

The Big Old Rambutan Tree

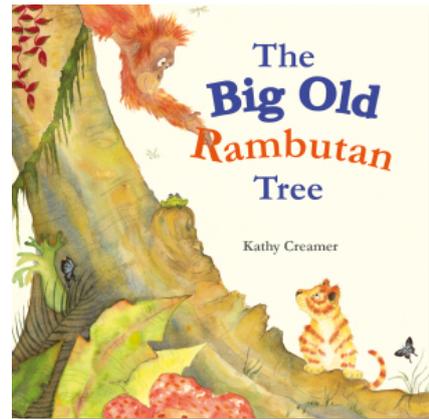
Written and illustrated by Kathy Creamer

Teaching notes prepared by Jen Scanlan

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Recommended for 4 – 12 year olds

Publisher: **Little Pink Dog Books**



From the flames of the burning rainforest in Sumatra, an extraordinary bond of friendship ignites between a savage tiger and a gentle orangutan, as they both struggle to survive in their fast diminishing habitat.

Summary

Despite the warnings from her friends, an orangutan named Ginger, rears an orphaned tiger cub as her own. When the growing tiger's natural instincts begin to show, the two have to part ways. With all net proceeds of this book being donated to Orangutan Outreach, this gentle story of friendship and the struggle to survive in the threatened Sumatran rainforest, will help children understand environmental impacts and offers hope for the future of the quickly diminishing wild Orangutan population.

Teacher Information

The teaching notes are for Primary school students and are applicable from K-6. Teachers can adapt each activity to fit the needs and abilities of their own students. The activities are English-based and provide teaching and learning suggestions for geography, science and technology, and visual arts. Australian Curriculum links are provided.

The notes have a focus on Sustainability, the cross curriculum focus of the Australian Curriculum, as well as personal and social capability. It connects with the cross curriculum priority of Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia.

Author/Illustrator Information

Kathy Creamer



Kathy is a children's illustrator and writer who has been published by Oxford University Press, Reed International, Julia Gabriel Communications, September 21, Christmas Press, Second Look and other organisations.

She has an MA in Children's Book Illustration from the renowned Cambridge School of Art at Anglia Ruskin University in England.

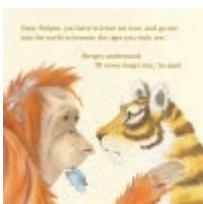
Kathy first supported the conservation of Orangutans with a book for the Singapore Zoological Gardens. ***My Cousin, Ah Meng*** (1998) sold in excess of 30,000 copies with all profits going to the zoo. It was followed by ***The Old Man of The Forest*** (UK, 2002). Both these books raised considerable funds in their host country for orangutan conservation.

Kathy has also run her own successful publishing company in the UK, where she published over eighteen picture books for a range of high net-worth private clients. Now in Australia, Kathy with her husband Peter, has set up Little Pink Dog Books Children's Publishing.

For more information about Kathy please visit her website <https://kathycreamer.com/>

Or visit her on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/kathycreamerillustration/>

View more of Kathy's work at <https://littlepinkdogbooks.com/>



Themes

Themes of relationship: love, trust and loyalty.

Themes of sustainability: animal conservation, diminishing habitat, environment, orangutans, tigers and the struggle for survival.

Australian Curriculum Links

English:

Foundation

Recognise that texts are created by authors who tell stories and share experiences that may be similar or different to students' own experiences ([ACELT1575](#))

Understand concepts about print and screen, including how books, film and simple digital texts work, and know some features of print, for example directionality ([ACELA1433](#))

Recognise and generate rhyming words, alliteration patterns, syllables and sounds (phonemes) in spoken words ([ACELA1439](#))

Share feelings and thoughts about the events and characters in texts ([ACELT1783](#))

Identify some features of texts including events and characters and retell events from a text ([ACELT1578](#))

Year 1

Understand that language is used in combination with other means of communication, for example facial expressions and gestures to interact with others ([ACELA1444](#))

Explore different ways of expressing emotions, including verbal, visual, body language and facial expressions ([ACELA1787](#))

