

Ekka

EDUCATION

LITERATURE TEACHING NOTES

*Stories in the Stables
by Farmer Rhonda*



PREP TO GRADE 6

DOCUMENT OVERVIEW

Stories in the Stables by Farmer Rhonda is our Ekka Education Literature Reading Series and the following document provides teaching notes to accompany our agricultural books for 2023.

The included books connect with our 8 Ekka Learning Trail points at Ekka. The online Stories on the Stables book videos alongside these literature teaching notes, present an immersive experience for students before their excursion to Ekka. The supplied questions and classroom activities demonstrate the value of our Australian farmers, animals and land and encourage a deeper understanding of the agricultural elements of the Ekka Learning Trail.

IMPORTANT DATES

Ekka Dates: Saturday 12 August - Sunday 20 August 2023

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

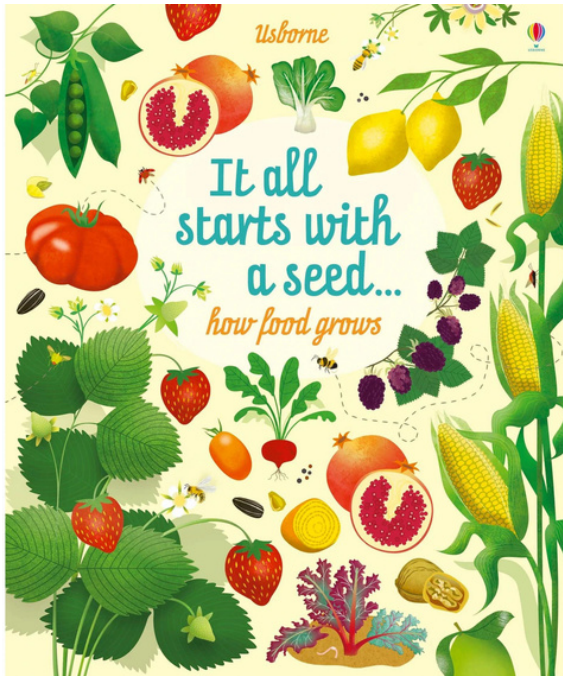
Education Content Enquiries

Kimmy Balmer | Entertainment & Education Coordinator
kbalmer@royalqueenslandshow.com.au

School & Group Bookings Enquiries

Syafiqah Raimee | Group Sales & Marketing Coordinator
sraimee@royalqueenslandshow.com.au

BY EMILY BONE AND SALLY EFFORD



AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM VERSION 9

English: Engaging with and responding to literature

Foundation to Grade 6 alignment ([AC9EFLE02](#))

English: Examining literature

Foundation to Grade 6 alignment ([AC9EFLE03](#))



Literacy



Creative & Critical
Thinking

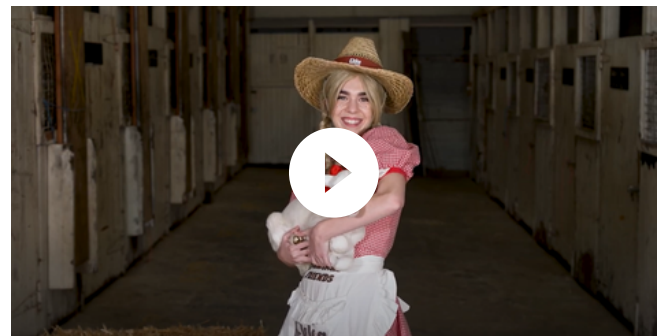


Sustainability

Stories in the Stables by Farmer Rhonda

Click the video link below to join Farmer Rhonda reading her favourite stories about animals and agriculture in her stables.

https://youtu.be/_Q0B0607tcE



Key Themes

Horticulture, Food & Fibre, Flour, Grain, Farm Machinery, Seeds

Synopsis

This book explains how almost everything we eat grows from just a small seed. This includes how a seed sprouts and how fruits grow from flowers by pollination, to how different plants produce vegetables, fruits, leaves, roots and grains. Tropical fruits, cocoa beans and Asian vegetables are covered, plus rice, wheat, corn, potatoes and more. Did you know that some food needs the wind to grow? While other food grows in the dark? Did you know some food grows in water? Which nut isn't a nut at all, but a type of bean that grows underground how a



About the Author

Emily Bone grew up in the south of England with a parrot, rabbits and lots of dogs. She spent long summers watching bugs and birds in her garden and making up stories about them. After studying English at Cambridge, she found her dream job at Usborne. Emily has written many books on wildlife, science and history. She now lives in Crystal Palace with two spoilt budgies and enjoys running in the park and tending to her vegetable garden.

TEACHING NOTES AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Before Reading

Before your class reads through the story, begin a class discussion about the cover and title of the book.

You might like to discuss:

- What do you notice on the cover?
- What do you think might happen in this story?
- What fruit and vegetables do you see on the cover?
- What animals do you see on the cover?

After Reading

1. What is your favourite fruit or vegetable that is mentioned in the story? Did you know that it came from a seed?
2. When we look at the story of flour, did you know that flour comes from ground-up grains and seeds?
3. Many animals also rely on fruit, vegetable and seeds. What animals do we see throughout the story and how do they fit within the ecosystem?
4. Throughout the story, we encounter vocabulary that you may not of heard before. Let's delve into the definition of these new words:
 - Pollen
 - Seed drill
 - Sprout
 - Stalks
 - Wilting
 - Pods

Class Activities

1. Our story has illustrations that show us how seeds grow into plants, but we can see it happen in real life through the following videos. What did these teach you?
 - Watch these quick links to learn more about how it all starts with a seed...
<https://usborne.com/au/quicklinks/quicklink/12141-it-all-starts-with-a-seed-how-food-grows>



