



TEACHERS' RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED FOR

Lower primary: ages 5–8; years k to 3

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KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **Learning areas:** English
- **General capabilities:** Literacy, Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social capabilities, Ethical Understanding, Intercultural Understanding.
- **Cross-curriculum priorities:** Sustainability

REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

- Language and literacy
- Creative and critical thinking
- Intercultural understanding
- Sustainability themes

THEMES

- Family, community and culture
- Diversity
- Friendship
- Sustainability and nature
- Community gardens
- Pets
- Play
- Grandparents and parents
- Music
- Neighbours
- Cooking

PREPARED BY

Penguin Random House Australia
All illustrations © Deb Hudson 2020

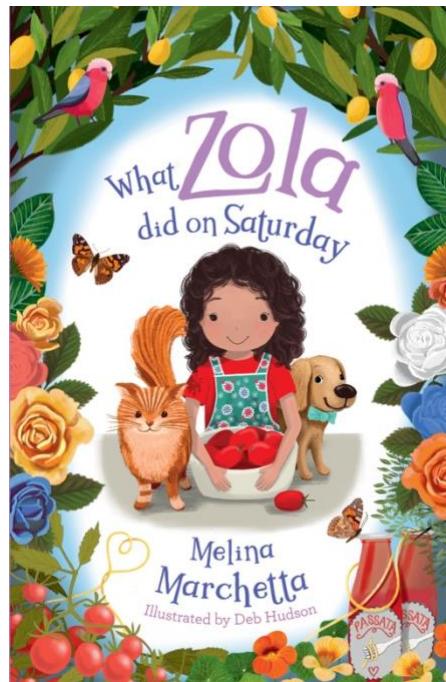
PUBLICATION DETAILS

ISBN: 9781760895211 (paperback);
9781760147648 (ebook)

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What Zola did on Saturday

Melina Marchetta

PLOT SUMMARY

Seven-year-old Zola lives with her nonna and her mum, and their well-behaved dog, Monty. Every day of the week is a new adventure for Zola, especially in the sprawling backyard where Nonna is growing every vegetable imaginable and nurturing the best roses in the street.

It's tomato day at Nonna Rosa's! Zola and her friends are full of curiosity about this special tradition, but of course things don't quite go to plan when Zola and Monty and Gigi are curious about the ingredients Nonna Rosa has gathered. Can Zola and her neighbours band together and save the day?

A wonderful children's series celebrating community, sustainability, diversity and family from the bestselling author of *Looking for Alibrandi*. Fun, heartwarming stories full of mischief, humour and heart, sure to charm and engage newly independent young readers.

'I don't know about you but I am getting incredibly fond of Zola and her neighbourhood. . . newly independent readers both boys and girls will just adore these stories . . . fabulous read-alouds for either classroom teachers or teacher-librarians paired with activities and action plans. Highly recommended.'

Sue Warren

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Melina Marchetta is the bestselling author of ten novels, which range from beloved young adult fiction and fantasy through to contemporary and crime fiction, and a book for younger readers. Her much-loved Australian classic *Looking for Alibrandi* was made into an award-winning film. She lives in Sydney with her daughter and her dog in a neighbourhood very much like Zola's.

Q & A ON ZOLA WITH MELINA MARCHETTA

Melina Marchetta's new series is perfect for beginner readers. Why did she write the What Zola Did books? My eight-year-old daughter is a very reluctant reader. When she was in Year 1 she especially struggled with literacy so I wrote it for her. Although the character is named Zola (who is named after a young friend), she is very much based on Bianca. And I'm always searching for diversity in books for any age.

What does Bianca think of the series? She is very excited about it. Apart from our dog Gigi being in it, so are the dogs next door, as well as my nephew whose middle name is Alessandro. In the books Alessandro lives behind Zola and they hang out via a little gate in the fence. We will soon move into a house that will be separated by a similar door, so they are both excited. The other night Bianca read a chapter to my mum and her cousin and they were very charmed.

