

THE INSIDE DOG



PIP HARRY AND CAROLYN DAVIS

TEACHERS RESOURCES

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Teachers Resources by Robyn Sheahan-Bright

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INTRODUCTION

Cuddles is an inside dog. Cuddles loves warm laps, snuggly couches and soft beds. He is most definitely an inside dog. So when his family decides to bring him along on a farm holiday, Cuddles is horrified to find himself outside with the farm dogs. Will this inside dog ever be ready for outside adventures?

A charming book about being brave, stepping out of your comfort zone and trying new things from CBCA award-winning children's author Pip Harry, with illustrations by acclaimed art director and artist Carolyn Davis.

THEMES & CURRICULUM TOPICS

Several themes are covered in this book which might be related to the Australian Curriculum, including:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES (HASS)

This is relevant to the following Curriculum Area:

<<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/humanities-and-social-sciences/hass/>>

TRYING NEW THINGS

Discussion Point: Brainstorm what things students find difficult to do or things they are reluctant to tackle.

Discussion Point: What new things have your students recently attempted or accomplished?

Activity: Read and discuss other stories about trying new things and stepping out of your comfort zone. [See **Bibliography**.]

PETS

Discussion Point: What does your pet like most to do? Is it an inside or an outside pet?

Discussion Point: Invite students to bring in a picture of their pet dog if they have one. Create a gallery of puppies and dogs to share as a classroom display.

Discussion Point: Read and discuss other stories about pets or pet dogs. [See **Bibliography**.]

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

This is relevant to the following Curriculum Area:

<<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/english/>>

The text of this book might be studied in relation to the following aspects:

Activity: This story works on a traditional structure in which a character embarks on a *journey* (Cuddles going to the farm), which presents a problem (Cuddles is an inside not an outside dog).

A repeated sequence of events (Cuddles trying to do new things on the farm) builds momentum. *Turning Point:* The farm dogs rescue Cuddles from the alpacas and begin to teach him farm skills. *Resolution:* 'Cuddles is still an inside dog. But now he is ready for outside adventures too.' Write another story about a pet or a child trying something new, employing the same set of narrative features.

Activity: Naming is important in any story. Cuddles has a name that suits his personality. The 'working dogs who mustered sheep' on the farm do as well: 'Tank, Gus and Spike'. What other names might Cuddles have had? What other names might suit the working dogs?

Activity: Test your students' **comprehension** by asking them questions about the written and visual text. [See also **Author's Notes** below.]

Visual Literacy

This is relevant to the following Curriculum Area:

<<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/the-arts/visual-arts/>>_

The visual text of a book combines with the written text to tell the story using the various parts of the book's design and illustrations, as explored below:

Activity: The **cover** of a book is an important part of its message. What does this cover (front and back) suggest about the book's contents?

Activity: The **endpapers** contain objects associated with Cuddles. Identify and discuss the images. Then design your own endpapers for this book.

Discussion Point: The title page depicts Cuddles on a couch enjoying being an inside dog. Contrast the image of Cuddles on the title page at the beginning, and on the final page of the book. What do the objects contained in the images tell you about how he has changed? Did you notice these objects hiding anywhere else in the story?

Discussion Point: The **format** of the book is square. How does the **layout of the storyboard** and the **format and design** of the pages influence your reading of it? For example, some frames depict the action from an aerial view above, one is looking upwards, into the sun. Some contain more than one image in a sequence of images. White space is used throughout to dramatic effect. The aesthetic of the book is quite 'retro' in imagery, for example, the small red car with the luggage rack, and the traditional farmhouse with wraparound verandah. When Cuddles is scratching at the farmhouse door, what signs are there that people are inside? What else did your students notice in this storyboard's design?

Activity: Creating characters entails studying **facial expressions and 'body language'**. Examine the images of Cuddles, the farm dogs, and the alpacas. How does the illustrator create their characters visually? Can you identify what dog breeds Tank, Gus and Spike might be?

