

The Tashi books lend themselves to an enjoyable storytelling session in the library, but you can also extend your storytelling into a few hours' or a whole day's study and discussion.

Here are a few suggestions to get you started.

Because the Tashi books appeal to a wide range of students (we receive letters and reviews from fans as young as 4 and up to about 12 years old), we've provided a range of suggestions from simple to more complex activities.

LANGUAGE AND WRITING

Word Find

For a quick Friday afternoon activity, download and photocopy the *Haunted House Word Find Activity Sheet* (following).

Character portraits

You'll find portraits of a number of characters on the Tashi website: www.tashibooks.com/characters. Are your students' favourite characters in our list? Have students write a brief portrait of one of the other characters from a Tashi book.

Character names

Many of the characters in the Tashi books are wonderfully named for their traits. This gives the books a gentle humour and makes them a joy to read aloud.

'Soh Meen' is the perfect name for Tashi's grumpy neighbour (*Tashi and the Mixed-Up Monster*), and a fortune teller definitely looks ahead ('Luk Ahead' - *Tashi and the Dancing Shoes*). 'Not Yet', the shoemaker who never quite gets people's shoes ready on time, appears in several of the books. Other examples are 'Princess Hoiti-Toiti' (*Tashi and the Phoenix*) and 'Arthur Trouble', the naughty boy in class (*Tashi and the Mixed-Up Monster*).

Have students invent a character and come up with a name which represents their personality.

Vocabulary building

Anna Fienberg's vivid descriptions can provide inspiration for students to use new words and phrases in their own written work. Make a list of some of the unfamiliar words in a Tashi story and research their meaning.

Write an adventure story

Jack's Uncle Joe appears in a number of the Tashi books. He always has a story to tell – on just about any subject! But many of his adventures are only hinted at. Have students complete one of his adventure stories (for example, they could write the crocodile story from the beginning of *Tashi and the Dancing Shoes* or tell what happened after Uncle Joe walked through the wall at the end of that book).

Voice and setting

Lisa Hill of Mossiel Park PS suggests that *Tashi and the Stolen Bus* 'has great potential as a stimulus for writing. Teachers can focus on changes of narrative voice (from first person Tashi to third person Jack) and variations in setting (from the Old Country to the present).'

Similes

Melissa Buske from Mercedes College, SA, points out the use of similes in *Tashi and the Forbidden Room*, 'such as "a chill like iced water". These could be identified throughout the book and then students could use these in their own writing and also create their own similes.'

Suspenseful writing

Ann McCabe from Open Access College/Braeview Primary School, SA, suggests that students could read the story 'The Three Tasks' from *Tashi and the Forbidden Room* and 'explore the themes of suspense writing in stories, good versus evil and "forbidden" items ... They could make up their own list of tasks for Tashi to solve in similar or different situations.'

Stories from everyday objects

In the introduction to each Tashi book, Anna Fienberg tells us about the inspiration for the stories. Sometimes her ideas come from looking at the world around her - the sounds in *Tashi and the Haunted House* were inspired by Anna's son and his friend tapping on a piece of tin and an old roof tile at the park, and *Tashi and the Demons* was inspired by seeing a Dragon's Blood Tree at the Botanic Gardens.

Look out of your classroom window or around the playground. Could any of the objects, shapes, shadows or people inspire a character or an event in a story?

Fairytales and fables

Compare the modern Tashi stories to traditional fairytales and fables read in class.

ILLUSTRATION AND VISUAL ARTS

Drawing

For a quick Friday afternoon activity, download and photocopy the *Big Stinker Drawing Activity Sheet* (following).

Decoration

Gather feathers, beads and other shiny decorative objects and have children use them to decorate Tashi's dancing shoes on the following activity sheet.

Book cover design

After reading one of the Tashi books, go back and discuss the cover illustration.

Which episode in the book is shown on the cover?

Point out some of the details in the illustration. What colours are used and what mood do they convey?

Follow up by asking students to design their own Tashi book cover.

Using pencil and charcoal

Kim Gamble's pencil illustrations convey a strong sense of place and emotion, without the use of colour.