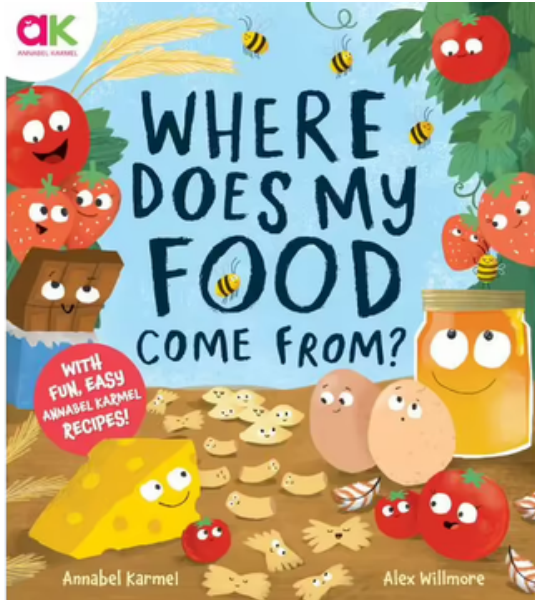
Class Activities

2. As we have discovered, there are many foods we eat that start out as a seed. You can even eat the seeds of some plants. Did you have a favourite that was mentioned in the story?
 - Set a research task (for small groups) to investigate a specific fruit, vegetable or plant. You may like to look into the type of seed, the environment where they grow, the root structure of the plant, the length of time it takes for it to grow, etc.
3. The story of flour demonstrated that a number of baked goods, like bread, pasta, cakes, buns, cookies and pies, all share the same ingredient of flour which comes from wheat. Can you think of any other foods that use flour?
 - Find a recipe online that includes flour or another type of grain. Write out the recipe on a piece of paper with a fun name for the dish, then list all the ingredients plus the steps involved in cooking this recipe. Then, illustrate the page with how you would like your recipe to look like.
4. Another food that grows from a seed is sugar! Sugarcane farms are located all over Queensland and 95% of sugar produced in Australia is grown in Queensland. Do you know more about the process of sugarcane growing?
 - Create a brochure or powerpoint presentation that highlights the importance of the sugarcane industry in Queensland. You might like to look into how many sugarcane farms there are in Queensland, the uses for all the parts of sugarcane (sugar, stalks, plant mass) and the sustainability of this plant. You can find some inspiration for this activity through this CANEGROWERS video, <https://youtu.be/zH7SdF-ghEg>

**WELCOME TO THE
EKKA EDUCATION
FAMILY!**



BY ANNABEL KARMELE AND ALEX WILLMORE



AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM VERSION 9

English: Engaging with and responding to literature

Foundation to Grade 6 alignment ([AC9EFLE02](#))

English: Examining literature

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Literacy



*Creative & Critical
Thinking*

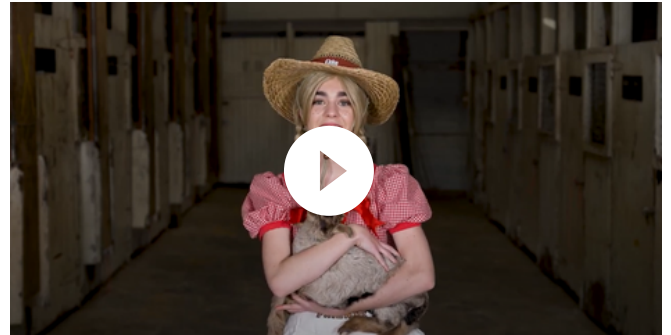


Sustainability

Stories in the Stables by Farmer Rhonda

Click the video link below to join Farmer Rhonda reading her favourite stories about animals and agriculture in her stables.

<https://youtu.be/R1wMe31M31M>



Key Themes

Farm to Fork, Recipes, Rural Careers, Fruit, Honey, Meals

Synopsis

Where Does My Food Come From? is a jam-packed trail of food discovery, filled with crafty activities, fun experiments, mind-boggling foodie facts and yummy recipes. Helping children to develop a life-long love of food is about taking them on a journey of discovery and learning more about where their food comes from, particularly within the agricultural industry. Images from renowned children's artist Alex Willmore make each food cheekily spring to life on the page, telling the story of its creation to the reader. Find out how tomatoes, strawberries, honey and chocolate are grown and made, and enjoy the fun, step-by-step food activities in each section too.



About the Author

Annabel Karmel is the UK's best-selling children's cookbook author, with over 4 million copies of her Complete Baby And Toddler Meal Planner sold worldwide. She has written over 40 books on baby, toddler, child and family food and nutrition. Credited with starting a 'food revolution' with her trusty recipes and methods, she has become a best-selling international author, and the mother of all feeding experts with 47 cookbooks...and counting.

About the Illustrator

After studying Illustration for Children's Publishing at the North Wales School of Art and Design, Alex Willmore went on to illustrate The Runaway Pea, which was selected for the Book Trust's 2020 Time to Read Campaign. Alex has won the 2020 Shrewsbury Book Fest award and The FCBG 2020 award for his illustrations in The Runaway Pea, as well as being nominated for the Kate Greenaway Medal, and was a finalist in the 2020 Oscar's Book Prize.

TEACHING NOTES AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Before Reading

Before your class reads through the story, begin a class discussion about the cover and title of the book. You might like to discuss:

- What do you notice on the cover?
- What do you think might happen in this story?
- What types of food do you see on the cover?

After Reading

1. Did you know that chocolate is made from a type of bean?
2. Can you name some foods or recipes that you like to eat with honey?
3. In our story, the bees pollinate the flowers on a tomato plant for them into the tomato fruit. Did you know how important bees are for our fruit and vegetables?
4. Strawberries are the key ingredient for Ekka's famous Strawberry Sundae. If you've had one before, what are the other ingredients to make our strawberry sundae?

Class Activities

1. Our story includes family friendly recipes that highlight our fruits, honey and cocoa beans. However, there are so many more recipes online that you could make at home.
 - Take a look at this [Woolworths link](#) that gives us lots of Kids Recipes. See if you can find a new recipe that uses some of the foods from our story. Write out each of the steps in the procedure on a page and accompany your version of the recipe with an illustration of the food that you're cooking.



Class Activities

2. In our story, the tomatoes and strawberries rely on bees and other pollinators to pollinate the flowers on the plant which allows the fruit to grow. Did you know how vital these animals are to the environment and our farmers?