Discuss how authors create characters using language and images ([ACELT1581](#))

Discuss characters and events in a range of literary texts and share personal responses to these texts, making connections with students' own experiences ([ACELT1582](#))

Describe some differences between imaginative, informative and persuasive texts ([ACELY1658](#))

Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning about key events, ideas and information in texts that they listen to, view and read by drawing on growing knowledge of context, text structures and language features ([ACELY1660](#))

Create short imaginative and informative texts that show emerging use of appropriate text structure, sentence-level grammar, word choice, spelling, punctuation and appropriate multimodal elements, for example illustrations and diagrams ([ACELY1661](#))

Year 2

Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning and begin to analyse texts by drawing on growing knowledge of context, language and visual features and print and multimodal text structures ([ACELY1670](#))

Discuss the characters and settings of different texts and explore how language is used to present these features in different ways ([ACELT1591](#))

Identify the audience of imaginative, informative and persuasive texts ([ACELY1668](#))

Create short imaginative, informative and persuasive texts using growing knowledge of text structures and language features for familiar and some less familiar audiences, selecting print and multimodal elements appropriate to the audience and purpose ([ACELY1671](#))

Year 3

Draw connections between personal experiences and the worlds of texts, and share responses with others ([ACELT1596](#))

Discuss the nature and effects of some language devices used to enhance meaning and shape the reader's reaction, including rhythm and onomatopoeia in poetry and prose ([ACELT1600](#))

Discuss how language is used to describe the settings in texts, and explore how the settings shape the events and influence the mood of the narrative ([ACELT1599](#))

Identify the audience and purpose of imaginative, informative and persuasive texts ([ACELY1678](#))

Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning and begin to evaluate texts by drawing on a growing knowledge of context, text structures and language features ([ACELY1680](#))

Year 4

Discuss how authors and illustrators make stories exciting, moving and absorbing and hold readers' interest by using various techniques, for example character development and plot tension ([ACELT1605](#))

Create literary texts by developing storylines, characters and settings ([ACELT1794](#))

Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning to expand content knowledge, integrating and linking ideas and analysing and evaluating texts ([ACELY1692](#))

Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts containing key information and supporting details for a widening range of audiences, demonstrating increasing control over text structures and language features ([ACELY1694](#))

Year 5

Identify aspects of literary texts that convey details or information about particular social, cultural and historical contexts ([ACELT1608](#))

Recognise that ideas in literary texts can be conveyed from different viewpoints, which can lead to different kinds of interpretations and responses ([ACELT1610](#))

Identify and explain characteristic text structures and language features used in imaginative, informative and persuasive texts to meet the purpose of the text ([ACELY1701](#))

Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive print and multimodal texts, choosing text structures, language features, images and sound appropriate to purpose and audience ([ACELY1704](#))

Year 6

Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts ([ACELT1613](#))

Use comprehension strategies to interpret and analyse information and ideas, comparing content from a variety of textual sources including media and digital texts ([ACELY1713](#))

Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, choosing and experimenting with text structures, language features, images and digital resources appropriate to purpose and audience ([ACELY1714](#))

Visual Arts

Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination to create visual artworks and design, including considering ideas in artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists ([ACAVAM106](#))

Create and display artworks to communicate ideas to an audience ([ACAVAM108](#))

Identify intended purposes and meanings of artworks using visual arts terminology to compare artworks, starting with visual artworks in Australia including visual artworks of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples ([ACAVAR113](#))

English

English provides students with skills to investigate sustainability issues and, together with visual arts, enables students to communicate and encourage others to take action for sustainable futures.

Before Reading

Look: Help students identify the basic parts of a picture book: front cover, back cover, title page, spine, and blurb.

The Front Cover and the Title Page:

- Describe the illustration on the cover.

Think: Read the title of the book: make predictions

- Do you know what a Rambutan tree is? Who is the main character in the book? How do the cover and title page help you?
- The front cover uses different fonts in the title. What stands out?

Read the blurb from the back cover and explain its purpose.