Have students try to draw a scene using only a pencil or charcoal.

Older students might study Gamble's illustrations more closely, looking at cross-hatching, shading and the use of lines of different thicknesses.

For further inspiration, see if your school library has a copy of Kim Gamble's book *You Can Draw Anything* (Allen & Unwin, ISBN 9781863736800).

Diorama

The illustration at the beginning of 'The Bandits' story in *Tashi and the Giants* is a nice pointer to another activity – building a diorama.

Use a cardboard box to frame the scene, like Jack has in the picture.

Older students might also want to cut out silhouettes of characters like the dragon and the baron, and even use paper fasteners to create moving joints (as Jack has done in the picture). These characters could be added, removed and moved around the diorama, to create a puppet theatre.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT, VALUES AND ROLE PLAY

Tashi's family and friends are very important to him, as are values such as honesty. His stories can be a good starting point to talking about values.

Wendy Fletcher from the Centre for Extended Learning Opportunities, Tasmania, writes of *Tashi and the Stolen Bus*: 'In this book Tashi introduces us to the idea of honesty and shows why we don't steal. He shows us that people can make mistakes and be forgiven and that sometimes the most obvious solution to why someone behaved in a particular way may not be the best one.'

Denise Tarlinton from Kurwongbah State School in Qld suggests this activity for *Tashi Lost in the City*: 'This text lends itself to developing character profiles and role play. A hotseating activity where children take turns to take on the role of Tashi while other students ask questions about the events of the tale or about their feelings would be effective. Students could be asked to recall a time they were lost or separated from their parents – how did they feel?'

HOLD A TASHI-THEMED DAY OR EVENT

You could involve one class or several in a Tashi party, day or event.

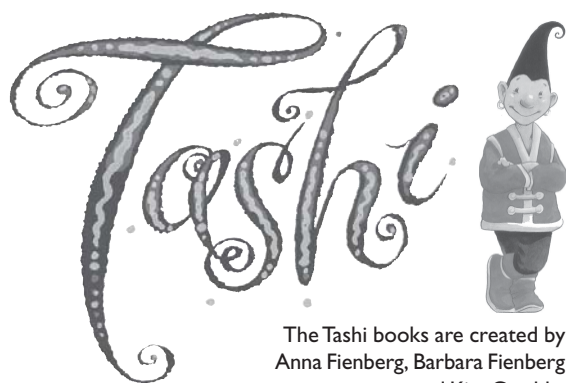
Have one class design invitations asking another class to join them at the event.

Hold a group storytelling session in the library or at assembly.

Cut out 'dancing shoe' footprints and tape them to the floor pointing the way to the library or assembly hall.

Students can 'leap' from one to another, like Tashi did in *Tashi and the Dancing Shoes*.

Have a group of students act out a scene from one of the books at assembly.



The Tashi books are created by
Anna Fienberg, Barbara Fienberg
and Kim Gamble.

Published by Allen & Unwin. Illustrations: Kim Gamble.

