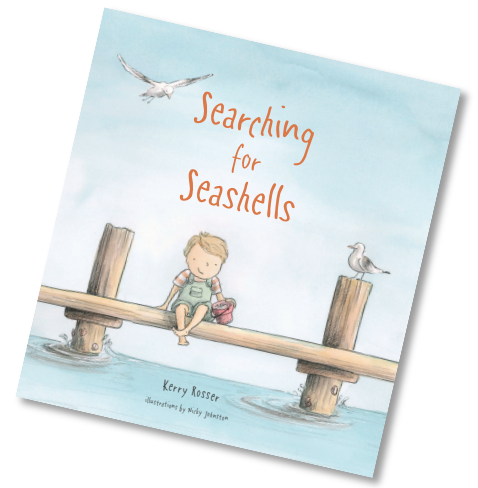


Searching for Seashells



Written by Kerry Rosser and illustrated by Nicky Johnston

Teacher's Notes

Author Background

Kerry Rosser is a writer with a background in psychology, bringing an analytical and inquisitive approach to her work. Her writing has spanned corporate and government communications, marketing and community engagement through to freelance, blogging and writing for children.

Her first children's book, *Searching for Seashells*, is a gentle story of losing someone loved. Written to help her children understand the loss of their baby brother, it shares the many different feelings of grief. It reassures young children that these emotions are normal and celebrates the love that remains even after someone is gone.

Kerry lives in country South Australia with her husband, three children and an ever-changing array of animals.

Illustrator Background

Nicky Johnston is a mum to four boys, a primary educator, a speaker and children's book author and illustrator based in Melbourne.

Passionate in raising awareness of the importance of children's emotional wellbeing, Nicky has written books to help children deal with anxiety and develop resilience. She is an experienced public speaker and presents at parent forums, seminars and conferences. She is also a speaker with Black Dog Institute Community Education.

Her illustration style is described as whimsical, playful, narrative, emotive and dreamy. She works mainly in watercolour, ink and pencil. She also produces work digitally using a variety of illustration software.

Her passion for sharing her creativity is evident in feedback from children and teachers after she has visited their school. Her communication style, love of teaching and storytelling, shines through and inspires the next generation of author and illustrators.



Classroom Ideas



- Have a look at the front cover. What do you think the book is about?
- Read the blurb to the class. Who do you think Jimmy is?
- Read the story and ask the students which page was their favourite. Why is it their favourite?
- Class discussion about how the book made the students feel. Encourage conversation about times that students might have felt some of the emotions felt by the boy character.
- Why do you think the book is called Searching for Seashells?
- Have the students draw a big seashell and write words or draw pictures that represent how they feel when they think about a special person in their family.
- The boy's mum helps him through all of his feelings. What does your Mum / Dad / Grandma / Grandpa etc. do to help you through your feelings?
- At the beginning of the book, we find out that Jimmy loves yoghurt, bubbles and searching for seashells. Write a questionnaire and interview 5 people in your class and two family members about their favourite things. (eg. Favourite food, favourite colour, etc.)
- The boy says Jimmy is his best friend. Draw a picture of one of your really good friends and write / draw what makes them so special.
- Write a story about a time you had to say goodbye to someone special (even just for a short time) and add lots of feeling words into the story.
- A lot of the story features the beach. Use the five senses to describe a time you were at the beach.
- The boy gets angry and his Mum says that it's ok to feel angry when we want something we can't have. Discuss times when the students felt angry and how they overcame it. What are good ways to cope with big emotions?
- In small groups or as a class, have the students role play big emotions and healthy ways to overcome them.
- The story talks about memories. Create a time capsule of stories, items and special memories to be opened in five years. Discuss what things you might want to remember in five years and why.
- Special memories keep us connected to the people we love, like the boy's memories of Jimmy do in the story. Think of five people who are special to you, and a favourite memory you have of each that you will always treasure.