- How does reading the blurb help you to work out more about the book's characters?

Wonder: What do we know about sustainability?

- Students brainstorm what they are curious about, what they wonder and would like to know.
- Begin a K-W-L chart, completing What I KNOW and What I WONDER sections.

Seek: Explore what the students know about orangutans – their size, what they eat, where they live and other interesting facts, such as opposable thumbs.



While Reading

Suggestions for Discussion

- Who or what is Ginger? What can she smell?
- Language: alliteration – words which repeat the same starting sound. Find examples: wiffle/waffle, tall/tree, clambered/canopy.
- Which little animal is crying? What does Ginger do?
- How do the other orangutans react? What is their point of view?
- Ginger has a different point of view. What decision does she make?
- List four things that Ginger teaches Stripes.
- Why does Stripes need something more satisfying to eat? What choice does Stripes make?
- What are the consequences when Ginger finds out?
- What is 'the peculiar smell' that prickles Ginger's nose?
- Explain how flames can 'lick up' a tree.
- As Ginger tries to escape the fire, something terrible happens. Give the three words that describe what happens as Ginger falls.
- Explain how Ginger is saved.
- Which other animals does Stripes help?
- What happens after the fire? How are people trying to help the animals?
- How do the orangutans celebrate the fruiting of the Rambutan tree? Who is their special guest?
- How do we know the animals will be safe at the end of the book?
- Why is it important to know that the Rambutan tree is 'big' and 'old'?
- There are dragonflies and butterflies throughout the book. Go back and count them! How do they help us with our reading?



After reading

Illustrations and the purpose of storytelling

- What is storytelling and why do people tell stories? (Activate prior knowledge.) Use the tool think, pair and share to swap ideas with other class members.
- How do people tell stories? (Storytellers use not only written and spoken words but also visuals, such as drawings and photographs.)
- What method of storytelling might a storyteller use if he or she wants the audience to do or feel something? (Answers will vary. Possible answers: Storytellers might use visuals, real-life examples, personal anecdotes, or invite listeners to put themselves in the story.)
- What is Kathy Creamer's goal in creating *The Big Old Rambutan Tree*? Does the author want to entertain, explain or persuade? (She helps us understand environmental impacts on endangered animals, especially orangutans, and persuades people to care about them.)
- What techniques does she use in her illustrations to get people to care about the animals, and why does she want them to care? (She portrays them as soft and approachable, using watercolours and a cheerful colour palette. Close focus on their faces, with offers, encourages us to connect. She wants people to take action to protect orangutans and tigers, before it's too late.)
- Turn to the page where 'Years went by and Ginger grew old and tired'. (The illustration uses direct eye contact to demand our engagement with the character. Discuss how the text and the illustration combine to create a feeling of increasing sympathy for Ginger. Why has it been included at this point in the narrative arc?)
- The goal of *The Big Old Rambutan Tree* is to help us to learn about orangutans and want to protect their habitats. In what ways do the illustrations inspire those feelings? Students write a short response to the question: How do storytellers use illustrations to help people care?

- Invite students to further interact with the illustrations during a group reading. Give each student several sticky notes. Ask students to write or draw how each illustration makes them feel or ask a question. After they have looked at all the illustrations, students categorise and display the sticky notes under themes, emotions and questions. Develop further understanding through discussion and link to other activities.
- In small groups, students collaboratively plan, compose, sequence and prepare a storyboard for a scene from *The Big Old Rambutan Tree* using images to convey setting, characters and points of drama in the plot. What sounds would they add for each frame? Work out ways to create the sounds while sharing the storyboards.
- **Visual Arts:** review the illustrations on each page, observing each character's facial expressions and their body language. Ask students to name the emotion each character is feeling and discuss how they could tell this. Students select one of Stripe's expressions to create on a tiger mask, using a paper plate, orange paint, black markers, black pipe cleaners or wool, elastic, card, etc. Students wear the mask while acting the emotion and sharing the associated event in the plot.
- Taking inspiration from their masks, students individually write an imaginative short story about an adventure Stripes had in the time he was away from Ginger, and the emotions he felt.

