



RECOMMENDED FOR

Pre-school and early primary age
(ages 4+)

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KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **Learning areas:** English, Visual Arts, Media Arts, Science
- **General capabilities:** Literacy, Critical and creative thinking, Visual literacy, Science understanding (biological sciences)

REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

- To discuss new vocabulary, respond to texts and share feelings and thoughts about the events and characters in texts
- To retell familiar texts through performance, use of illustration or images
- To learn about animals and their habitats, and the natural world.
- To experiment with different materials, and create artworks to communicate ideas to an audience

THEMES

- Problem-solving
- Nature
- Friendship
- Sharing and cooperation
- Identifying emotions

PREPARED BY

PenguinRandom House Australia

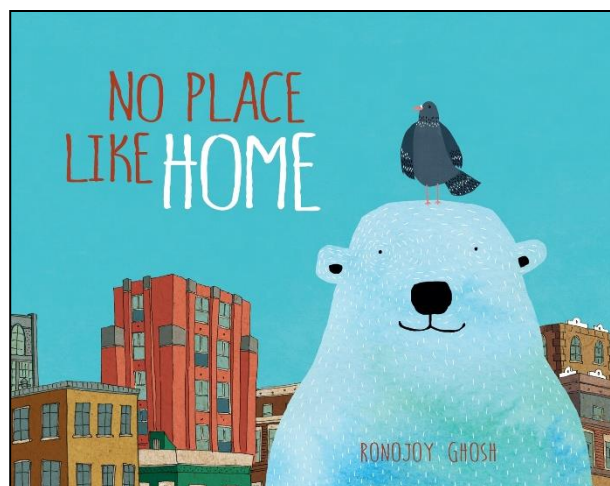
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No Place Like Home

Ronojoy Ghosh

PLOT SUMMARY

George the polar bear lives in a big city. He's not happy, but at first he's not sure why. Gradually he realises that the city isn't really his home and that he's homesick. But where is home? And how can he get there?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ronojoy Ghosh works as an art director in an advertising company. He lives in Sydney with his wife and young son. He wrote his first picture book, *Ollie and the Wind*, for his son, who refuses to sleep until he hears a story every night.

INTERVIEW WITH THE AUTHOR

1. What was your inspiration for writing *No Place Like Home*?

My work has taken me to many different parts of the world. I have lived in India, Indonesia, Singapore, New Zealand and Australia. George is loosely based on these experiences and finding comfort in home.

2. How do you approach illustrating animals and landscapes?

I look at photographs for reference before getting started, followed by sketching on paper and finally finishing the artwork on the computer. I draw out many different compositions before deciding on the final one for an illustration.

3. Do you like illustrating some types of animals or landscapes more than others?

I love making cityscapes, but as there are so many elements and colours that need to work together, it can be quite challenging.

4. How do you name your characters?

Not all the characters in the book have names, but I do have a fondness for the pigeon and call him Pierre. The name of a character needs to feel right. George wouldn't be as charming if he had a different name.

5. What was the most challenging part of creating this book? What was the most enjoyable?

I couldn't leave George not liking ice-cream! I had to find a way to resolve this and that's why I showed him enjoying an ice-cream in the endpapers. Wouldn't it be great to taste all those different flavours?

6. Do you have a favourite book that depicts the natural environment?

Man-Eaters of Kumaon by Jim Corbett.

expecting to see inside the book? What questions do you have about what could be in the story?

3. Just inside the cover, before the start of the story, are some illustrated pages. These are called 'endpapers'. What is on the endpapers? What do you think the endpapers have to do with the story?
4. After you've finished reading the book, take another look at the endpapers at the start of the book, and the endpapers at the end of the book. Are they the same? Why do you think that is? What is the author showing you with these endpapers?

KEY STUDY TOPICS

English

Questions

1. *Worksheet 1* asks readers to draw their favourite character from the book and write answers to some simple questions.
2. *Worksheet 2* asks readers to identify feelings by matching illustrations of George to words for different feelings.
3. Were any words in the book new to you? Can you work out from the illustrations what the words mean? Write a list of these words, or ask the teacher to write the unfamiliar words on the board for the class to discuss.
4. Can you tell the difference between a noun, a verb and an adjective? See *Worksheet 3* for a wordcloud activity about nouns, verbs and adjectives.
5. Can you find three adjectives used to describe places or things that don't make George feel at home? What about three adjectives that describe George's home?
6. Can you think of three words that describe your home? What about three words that describe somewhere you've been that felt strange or unfamiliar to you?
7. Page 6 says 'George didn't even like ice-cream.' Do you think polar bears usually like ice-cream? Why do you think the author has chosen ice cream as an example of something George doesn't like? (Hint: what if the text said 'George didn't even like broccoli'?)