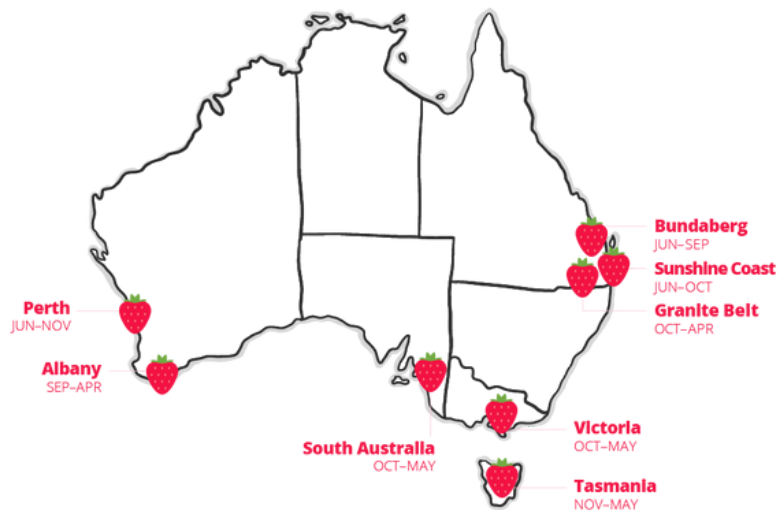
- Set a research task (for small groups) to investigate online about the importance of bees in Australian agriculture. The topics may include the process of pollination, types of bees in Australia (native and introduced species), careers with bees and in apiculture and ways to help bees in your garden (flowers and drinking pools).

3. Australia has vastly different areas where different produce is grown based on the weather conditions and the types of soil. Even our tomatoes and strawberries in our story grow in unique regions of Australia. Can you find where tomatoes and strawberries are grown in Australia? What about the cocoa beans that make chocolate, where are they grown?

- By illustrating a map of Australia, students should research where these fruits are grown in Australia and locate those farms on the map. You might like to show the different fruits by getting the students to draw that fruit in the relevant regions, like this link -

<https://berries.net.au/home/about/strawberries/str-growing-regions/>

AUSTRALIAN STRAWBERRY GROWER REGIONS



- Cocoa beans are grown around the world, so students will need a world map to understand the geography of where the cocoa growing regions are and illustrate those areas. Is there a common latitude of cocoa growing regions? Similar weather patterns or climates?

4. Throughout our story, we encounter lots of people who work in agriculture and impact the lifecycle of many of these foods. Careers in ag can include beekeepers, chocolate factory workers, fruit pickers, agronomists (soil testing) and scientists. Can you think of some more?

- Brainstorm with your class about the potential careers in agriculture. There are many more opportunities outside being a farmer.



BY TONY WILSON AND LAURA WOOD



AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM VERSION 9

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English: Examining literature

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Literacy



*Creative & Critical
Thinking*



*Personal &
Social Capability*

Stories in the Stables by Farmer Rhonda

Click the video link below to join Farmer Rhonda reading her favourite stories about animals and agriculture in her stables.

<https://youtu.be/iYUmSNEjOr8>



Key Themes

Sheep, Nursery Rhymes, Sharing, Wool, Colour, Counting

Synopsis

Reminiscent of the old nursery rhyme, Baa Baa Blue Sheep is full of colourful sheep and their brightly coloured bags of wool that the Master and the Dame won't share. To begin, our blue sheep has nine bags of wool and instead of sharing, the Master and the Dame are greedy and selfish and want to take ALL the wool for themselves. They fight for possession until the wool is lost. We encounter purple, red, yellow, orange and green sheep who all have wool to share, but the Master and the Dame continue to fight over each and every bag of wool. Finally, we meet the little boy who lives down the lane, who demands that the Master and the Dame stop arguing and wasting the wool and instead, share the bags of wool from the black sheep. Inspired by this little boy, they decide to share the three bags of wool and even give the little boy his own bag of wool. The Master, the Dame and the little boy down the lane encourage the importance of sharing and how in the end, everyone is happy when they are considerate of others.



About the Author

Tony Wilson is a much-loved Australian author with picture books including Grannysaurus Rex, Harry Highpants, The Princess and the Packet of Frozen Peas, and The Cow Tripped Over the Moon, which won the Honour Award for the CBCA Book of the Year in the Younger Readers category in 2016 and was selected as the National Simultaneous Storytime title for 2017. His middle grade reader Stuff Happens: Jack was shortlisted for Readings Children's Book Prize in 2015.

About the Illustrator

Laura Wood is an independent illustrator who grew up in a small town in Northern Italy. Starting her career in Melbourne, Australia, Laura has an extensive portfolio of children's picture books including Humpty Dumpty Sat on a Slide and The Cow Tripped Over the Moon with Tony Wilson. She has a colourful and dynamic style that conveys humour and excitement with simplicity and subtlety.

TEACHING NOTES AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Before Reading

Before your class reads through the story, begin a class discussion about the cover and title of the book. You might like to discuss:

- What do you notice on the cover?
- What do you think might happen in this story?
- Do you already know a nursery rhyme that is similar to the title?
- What happens in the nursery rhyme 'Baa Baa Black Sheep'?

After Reading

1. What is your favourite colour of sheep in the story? And how many bags of wool did that sheep have?
2. Can you name all the colours of sheep we see in the story? (Blue, Purple, Red, Yellow, Green, Orange, Black)
3. At the end of the story, we see the Master, the Dame and the little boy making a jumper, beanie and scarf out of the coloured wool. What sorts of things can be made from wool? Does anyone have any pieces of clothing or toys at home that are made from wool?

Class Activities

1. Throughout our story, the colourful sheep seem to be shocked and alarmed by the Master and the Dame arguing over their wool. How do you think the sheep feel about their wool being wasted? What do they think about the way the adults in the story are behaving?
 - Draw a picture of a colourful sheep and in a speech bubble, tell us how the colourful sheep is feeling.



Class Activities

2. The little boy teaches us a valuable lesson when he asks, “Will you just SHARE THE YARN?”. Think about the message of this story. What is the important moral for this book?
 - Try to write a single sentence about what you learnt from this book.
3. At the Ekka, our farmers bring along their sheep so you can see them in real life. Have you ever seen coloured sheep outside of this story? Do you think that there are blue or red sheep out on a farm?
 - Set a research task (for small groups) to investigate online about the colour of our sheep in Australia, the different types of wool they produce, and the process farmers use to collect their wool.
4. The colourful sheep in our story have curly and fluffy wool. You can use woollen yarn to create a number of classroom decorations inspired by Baa Baa Blue Sheep.
 - Make pompom sheep with a variety of coloured yarn - follow this video - <https://youtu.be/HYggVPva6no>
 - Using a cardboard cut-out in the shape of a disc start winding the yarn tightly around the card until the disc is completely covered. The more yarn you use, the fluffier your pompom sheep will be.
 - Use scissors to cut the yarn around the edge of the disc (be careful). As you cut, the yarn should puff out into the pompom shape.
 - Tie a thread of yarn around the centre of the pompom, lined up with where the cardboard disc is placed. The tighter the knot, the better.
 - Remove the cardboard disc and you can trim the edges of the pompom where necessary to ensure it is all the same length.
 - From this point, you can decorate your sheep as you like - using the pompom for the body of the sheep, cotton balls or smaller pompoms for their head, pipe cleaners or toothpicks for their legs, buttons or beads for their eyes.
 - We would love to see your pompom sheep creations! Send us a photo through to education@ekka.com.au



