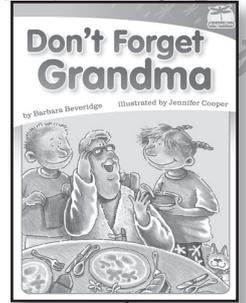


# Don't Forget Grandma

by *Barbara Beveridge*

illustrated by *Jennifer Cooper*



## Overview

This simple play has a cast of four characters. Grandma is coming to dinner, and the children have a lively, entertaining time preparing for her arrival.

## Suggested purposes

This text supports the comprehension strategies of following the steps in a process, noting details in illustrations, and summarising the main ideas. It introduces the students to the conventions involved with reading and performing plays.

## Text features (Focus on only one or two per session.)

- the initial consonant blends – *gr, sp, pl*
- the contractions – *don't, let's, didn't, I'll*
- the compound words – *forget, Grandma*
- the silent “k” in “knife”
- the use of repetition
- the use of exclamation marks
- the use of questions
- the play-writing conventions of a list of characters and the use of capital letters and coloured type
- the humour in the illustrations
- the visual sub-plots involving a spider and the family cat

## Setting the scene

Talk about having visitors for a meal. *What special things do you need to do before they come?* Be aware that there may be cultural differences between members of the group.

Watch a group of children performing a play. Talk about the conventions of plays and familiarise the students with the idea of the characters taking turns to speak.

## The first reading

Discuss the cover illustration. *Who do you think this visitor might be? What is on the table?* Draw out the idea that a lot of care has gone into the table setting. *Can you read the title?*

**Back cover** – Read aloud the preview question. Discuss the students' predictions.

**Title page** – Draw the students' attention to the words “A play” under the title. Talk about what a play is. Read the names of the author and the illustrator. Look at the illustration. *Does the home look ready for a visitor? What do you think Mum might ask the children to do?* Read the title again.

**Page 2** – Introduce the idea that a play starts with a list of characters. Explain that the group will read the whole play together before choosing people to be particular characters. Read the character list.

Explain the word “scene”. *Can you read and find out what the scene is for this play?* Explain the convention of using upper-case letters and coloured print for the names of the characters. *Who is the speaker on this page? What is Mum asking the children to do?*

**Page 3** – *Who is speaking now?* Listen to the students read the text for themselves, supporting them as necessary. You may need to remind them that the names of the characters in coloured print are for information only and not for reading aloud. Note that on pages 3 to 6, George and Rosanna speak the refrain together.

**Page 4** – *What are the children doing now?* The students may need support with “knives”. Remind them that “k” in front of an “n” is silent.

**Page 5** – Observe the students’ strategies for working out “spoons”.

**Page 6** – Some students may be unfamiliar with the word “napkins”. Discuss what they are for.

**Page 7** – Note the stage direction.

When the students have read the play, consolidate their new learning about the conventions of plays by rereading it with them taking on individual roles. Ensure that when one student is reading, the other students are following the text so that they know when it is their turn to speak.

**Ideas for revisiting the text** (Choose only one or two per session.)

- Plays are very popular with children, and this play is very short, so the students may read it many times taking on different roles. Listen to them as they reread the text, observing their ability to cope with the format of the play, to track the text when another character is speaking, and to read expressively.
- Focus on any of the initial consonant blends that the students may have been unsure of. Locate the words in the text and make a list of other words that start the same way.
- Focus on the silent “k” in “knives”. List other words that start with “kn”.
- Locate the contractions in the text and read the lines where they occur. Talk about what the contractions are short for and read the lines again without using contractions. *How does that sound?* Draw out the idea that contractions make speech sound more natural.
- Focus on the compound words “forget” and “Grandma”. List other examples of compound words.
- You could talk about the use of the words “grand” or “great” to denote family relationships. Discuss other names for grandparents.
- Look closely at the illustrations. Discuss the humorous elements, such as Rosanna juggling the spoons on page 5.
- Follow the visual sub-plot of the cat or the spider and tell their stories.

**Suggestions for further activities**

- Ask the students to retell the play in their own words.
- Perform the play for an audience.
- As a group, write instructions on how to set the table.
- Make an invitation for a grandparent.

- BLM word activity: use contractions

The students can read the words on the knives and forks. They can pair the words with the contractions, matching the appropriate knives and forks. They can then write the contractions on the lines below.

- BLM comprehension activity: follow instructions in the text

The students can discuss how to lay a table. They can write a set of instructions, then read their instructions to a partner.