Is Zola's Nonna Rosa similar to anyone in your family? My mum is a bit like Nonna Rosa. We went on holidays once and left our dog Gigi with her and she had to build a barrier around her entire garden. The moment we let Gigi loose in the backyard, she jumped the barriers and went for a dig-a-thon. It's all we heard the whole time we were away.

Are you a passionate gardener? I'm a terrible gardener. The problem is that I love gardens, so I would be the happiest person in the world if I had a personal gardener. Once in a while I tell myself that I'm going to grow tomatoes. I've done that successfully once, but it's all about the quality of the soil. I also love eggplant and capsicum.

What is your favourite scene in the first book? My daughter is a busybody about what the neighbours are up to so I love the scene where Zola and her cousin are on the trampoline reporting on what neighbouring kids are doing.

The illustrations are just gorgeous. How did you feel when you first saw them? I've never had illustrations in my novels before so the visuals have always been in my head. I love Deb's illustrations because she has

captured the personalities of humans and dogs perfectly.

What other types of adventures will Zola have during the rest of the week? My father passed away recently and prior to that he had purchased a little yellow boat to fix up for his grandchildren. My cousins and my parents' neighbours and my nephews are determined to work on it, so [Friday's book is] based on the little yellow boat and what happens when Zola and Alessandro and the dogs get into the paint!

There are seven books in the What Zola Did series.



Each one is like a warm hug and is filled with beautiful illustrations by Deb Hudson.



ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Deb Hudson grew up in the country on a hobby farm with a large veggie patch surrounded by fruit trees. She was the youngest of six children, hence the need for a big vegetable garden. Each child tended their own row in the garden, keeping it free from weeds, rabbits, the sheep and other smaller bugs.

Drawing and creating have always been a big part of her life. As a child her mother said she was 'off with the fairies' in her own little dream world, and was often dancing about in dress-ups, talking to imaginary friends and drawing.

Deb feels a lovely connection to the joy of the community garden in the Zola series. She finds that



drawing plants and the lovely shapes, textures and colours of flowers feeds her imagination and inspires her creativity. Deb also loves to draw people and the emotion of their relationships.

Deb illustrated her first children's book *The Golden Thread* in 2018. She has also created greeting cards, crockery, calendars and packaging.

Deb is passionate about drawing bright, happy and colourful images that evoke emotion and thought in the viewer – the dreamy, joy and wonder-filled moments of the everyday. She has been drawing and creating since she was a little girl and lives in the fabulous city of Melbourne, Australia, with her husband, three children, an energetic border collie and a bright yellow canary.

Questions

1. Before reading the book, discuss what you think this story is going to be about.
2. After reading it, were you surprised by the story? Why or why not?

WRITING STYLE

The What Zola Did series of books are very satisfying ones to read aloud. One of the reasons for this is the distinctive rhythm, word sounds and choices, and the overall language used by the author Melina Marchetta and the way in which she dramatises conversations, called 'dialogue'. We call this the author's voice. Take turns reading this book aloud in class. Make sure you emphasise the words in bold. Can you hear Melina's voice telling you the story? Be sure to give each of the characters their own voice when reading out the dialogue.

Questions

- What do you think of Melina's writing style and voice as an author? Did you like it? Why? Did you like the dialogue?
- Did the story make you laugh? When?
- Were there some moments where you felt sad? Why?
- How did you feel after you finished the story?
- Have you had experiences just like Zola? What did you do to make things right?

CHARACTERS

There are so many characters to love in this story: Zola, Alessandro, Nonna Rosa, memories of Nonno Nino, Zola's mum, Mr Walton, Bianca, Omar and Leo and the rest of Zola's neighbours and teachers and friends at school, and of course, the loveable dogs that belong to

Zola and Alessandro: well-behaved Monty and naughty Gigi. And Bianca and Omar's fluffy cat, Tim Tam.