**ARE 'EWE'
JOINING US AT
EKKA 2023?**

BY EMILY MACKENZIE

WANTED! Ralfy Rabbit, Book Burglar



AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM VERSION 9

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English: Examining literature

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Literacy



Creative & Critical
Thinking

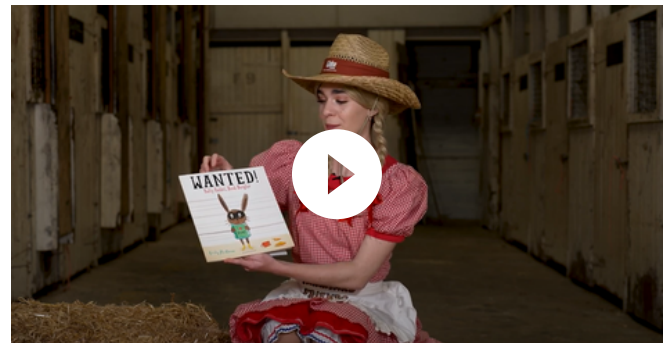


Ethical
Understanding

Stories in the Stables by Farmer Rhonda

Click the video link below to join Farmer Rhonda reading her favourite stories about animals and agriculture in her stables.

<https://youtu.be/X4BIPw9YTzA>



Key Themes

Reading, Rabbits, Library, Stealing, Stories, Forgiveness

Synopsis

Meet Ralfy, a very unusual rabbit, with a passion for . . . books! Some rabbits dream about lettuces and carrots, others dream of flowering meadows and juicy dandelions, but Ralfy dreams only of books. He doesn't just dream about them, he wants to read them ALL THE TIME. Soon his obsession sends him spiralling into a life of crime! He is wanted on suspicion of the following: nabbing novels, dashing away with dictionaries, pinching poetry, creeping off with comics and cookbooks. Can you help us find him and together we will stop book burglary!



About the Author and Illustrator

Emily Mackenzie is a freelance illustrator and graphic designer based in Edinburgh who graduated from Edinburgh College of Art. Working mainly with ink, digital collage and screen printing, Emily's illustrative work draws from childhood memories, an inquisitive nature and a vivid imagination. As well as drawing, Emily loves knitting and gets very excited about anything bright and colourful! This is Emily's first picture book.

TEACHING NOTES AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Before Reading

Before your class reads through the story, begin a class discussion about the cover and title of the book. You might like to discuss:

- What do you notice on the cover?
- What do you think might happen in this story?
- Why do you think Ralfy Rabbit is wanted?
- What is he wearing?
- What do you see on the floor?

After Reading

1. How did they know it was Ralfy Rabbit stealing the books?
2. Why do you think Ralfy starts wearing a mask when he starts stealing books?
3. At the end of the story, Ralfy is brought to the library where he can borrow all the books he wants. Do you have a favourite book at the library?
4. In our story, we encounter vocabulary you may not have heard before. Try acting out these new verbs:
 - Creeping
 - Sleeping
 - Dashed
 - Nabbed
 - Pinched
 - Burrowed

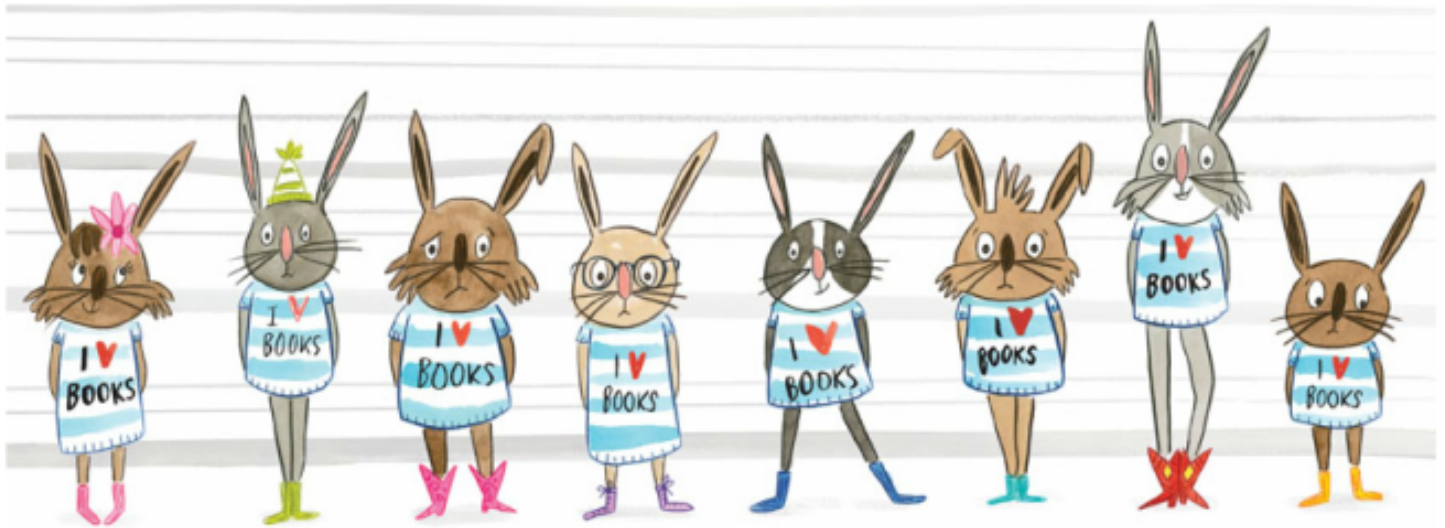
Class Activities

1. Arthur assembles his special surveillance kit in the story to catch the thief stealing his books. He includes a super flashy torch, snappy camera, notebook and pencils, binoculars, chalk, sticky tape, snacks and books on string. Teddy also keeps him company. What would be in your surveillance kit?
 - Illustrate your own surveillance kit and include all the things you think you would need to catch a bunny book thief



