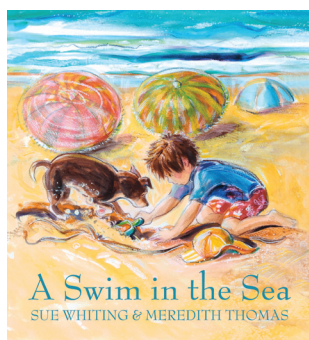


Walker Books Classroom Ideas



A Swim in the Sea

Author: Sue Whiting
Illustrator: Meredith Thomas
ISBN: 9781921150494
ARRP: \$27.95
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*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

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Outline:

Bruno was too excited for his jam toast. Today was his Big Day. Today, Bruno was going for a swim. A swim in the sea – the big blue sea. But will he be brave enough?

Author/Illustrator Information:

Sue Whiting

After developing a passion for children's literature as a primary school teacher, Sue Whiting now works full-time in the field she loves, dividing her time between working as a children's book editor and writing stories for young people. Sue has had almost sixty children's books published, ranging from rhyming romping verse for the very young to novels. For more information about the author, please visit her website: www.suewhiting.com

Meredith Thomas

Meredith Thomas is an artist and illustrator who has been drawing and painting since graduating from RMIT in 1983. She has worked full-time as a freelance illustrator since 1991. Meredith applies her talents to a wide variety of mediums and formats, ranging from watercolour and scraperboard children's book illustrations, to painted murals, and pantone marker renderings for the advertising industry. *A Swim in the Sea* is her first book with Walker Books Australia.

How to use these notes:

This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

These notes are for:

- Early childhood – Primary year 1
- Ages 3+

Key Learning Areas:

- English

Example of:

- Picture book

Themes/ Ideas:

- Swimming
- Nature
- Courage

National Curriculum Focus:*

English content descriptions:

Foundation

ACELA1429
ACELA1431
ACELA1432
ACELA1440
ACELT1575
ACELT1577
ACELT1783
ACELT1578
ACELT1579
ACELT1580
ACELY1646
ACELY1784

Year 1

ACELA1444
ACELA1787
ACELA1449
ACELA1451
ACELT1581
ACELT1582
ACELT1583
ACELT1584
ACELT1586
ACELY1656

*Key content descriptions have been identified from the Australian National Curriculum. However, this is not an exhaustive list of National Curriculum content able to be addressed through studying this text.

Walker Books Classroom Ideas

Sue Whiting on *A Swim in the Sea*

I remember very clearly the day I first got the idea for *A Swim in the Sea*. It was a gorgeous morning, late spring, and I was filled with child-like excitement about the day ahead. I live by the sea and on this morning the sea looked especially brilliant, twinkling at me and beckoning me to take my first swim for the season. So I headed off to the beach. As I climbed down the cliff track and onto the sand, a refrain began to run through my mind: I'm going for a swim in the sea, a swim in the sea, the big blue sea, and by the time I returned home after my swim, words were whirring through my brain and I was eager to get that excitement and anticipation down on paper. Of course, this wasn't enough to make a story – a story has to have a problem, and my day seemed too good for problems. That's when I played "what if" and explored the idea of what it would be like if after all that excited anticipation, my long awaited "swim in the sea" wasn't what I hoped it would be.



Discussion Questions and Activities

Before reading

Prior to reading *A Swim in the Sea*, examine the cover, title and back cover blurb. What do you think the book is about and why?

Ask the students if they have ever been to the beach and swam in the sea. Did they enjoy it? Why? Why not? In small groups ask children to discuss their beach experiences. For those students who have never been to the beach, they can discuss whether they would like to see the sea. Why/why not? What they think it might be like?

Ask students to identify who the author and illustrator are.

During Reading / Guided reading activities

Spread 1: "Bruno was too excited for his jam toast."

Have you ever been so excited about something that you couldn't eat? Why is it important to eat breakfast, especially at the start of a big, exciting day?

Spread 2

Why does Mum say "Are we going for a day or a month?"

Spread 3

What would you expect to see when you arrive at the beach?

What is the line where the sea meets the sky called? Is it actually the end of the ocean?

Spread 4

Look at the expressions on the other children's faces. What do you think they are thinking?