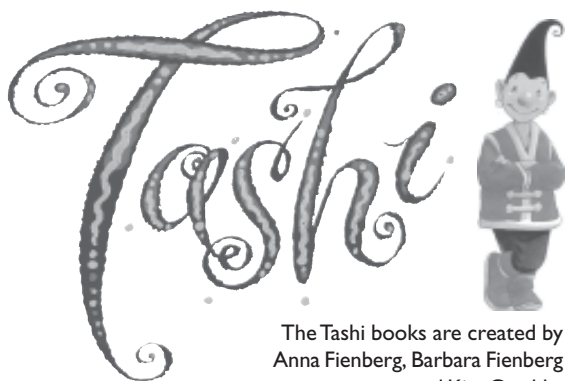
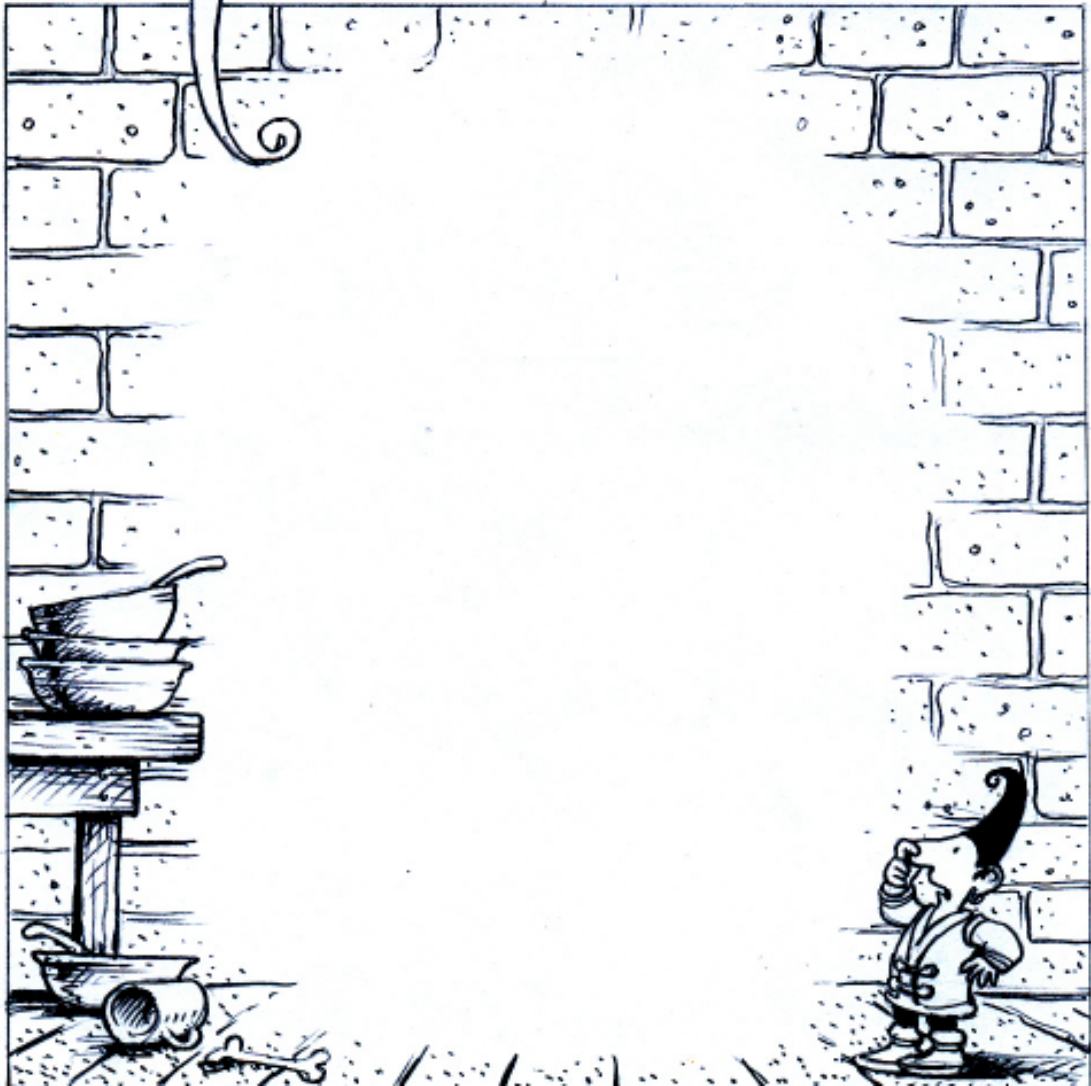
Decorate Tashi's Dancing Shoes.
Colour them in, paint them or
glue on decorations.

www.tashibooks.com


A&U

Tashi^o

and the
BIG STINKER



The Tashi books are created by
Anna Fienberg, Barbara Fienberg
and Kim Gamble.

Published by Allen & Unwin. Illustrations: Kim Gamble.

In *Tashi and the Big Stinker*, Tashi plays a trick on a hungry giant. Can you draw the rest of this picture of Tashi in the giant's kitchen? You could draw the giant, or perhaps what he's eating. You could even draw yourself with Tashi!

www.tashibooks.com

A&U