Class Activities

- Ralfy Rabbit makes lots of lists of all the books he reads so he can recommend books to his family and friends. He even gave them carrot ratings based on how much he enjoyed reading them.
 - Review a book from the library and include the following information:
 - Synopsis
 - About the Author
 - Your favourite page
 - Any fun information
 - A carrot rating out of 5 carrots
- Ralfy dreams about books in our story which makes him turn to a life of crime so that he could have access to books all the time. Do you think you can help him?
 - In this activity pack, you can help Ralfy get through mazes, spot the difference and colour in his favourite books. <http://static.booktopia.com.au/pdf/9781408843130-1.pdf>
- At the police station, PC Puddle put together a line up of rabbits so that Arthur could try and identify the bunny book thief. Can you see which one is Ralfy?
 - Draw some of your classmates as rabbits in a line-up like the [illustrations on these pages](#) and make sure that you give your drawings some identifying features such as hair colour, accessories and eye colour.

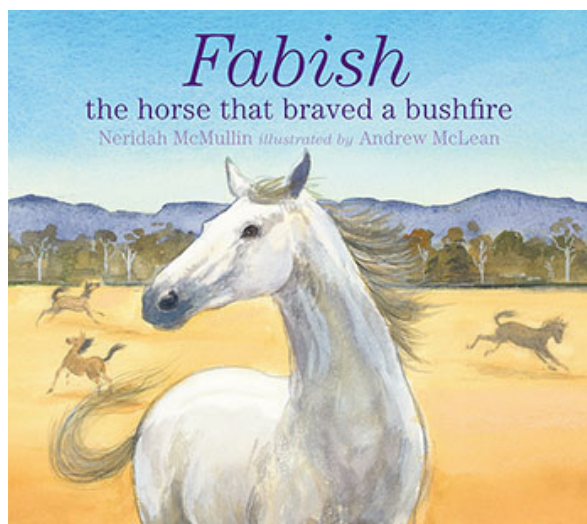


5. In Queensland, it is illegal to have rabbits so they are 'wanted!' like Ralfy Rabbit. This is because of the destruction they cause to the agricultural industry and how they wreck the native habitats. Did you know about this?

- Set a research task into the history of rabbits in Australia and Queensland, why they have been banned and how current populations are monitored.



BY NERIDAH MCMULLIN AND ANDREW MCLEAN



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Literacy



Creative & Critical
Thinking



Ethical
Understanding

Stories in the Stables by Farmer Rhonda

Click the video link below to join Farmer Rhonda reading her favourite stories about animals and agriculture in her stables.

<https://youtu.be/Yoxllcchu1l>



Key Themes

Horse, Bushfires, Yearlings, Racehorses, Horse Behaviour

Synopsis

Based on the true story of a brave horse named Fabish, the book tells the tale of the Black Saturday bushfires of 2009 and how Fabish saved the lives of seven yearlings. Originally, Fabish was a hardworking racehorse before he retired to the paddock, to teach the yearlings what was expected of them. He taught them to behave and demonstrated the correct behaviour of a racehorse. One hot summer day, a wild wind blew up and the yearlings were restless. Then Fabish smelled smoke. Fire was coming, fast. The trainer threw open the gate of the paddock and instructed Fabish to lead the yearlings away, to escape from the oncoming bushfire. All through the night, the fire raged through the farm. The next morning the trainer went out to see the damage – the farm was charred and desolate. The trainer was certain that Fabish and the yearlings wouldn't have made it, but in the distance he heard rhythmic footsteps. Following the sooty grey horse, were the seven yearlings, on their way home. Fabish had saved them all.



About the Author

Neridah McMullin is an exceptional Australian author for children's books and poetry. Fabish was shortlisted for The Children's Book of the Year – Eve Pownall Award for Information Books in 2017. Growing up on a farm surrounded by animals, Neridah is inspired by her youth and her stockman grandfather who bred, trained, and raced his own racehorses. When she read about Fabish, she went to meet the trainer at the farm in north-east Victoria. He told her about that terrible time, and how he had to set Fabish and the yearlings free to make their own way through the firestorm. He didn't think he think he would ever see them again.

About the Illustrator

Andrew McLean is an artist who has taught painting, drawing and art, but is now a full-time painter and illustrator of children's books. Andrew also visited the farm where Fabish and the yearlings lived and saw the old stone stables where the racehorses were saved from the fire. Fabish is beautifully illustrated and captures a sense of movement and emotion in the images.

TEACHING NOTES AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

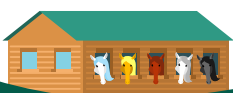
Before Reading

Before your class reads through the story, begin a class discussion about the cover and title of the book. You might like to discuss:

- What do you notice on the cover?
- What do you think might happen in this story?
- What do you think about the main horse we see? What features do you notice?
- Can you see anything in the background?

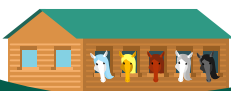
After Reading

1. Do you know what yearlings are?
 - A yearling is a young horse (either male or female) between the age of one and two years old.
2. What date of the year (in the southern hemisphere) is the standardised birthday for all racehorses
 - 1st of August
3. From this story, you can see the detrimental impact of bushfires for the people and animals in those areas. The 2009 Black Saturday bushfires were some of Australia's all-time worst bushfire disasters, similar to that of the Australian bushfires in 2019-2020. What do you know about the effect of bushfires? Think about the people, animals, and land.
4. At the end of the story, Fabish returns home safely with the seven yearlings following behind. However, we don't know where they went and how they survived the bushfire? This remains a mystery to the reader. Where do you think Fabish took the yearlings? How do you think they stayed safe while the fires raged around them?