Nature and science

Questions

1. Can you name all the types of animals that appear in the book? Look closely in the background of all the illustrations – you may find more.

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

1. Look at the front cover of the book. Read the title. What type of creatures appear on the cover? What kind of place is in the background? What does the title make you think about this illustration?
2. Read the blurb on the back of the book. What do you feel about it? What kind of things are you now



2. Apart from George, do you think the animals belong in the places they are shown? Why?
3. In which part of the world do polar bears live? Can you point the area out on a map?

Discussion and research

1. As a class or in groups, discuss what you know about polar bears. You could consider questions such as:
 - Where do polar bears usually live?
 - What kind of homes do polar bears usually have? Where do they sleep?
 - What do polar bears eat?
 - Do polar bears usually live in big groups, in small family groups, or mostly on their own?

Can you find out more? The following links have some useful information:

www.sciencekids.co.nz/sciencefacts/animals/polarbear.html

www.kidzone.ws/sg/polarbear/polar_bear.htm
2. Now that you know a little about polar bears, what do you think of the situations the author has put George in? Which parts of the story fit with what you know about polar bears? What things don't fit?

Extension discussion

Why do you think the author chose a polar bear and not another animal? What do you know about polar bears' natural habitat? (A habitat is where animals naturally live.)

Social skills and play

Questions

1. Do you think George was a kind bear at the start of the story? Did he have many friends? What about at the end of the book? What has changed? Why do you think it has changed?
2. Do you think George asked the birds to come with him on his journey? The final illustration suggests the birds are flying away. Do you think that is a good thing or a bad thing? Why? (Hint: consider the title of the book and the journey George has made.)
3. Have you ever felt homesick or out of place like George? How did you make yourself feel better?

The arts and visual literacy

Questions

1. Look at pages 2–3. The text says 'George never smiled. He never spoke to anyone.' These sentences are very simple, but the illustrations help give a stronger understanding of George's personality. What is George holding? What do you think he's about to do? Does this fit with the text on the page?
2. Have you ever thought about the way the words in a picture book fit together with the illustrations? Look at pages 4–5. Why do you think the last word on the page is placed as it is? What do you think George is about to do?
3. Look at pages 6–7: The text says 'George didn't even like ice-cream?' Is there evidence of that in the illustration? What do you think George has been doing? See *Worksheet 4*.
4. Can you imagine another part of the world where George might feel out of place? Try drawing George somewhere he doesn't belong. What clues can you include that will tell people that George is out of place?

Activities

1. One way to create a picture is to make a collage – this uses shapes and colour to create an image. You can make collages by cutting and gluing different types of paper and card, cloth and ribbons, and lots of other everyday items, such as leaves, aluminium foil, empty boxes or packets. Try making your own collage artwork. You could make a picture of your own design, or you could choose a favourite illustration in *No Place Like Home* and make a collage that looks like the illustration.
2. *Worksheet 5* invites students to consider how illustrations can tell a story without words, and to create their own story for an illustration from the book that has 'lost' its words.
3. *Worksheet 6* shows some sketches for two different illustrations in the book and helps students to understand the importance of drafting and trial and error.



FURTHER READING FROM RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA



Ollie and the Wind
by Ronojoy Ghosh

Why this story? To think about problem-solving, cooperation, making friends, and discovering new ways to play.

Sometimes the best things appear out of thin air

The wind blows all day on Ollie's island. There aren't many people around, but there's lots of space to play.

One day the wind steals Ollie's hat. Then it darts away with his scarf. But is the wind just naughty, or is it trying to tell Ollie something?

Teachers' resources available.



