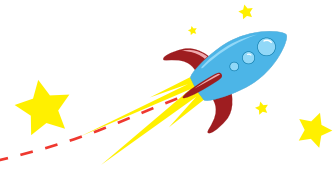




Marvin and Marigold: **A CHRISTMAS SURPRISE**

Written by Mark Carthew
Illustrated by Simon Prescott
Published by New Frontier Publishing

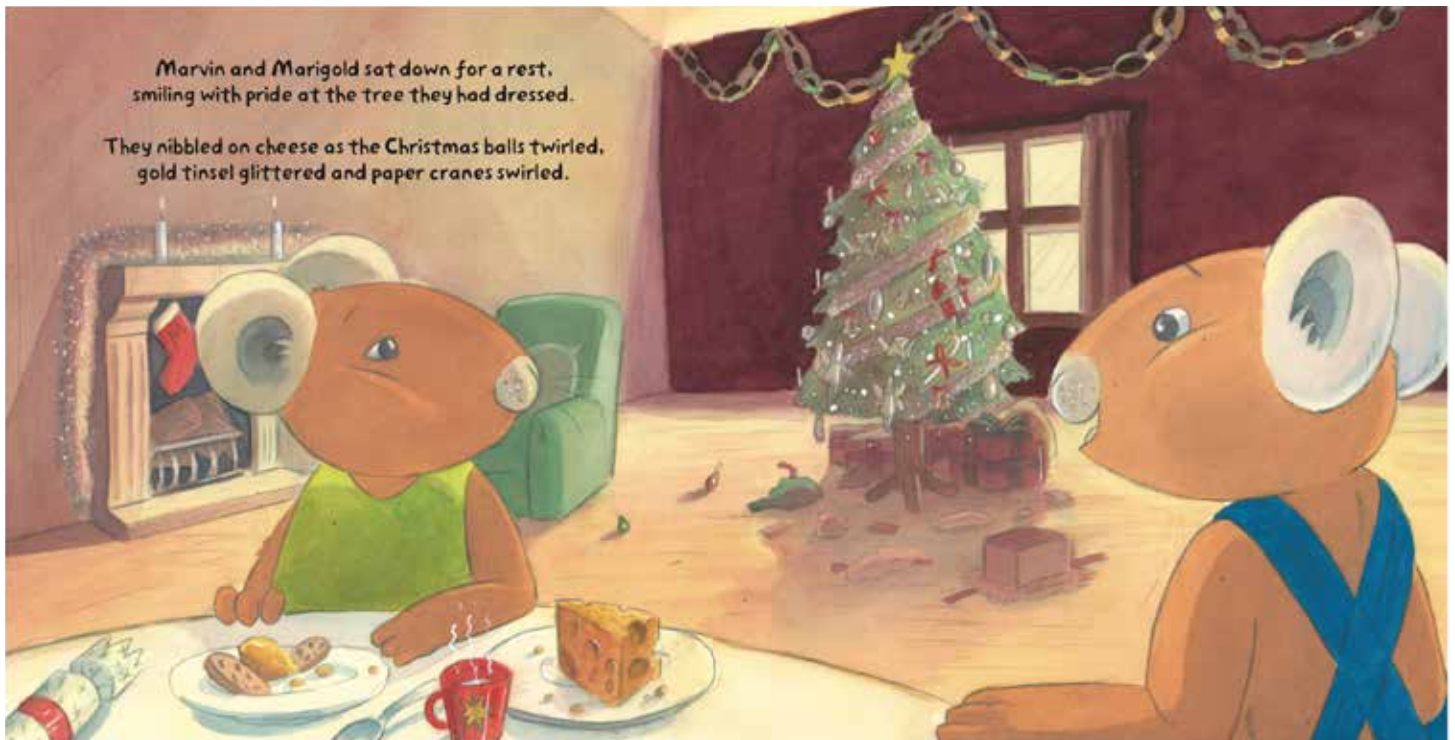


SYNOPSIS

On the first day in December Marigold Mouse receives a surprise gift. She can't wait to share her excitement with her best friend Marvin. Mark Carthew's evocative verse expresses the spirit of the festive season and Simon Prescott's illustrations bring to life the magic of Christmas.

AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR STYLE OR MEDIUM

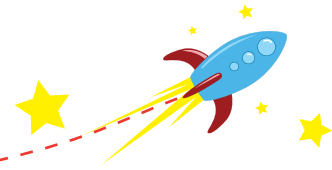
This second book in the Marvin and Marigold series highlights Mark Carthew's trademark ability to use to rhyming word play to capture reader interest. Carthew cleverly weaves notions of compassion and kindness along with family and Christmas traditions into the interactions between the two mouse neighbours. The characters of Marvin and Marigold are destined to become household favourites, as there is much to engage readers in this appealing storyline and series. The illustrations for *Marvin and Marigold* are painted in bright and cheerful watercolours, a medium which UK artist Simon Prescott excels.





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AUTHOR BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Mark Carthew is an award winning Australian children's author, poet, musician and educator well known for his books and series celebrating language, humour and wordplay. His illustrated play script series VoiceWorks has sold over one million titles worldwide. Mark's picture books include *Five Little Owls* and *The Gobbling Tree* - WINNER of Speech Pathology Australia's 2009 Book of the Year Award. Mark is a former Board Member of Australian Society of Authors (ASA) and May Gibbs Children's Literature Trust Fellow. Mark has a PhD in Writing from Swinburne University and he is both a primary teacher and Adjunct Research Fellow with Swinburne University's Department of Media and Communication.

Mark's recent picture books include *The Moose is Loose!*, illustrated by Matt Stanton published by Harper Collins / ABC Books, *The Great Zoo Hullabaloo!* illustrated by Anil Tortop and *Marvin and Marigold: The BIG Sneeze* illustrated by Simon Prescott. Mark's upcoming titles include *Six Little Ducks* illustrated by Mike Spoor and the third book in the Marvin and Marigold series *Marvin and Marigold: The Stormy Night*, New Frontier Publishing (2018).

ILLUSTRATOR BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Simon is a published illustrator and author. He mainly uses traditional mediums such as pencil, pen and watercolour. By using lighting and perspective he aims to create drama and atmosphere in his work, along with a healthy dose of humour.

He was raised in the country idles of Hertfordshire, where he watched too many cartoons and filled pads with drawings and doodles. He eventually went to Norwich School of Art to study a BA in Graphic Design.

After graduating he spent two years living in Finland, the home of the Moomins, Saunas and the midnight sun. Then he returned to the UK, and completed an MA in Children's book illustration in Cambridge, where he now lives and works.

EDUCATIONAL APPLICABILITY

Key themes in this book include kindness, friendship, family memorabilia, Christmas traditions, Christmas decorations and Christmas trees. Literary features include alliteration, assonance, rhyme and rhythm, wordplay, abbreviations, letter and sign writing.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

Before and during reading the book:

1. Introduce the book – read the title and subtitle and ask students to look at the cover illustration. What do they think may happen in the story? Look carefully at the endpapers and title pages. What features can you see? (Re-visit this at the end of the story and look carefully at the objects in the endpapers. Are there any key objects mentioned in the story missing?)
2. As you read the opening pages and get into the rhythm and pattern of the story, invite the children to look for the fine details in each picture – especially little things in each spread; such as the dead tree in Marvin's pot, the two tiny figures on his window ledge and the types of phones they both use.
3. Continue reading and encourage students to look for other subtle things Simon Prescott included in each illustration.
4. Look at the letter from Marigold's mother; 'Why is it in a different font / typeset?' A: It's written in ink. Revisit the lead-in text:

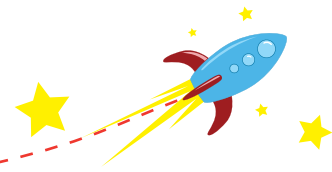
*On top of the box was a tinsel-wrapped note,
handwritten in ink, the way people once wrote.*

Ask children some discussion questions: Who still likes receiving letters in a post box? Why does that feel special? Why do some people still like writing letters by hand? Do you know what calligraphy is? What makes calligraphy such fun



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for some people?

After reading the book:

1. Ask children about **any** traditions they have in their family at Christmas or other times of the year. Discuss.
2. What did the children notice about the words? What sort of story was it? (Rhyming story). Can the children identify some of their favourite sections and lines?
3. Does anyone have something special they put on the Christmas tree? Why is the object or item significant? Make a list or photo collection of some favourite decorations.!

ACTIVITIES

Winter Mouse Houses!

Draw and design your own mouse house or houses. One for Marvin and one for Marigold. Children could add some extra features e.g. beds, gates, windows and chimneys etc snow covered roofs + icicles inspired by the story. How different would the houses look in the Northern and Southern hemisphere?

Children will also have great fun making mouse houses out of recycled materials, clay, cardboard and other media. They could also make a diorama.