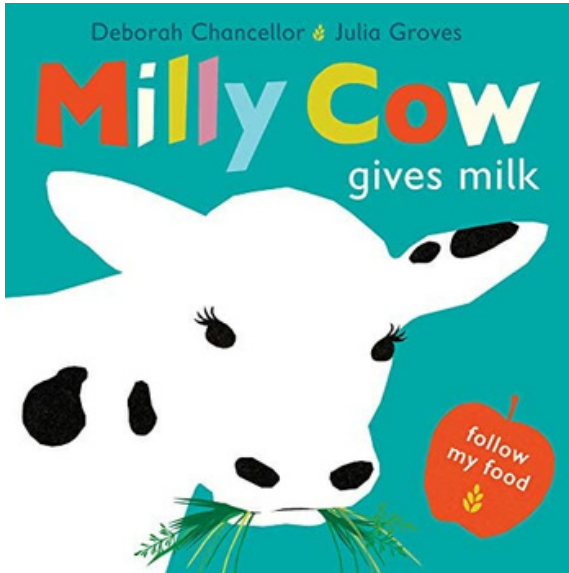


Class Activities

1. Throughout the story, we encounter lots of vocabulary that you might not have heard before. A lot of these refer to the behaviour of the horses. What do you think they mean?
 - Act out the following vocabulary in classroom. Find your own space and imagine you're one of the yearlings that is with Fabish out in the paddock. If you're not sure, just have a go and take inspiration from your fellow classmates around you:
 - Galloped
 - Pranced
 - Clip-clopped
 - Snorted
 - Neighed
 - Paced
 - Whinnied
2. The Black Saturday bushfires occurred in Victoria on the 7th of February 2009. The series of fires burning across the state became a firestorm, causing destructions of homes and land. It resulted in Australia's highest ever loss of life from bushfire. Have you heard of the Black Saturday bushfires?
 - Set a research task for small groups to learn more about the impact of bushfires. Topics could include:
 - What is the history of bushfires in Australia?
 - What weather conditions increase the likelihood of bushfires?
 - What was the effect of Black Saturday on the people of Victoria?
 - What were the consequences for native and domesticated animals?
 - What was the impact on the native flora and agricultural land?
3. Our hero horse, Fabish, is a retired racehorse that became a guide and mentor for the yearlings out on the paddock. Owning a racehorse is a lifetime commitment and it is important to ensure that after their racing careers, they have a retirement plan for the future. Racing Queensland's Off The Track initiative aims to optimise racehorse aftercare and promote best practice equine welfare to support retired racehorses in their lives after racing. Can you have a look at the Off The Track Education Program to learn more?
 - Go to the Off The Track Education page <https://www.racingqueensland.com.au/animal-care/off-the-track/ott-education> and interact with post-racing fact sheets.
 - Watch some of the Life After Racing Videos available here <https://www.racingqueensland.com.au/animal-care/off-the-track/life-after-racing-videos>
 - Students can be exposed to the various opportunities that racehorses can be a part of in their retirement. This includes new roles:
 - In show jumping and dressage
 - Connecting and caring for disabled people
 - Family horses
 - Quiet lives out on the paddock



BY DEBORAH CHANCELLOR AND JULIA GROVES



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Personal &
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Stories in the Stables by Farmer Rhonda

Click the video link below to join Farmer Rhonda reading her favourite stories about animals and agriculture in her stables.

<https://youtu.be/4z59bV5x4m8>



Key Themes

Cows, Agricultural practices, Dairy, Milking process

Synopsis

Follow along as Milly Cow lives a day in her life on the farm. She is a dairy cow on Farmer McBean's farm along with her friends. She grazes her grass and hay and drinks her fresh water which helps her to make creamy milk in her udder. In the morning at sunrise and at the end of the day at dusk, Milly Cow and her friends head to the milking parlour. Her udders are milked and is kept in a cool tank before it heads off to the shops. This is where we buy the milk from the refrigerated section and take it home to enjoy. Milk is so good for us, with calcium for our teeth and bones. Dairy farmers do an important job taking care of our dairy cows and making sure they are milked regularly. There are lots of different milk products we eat everyday including butter, cheese, yogurt, cream and ice-cream!



About the Author

Deborah Chancellor is a writer of fiction and non-fiction books for children. To date she has written nearly 100 books and worked with many leading publishers. This book was published on behalf of the Royal Association of British Dairy Farmers to educate children on the production of milk and its importance in our lives. They are dedicated to the interests of dairy farmers, the improvement of dairy stock, dairy produce and the dairy industry.

About the Illustrator

Julia Groves is a children's books illustrator who also teaches illustration, graphics and printmaking at colleges across the UK. She has designed and illustrated a range of baby books and picture books. She enjoys working in all kinds of media; papercut, printmaking, letterpress and hand-drawn typography. Her baby books were nominated for the Progressive Pre-School Awards. Her first picture book received an Outstanding Merit from Bank Street College of Education, New York's Best Books of the Year list and has been long listed for the Cogan Biodiversity Picture Book Award 2020 in the UK.

TEACHING NOTES AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Before Reading

Before your class reads through the story, begin a class discussion about the cover and title of the book. You might like to discuss:

- What do you notice on the cover?
- What do you think might happen in this story?
- What do you think about Milly Cow? What is she doing?

After Reading

1. At the end of the story, we learn that lots of products are made from milk. Do you have a favourite milk product? If so, what is it?
2. Dairy farmers are a big part of the process to collect cow's milk and send out to the shops for us to have at home. Can you remember the process of milking dairy cows? What are the steps?
3. Throughout our book, we encounter lots of new vocabulary you might not have heard before. What do you think these words mean?
 - Milking parlour → the building where the cows are milked on a dairy farm
 - Crops → plants that are grown and harvested
 - Hay → grass that has been cut and dried to be used to feed livestock
 - Udder → the part of a cow that produces milk
 - Cowpats → is the waste of cows that helps plants to grow