Activity: The **medium** is digital illustration, with brushwork and watercolour textures created in Procreate for iPad. The **colours** used in this book are muted or faded with a selective palette to create a feeling that we are in Cuddles' world. Invite students to draw, paint, or collage another scene to accompany the story they wrote above. Create a classroom mural using all the images.

Discussion Point: Humour is part of this story's charm; for example, 'Cuddles tried to introduce himself, but the alpacas seemed very unhelpful.' The image that accompanies this sentence shows the alpacas looking very threatening. What other spread did your students find amusing? What moment do you think was the most difficult for Cuddles?

Activity: See 'Learn to Draw a Dog' *ActivityVillage.co.UK*
<https://www.activityvillage.co.uk/learn-to-draw-a-dog>

Activity: Create a graphic novel/comic version of a scene in this book. [See **Bibliography.**] [See also **Worksheet 4.**] [See also **Illustrator's Notes** below.]

CREATIVE ARTS

There are many creative activities suggested by this text:

1. **On 20 February each year National Love Your Pet Day is celebrated.** Share this day with students by engaging in dog or pet-related activities.
[See: 'National Love Your Pet Day Activities for Children' *Aussie Childcare Network* <https://aussiechildcarenetwork.com.au/articles/teaching-children/national-love-your-pet-day-activities-for-children>]
[See also **Worksheet 1** below.]
2. **Decorate a picture of a dog house** for Cuddles, using images and motifs that relate to the story. [See **Worksheet 2.**]
3. **Create a Cuddles mask.** [See **Worksheet 5.**]
4. **Create a poster** to advertise this book.
5. **Create a Book Trailer** to promote this book. [See **Bibliography.**]

LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES

Activity: Research the topics above online.

Activity: Research the author and illustrator online.

MATHEMATICS

Activity: Have fun counting things in this text.

Activity: See **Worksheet 3** below for mathematics activities.

FURTHER TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION AND RESEARCH

- Research the work of Pip Harry. Compare this to her other books.
- Research the work of Carolyn Davis.
- Investigate any other topic not covered in these notes which you consider is suggested by this text.

CONCLUSION

This story is not only about a pet dog but also about learning to take risks and to try new things. Children will identify with Cuddles' attachment to his home and way of life and with his reaction to a new environment. And it is an immensely engaging book that children will enjoy. For Cuddles is a charming pet, whether he is inside or outside!

AUTHOR'S NOTES

Inspiration for writing *The Inside Dog*:

I was chatting on the phone to my sister when she mentioned her family was going to a farm for a visit and bringing their fluffy spoodle Rufus – a sweet, gentle pup who wears a colourful bow around his neck. She was worried Rufus wouldn't get along with the farm dogs – tough working breeds that slept outside – because he's 'an inside dog'. As soon as I got off the call, I jotted down the initial storyline for *The Inside Dog*, inspired by Rufus. In my story, I created the character of Cuddles, an inside dog who is horrified to find himself outside with farm dogs when his family goes on a rural holiday. During the farm stay, Cuddles is forced to step outside of his comfort zone, face his fears, make new friends and be open to trying something new.

When we were considering an illustrator for *The Inside Dog*, I put forward my childhood friend and artist, Carolyn Davis. Carolyn and I met when we were in high school and formed a fast friendship. We grew up and went our separate ways in the world – Carolyn became an advertising art director in New York and I became a journalist and author in Australia and Singapore. A true story: on our 18th birthdays, she gave me a pen and I gave her an art book! Carolyn's sweet, classic drawings were the perfect choice for the book and she got to work bringing Cuddles to life in gorgeous digital illustrations. Together, we went to Milkwood Farm creative retreat outside New York to complete the final illustrations for *The Inside Dog* and to reconnect after many years!

ILLUSTRATOR'S NOTES

The Inside Dog was dreamed up by author Pip Harry, who also happens to be one of my childhood best friends. I'd read all her Young Adult novels from cover to cover, so I was beyond excited to receive her manuscript for this book.