The Great Garden Mystery
by Renée Tremblay

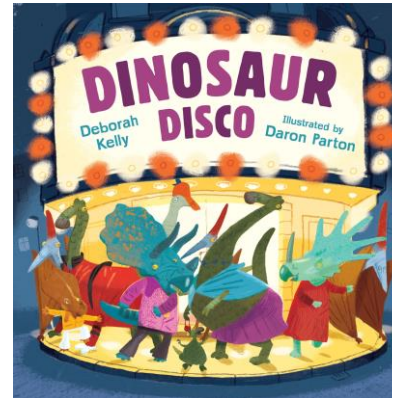
Why this story? To solve a mystery and learn about Australian animals.

Someone is stealing the beetroot, who could that somebody be? Join us in the garden and we'll unravel this mystery.

A mix of clever Australian animals examine the evidence, but can this cluey cast catch the thief before they strike again?

This beautifully illustrated picture book is perfect for reading aloud and features a cast of Australian and other animals that will delight both young and older readers.

Teachers' resources available.



Dinosaur Disco
by Deborah Kelly and Daron Parton

Why this story? To read a story in rhyme and learn about different kinds of dinosaurs – and different kinds of dancing!

Stomp your feet and the Dinosaur Disco!

Everyone is dancing at the disco. But then . . .

The music stops.

The ground shakes.

An intruder has sneaked into the disco. But is he looking for a dance . . . or his dinner?

Twist your hips, not your tongue! Dinosaur Disco includes a pronunciation guide and fun dino facts.



WORKSHEET 1: Response to the book

This book is about G_____.

G_____ is the main character in the book.

Draw your favourite character in the book or the part of the story you liked best.

I like this book because



WORKSHEET 2: Identifying feelings

This page has 4 illustrations of George. Below the illustrations are some words that describe how George feels in different parts of the book. Match the illustration to the feeling. Some illustrations may match more than one word.



grumpy

content

annoyed

happy



WORKSHEET 3: Parts of speech wordcloud

Below are some words found in *No Place Like Home*. Can you sort them into nouns, verbs and adjectives? You could write the words into three lists, one each for nouns, verbs and adjectives. Or take a red, a blue and a green pencil: draw a red circle around the nouns, a blue circle around the verbs and a green circle around the adjectives. Remember:

Nouns are things, people or places, for example 'ball'

Verbs are doing words, such as 'bounce'

Adjectives describe things, such as 'round'.

thirsty land grumpy
jungle hot cold
strange crowded trees covered
was house feel touch
made city spoke like water
sure bear smiled sleep place
sea icecream desert
polar small white
better home scared
mountain rowed

