

# The Mysterious Magical Shop

## Author: Elizabeth Pulford

## Illustrator: Rachel Driscoll

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### Synopsis

Hannah has always liked Mr McPherson's second-hand shop. On Christmas Eve when she stands at the window and peers inside, it seems even more magical and mysterious. Hannah is looking for the perfect fairy to go on top of the Christmas tree. When Hannah enters the shop Mr McPherson finds her a glass ball with a beautiful girl in a silver dress inside it. The girl looks like she is dancing but when Hannah shakes the ball nothing happens. Mr McPherson explains to Hannah that the girl, whose name is Lily, is frozen and it is up to Hannah to free her so she can dance again. He goes on to tell her the magical story of how Lily ended up trapped in the ball. Will Hannah be able to break the spell so that Lily can dance again or are fairy tales simply stories in books?

### Text Type

*The Mysterious Magical Shop* is a delightful illustrated story written by award-winning New Zealand author Elizabeth Pulford and illustrated by Rachel Driscoll. The story, which begins on Christmas Eve and ends on Christmas day, is a magical tale for the festive season, full of magic and fairies. Written for young readers, the story will appeal particularly to girls. Hannah is a special girl who has been chosen to free Lily from her ball. In order to do this Hannah needs to open her mind, listen to her instincts and most importantly, have faith that magic really does exist.

### Sharing the Novel

The novel has been divided up as follows: Chapters 1 and 2 (pp. 7–14), Chapters 3–9 (pp. 15–49) and Chapters 10–18 (pp. 50–88).

During the shared sessions encourage students to ask questions to clarify their understanding of words and ideas presented in the story. Have them make predictions about what will happen next in the story. Most importantly encourage students to enjoy the story, make the leap of imagination to a world where fairies exist, time stands still and magic can happen.

### Introducing the Novel

Have students study the front cover of the novel and read the blurb.

- What kind of story do you think this is? What do you expect from stories of this genre?
- What kinds of things do you think might be sold in the mysterious magical shop?

- What clue is there in the blurb that tells us what time of year it is?
- Who do you think the girl looking in the window is? What do you think she is looking at?
- How do you think the dancer got trapped in the crystal ball?

Teacher reads Chapters 1 and 2 (pp.7–14) aloud to the class. Students follow along in their books.

### Comprehension Chapters 1 and 2 (pp. 7–14)

- Why does Hannah like Mr McPherson's second-hand shop so much? What does she see when she peers in the window? Why does Hannah want to go into the shop? What does she hear as she opens the door?
- How many times has Hannah been in the shop? How does she feel as she enters the room?
- Who appears from the back of the shop?

### Discussion

- What two fairy tales does Hannah refer to these two chapters? What is special about fairy tales?
- What do we learn about Hannah in Chapters 1 and 2?
- What do you think is going to happen next in the story?

Students read Chapters 3–9 (pp. 15–49) independently before the next shared session.

### Comprehension Chapters 3–9 (pp. 15–49)

- Describe what Mr McPherson looks like. Why is Hannah taken aback by his greeting?
- What is unusual about Mr McPherson?
- What does Mr McPherson show Hannah when she says she is looking for a Christmas fairy? How does Hannah react? Why does her wonder turn to disappointment?
- What comes out of the flag? What does this remind Hannah about?
- What does Mr McPherson tell Hannah about time in his shop?
- Where does Mr McPherson find the fairy that he gives Hannah? Why isn't the Christmas fairy that Mr McPherson gives Hannah ready to go on the tree?
- What does Hannah see when she peers inside the crystal ball? What happens when she shakes it?

- What does Mr McPherson tell Hannah about the crystal ball? Why is he convinced that Hannah is the person Lily has been waiting for all these years?
- What does Hannah need to do in order to break the spell?
- Summarise the fairy tale that Mr McPherson tells Hannah. Who are Ivy and Lily? How are the girls different? What does each girl plan to present to the palace? What does Ivy do to Lily? Why does she do this? How does Lily get trapped in the ball? What does Lily do with the ball?
- Why can't Mr McPherson tell Hannah how to free Lily?
- How long does Hannah have to rescue Lily from the crystal ball?
- How do we know that Mr McPherson was telling the truth about time standing still in his shop?
- Where does Hannah want to go after she leaves Mr McPherson's shop?

### Discussion

- Why is it important to believe that "we all have a little bit of magic in us"?
- What lessons does the fairy story that Mr McPherson tells Hannah teach us?
- Why do you think Hannah wants to go to the flower shop?
- What do you think will happen in the story next?

Students read Chapters 10–18 (pp. 50–88) independently before the next shared session.

### Comprehension Chapters

- How does Hannah know which flower shop to go to?
- Who is working in the shop when Hannah enters? Why is this unusual?
- How do we know that the lady in the shop has been expecting Hannah?
- How many guesses is Hannah allowed to name the flowers that are making the beautiful smell?
- What is the point of change in the story that helps Hannah name the flowers?
- How does Hannah know that the lilies are part of the puzzle?
- Where does Hannah's mum think she got the money to buy the lilies from?
- What is the last thing that needs to go on the Christmas tree?

- What does Hannah’s dad tell her to bring downstairs after she has cleaned her teeth? How does this make Hannah feel?
- What does Hannah forget to do when she goes to bed?
- What happens when Hannah asks Lily what she wants her to do? Where does Lily want Hannah to take her? What happens as soon as Hannah decides to do as Lily has asked?
- What does Hannah think Lily means when she says “go back”?
- Describe what happens when Hannah begins to twirl. How does she know that she has set Lily free?
- Why does Hannah start crying after the ball disappears? Why doesn’t she check the top of the tree when she goes inside?
- Why does Hannah pretend to be asleep when her mother comes into her room?
- What does Hannah find inside her Christmas stocking?
- What does Hannah decide to do to surprise her parents on Christmas morning?
- What makes Hannah go and look in the lounge before she reaches the kitchen? Describe what she sees when she opens the door. How does Hannah’s dad react when he sees the tree?
- What is in the mysterious parcel that Hannah’s mother gives her?
- How does Hannah know that the present is from Mr McPherson?

### Discussion

- How does Hannah feel when she can’t figure out how to free Lily from the crystal ball? What does the fact that she perseveres until she succeeds suggest about her character?
- What do you think Lily’s experiences have taught her? What lessons can we learn from the story?

### Activities

**Plot** – Make a timeline of the important events that occur in the story.

**Plot** – Choose an important section of the story and retell it in your own words.

**Writing** – Write a poem that expresses Hannah’s thoughts and feelings when she sees Lily on top of the tree.

**Writing** – Write and illustrate The True Tale of the Christmas Fairy.

**Writing** – Write a paragraph explaining why *The Mysterious Magical Shop* is a good Christmas story.

**Theme** – Identify an important theme in the story and design a static image that depicts it. Include quotes and images from the story to back up your ideas. Your theme might be that it is important to believe in magic.

**Static Image** – Design an alternative front cover for *The Mysterious Magical Shop*. The front cover needs the book's title, and the name of the author and illustrator. Include an exciting illustration about the book. Write the name of the book long ways on the spine. The back cover needs a summary of the story to encourage the reader.

**Poster** – Design a poster advertising *The Mysterious Magical Shop* that would be suitable for display in your school library.

**Writing** – Write a letter to a friend explaining to them why they should read *The Mysterious Magical Shop*.

**Brochure** – Design an advertising brochure for Mr McPherson's Mysterious Magic Shop.

**Writing** – Write a chapter of the story from Lily's point of view.

Notes written by Vicki Ladd