My first job was to decide what I wanted Cuddles to look like; his size, his fur, his face, his ears. I gave him locks of manicured fur and a slightly roly-poly physique and little twiglike legs that hadn't quite reached their potential. I wanted him to have a whimsy and naïvety about his form. Not anatomically correct, just a sense of overall cuteness.

Next, I took Pip's delightful words and set about building Cuddles' world. The inside of his house, his neighbourhood, his humans, their car, the farm and everything in between. I kept the colours warm and comforting in his inside world. But I made the great outdoors cooler, with greens and blues, extending to the horizon.

Turning 600 words into 32 pages of illustrations means establishing the beats in the story. I don't always draw exactly what's written word-for-word. I ask myself what single image best brings each moment to life and let the pictures tell us things that the words might not. Take the close-up spread of Cuddles being patted by his family, for example. Here I didn't draw exactly what was described, but it completely embodies the sentiment.

For these illustrations I used Procreate on an iPad. But my years of hands-on experience with gouache, pencil, paper and even clay make digital drawing feel as intuitive and tactile as any traditional medium. It doesn't make it easier, it's just a lot less messy!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Pip Harry is an Australian author, copywriter and journalist. Her young adult novels include *I'll Tell You Mine*, *Head of the River* and *Because of You*. Her middle grade novel *The Little Wave* won the 2020 Children's Book Council of Australia Book of the Year Award for Younger Readers. Pip's second middle grade novel, *Are You There, Buddha?*, was a 2022 Children's Book Council of Australia Notable Book and was shortlisted for the 2022 NSW Premier's Literary Awards, Ethel Turner Prize for Young People's Literature. Pip's next middle grade novel, *August & Jones*, was published by Hachette in 2022 and was shortlisted for the CBCA Book of the Year: Younger Readers 2023 and the 2024 YABBA Awards, and won the CBCA Shadow Judging Book of the Year for Younger Readers. Her first picture book, *Over or Under?* is inspired by a lifetime of ocean swimming and occasionally getting dumped by big waves. See also: www.pipharry.com.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Carolyn Davis is a natural visual storyteller. Whether making television commercials or picture books, she has an innate ability to depict a narrative through a series of artfully composed scenes. Her work as a Creative Director at New York's top advertising agencies has been recognised at the Cannes Lions festival, the British Design & Art Direction Awards and the New York One Show, with several of her campaigns featured in MoMA's permanent collection.