- Which characters were your favourites? Why?
- Create your own characters and write a story about them. What happens to them? Do they get in trouble? Are there any pets involved? What do they look like? Where do they live? What does it look like? Who else lives there? Do they have lots of neighbours?
- Have you ever grown tomatoes? Write a story that features your garden, either real or imagined, and your neighbourhood. Try to include at least two other characters and two animals that you see. Where do you go? What can you see? Describe the setting and what you love about it.

SUSTAINABILITY, NATURE AND COMMUNITY

- Plant some flower or vegetable seeds in some soil in an egg carton or other container. Depending on the time of year and where you live, there are lots of seeds you might choose from. Some good ones to try are tomatoes, sunflowers, carrots, peas. As a class, keep them watered and in the sun. Watch them grow. Plant them out in a painted pot, following the activity instructions at the end of *What Zola did on Friday*.
- Start your own school community garden and enjoy it all year round, just like Zola and her family. Teachers might like to involve parents in this rewarding project that teaches children (and adults!) so much about sustainability. Organise a plant sale of seedlings you have grown as a class.
- Join in [National Tree Day](#) and plant some trees.
- Draw your favourite things about the sea. Try to include as many animals as you can. You might like to draw a boat that you would like to sail in, just like Zola and her family. Where does your boat go? Find out what we can do to ensure the sea is a healthy environment for all its creatures.
- Make some pasta sauce as a class, just like Nonna Rosa and Zola and the gang. Use the simple sauce recipe at the end of *What Zola did on Saturday*.

FAMILY

- Draw a picture of your grandma or grandfather, or your parents or brother or sister or aunty or uncle or someone else in your family. What is special about them? What are the things you love about them? Write under it the sorts of activities they like. Are there special activities that you enjoy together? Describe them.



- Create an acrostic poem out of the name you have for them and list all the things you love about them, making sure that each starts with a letter of their name. Feel free to add lots of illustrations!

INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

There are lots of different words that mean grandmother and grandfather in different languages. In Italian, *nonna* means grandma and *nonno* means grandpa. There are also lots of words for *tomato*.

- As a class, research and discuss some other words for *tomato* in different languages.
- Draw pictures of tomatoes, labelling them with their correct names in different languages and the country the word comes from.

VISUAL LITERACY

The illustrator of the Zola series, Deb Hudson, has taken great care to develop the setting of Boomerang Street and all of the characters in the books, working with the author and editor to get them just right. Here are some examples of her character studies:

- Create your own character studies by drawing pictures of the characters from your story in the previous activity. Try drawing them in a variety of poses and with their friends, family and pets.
- Now illustrate a scene from the story, including as many of the characters that you can and some of the instruments you or your classmates or someone in your classmates' family plays.
- Look at the illustrations throughout *What Zola did on Friday*. Pick a favourite one and describe what you see. Is there more in it than is described in the text? What are some of the extra details the illustrator has included?
- Draw your own pictures of Zola, Alessandro, Nonna Rosa, Nonno Nino, Mr Walton, Ms Divis, Leo, Bianca and Omar and their parents, and all the pets. Try drawing Nonno Nino's boat, too. Decorate it with bright colour and vibrant patterns, just like Zola and Alessandro.
- Download the Zola activity packs [here](#) and [here](#).