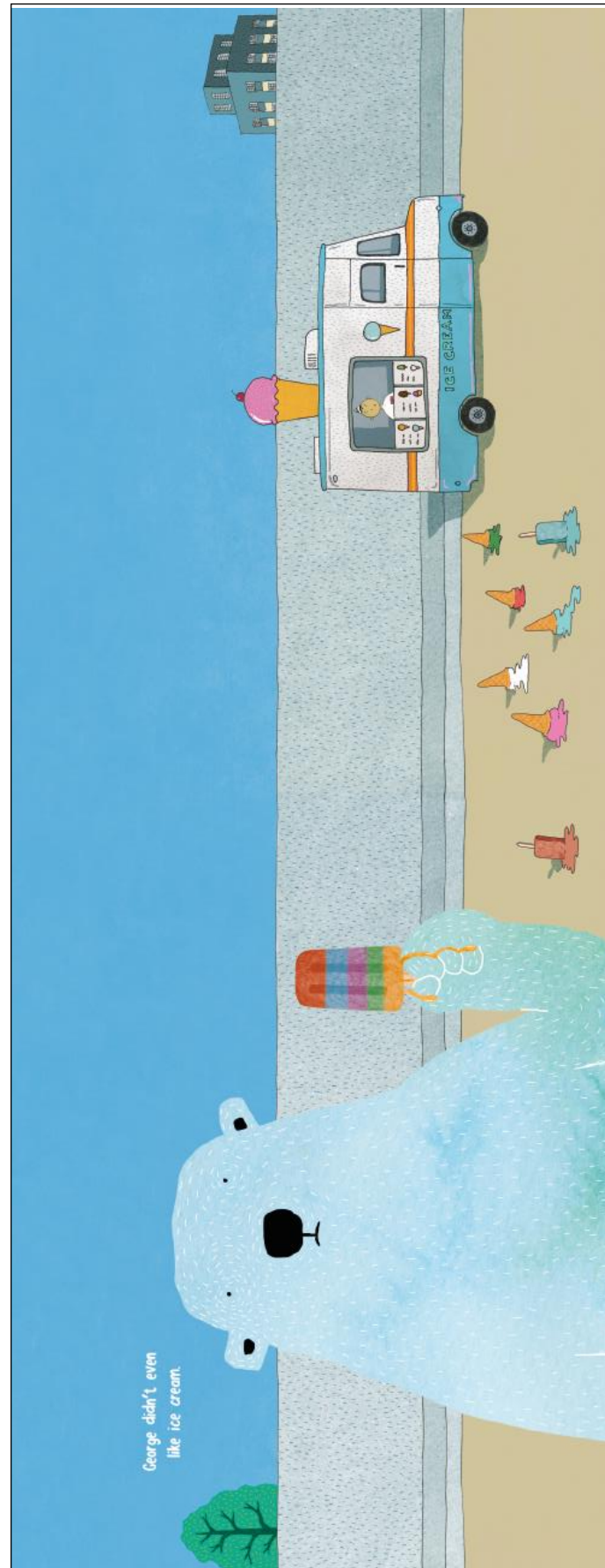


WORKSHEET 4: Visual literacy

Sometimes illustrations will show exactly what the text in the story says. Sometimes illustrations will expand on what the text says, and give you more information. The text on the following page of the book says 'George didn't even like ice cream.' What is happening in the illustration? Does it show exactly what the text says, or even more?



WORKSHEET 4: Visual literacy page 2



WORKSHEET 5: Wordless storytelling

This illustration has lost its words. Without looking inside the book, what do you think the illustration says about George and his house? Try coming up with your own words to go with this illustration. You can make your version as different from the book as you like.



WORKSHEET 6: Creating an illustration

On the next two pages are some sketches Ronojoy made of two illustrations in *No Place Like Home* plus the final illustration.

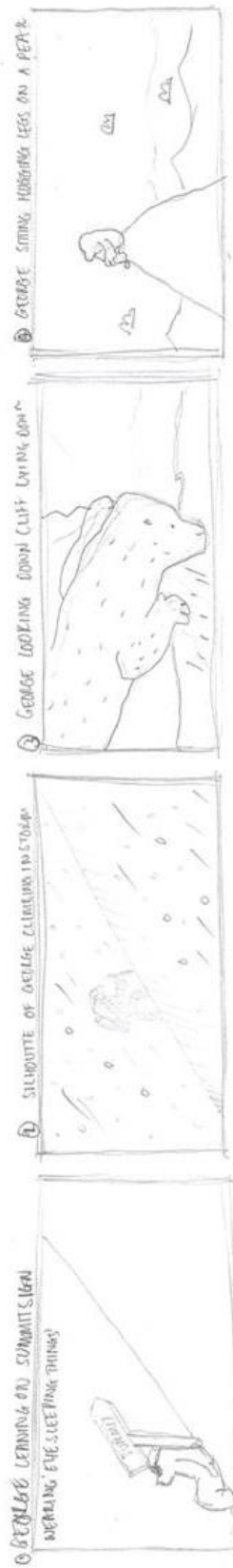
Have you ever started to draw or write something and then decided you didn't like it? Don't worry if you have – it isn't a waste of time. Trying out lots of ideas helps you make your final drawing or story even better. Artists often make lots of quick, simple sketches of an idea in black and white before they create a colour version. They might make lots of versions of an illustration before they are satisfied with the final product.

1. Look at the two sets of sketches below. Why do you think Ronojoy chose the versions of the illustrations that he did?
1. Draw your own version of George in a place that wouldn't quite be home for him. Try making a few rough sketches in lead pencil first. Then pick your favourite sketch and create a more detailed version in colour.

