

Title: Wombat Stew

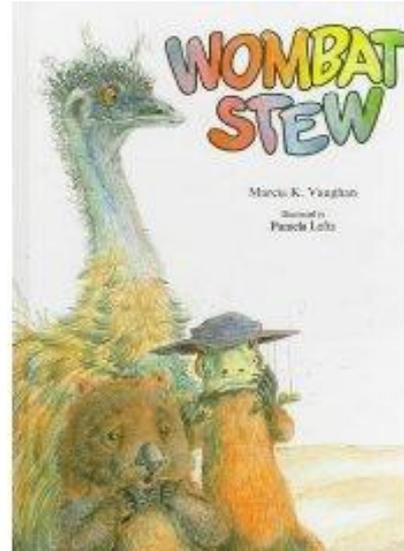
Author: Marcia Vaughan

Illustrator: Pamela Lofts

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Story Summary: One day a dingo catches a wombat by the billabong. The wombat's friends want to save him so they help the dingo make the stew with some very yucky ingredients. The dingo's soup is not quite how he intended. The text is relatively short and uncomplicated, written with a certain rhythm.



How To Use

There are more ideas given here than you can do in a week. You don't need to cover everything suggested. It is meant to be flexible and used as an inspiration, so that you can follow the child's interests. If you can think of any other activities or field trips that might complement Wombat Stew (and you want to do them) plan them into your schedule.

After each reading (and sometimes during), try to introduce the ideas mentioned in a natural conversational way. You can listen to the children's interest and see what sparks their imagination. With a few questions you can usually guide children towards the planned study topic. Ask open-ended questions and try to get them thinking and talking.

Unit studies weave a web of connections and don't always fall into neatly packaged subjects. I have tried to compartmentalise to help you structure your lesson but you will find the topics chosen overlap at times, or lead you towards another subject. This is all part of the learning journey.

Social Studies (HSIE or SOSE) is a broad topic covering history, geography, culture, politics, family life and more. In this unit study we have dabbled into social study topics as they arise. It is not an 'everything you need to know' Social Studies unit.

Picture books are often the first steps into reading for our children. As we read stories our children 'read' the pictures. The illustrations in Wombat Stew are an essential part of the story. We examine the pictures, illustrator's style and try out some art techniques and mediums that the illustrator used.

Some aspects of science, nature or technology are covered in this unit study. For this age group we do not need to get too technical with details. Ask questions and see what they know and what has captured their interest. You might know enough about a particular topic to just discuss it with your child. That's great! Sometimes in my enthusiasm I lose my children's interest because I myself become thirsty for knowledge. Try not to make my mistake. At other times you might want to do a little extra research or read from another book. You, as the parent, can guide them in this.

Suggested Itinerary

Prior to the first reading with your children I recommend you read through the unit study and make a plan. Read to your children from the selected book at the commencement of each lesson. The benefit of this is accumulative. Repeated readings encourage a deeper understanding of the story, appreciation of the art and give revision from the previous day's lesson. With your guidance children will begin to think critically and appreciate many facets of the book.

A lesson usually takes 30-45 minutes but if you've captured your child's imagination by all means take longer.

The following points can be discussed during subsequent readings of the book.

- **Text Type**—Procedure. How to make a wombat stew.
- **Genre**-Fiction. Is this a real story?

What is the difference between a factual and fictional story. Tell me a few things that shows this is only a story. Animals can't talk. Dingos can't cook. A platypus cannot walk on his hind legs.

- **Use of repetition**- What is the saying being repeated.
- **Vocabulary Words**-billabong, billycan
- **Alliteration**-‘Big blobs and billabong mud’

‘sliding off his sun-soaked stone.’

- **Parts of a story**
 1. **Beginning-What is the Conflict?** Dingo takes the wombat
 2. **The Middle-The Climax?** Friends try to help. Friends plan. Dingo falls for the plan
 3. **The Ending-Resolution?** No more Dingo

- **Make a List**

How many words can they find that end with ‘Y’.

For Example; brewy, chewy, lumpy, crunchy, munchy, muddy, yummy, gooey, billy, creepy ,spicy

- **Name the Recipe**

Why do you think the Dingo named his recipe Wombat Stew?

What might he have called his recipe if he had caught one of the other animals? Koala Cookies!

Could you make a rhyme for the new dish?

Lesson One -Social Studies

Geography- How do we know this story is based in Australia?

Where do you think you should put your map marker for this story?

Did you know there are no Koalas in Tasmania or WA?

Platypus are only found on the east coast of Australia including Tasmania.

Relationships-The animals are friends to the wombat; they save his life.

How can we be a good friend to others?

History and Environmental planning

The **Dingo Fence** or the Rabbit Proof Fence is longer than the Great Wall of China. It is 5,320 km.

It was originally built to keep out the rabbits but that didn't work. Now it is called The Dingo Fence or Dog Fence.

Lesson Two—Art

Art Medium

The illustrations in this book are probably water colour and watercolour pencils. Can you identify the different mediums?

Shapes and Drawing

Look at the page where the emu is adding the feathers to the pot. Have your child make out the shapes in the emu. They should be able to identify a diamond, four ovals, and a cylinder.

Using tracing paper have them trace the picture in the book following the shape. When finished, place tracing paper under a clean sheet of paper and hold the two sheets up against a light filled window. Trace the tracing onto a clean sheet of paper. Once traced, look at the original illustration and add some details.



Lesson Three—Science, Nature and Technology

Do a little research into one of the following areas

Nature Study- Australian animals mentioned in the story.

Chemistry- Make a stew.

Bush craft- How can you cook your food in the bush? Discuss safe handling of fire in the bush.

Poisons-What should you eat. What makes something poisonous.

Related books and Media

Diary of a Wombat by Jackie French. ©2003 Highly recommended. Notable Children's Books. Younger Readers

Jackie French the author has a wombat living in her backyard. This very funny story is a study in the wombats behaviour. <http://www.jackiefrench.com/wombat.html>

Wombat Down Below ©2004 by Jill Morris

Big Foot the Northern Hairy-nosed Wombat lives alone in his comfortable burrow. He comes out at night to feed and exercise, but is very aware of the dangers he faces outside. The grasses are drying up and the night is full of predators - dingoes, wild cats and owls.

Koala Lou by Mem Fox is also illustrated by Pamela Loft

Dusty a movie based on the book by Frank Dalby Davidson.

If you liked this resource I suggest you try [Australian Book Traveller](#).