Christmas Trees and Decorations

Marvin and Marigold: A Christmas Surprise is full of many wonderful alliterative lines and phrases highlighting items on the Christmas Tree. Many of these items are part of a special memory.

Provide an opportunity for children to discuss and think about the special things they or their family place on the tree at Christmas or other traditions or things that they do for special celebrations. Discuss the wonderful alliterative phrases and the decorations that match.

For example, *"They found all sorts of trinkets that sparkled and spangled, twinkled and twirled, and jingled and jangled."*

Bright bells and baubles...
Treasures and trinkets...
Sunbursts and snowflakes...
Dingled and dangled... etc



Children could make similar items from the story for their own tree or make up their own decorations. Trees and decorations could be made with paper, felt, drawn or painted ...or even be made 3D using mixed materials!

These could even be displayed in the categories above.

Christmas Stockings

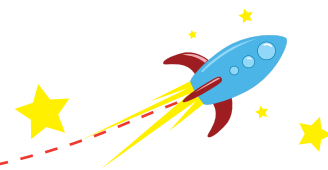
Make Christmas stocking using old socks, felt or recycled fabric. Children could learn to hand stitch (embroider) their own initials on a sock or Christmas stocking.





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Letter Writing, Postage Labels and Calligraphy

The letter from Marigold's Mother & the post pack label both provide a great opportunity to talk about the conventions of addressing and writing letters and parcels. Children could make their own thumb print, using paint for faux wax seals and associated signs with visual images such as FRAGILE / DO NOT BEND / THIS WAY UP etc.

The letter and postal note is written in old-fashioned writing, so children could explore writing styles using older style ink pens or even quills and ink. This activity could also be used as a stimulus to explore calligraphy.



Christmas Surprise / Memory Snap – Picture & Word Matching Game Activity Sheet

Print and CUT OUT the attached activity sheets. Play the game by matching the words to the object in the image. This can be done as a 'snap' card game or as a memory game ie turning over two cards and if they match you get to keep the pair. The winner is the one with the most pairs.

Children could also have fun colouring in and adding extra game pictures and words of their own.

Origami / Paper Cranes



Review and discuss the line "six paper cranes - all symbols of peace and shepherds and sheep made from old corks and fleece..." Ask children: "What other symbols are used for peace?" e.g. White Dove, etc.

Older children could research and discuss the story of the young Japanese girl Sadako and her heartfelt message for world peace using the thousand paper cranes after Hiroshima. Children will enjoy making their own origami cranes or other origami objects and animals to suit their ability level. These could be used for Christmas tree decorations. There are many wonderful books and online resources on how to make origami creatures and characters e.g.

<http://www.origami-instructions.com/simple-origami.html>

<http://www.wikihow.com/Fold-a-Paper-Crane>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qmPTMNBlz0o>

Cut and Folded Paper

Children will also enjoy making folded paper angels, stars, snowflakes and other folded or cut paper decorations. Check out sites such as:

<http://www.redtedart.com/paper-fan-angel-craft/>

<http://www.instructables.com/id/How-to-Make-6-Pointed-Paper-Snowflakes/>

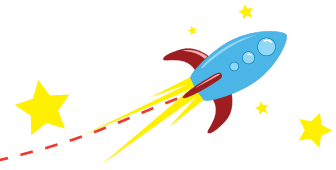
Babushka Dolls

Research and discuss the history and tradition of Babushka dolls; their colours, themes and modes of facial expression etc.



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Children could draw and create their own Babushka doll costume, face expression and theme on a simple descending size template. (See ATTACHED template). There are many templates available on a simple web search. Encourage children to think about creating their own designs.

Shepherds and sheep

Using corks, fabric, felt, string, paper and cotton wool, children will also enjoy making their own shepherds and sheep! These could also be used in the nativity scene below.



Nativity Scene (Shoebbox)

Using mixed materials, children could work together to design and construct their own nativity scene in a shoebox or other cardboard box. Discuss key features of the traditional Nativity scene story.



Christmas Tree Windows

Children could make picture frames windows with a silhouetted Christmas tree using cellophane and black card borders.

Songs

Songs and music bring the Christmas story to life. One of Mark's all time favourites is *Happy Christmas to You* by Peter Combe. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ttrPJx9K0GY>. One of Simon's favourites is ...