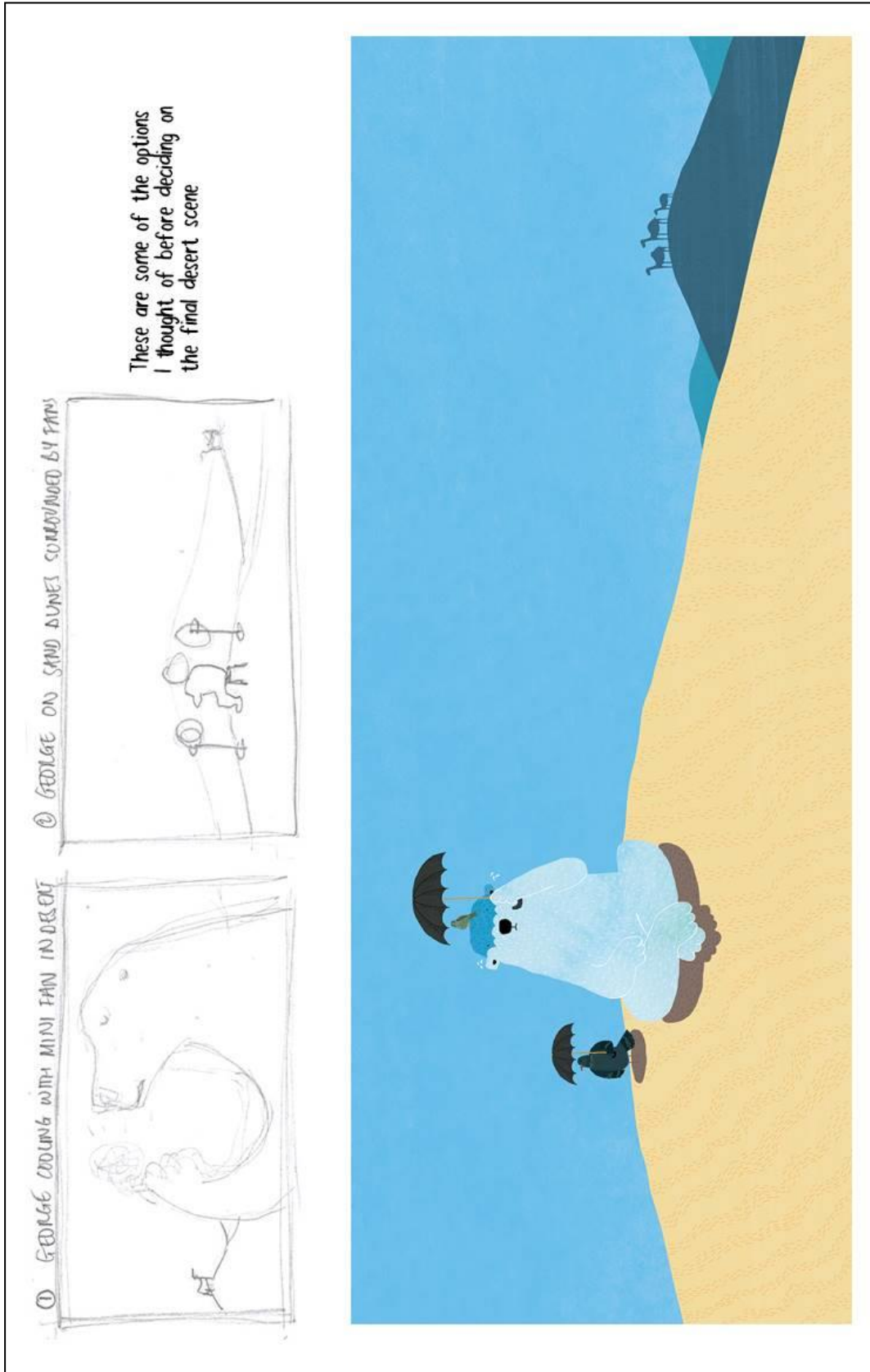


WORKSHEET 6: Creating an illustration page 2

The final mountain illustration turned out very different from where I started



WORKSHEET 6: Creating an illustration page 3



ORDER FORM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	SCHOOL YEAR	RRP	QUANTITY	TOTAL
<i>No Place Like Home</i>	Ronojoy Ghosh	9780857988461	Pre-K–1	24.99		
<i>Ollie and the Wind</i>	Ronojoy Ghosh	9780857988485	Pre-K–1	24.99		
<i>The Great Garden Mystery</i>	Renee Trembl	9780857984166	Pre-K–1	19.99		
<i>Dinosaur Disco</i>	Kelly and Parton	9780857981363	Pre-K–1	24.99		
TOTAL						

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