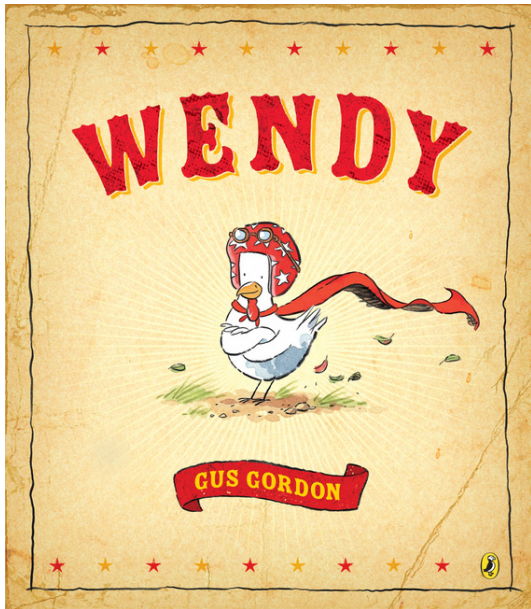
Class Activities

1. Milly Cow is dairy cow that is a predominantly white with a few black spots and a black tail. As we can see in the story, Milly Cow's friends are also black and white but are all different, with spots in different places all over their body. If you had a dairy cow, what would it look like?
 - Have a go at drawing a dairy cow and colouring it in with black spots. Don't forget about the colour of their ears and tail.
2. After visiting the milking parlour, Milly Cow's milk is pumped into a cool tank. The milk is then made ready to drink before it heads off to the shops. The process of making milk ready is called pasteurisation. Have you heard of this before?
 - Set a research task for small groups to learn more about pasteurisation and dairy cows in general. Topics could include:
 - What is pasteurisation?
 - What equipment is required for the pasteurization process?
 - What breeds of dairy cows are there in Australia?
 - How does milk become other milk products such as butter, cheese, yogurt, cream and ice-cream?
3. At the end of our story, we learn that each cow has her own unique personality. Sometimes they do funny things like when Milly Cow likes to use her teeth to pluck juicy blackberries off a bramble bush. If you were a cow, what funny thing would you do? What would your personality be?
 - In a few sentences, write about your personality if you were a cow. Write about one funny thing that you might do, like eat berries of a bush or lay under a tree for nap. Use your imagination to think of some things a cow might do out on a farm.

**HAVE YOU 'HERD'
ABOUT THE EKKA
LEARNING TRAIL?**



BY GUS GORDON



AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM VERSION 9

English: Engaging with and responding to literature

Foundation to Grade 6 alignment ([AC9EFLE02](#))

English: Examining literature

Foundation to Grade 6 alignment ([AC9EFLE03](#))



Literacy



Creative & Critical
Thinking



Personal &
Social Capability

Stories in the Stables by Farmer Rhonda

Click the video link below to join Farmer Rhonda reading her favourite stories about animals and agriculture in her stables.

<https://youtu.be/1p7GcvOzFKU>



Key Themes

Chicken, Adventure, Friendship, Circus, Thrill-seeking

Synopsis

Wendy isn't any old chicken, she wanted lead an extraordinary life. One day the travelling circus comes to town and Wendy gets a job as the motorcycling riding stunt star, Wendy the Flying Chicken. She is a thrill-seeking chicken that could jump over double decker buses and animals would come from miles around to come and see her in action. Wendy was a star! Everyone wanted her to perform the biggest stunt to date and when the big day finally arrived, all eyes were on her. As she soared into air, she could see her little farm in the distance and her thoughts turned back to her friends and family back home. She had flown a little off-course. She crashed and the crowd went wild, eventually ending up at the hospital, Wendy decided she was going back to a place where she didn't need to be a superstar. And it was so nice to be home.



About the Author and Illustrator

Gus Gordon is an internationally acclaimed Australian illustrator and author. He has illustrated and written over 80 books for children. His illustrations are known for their loose and energetic line work, mixed media and humour. His writing is always anthropomorphic. Gus's first picture book, Wendy, was a Notable Book in the 2010 Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA) Picture Book of the Year Awards. It also received a Highly Commended at the Prime Minister's Literary Awards for Children's Fiction. Gus' stories are typically very character orientated, relying heavily on the character's personality and their reaction to an environment or situation to direct the story.

TEACHING NOTES AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Before Reading

Before your class reads through the story, begin a class discussion about the cover and title of the book. You might like to discuss:

- What do you notice on the cover?
- What do you think might happen in this story?
- What do you think about Wendy?
- Why do you think she is wearing a helmet, goggles, and a cape?

After Reading

1. Why do you think Wendy decided to go back to the farm at the end of the story?
2. Twice in the story Wendy's beak tingles – the first time when she was announced as 'Wendy the Flying Chicken' in front of the circus crowd and secondly, when she was back on the farm surrounded by all her farmyard friends. What do you think it means when her beak tingled?
3. Wendy is so happy when she gets back home to the farm; chatting with the farmyard animals, telling the young chicks about her amazing adventures, watching the sunrise and snuggling in for bed. What do you think Wendy has learnt? What is the message of the story?

Class Activities

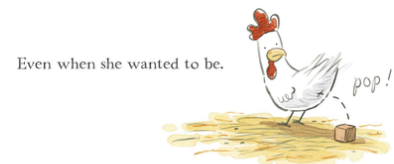
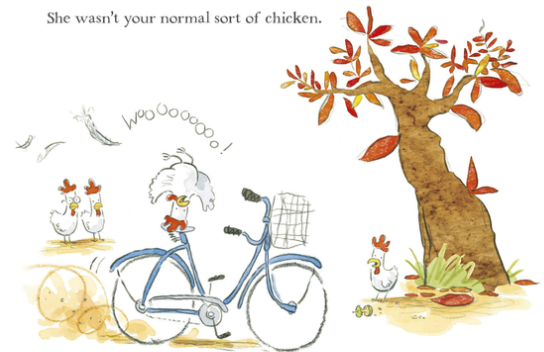
1. At Monty McFloos' 'Mostly Spectacular Travelling Circus', there are lots of different circus acts. As we know Wendy becomes the Flying Chicken. There is also Marvellous Molly who juggles, the Zoodoozky Brothers who perform magic shows and Wally Winterbottom who does underwater tricks. If you were part of the travelling circus, what would be your circus act?
 - Write down an adjective and your name and then describe your circus act. You may be inspired by some of the sports you play or the hobbies you have.
 - Then draw yourself as a colourful animal that is performing your chosen circus act. Think about the outfit you might wear, as Wendy is wearing goggles and a helmet for safety while displaying her motorcycle stunts. She also wears a cape that flies in the wind when she is sailing over the double decker buses.



Class Activities

2. Our main character Wendy is a farmyard chicken and is illustrated with all the features of a real chicken you will see at the Ekka. The different parts of a chicken include the wings, tail, leg, foot, eye, beak, wattle and comb. Can you identify the different parts of Wendy?

- As a class have a look at this illustrated page of Wendy http://blaine.org/jules/Wendy_on_bike.jpg and try to identify the different parts of the chickens you see. We share some similar features to Wendy as we also have eyes and legs but as a bird, Wendy has features that only birds have, such as beaks and wings.



3. When Wendy does her final motorcycle stunt, she goes “higher than any chicken had ever been before”. This is because chickens aren’t very good fliers and can usually only stay up in the air for a few metres before landing back down on the ground. Over time, chickens adapted to spend more time on the ground since that is where their food is located. What else do you know about chickens?