Author Study & Fun Pages

Find out more about Mark by checking his website and the acrostic style poem about Mark markcarthew.com.au/about/ Make up your own in a similar rhyming style biography by weaving your name throughout a poem. Also check the fun activity pages at markcarthew.com.au/funstuff

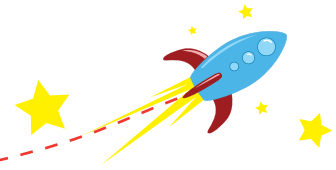


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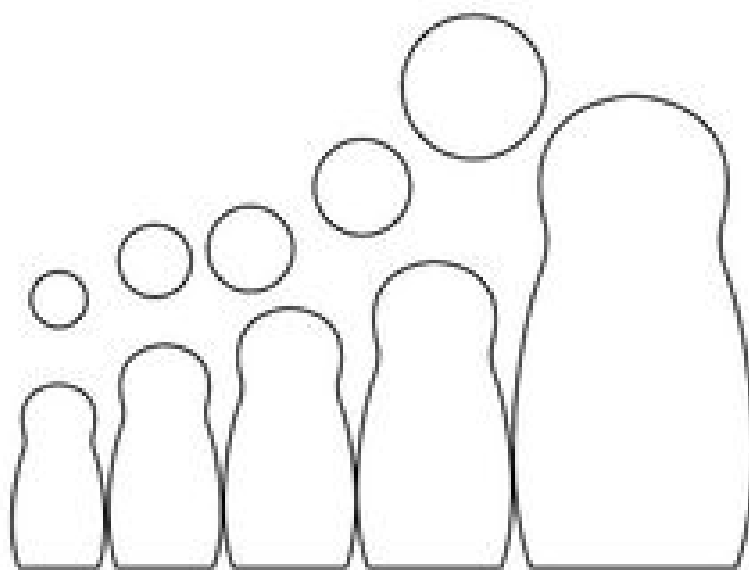
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MARKETING AND SELLING POINTS

- *Marvin and Marigold: A Christmas Surprise* will assist learning about Christmas and other traditions, family connections and memorabilia, goodwill and kindness to others.
- Classic rhyme and playful text in the style of Dr Seuss.
- Mark Carthew has previously won Speech Pathology Australia's Book of the Year Award for *The Gobbling Tree*, along with other shortlisting's for *Five Little Owls*, *Wicked Wizards & Leaping Lizards* and *The Moose is Loose!*
- Mark's latest picture books - *Marvin and Marigold: The Big Sneeze* and *The Great Zoo Hullabaloo!* have both been shortlisted in the 2017 Speech Pathology Australia Book of the Year awards.
- His anthology *Can You Keep a Secret? Timeless Rhymes to Share & Treasure* was a CBCA Notable for Early Childhood.
- Mark's illustrated play script series *VOICEWORKS* has sold over a million copies worldwide and won Drama Victoria's Best New Series Award.
- The characters of Marvin and Marigold are set to become family favourites with three books already commissioned in the series:
 - *Marvin and Marigold: The Big Sneeze*
 - *Marvin and Marigold: A Christmas Surprise*
 - *Marvin and Marigold: The Stormy Night* (2018)

BABUSHKA DOLLS - TEMPLATE

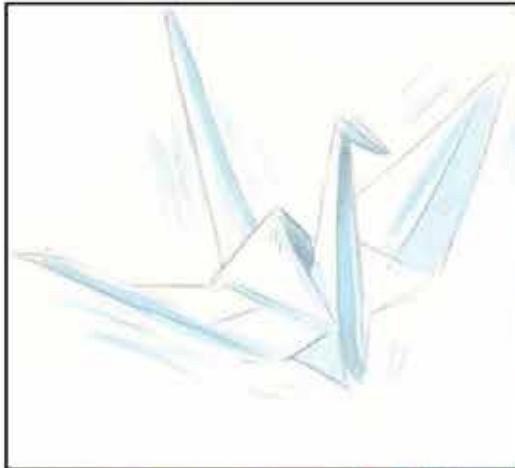


BABUSHKA DOLLS - TEMPLATE



A CHRISTMAS SURPRISE / SNAP!

PICTURES (1)



www.newfrontier.com.au





paper crane

snow person

phone

snowflake

elf-hat

bells

baubles

present

shepherd

sheep

reindeer

candle



babushka doll	star	Santa Claus
cheese	toy car	wooden duck
christmas stocking	sock	candy cane
Marvin	Marigold	snow fairy



Marvin and Marigold



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By Mark Carthew, illustrated by Simon Prescott
ISBN 978 1925059991



Marvin and Marigold Book



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