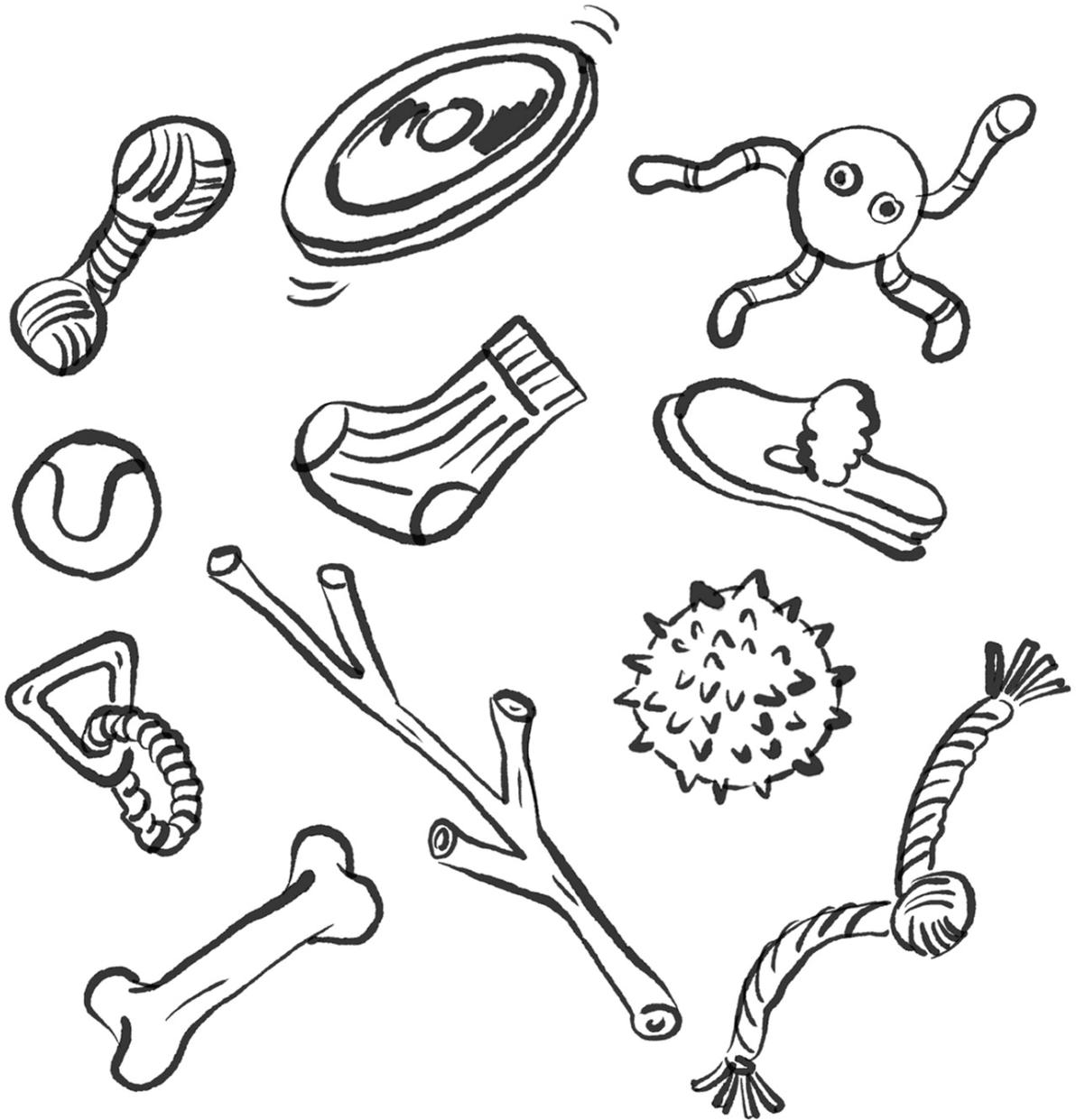
As an illustrator, Carolyn's whimsical, naïve style and restrained colour palette bring depth and emotion to the worlds she creates. You'll see it on display in her debut children's book with Hachette, *The Inside Dog*. Carolyn's talents extend beyond the page and screen into three dimensions, including a soon-to-be-released line of designer cat furniture, *CATWALC*, and her growing collection of beautifully thrown and glazed pottery.

Originally from Australia, Carolyn now lives in New York City with her partner, Matt, and their cat, Shadow. Find more at: www.carolyndavis.me



