene?

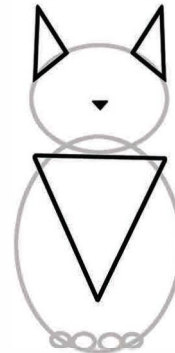


# How to draw Catvinkle

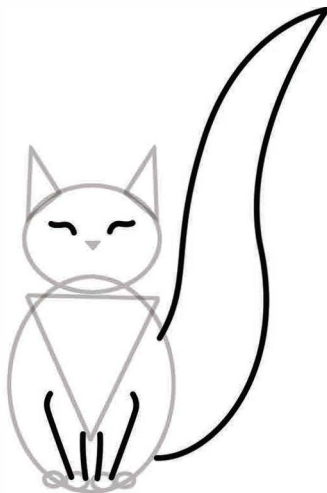
1. Using your pencil – draw 6 ovals, for Catvinkle's head, body and her tiny feet.



2. Now add 4 triangles, for her ears, nose and chest.



3. Add 8 curvy lines, for her tail, eyelids and legs.



4. Now that you have the basic shape, use a marker. Add smooth lines where her fur is short – ears, nose and legs.



5. Now draw lots of little lines for all of Catvinkle's soft, fluffy fur. Don't forget to leave a gap for her bow!

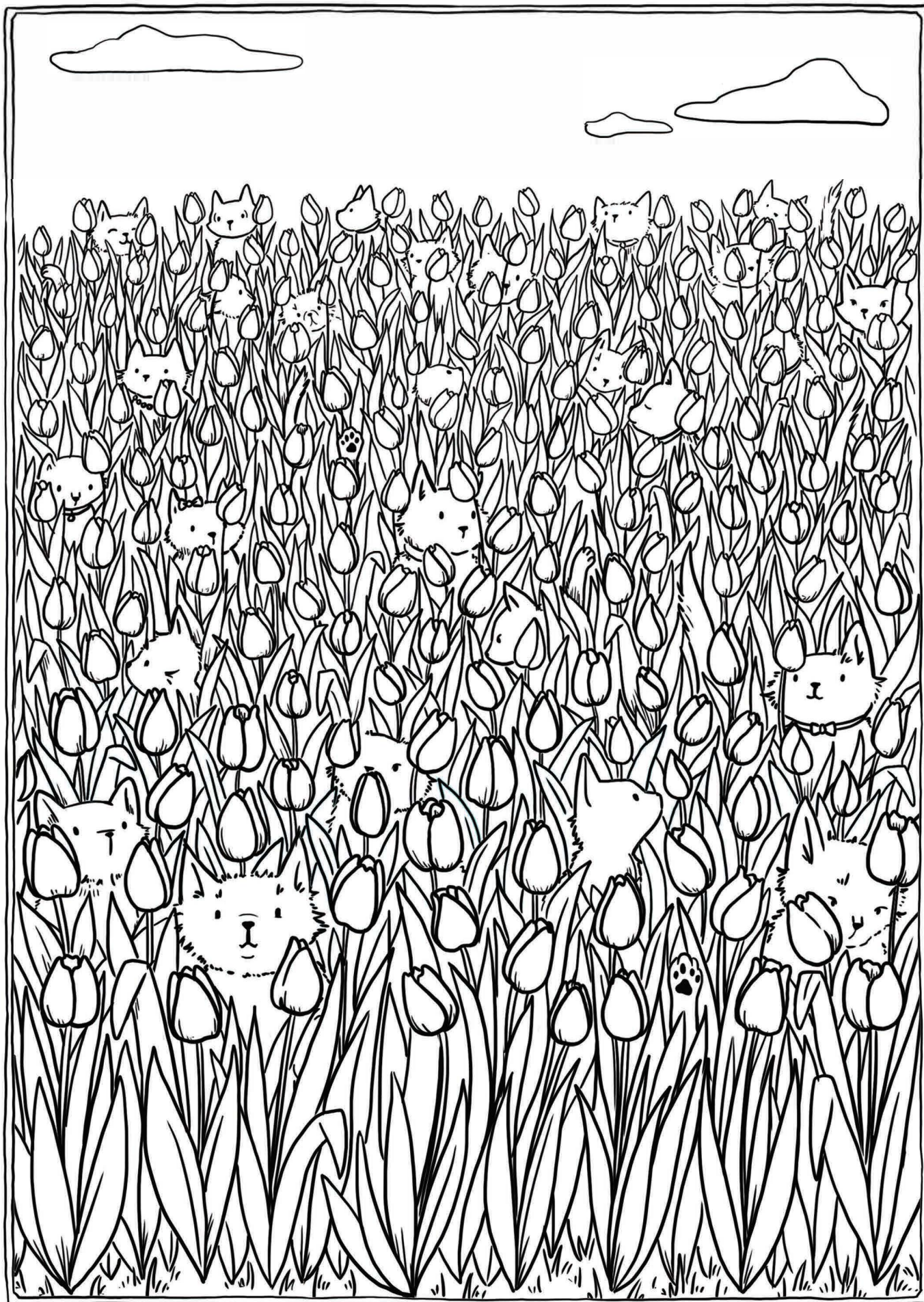


6. Lastly, add Catvinkle's bow, long whiskers and her face. You can give her any expression you like!



Erase your pencil lines and you are finished!

How many cats can you find hiding in the tulips?



Answer: 35. Hint: sometimes all you can see is a fluffy tail or a little cat paw!

Find out more about *Catvinkle and the Missing Tulips* by Elliot Perlman and Laura Stitzel at [penguin.com.au](http://penguin.com.au)

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