

# GRANDMA'S PURSE



Vanessa Brantley-Newton

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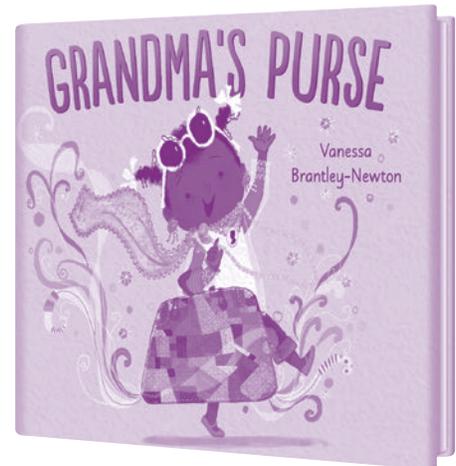
# GRANDMA'S PURSE

## EDUCATORS' GUIDE

### ABOUT THE BOOK

*Grandma's Purse* celebrates family, especially our love for our grandmothers. This touching story of how intergenerational relationships let us share our histories is sure to become a treasured family heirloom.

Grandma has the most wonderful purse, full of energy and mystery! In this purse is a gift, a treasure for her beloved granddaughter. Before we reach the gift, Grandma explains how each item in her purse reminds her of her granddaughter and her family heritage, which she is now giving (literally) to her granddaughter. Brantley-Newton's gouache and charcoal drawings (with digital enhancement) swirl with energy and pulse with love. Her purse is gorgeous, and yet it is only a metaphor for the true treasure found in these pages.



Grades PreK–K  
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### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Vanessa Brantley-Newton is an illustrator, doll maker, and crafter who studied fashion illustration at FIT and children's book illustration at the School of Visual Arts in New York. She is the author and illustrator of *Let Freedom Sing* and *Don't Let Auntie Mabel Bless the Table* and has illustrated numerous children's books including *Mary Had a Little Glam* by Tammi Sauer, *One Love* and *Every Little Thing* by Bob and Cedella Marley, and *Presenting . . . Tallulah* by Tori Spelling. Vanessa makes her nest in Charlotte, North Carolina, with her husband, their daughter, and a very rambunctious cat named Stripes. Learn more about Vanessa and her artwork at [VanessaBrantleyNewton.com](http://VanessaBrantleyNewton.com) and on Facebook.

### PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

- Speak with young readers about where they keep their best-loved objects. Perhaps it is in a room, a cupboard, a chest, or a pocket. Talk with students about what all these places have in common and how they are different.
- Remind students that good readers continuously make predictions all the way through the book, starting with the front cover. Read the title to your students. Ask questions, if necessary, about who is on the cover and what she will do. Ask about specific items. Show the back cover, endpapers, acknowledgments, and title page. Ask students to make predictions about the book based on their observations.
- There are quite a few words in this book that beginning readers may struggle with: *treasure, magical, mirror, lipstick, extra-fancy, hairpins, memories, Japan, treat, church, attention, pastor, phone, scarf, cushion, toward, sleeve, pictures, recognize, married, accessories*. Have students define these words before starting the story. Put them on a word wall with pictures that represent each word. Practice taking these words apart (lip—st—ick), finding the words inside words, and other decoding skills.

# CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

## COLORS AND SHAPES

- The pattern on Grandma's purse is a mix of triangles, rectangles, and other polygons. (Make sure your students know that *polygon* is just a fancy word for shape!) Pick out one segment of the purse (such as the blue rectangle just below the purse handle) and have students try to count all the triangles or all the rectangles or all the other shapes they find. Have students write about the shape of the purse. What shape is it? Why is it not a true rectangle?
- Bring in shape puzzles, 3-D shapes, tangrams, or math manipulatives that include containers of small shapes. Have students use these to create designs, and challenge them to mirror the designs found in the book. Add criteria that match the geometry goals for your grade.
- Give students sheets of different colored paper and have them cut out as many triangles, squares, and rectangles as they can. Tell them to use their imaginations to create purses, bags, or containers in the style of Grandma's purse.
- Have students choose one color and one shape from the book. Using ONLY that color and ONLY that shape, have them do a drawing that fills at least a quarter of a blank white page. After each student is done with their drawing, form groups using different attributes. For example, you may say, "Form a group of four. Each person in your group must have a different shape and a different color." When you have your groups, tell them to put their drawings together to form a new piece of art or a new pattern. Lastly, have the groups write a description of their art project.

## MORE CLASSROOM FUN

- A great way to introduce point of view is to have students practice reading as if they were Grandma Mimi or the granddaughter. Introduce some fun into this activity by having students act as if they are Grandma's purse or the granddaughter's purse. What would these purses sound like? Would they sing? Would they sound robotic? Students will have fun surprising you with many kinds of voices!
- Have each student make a list of items that their teacher should have in a purse or bag, including:
  - Five items that the student would love to receive
  - Five items that the student could not use
  - Two items that make the teacher think of someone else (just like Grandma Mimi's coin purse reminds her of her husband)

Adjust this activity to meet the needs of your students with the goal of guiding them toward an empathetic point of view.

- Play a game of Guess Who. Have students bring in a bag (with no name) that is filled with items that make them happy. Show the items one at a time and have students guess who the owner is and explain why. Send home rules for students to use when considering items. For example, the items shouldn't be valuable or dangerous and should fit inside the bag you are using.



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Ed Spicer is a retired educator with a wide variety of experiences during the last two decades. He was nominated and selected as one of Allegan's "Outstanding People in Education" and was a Cool Teacher winner in Michigan.

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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

# SHAPE INVENTORY

Record the different shapes you find as you read *Grandma's Purse*.  
Write the number of shapes counted on the lines.

On the cover, endpapers, and title page,  
I found \_\_\_\_ different shapes.

Draw and label each shape.

On the next six pages (*candy to wordless spread*),  
I found \_\_\_\_ different shapes.

Draw and label each shape.

On the first six pages (*up to the couch scene*),  
I found \_\_\_\_ different shapes.

Draw and label each shape.

On the remaining pages,  
I found \_\_\_\_ different shapes.

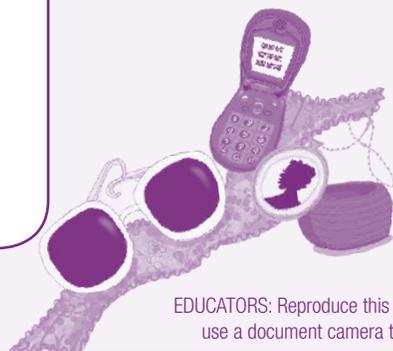
Draw and label each shape.

On the next six pages (*second couch scene up to  
coin purse*), I found \_\_\_\_ different shapes.

Draw and label each shape.

My favorite shape is:

\_\_\_\_\_



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

# WHAT'S IN GRANDMA MIMI'S PURSE?

There are twelve items in Mimi's purse. Check off whom each item is for and write about its purpose.

ITEM	GRANDDAUGHTER	GRANDMA MIMI	PURPOSE
Mirror	_____	_____	_____
Lipstick	_____	_____	_____
Smell-Good	_____	_____	_____
Earrings	_____	_____	_____
Hairpins	_____	_____	_____
Coin Purse/Coins	_____	_____	_____
Candy	_____	_____	_____
Phone	_____	_____	_____
Glasses	_____	_____	_____
Scarf	_____	_____	_____
Photo Sleeve	_____	_____	_____
Gift Purse	_____	_____	_____

Make sure students explain the purpose by referring to the text first. Items can be for both. Explain.

EDUCATORS: Reproduce this activity sheet for your students.



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