

Star of Anise

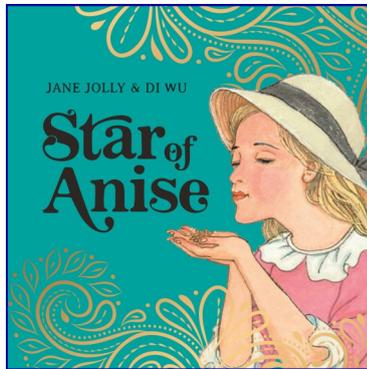
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The hawker's wagon jingled and jangled as it came down the track... Annie and Arthur have been eagerly awaiting Bhagwan Singh's next visit. What wondrous things will he have in his cart this time, among the silk and soap, spices and shirts? As the hawker makes his camp for the night, the children savour spun sugar and food from the Punjab, discovering the secret star anise. A gentle story about embracing different traditions, based on the stories of Sikh hawkers in Australia in the late 1800s.



Themes:

- Hawkers
- Traditions
- Cultures
- History

Discussion Questions and Activities:

- How would you describe the opening page when Annie and her brother Arthur are waiting for Bhagwan Singh's wagon to arrive?
- What was it that the children could hear?
- Bhagwan Singh is a hawker. Do you know what this is?
- What clues are there as to the time when this story is set? Look closely at the pictures for clues like clothes and mode of transport?
- What did the children find in the wagon when he arrived?
- Can you recall what Annie knew her Dad and Mum would want? What was it that she and Arthur wanted?
- Looking at the picture of Annie and Arthur in the wagon, is there something that you would choose?
- Bhagwan Singh is a Sikh. What do you know about Sikhs? Refer to the notes in the back of the book for more information.
- As a class, study the notes at the back of the book about the history of hawkers in Australia. Expand your research about this topic, and in small groups, come up with five other interesting facts about hawkers and the impact and influence they had on life in Australia during this time.
- How does this way of buying goods differ to how we buy things now? Think about how you might buy things now. Do you think that was an option for Annie and Arthur?
- Have you ever heard of 'star anise' or eaten food made with it? If so, how would you describe it? Compare this to how it is described in the book.
- What 'piece of Australia' did Annie give Bhagwan in return for the star anise that he gave to her?
- Design and draw your own grand and colourful building from India, just like those shown in the story.