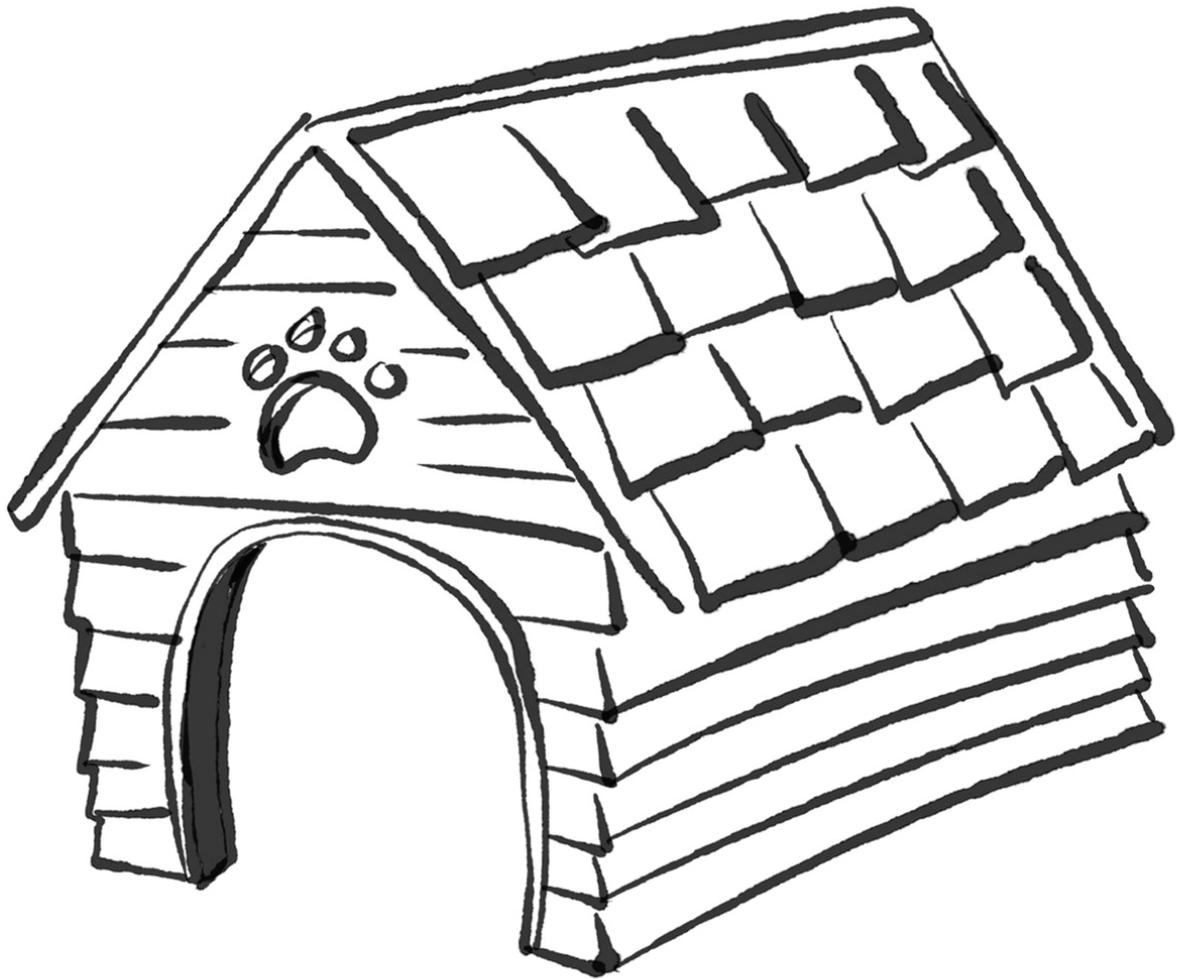
WORKSHEETS

WORKSHEET 1. COLOUR IN CUDDLES' TOYS



WORKSHEET 2. CUDDLES IN A DOG HOUSE

Decorate this dog house and the yard in which it is located using images and motifs that relate to the story. Draw Cuddles enjoying his 'outside' home.



WORKSHEET 3. MATHS FOR CUDDLES



How many rope toys would you need to add to those above to make ten?



How many balls would you have if you multiplied those above by eight?



How many toy puppies would you have if you subtracted three from the line above?



How many toy mice would you have if you added twelve to the line above?