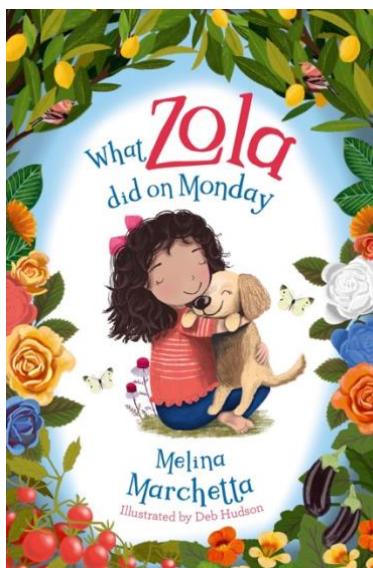
ZOLA



GIGI



FURTHER READING FROM PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA



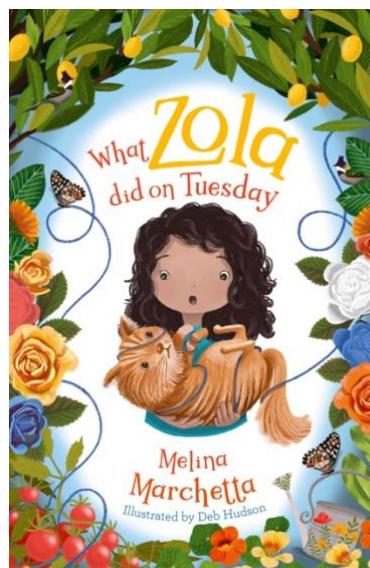
What Zola did on Monday
by Melina Marchetta

Why this story? Read the fun-filled and heart-warming first story in the What Zola Did series by Melina Marchetta.

Zola loves living on Boomerang Street with her mum and her nonna. Every day of the week is an adventure. But Zola has a problem. No matter how much she tries, she can't keep out of trouble. Like on Monday, when Gigi gets into Nonna Rosa's veggie garden . . .

Luckily, Zola's family and friends are around to make things right in the end, to help her accept responsibility and, best of all, to have lots of fun.

Teachers' resources available.



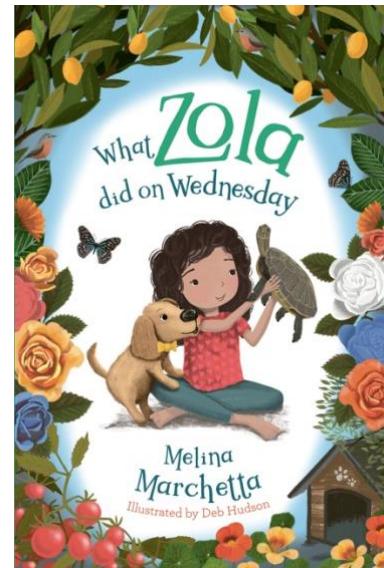
What Zola did on Tuesday
by Melina Marchetta

Why this story? Read about more of Zola's action-packed and funny adventures in book two in the What Zola Did series!

Zola loves living on Boomerang Street with her mum and her nonna. Every day of the week is an adventure. But Zola has a problem. No matter how much she tries, she can't keep out of trouble. Like on Tuesday, when Zola tries to help Nonna knit a scarf . . .

Luckily, Zola's family and friends are around to make things right in the end, to help her accept responsibility and, best of all, to have lots of fun.

Teachers' resources available.



What Zola did on Wednesday
by Melina Marchetta

Why this story? Read another fun and mischievous adventure from Zola and her friends in book three of the What Zola Did series!

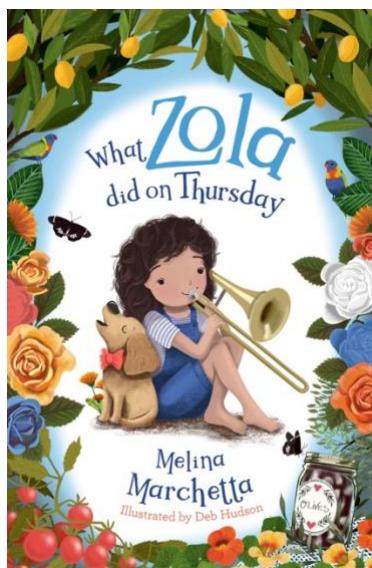
Zola loves living on Boomerang Street with her mum and her nonna. Every day of the week is an adventure. But Zola has a problem. No matter how much she tries, she can't keep out of trouble. Like on Wednesday, when Zola has a plan to help find her friend Sophia's missing turtle but Gigi leads the neighbours on a chase around the street . . .

Luckily, Zola's family and friends are around to make things right in the end, to help her accept responsibility and, best of all, to have lots of fun.

Teachers' resources available.



