

# LEARNING TIME

## Wombat Can't Sing

Kylie Stewart

Wombat Can't Sing follows Wombat's journey of self-discovery. Despite his best efforts, Wombat simply can't sing as melodiously as Fantail, nor can he chirp like a cricket, croak like a frog or laugh like kookaburra. Wombat learns to be himself, in this beautifully illustrated book by Australian artist and illustrator Kylie Stewart.



**Themes:** Identity, Belonging, Australian animals

**Rare and interesting words/concepts:** jump, croak, tweet, laugh, dig and fly

### Key Message for Parents | Children's wellbeing is critical to brain development and learning

- Children learn best when they feel emotionally supported, through actively listening to them, validating them – 'you said you feel scared', and responding appropriately.
- Play is critical to young children's social, emotional, and intellectual development.
- Provide opportunities to explore in non-structured ways. As often as possible to allow children to take the lead in their play.
- Allow lots of opportunity to try new things, visit new places and meet new people.
- Reward efforts and let the child lead the pace.

### Australian Early Years Learning Framework | Outcome 1: Children develop their emerging autonomy, interdependence, resilience, and sense of agency.

Educators can support children's learning to be open to new challenges and discoveries

- helping the child to understand their feelings by naming those feelings
- Providing opportunities for children to explore their own interests and skills
- providing a safe, predictable, and welcoming environment where the child is supported
- encouraging new experiences within the child's own level of comfort, acknowledging fears and concerns, and offering emotional support with positive language and encouragement.

## Welcome

Ask carers to write nametags for themselves and their children.

Welcome everyone, introduce yourself, remind adults to turn their mobile phones off and that there will be time for adults to chat after the story and songs.

## Welcome Song (or your preferred song)

Have the words available as a handout or written on a board or butcher's paper for the adults to read and join in.

### Good Morning

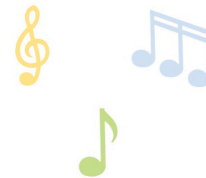
*Good morning to you*

*Good morning to you*

*Good morning everybody*

*and welcome to you!*

*You may like to introduce the book at this stage or use a song to help prepare your group and introduce the upcoming story and activities.*



## Song

### The More We Get Together

*The more we get together, together, together,*

*The more we get together, the happier we will be.*

*Because your friends are my friends,*

*And my friends are your friends.*

*The more we get together, the happier we will be.*



## Before Reading

- Greet families and children warmly, ask them how they are, awaiting their responses and acknowledging them.
- Explain the format of the session, including the book you are reading, songs and activities. You may want to use a visual board to support diverse language and learning needs.
- Ask the children to sit where they can see the pictures, as you will need them to watch closely!
- Let them know they can move if they need to, and they can 'read' the pictures as they listen to you read the words.

### During Reading

- Introduce the name of the book, author, and illustrator.
- Have a look at the cover and endpapers then discuss what the children think may happen in the book.
- Point out the animals and name them explicitly. For example: *'Here is wombat'*.
- Be intrigued and model engagement with the text, through looking interested in what they discover and check the children are following along. You can ask – *what are the characters feeling? Why do we feel different things and do different things?*
- This book allows opportunities for the audience to identify times when the children might have had similar experiences or feelings.



### After Reading

- Talk about the idea of everyone being different and having different skills or interests.
- Provide sufficient time for children to express their experiences and thoughts. Communication skills include turn taking, eye contact, voice and expression, respectful responses, timing, explaining, and listening. These all need time to be practiced as a part of the literacy journey.

### Further Resources

#### Fremantle Press – Teachers Notes

[https://1b124riq24c135lpm3nl6tz1-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/TN\\_WombatCantSing.pdf](https://1b124riq24c135lpm3nl6tz1-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/TN_WombatCantSing.pdf)

#### Author/Illustrator website

<http://www.magicowldesign.com/>

#### Australian animals in Kaurna

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ovct92Xy3fo>



## Extension Ideas

### Read

- Visit the Raising Literacy Australia website and find more book recommendations under Featured Stories. You can search by theme – Identity or Differences
- Borrow books that feature the theme of differences from the library. Share non-fiction books to gather lots of facts about Australian animals. Many books are also freely available via Library subscriptions such as Libby and StoryBox Library for read aloud – making books accessible from home or when you are out and about. Ask your local library.
- Visit a new place and explore the brochures, signs and signage, the zoo, or a farm are great places to see animals and discuss their characteristics, using the information on site – or do a virtual tour.

### Sing

- Singing slows down language so enables sounds to be heard more easily. Phonemic Awareness knowledge (sounds) is a foundation to literacy competency.
- Spotify and YouTube have a huge variety of songs. We have a Spotify Playlist ‘ Raising Literacy Australia’ – Featured Stories
- Here are some song names you could try: Hey-di-ho The Elephant, Elephants have wrinkles, Alice the camel and Never Smile at a Crocodile.
- Adapt your own from well-known tunes and your own made-up words.

### Talk

- Talk about what you enjoy and feel you are good at, and prompt your child to discuss their own attributes, skills and interests.
- Discuss how we learn and gain skills, how practicing helps to improve abilities.
- Identify the child’s skills as a part of the everyday conversation, noticing when they learn something new and show interest in something.
- Discuss things that you find challenging, what are your coping strategies e.g. deep breathing, distraction, positive thinking, asking for help, practicing new skills and being brave when learning new things.
- Talk about how to observe other’s skills and attributes and how to appreciate those.

### Play

- Make a role play experience whereby children can play out their responses.
- Draw a picture of doing something enjoyable or that the child feels they are skilled at.
- Use toys to act out scenarios that a child might experience like going to a preschool visit.
- Play with toys of Australian animals and allow the child to act out their attributes.
- Use our Activity Time for a fun version of hopscotch.

## STEM Focus. Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

### Exploring shapes – cubes

Did you know wombats do cube shaped pool!

Let's explore cubes.

#### What you need

A safe place to explore together.

Measuring instruments, tape or ruler.



#### What to do

- Have a look around your environment and find things that are square or cubed shaped.
- Examine the shape and count the sides.
- Measure the sides – are they the same?

**Science:** Measuring, predicting, examining,

**Maths:** Measurements, same, equal, 2D, 3D, square, cube etc.

**Engineering:** Create a tower or 2D shape.

**Technology:** Document with photos, create a video.

**Language:** Talk about shapes and words for measurements, centimeters, millimeters, long, short.

#### Extension?

Study more about scats!

<https://www.popsci.com/wombat-cubic-poop/>





## Goodbye

Conclude the session with some suggestions of books that parents might want to share with their children. Raising Literacy Australia suggests the following books to support learning in this area. If your library has copies, make them available for families to borrow or include them in your story time session.

For more stories to share, we recommend the following titles:

- **Giraffes Can't Dance** by *Giles Andreae*
- **Bev and Kev** by *Katrina Germein and Mandy Foot*
- **The Koala Who Could** by *Rachel Bright and Jim Field*

An Activity Time for this book is available to download for FREE from our website. This is a great resource to share with families, you are welcome to print and distribute as necessary.

Libraries can purchase bulk copies of our books at discounted rates. Visit Little Book Press at <https://littlebookpress.com.au/products/bev-and-kev>

## Goodbye Song

Depending on the size of your group, you may wish to insert each child's name in the place of 'you' as it develops a more personal relationship between yourself, the child and the family.

Sung to the tune of (*Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush*) or your choice.

## Goodbye

*This is the way we say goodbye (wave) say goodbye, say goodbye*

*This is the way we say goodbye to all our library friends (or) (to our friend.....)!*

