





12. Does anyone know someone with dementia?
13. What do you think would have happened if the grown-ups had tried to take Granny's furry jacket off while she was 'travelling' in Antarctica? Do you think she might have got upset? Or even angry? If you thought you were in Antarctica and someone tried to take off your warm clothes would you feel?
14. Do you think Granny and Grandchild enjoy going on their 'travels'? (I do!)

## **BEYOND THE BOOK: DEMENTIA**

850,000 people in the UK are living with dementia – and rising. The Alzheimer's Society estimates that about a third of children knows one of them. Leading experts say children growing up now will *all* be touched by dementia, so it is important for them to understand it as easily and as early as possible. It is better that kids learn about dementia before it is in their own family, the Alzheimer's Society says, and if the whole class understands about the condition, it makes it much easier for any child that has a relative with dementia – and it will help lead to a general destigmatisation that is good for everyone.

Of course, it is important to introduce dementia in a way that is accurate but not frightening, and is age-appropriate. *Travels with my Granny* is a picture book so its core readership is probably 3/4 - 7, but it can start a conversation for much older children (and indeed adults) and offers a simple way of explaining dementia and the current thinking about how to interact with people with dementia. So, as well as being a fun introduction to all sorts of places and landscapes, *Travels with my Granny* can be used as an easy way into understanding and discussing early and mid-stage dementia. Of course, you first need a basic explanation of what it is:

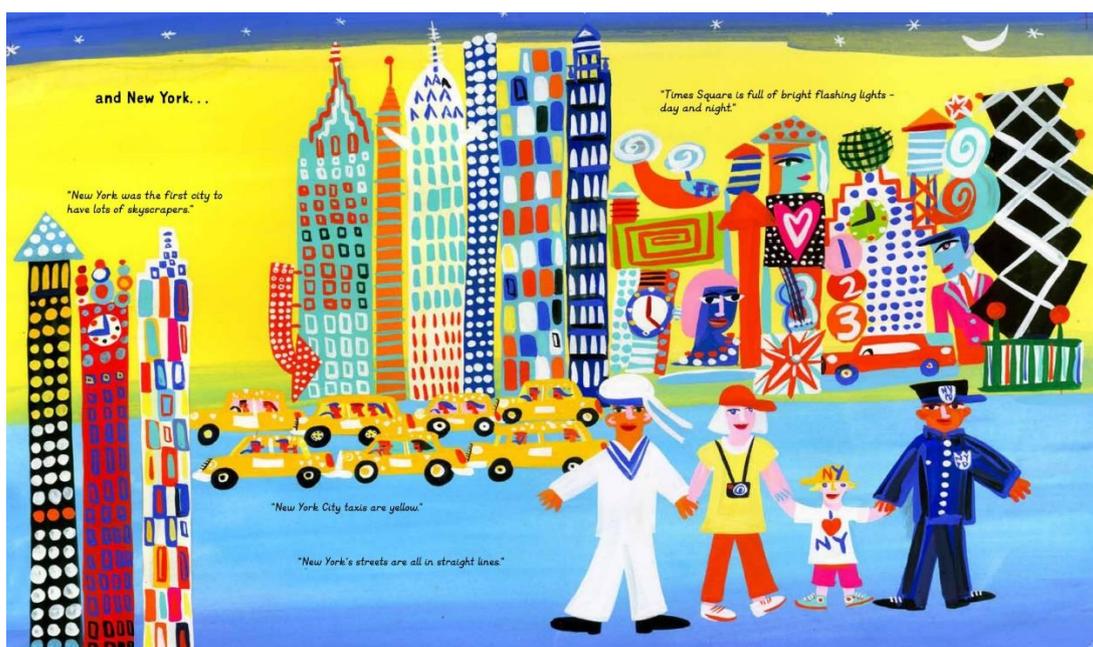
Dementia is an illness of the brain that changes the way people think. It mainly affects older people – especially the very old. There are several types of dementia and it is different for each person, but most people with dementia lose their short-term memory and their ability to do complicated tasks. They may be able to remember in great detail something that happened 20 years ago while forgetting what happened 20 minutes ago. So, they may not recall the last time you saw them, but, like Granny, may be able to tell you all sorts of interesting things about what they did when they were young.

Sometimes people with dementia can seem to behave very strangely (like Granny in her winter furs in summer). They may become frustrated about things they can't do, or get upset or angry for no apparent reason. Sometimes this is because they are 'travelling': They are somewhere else in their mind, so what is happening where their bodies are – and where we are – can be very confusing for them. If we can be patient and understanding and not keep telling them they are wrong, people with dementia are likely to be happier. And, like Granny taking Grandchild travelling, they may be able to share some of their memories with us.

Further information and teaching resources: [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

## ACTIVITIES

1. Spot the souvenir: Can you find where all the souvenirs in Granny's room come from? There is one in each picture of a place Granny has visited. (The answers are on the map at the back of the book, which will also show you where in the world all these places are).
2. Granny tells Grandchild a few fun facts about some of the places they visit. Can you find a few more interesting facts about these places? – or about the other places in the story? (Depending on the age of the children, this might be a class activity or homework, it could be a way of practising simple research skills, and for older kids about differentiating between basic facts (size, population etc – perhaps already looked at in class) and more quirky off-beat information.
3. Draw a picture of a place you would like to go. It could be a real place you've already been, a place you would like to go one day, or somewhere that exists only in your imagination.
4. What would happen if the grown-ups tried to get Granny out of her winter clothes and into summer clothes when she is on her way to Antarctica? Write or draw what you think would happen and what you think Grandchild would do about it.
5. Where do you think Granny and Grandchild go next? Draw or write the next part of the story.
6. Where is the most interesting place you have been? It could be a long way away, or it might be just around the corner (there are plenty of interesting places very nearby!). Tell us about it (or draw or write about it).
7. Most of the grandparents and older people you know won't have dementia, but they all have interesting memories and stories. Ask your adults to help you choose an older relative or friend you could talk to. Ask them a few questions about their childhood and the most interesting things they did when they were young.



**FURTHER READING:**

*Picture books about dementia:*

Lovely Old Lion by Julia Jarman & Susan Varley (Anderson Press)

Grandma by Jessica Shepherd (Child's Play)

*And on travel and places:*

Little Kids First Big Book of the World by Elizabeth Carney (National Geographic Kids)

Oh The Places You'll Go by Dr Seuss (Harper Collins Children's)

*Or use the BookTrust Bookfinder to find more recommendations:*

*[booktrust.org.uk/bookfinder](http://booktrust.org.uk/bookfinder)*