FURTHER READING FROM PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA



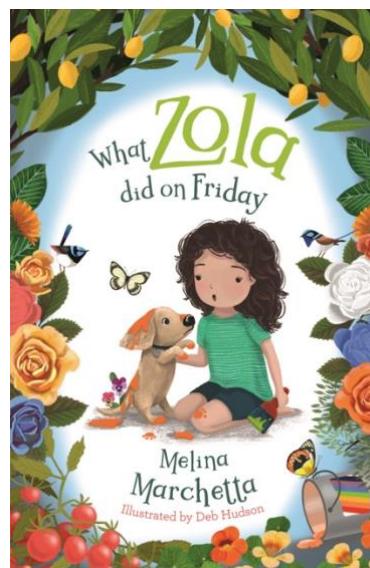
What Zola did on Thursday
by Melina Marchetta

Why this story? Read about Zola's musical adventures in the fourth book in the *What Zola Did* series by Melina Marchetta.

Zola loves living on Boomerang Street with her mum and her nonna. Every day of the week is an adventure. But Zola has a problem. No matter how much she tries, she can't keep out of trouble. Like on Thursday, when Zola's cranky neighbour is not impressed by how well she plays the trombone.

Luckily, Zola's family and friends are around to make things right in the end, to help her accept responsibility and, best of all, to have lots of fun.

Teachers' resources available.



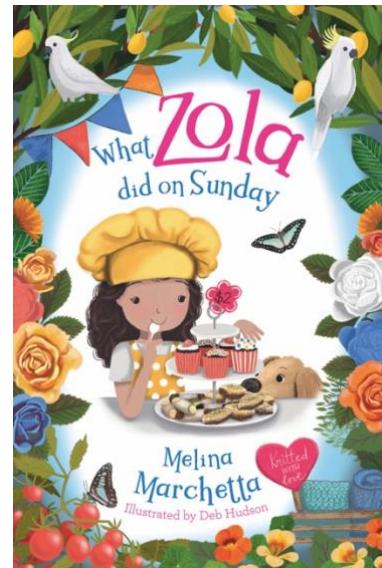
What Zola did on Friday
by Melina Marchetta

Why this story? Read about more of Zola's action-packed and funny adventures in book five in the *What Zola Did* series!

Zola loves living on Boomerang Street with her mum and her nonna. Every day of the week is an adventure. But Zola has a problem. No matter how much she tries, she can't keep out of trouble. Like on Friday, when Zola and Alessandro decide to paint Nonno Nino's boat!

Luckily, Zola's family and friends are around to make things right in the end, to help her accept responsibility and, best of all, to have lots of fun.

Teachers' resources available.



What Zola did on Sunday
by Melina Marchetta

Why this story? Read another fun and mischievous adventure from Zola and her friends in the gorgeous seventh book in the *What Zola Did* series!

Zola loves living on Boomerang Street with her mum and her nonna. Every day of the week is an adventure. But Zola has a problem. No matter how much she tries, she can't keep out of trouble. Like on Sunday, when it's fete day and there are so many fun activities for Zola and her friends to enjoy.

Luckily, Zola's family and friends are around to make things right in the end, to help her accept responsibility and, best of all, to have lots of fun.

Teachers' resources available.



ORDER FORM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	SCHOOL YEAR	RRP	QTY	TOTAL
What Zola did on Monday	Melina Marchetta	9781760895150	K-3	\$12.99		
What Zola did on Tuesday	Melina Marchetta	9781760895167	K-3	\$12.99		
What Zola did on Wednesday	Melina Marchetta	9781760895174	K-3	\$12.99		
What Zola did on Thursday	Melina Marchetta	9781760895181	K-3	\$12.99		
What Zola did on Friday	Melina Marchetta	9781760895020	K-3	\$12.99		
What Zola did on Saturday	Melina Marchetta	9781760895211	K-3	\$12.99		
What Zola did on Sunday	Melina Marchetta	9781760895228	K-3	\$12.99		
TOTAL						

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