Carolyn MacDiarmid, a former preschool teacher, has been employed with the Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW) since 1997. She has worked in various roles and is the author of CCRW’s “Wendy Blair” storybook series completed in 2005. As a writer who has low vision, she enjoys writing whimsical material that challenges the notion that people who have disabilities are incapable. MacDiarmid is a proud Ontarian who has lived in Toronto all her life and currently lives in the city’s east end with her husband and daughter.

James Tuer is a Toronto-based artist who works at an animation studio by day, and illustrates fun projects (such as the book you’ve just read) by night. He enjoys working on projects that positively impact people’s lives. James and Carolyn first worked together on the Wendy Blair series, and have teamed up again over a decade later to bring you three new stories that help to break down stereotypes about living with a disability.
About This Book...

This book is a project of the Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW), a national, non-profit organization that promotes and supports the meaningful and equitable employment of Canadians with disabilities. Funding for this project was provided by the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario (ADO) to celebrate Ontario’s 150th anniversary and this province’s diversity.

**Felicia McCan** is a delightful story that promotes diversity, inclusion, and acceptance. Felicia is the centre of attention at her new school. Her appearance and the unfamiliar tool she uses to read raise the interest of the other children. These differences quickly become accepted, and her charm, style, and unbounded energy stand out and win over the crowd. This story teaches young readers the importance of getting to know others rather than making quick judgments based on appearance. It teaches children to celebrate differences rather than focusing negatively on them.

Carolyn MacDiarmid
The Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work
Felicia McCan

This project is funded by the Government of Ontario’s Ontario 150 Partnership Program.

A project of

Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work

Le Conseil Canadien de la Réadaptation et du Travail
A 12-year-old girl had just moved to North Bay,  
And everyone learned to step out of her way.

Her name was Felicia...Felicia McCan –  
A girl of adventure where magic began.

Full of excitement and mischief and more,  
She shook up her school as she entered the door.
She had rainbow glitter all over her clothes
And heavy eyeglasses that pinched her small nose.

The hat that she wore was a knitted tea cozy –
It made her head warm, and her freckles looked rosy.

She glowed and she glistened, she sparkled and shone,
And just like a lamp, she could turn brightness on.

Her shoes were quite pretty, and each had a ruffle
That moved back and forth as she danced with a shuffle.
The kids in the hall were too shocked to react – Was this girl for real or was she an act?

Everyone watched her rush by and race out, “What in the world is that girl all about?”
Some children decided to not turn away
And welcomed Felicia on that school day.

She had a big smile from her cheeks to her chin,
And just like a magnet, she drew people in.
Felicia was fun, and Felicia was grand
And soon had the school in the palm of her hand.
She had many pets, as she loved every creature,
But one got away, and it frightened her teacher!
Nobody actually knew what to do
The day she arrived with a stray caribou.
At recess her friends lay outside on the grass, Pretending to be in her dancercise class.
She did magic tricks that made everyone cheer, “Felicia, can you make our work disappear?”
The school fundraiser included an auction – Felicia sold treats and a secret concoction.

She worked very hard, and the people could see a wonderful leader who led willingly.
One morning she made an important decision
To tell her new friends all about her low vision.

“I have vision loss, so my eyes don’t see well –
I might lose more sight, but it’s too soon to tell.”

“My best friend is something called ‘magnification’ –
It helps me to read without great complication.”
This made the children collectively laugh, “We all thought your best friend was Stephanie Graff!”
Her classmates observed what Felicia did next, “I use my device - it enlarges the text.”

“With magnification expanding the print, I can read words without having to squint.”

“I want to work well, and I want to succeed – I’m glad that this tool can help me to read.”
Her friends gave support in an uplifting chant, “You’re Felicia McCan, not Felicia McCan’t!”
The children remarked on that fine day at school, “Your magnification is totally cool!”

They saw the expression of Stephanie Graff
And giggled so hard that they each bent in half.
Then came the news that made everyone bleak, “I’m leaving North Bay – I’ll be gone in a week.”

“My family is moving again...to Toronto – I have to pack up, and I’m doing that pronto.”

Her friends were surprised, so they didn’t say much, “We’ll still stay connected, we’ll all keep in touch.”
No one applauded, and nobody cheered
When slowly Felicia McCan disappeared.
Fist bumps and hugs and a lot of high-fiving
Replaced fifteen minutes of fun dancercising.
Her last day was sad, but Felicia still sat
And presented each friend with a tea cozy hat.
They watched her jump up, and they watched her dance out,
And they knew what Felicia McCan was about!
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