Spread 5

The text on this page doesn't finish at the end of a sentence. How does this affect the way you read it? Ask students what they think will happen on the next page.

Spread 6

Why do you think Bruno is scared of the waves? Would you be scared?

Spread 7

Do you think the sea was really after Bruno? Why does he think it is a monster?
Why do you think the illustrator has used different colours for the sea on this spread?

Spread 8 "And all he wanted to do was hide."

Why is Bruno hiding? What are some other ways he could have dealt with his fear of the sea?

Spread 9

What kind of shells and sea creatures might you find when exploring the beach? Ask if any students have ever found anything interesting at the beach.

Why do you think Mum and Dad are inviting Bruno to go exploring with them?

Spread 10

Is Tessa being kind? Why do you think she said this?

Spread 11

Bruno's family are making a city. Draw a picture of a sand city. Label all its special features. What other things can you make in the sand?

Spread 12

How has Bruno's mood changed? Why?

Spread 13

Can you explain what happened here? How did the wave reach them?

Spread 14

Why do you think Bruno didn't scream? What made Bruno change his mind about the sea?

Spread 15

Why does Bruno want everyone to look at him? How is he feeling? When have you felt like this?

After reading

Bruno goes through a range of feelings in the story. How was he feeling:

- before going to the sea?
- when he first sees the sea?
- when he gets to the shore edge?
- when he hides under his towel?
- when he starts to help build the city?
- when he gets knocked off his feet?
- when he is in the paddling pool at the end?

Create a mood/feelings chart for the story. Discuss situations when students have felt the same way and why.

Walker Books Classroom Ideas

Who are the characters in this story? Ask students to identify the main character. What do we know about the characters? What does the story tell you? What do the illustrations tell you? Create a character profile for each of the characters.

Why do you think Bruno is scared of the sea? Are the other characters scared? Why not? Pretend you are Tessa. How do you think she was feeling when she saw the sea?

Using a selection of musical instruments, ask students to find sounds that best reflect the onomatopoeic words on the spread where Bruno leaps onto the wet sand. Re-create the scene by giving half the class musical instruments and have the other half of the class pretend to run up to sea only to be scared off by the waves (musical instruments).

The big blue sea

In the book, the sea is described as “wobbling like a sparkly blue jelly”. What are some other ways of describing the sea?

As a class, develop a bank of words that describe the sea and the beach. Think about what it looks, sounds and smells like.

Does the sea look like sparkly blue jelly? Are there other things the sea could be compared to? Use the word bank to help you to write descriptions of the sea.

What things do Bruno and his family take with them to the beach? What other things might be useful? What things are essential? Make a chart showing things that you MUST take and things that you COULD take.

Draw a picture of a beach bag, then draw around it all the things that you would put in it for a day at the beach. Compare pictures with your classmates.

With students, brainstorm what you might find when you go to the beach. Create a list and then order it alphabetically.

Go to the library and ask students to collect books about the sea. Create a book display of these in the classroom. Decorate the display with items you might take to or find at the beach (such as beach towels, bucket, spade and sea shells).

Ask students how they keep safe at the beach. After this, explain the different ways to keep safe at the beach, including:

- Always swim between the red and yellow flags
- Never swim alone
- Read the safety/warning signs
- Check there are lifeguards on duty
- Talk to a lifeguard about beach safety
- If you find yourself in trouble in the water, stay calm, wave your arm and yell for help

Invite a lifeguard to visit your school to talk about beach safety.

Have a discussion on sun safety when you are at the beach. Ask students what they should do before going in the sun.

The sea and beach is a habitat for many animals. Research what animals live on the beach and in the sea. How have they adapted to their environment? How are they important to the balance of their habitat?

Grammar and Punctuation

Ask students how they can tell when a character is speaking and then discuss the use and purpose of speech or quotation marks. Read the book again, clapping each time a speech mark is used.

Why do the characters' names start with a capital letter?

What do sentences begin and end with? Find examples of these in the book.

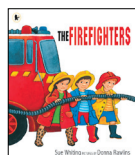
Some of the text is in large capitals. Why? What does this tell you to do when you are reading it? Re-read the text, emphasising these parts.

Illustration

Find three things that you like about the illustrations. Describe why you like each of these three things.

How do the illustrations add to the story? How would the story be different if there were no illustrations?

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