

# Lamont Books Standing Order

May 2014

*Teacher Notes and Activities*

## **The Stone Lion**

**By Margaret Wild & Illustrated by Ritva Voutila**

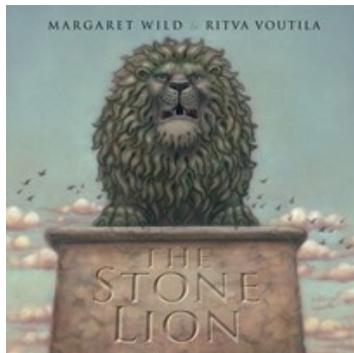
**Publisher: Little Hare**

**ISBN 9781921894855**

**\$24.95**

**Picture Book of  
the Month**

Sometimes statues are granted a chance to become warm, breathing creatures. The stone lion has only one dream - to run, pounce and leap in the park across from where he sits. But one snowy night, when a baby is abandoned at his paws, he is compelled to think differently.



Teacher notes have been based on those prepared by the publishers, Hardie Grant Egmont. The full version is available at [www.hardiegrant.com.au](http://www.hardiegrant.com.au)

### Themes:

- Desire
- Selfishness
- Compassion
- Transformation

### Discussion Points & Activities:

*The Stone Lion* is a fantasy where stone statues can think, dream, feel, speak and even move. Margaret Wild has adopted the traditional, unhurried prose of fable-like stories, and uses Gothic elements such as statues, gargoyles, homeless waifs, ancient cavernous buildings, cruel winter weather and the dramatic action taking place at night. It has a circular plot: the story begins and ends with the lion on its pedestal, and the opening and closing dialogue are conversations between the lion and the gargoyle above the portico. But even though the beginning and end are the same, they are also different. Because this is a story about transformation, the lion at the end of the story is different from the lion at the beginning.

- Why do you think Margaret Wild has chosen a stone statue for her main character in this story?
- All stories are about emotional journeys. They lead a character from one emotional situation to another, such as from sadness at the start to happiness at the end. What is Sara's emotional journey? What is the lion's emotional journey? Which of these two emotional journeys is more interesting to you? What is the reason for your choice?
- Some characters have no emotional journey (that is, their mood is more or less the same at the end as it is at the beginning). The gargoyle might be considered one of these characters. What other characters seem to have no emotional journey? What do you think is their role in the story?
- Oscar Wilde wrote some stories that were similar to Margaret Wild's *The Stone Lion*. The best-known of these are *The Happy Prince*, *The Selfish Giant* and *The Nightingale*. Read one of these stories and consider the ways in which it is similar to *The Stone Lion*.
- The illustrator has shown the story moving through a number of seasons. What are the seasons she portrays? How does the weather in each picture make you feel about that moment in the story? How does this help to make the story more dramatic?