5. How many toy dog bones would you have if you divided those above by two?

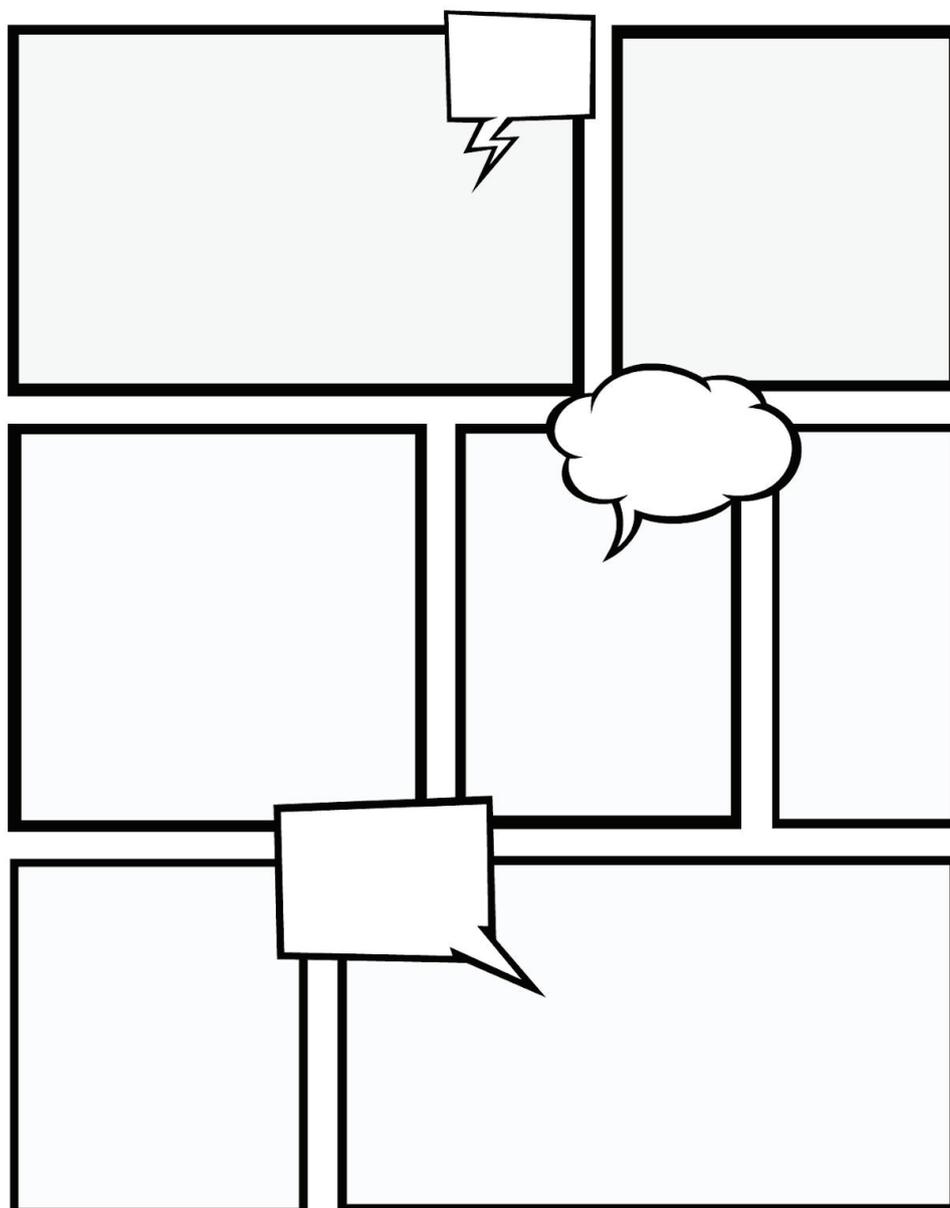


6. How many toy teething rings would you have if you tripled them?

ANSWERS: 1. Three. 2. Ninety-six. 3. Four. 4. Eighteen. 5. Two.
6. Eighteen.