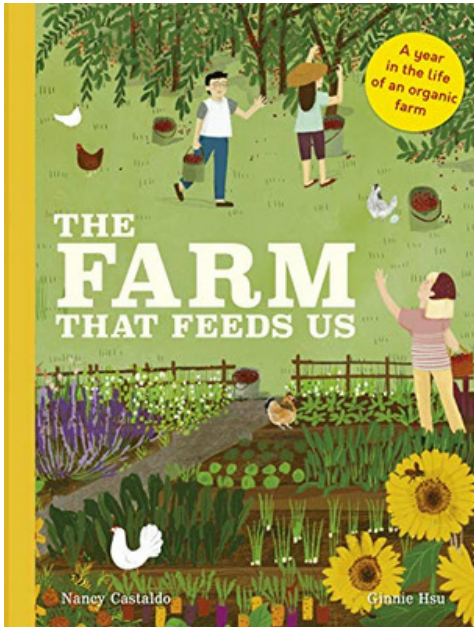
- Set a fact-finding activity for students to learn more about chickens. Topics could include:
 - What are the different breeds of chickens in Australia?
 - How many eggs do chickens produce each year?
 - How many days after a mother hen sits on her eggs, will the chicks hatch?
 - What do you call a female and male chicken?
 - What foods do chickens eat?

4. In our story, Wendy becomes a star and is photographed by the paparazzi and interviewed on TV. She is also the front-page story in ‘The Pecking Order Post’ – “Nothing Poultry About Wendy’s Next Jump! – Chicken Risks Life and Wing”. If you were writing a newspaper article about Wendy, what would it say?

- Make your own Pecking Order Post in class. Students can write their own articles about Wendy’s stunts or about her return home to the farm. Ensure they come up with an exciting title and illustrate their article with a picture of Wendy.



BY NANCY CASTALDO AND GINNIE HSU



AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM VERSION 9

English: Engaging with and responding to literature

Foundation to Grade 6 alignment ([AC9EFLE02](#))

English: Examining literature

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Literacy



Creative & Critical
Thinking



Sustainability

Stories in the Stables by Farmer Rhonda

Click the video link below to join Farmer Rhonda reading her favourite stories about animals and agriculture in her stables.

https://youtu.be/w2_6ZnkVhHA



Key Themes

Farming, Plants, Agricultural Shows, Farm Animals, Diversity, Sustainability

Synopsis

Where does our food come from? What role do farms play? What's it like to be a farmer? In this charmingly illustrated book, follow a farm throughout the year to discover how the farmer grows fresh and tasty food for us to eat in a sustainable and natural way. Explore the workings of a small-scale, organic family farm and experience the rhythm of farm life. In the spring, visit the chicken coop, till the fields and tour the farm machinery. When summer comes, plant corn, meet the pollinators and head to the county fair. In autumn, make pies and preserves and put the fields to sleep. Winter activities include trimming and pruning the orchard, seed shopping and baking bread. To conclude your year on the farm, learn what you can do to support the farmers who pick our carrots and raise the cows for our milk.



About the Author

Nancy Castaldo has written award-winning books about our planet for over 20 years from New York's Hudson Valley. Her love of reading and writing outdoors began in her childhood, when she wasn't searching for frogs, turtles, and salamanders, and climbing trees. Her curiosity led her to study science. As an environmental educator, Nancy combined all of those interests. She still enjoys spending her time exploring in the wild as she did while researching over two dozen books and many articles.

TEACHING NOTES AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Before Reading

Before your class reads through the story, begin a class discussion about the cover and title of the book. You might like to discuss:

- What do you notice on the cover?
- What do you think might happen in this story?
- What plants do you see growing on the cover?
- Are there animals on the cover? What are they?
- What are the people on the cover doing?

After Reading

1. We encounter many types of farms in our story, can you name other types of farms that aren't mentioned in our story?
2. At the Orchard, we have apple trees that bloom with flowers before they are pollinated and turn into the fruit we eat. Orchard fruits like apples, cherries, pears and plums are revealed. Can you think of some more fruits that grow on trees?
3. The end of our story tells us that there are many ways to support our local farmers. Why do you think this so important?

Class Activities

1. We get to take a look inside the Chicken Coop where the chickens in our story live. This allows our chickens to safely lay eggs in their nests, stay protected from any predators and have a place to rest. If you could design a chicken coop, what would it look like?
 - Design and illustrate a chicken coop that includes places for the chickens to nest, feed and have some exercise.
 - Explore different breeds of chickens that you would like to reside in your chicken coop. You might like to pick a breed of chicken based on the amount of eggs they produce, the colour of their feathers or their nature and personality.



Class Activities

2. The page in our story about Farm Machinery shows several types of equipment and machinery used on the farm for various tasks. Historically, farmers used horses to do the majority of the work around the farms, however, this has transformed into farmers using tractors and harvesters throughout the property. Agricultural technology is quickly developing to include computer automated technology, artificial intelligence, drones and connected sensors on farm.
 - Set a research task to consider the new advancements in agricultural technology and the ways in which farmers can benefit from using this technology on their farms. You may like to focus on a certain industry within agriculture, like cotton farms, dairy farms, etc.
3. When we look at the County Show, Farmer Rhonda tells us that like the County Shows, Ekka is an agricultural show where “farmers come from all over the country to show off their produce and livestock.” The Ekka exhibits animals, food, games and entertainment, throughout the Brisbane Showgrounds. Imagine what that would look like...
 - Create a class mural of all the exhibits at Ekka like we see in our story. Perhaps small groups can focus on one area and illustrate the activities of the farmers.
4. It is vital to “Do Our Bit” for our local farmers, as they can provide us with tasty products all year round, whatever the weather. Can you think of some ways to support our farmers?
 - Create a brochure or article that highlights a way that we can support our Australian farmers. Topics may include:
 - Trying a variety of fruits and veggies which protects our biodiversity
 - Purchasing produce when it's in season
 - Reducing waste and finding meals that incorporate leftover fruit and vegetables
 - Supporting local Australian growers by buying local products
 - Buying ‘wonky’ fruit and veg, as it still tastes the same



**THANKS FOR BEING
A PART OF STORIES IN
THE STABLES BY
FARMER RHONDA**

Ekka

EDUCATION

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