Extension/for older students

Understand how images can convey point of view and engage emotions

- View the images on the double page that begins with '*At the bottom of the big old rambutan tree, a little animal sat crying.*' Notice the placement of the images on the page, the framing of the images and the salient features. In pairs, students explore and discuss:
 - How are the visual elements of gaze, demand, framing, placement, layout and salience used in this image?
 - What effect do they create?
 - How does the image make you feel?
 - What is the intent of the image?
 - What attitude or point of view does it encourage you to take?

- Students compare these images with the large image of the orangutan on the next page. Using think, pair and share, they discuss the differences and effects created by the different framing, composition and layout of each image.
- Turn to the double page that begins with '*But Ginger wouldn't*'. Identify the narrative voice (the person or animal through which we experience the story). Why did the author write the story from Ginger's point of view? Students rewrite the text from the page in first person. Does writing in first person change the impact of the story or increase our empathy for the orangutans? Consider why the author chose to write the story in third person.
- Pivotal points: students identify the points in the plot where characters are faced with choices. Investigate the ways in which Kathy Creamer makes us care about their decisions and consequences through the use of salience and close-ups in those illustrations.
- **Visual Arts:** Students download or copy a photograph of an orangutan, or other primate from the Sumatra rainforest, which includes a clear face of the animal. They create two versions of the photograph, experimenting with cropping and layout in one version to create an extreme close-up intended to engage empathy in the viewer and move them to care about the animal's plight.

Themes to explore

Themes of relationship: love, trust and loyalty.

The importance of hands

Orangutans, like humans, have opposable thumbs. They are called **opposable** because the **thumb** can be moved around to touch the other fingers, which gives people and apes the ability to grasp things. Orangutans have feet exactly like their hands, giving them the ability to climb really well and to eat with their feet.

- **Visual Arts:** Source and display images of orangutan's hands and feet. Students compare them to their own hands and feet and identify the similarities and differences. Create colourful artworks using black handprints on contrasting backgrounds.
- Give students a thick elastic band or tape to join their thumb to their fingers. Now try to do some ordinary tasks. Discuss the importance and uses of opposable thumbs.

- The importance of our hands is expressed in the numbers of idioms about hands. (Examples: to lend a hand, hold hands, know it like the back of your hand, take your life in your hands, etc.) Identify Ginger's use of her hands in illustrations throughout the book. How does Ginger's relationship with Stripes develop through her use of touch? What does she do that shows love to Stripes? Students brainstorm ways they show kindness to friends and classmates, adding these to a mind map.
- Discuss/demonstrate correct and frequent handwashing to stay healthy - even orangutans know what to do! Explain the reasons why people must use soap. [Orangutan demonstrates hand-washing Video](#)
- Hands are used to communicate and to build relationships. Some orangutans have learnt sign language. Discuss sign language as a form of communication. Explore the Auslan sign bank dictionary as a class or in pairs. Students sign a word or short phrase to describe their feelings towards orangutans. [Auslan signbank dictionary](#)
- Stripes does not have hands with opposable thumbs, he has paws, yet he 'lends a hand' to Ginger when she really needs it. What does Stripes do that shows loyalty to his friend? Students write a short report expressing their ideas to show loyalty to friends (including online behaviour). Consider situations when loyalty is misplaced (e.g. keeping harmful secrets).
- **Visual Arts:** Explore the use of watercolours, as used by Kathy Creamer in her illustrations. Students trace their hands and a friend's hands in pencil on paper. Emphasise overlapping and connecting hand shapes. Paint sections using watercolours, a different colour for each section. When dry, outline all the shapes using black markers.
- **Visual Arts:** From images, students draw an orangutan's hand OR a tiger's paw print in a large size, in the centre of the paper. Inside the paw or hand print, students draw and colour the things the animal needs to survive (habitat, food, etc.). Around the outside, students depict the threats to the animal's survival and/or things people are doing to help the animals. Discuss choice of colour schemes: bright, like the illustrations in the book, to communicate hope, or dark, to communicate the seriousness of the situation. (A slogan could be added to make the message explicit, such as 'Lend a hand for orangutans'.)