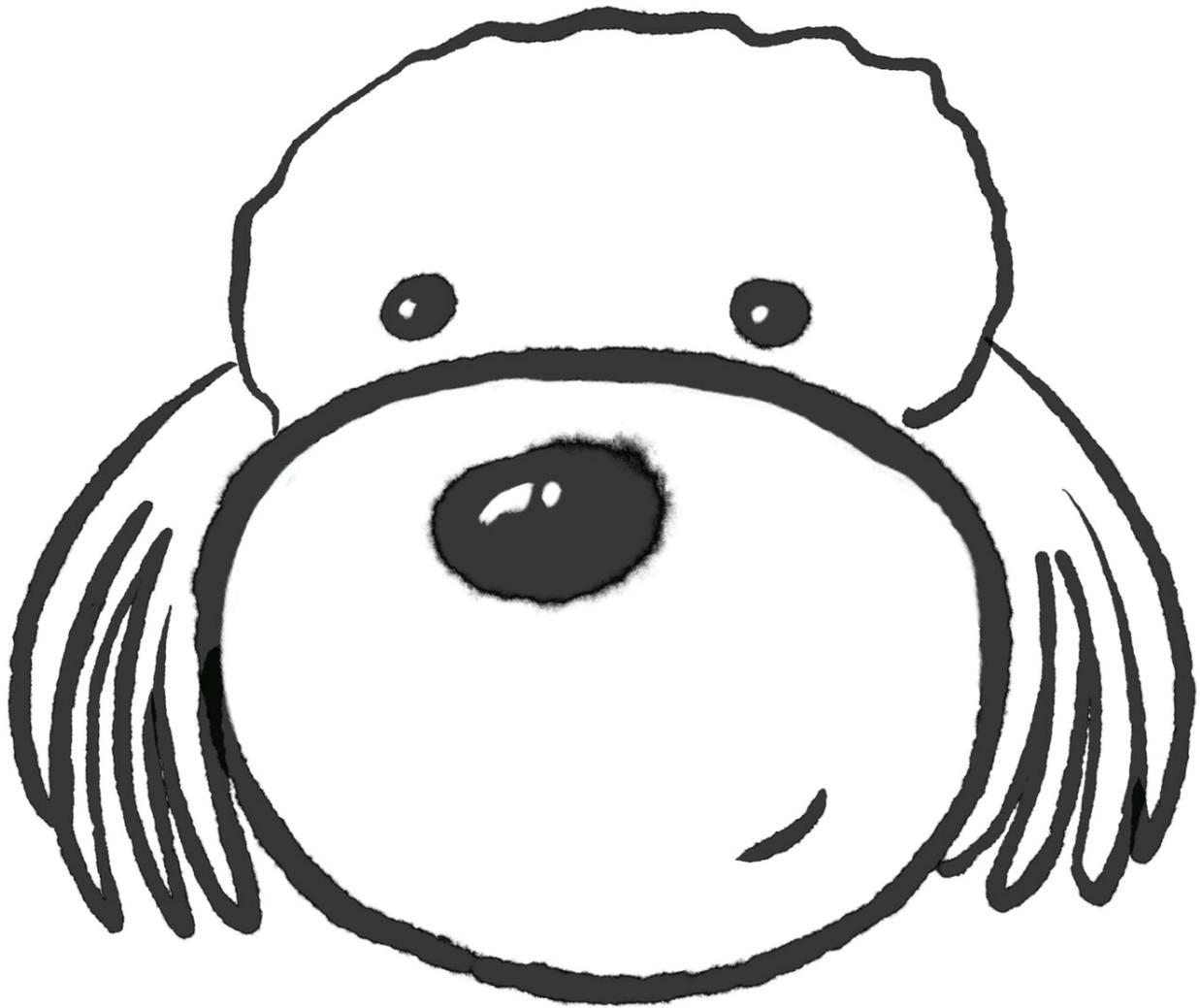
WORKSHEET 4. GRAPHIC STORYTELLING

Create a graphic novel/comic interpretation of one of the scenes in this book. Use the layout below as the storyboard for your comic. Enlarge on a photocopier to give you more space.



WORKSHEET 5. CUDDLES MASK

Enlarge the mask below on A3 craft paper and cut it out. Colour it in and then add elastic to the sides to put over your head.



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF THE NOTES

Dr Robyn Sheahan-Bright operates justified text writing and publishing consultancy services, and is widely published on children's literature, publishing history and Australian fiction. In 2011 she was the recipient of the CBCA (Qld Branch) Dame Annabelle Rankin Award for Distinguished Services to Children's Literature in Queensland, in 2012 the CBCA Nan Chauncy Award for Distinguished Services to Children's Literature in Australia, and in 2014, the QWC's Johnno Award. In 2021 she was appointed a member of the Order of Australia.