Themes of sustainability: animal conservation, diminishing habitat, environment, orangutans, tigers and the struggle for survival.

Australian Curriculum Links

Sustainability

Sustainability is both a cross-curriculum priority and a geographical concept and encompasses both an understanding of the concept of sustainability and actions that contribute to a sustainable future. In protecting environments, the interdependencies of environmental, social, cultural and economic systems need to be considered. The subjects of geography and science and technology equip students with knowledge of sustainable practices, understandings of sustainability challenges and skills to take action for more sustainable ways of living. Learning about the habitats and threats to orangutans and tigers assists students to contribute to the world as active, responsible and informed global citizens.

Systems

- OI.1 The biosphere is a dynamic system providing conditions that sustain life on Earth.
- OI.2 All life forms, including human life, are connected through ecosystems on which they depend for their wellbeing and survival.
- OI.3 Sustainable patterns of living rely on the interdependence of healthy social, economic and ecological systems.

World views

- OI.4 World views that recognise the dependence of living things on healthy ecosystems, and value diversity and social justice, are essential for achieving sustainability.
- OI.5 World views are formed by experiences at personal, local, national and global levels, and are linked to individual and community actions for sustainability.

Futures

- OI.6 The sustainability of ecological, social and economic systems is achieved through informed individual and community action that values local and global equity and fairness across generations into the future.
- OI.7 Actions for a more sustainable future reflect values of care, respect and responsibility, and require us to explore and understand environments.
- OI.8 Designing action for sustainability requires an evaluation of past practices, the assessment of scientific and technological developments, and balanced judgements based on projected future economic, social and environmental impacts.
- OI.9 Sustainable futures result from actions designed to preserve and/or restore the quality and uniqueness of environments.

Science

Curriculum content descriptions

Living things have basic needs, including food and water ([ACSSU002](#))

Living things live in different places where their needs are met ([ACSSU211](#))

Living things depend on each other and the environment to survive ([ACSSU073](#))

People use science in their daily lives, including when caring for their environment and living things ([ACSHE035](#))

The growth and survival of living things are affected by physical conditions of their environment ([ACSSU094](#))

Find out more about:

1. The Rambutan tree and its fruit

- Rambutan facts for kids [Rambutan Facts for Kids](#)
- View [Kids try stuff: Rambutan Kids Try Weird Fruit](#)
- Link to students: Which fruit do you like/dislike? What is the most unusual fruit you have tried?

2. Orangutans

- Orangutan Outreach [About Orangutans](#) and WWF [Orangutan - WWF - Australia](#)
- What are the threats to orangutans and their habitats? How can orangutans be protected?
- Select episodes from [Orangutan Jungle School - Meet the Babies Awaiting your Help](#) there are many short, funny clips to select from with highly relatable topics for students of all ages, such as 'Bedtime'. Example activity: students create their own bedtime procedure, using images and text, then compare this to an orangutan's bedtime procedure.

3. Palm oil and the Sumatran tiger

- What is palm oil and how is it used? [Palm Oil Problem - Classroom - BTN](#)
- Read the article about palm oil and the Sumatran tiger [How Palm Oil Impacts the Sumatran Tiger](#) by Laura Downing, One Green Planet
- What impact does the production of palm oil have on tigers?

4. Paper mills and the Sumatran tiger

- Watch [Sumatran Tiger - Behind the News](#)
- Tigers throughout Asia are vulnerable to extinction. What do you think is causing wild tiger numbers to decline? What might be the connection between tigers and paper mills?
- Why is it important to save tigers from extinction?

Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia

The first key concept highlights the diversity within and between the countries of the Asia region, from their cultures, societies and traditions through to their diverse environments and the effects of these on the lives of people.

O1.2 Interrelationships between humans and the diverse environments in Asia shape the region and have global implications.

Case Study

Students investigate the significance of the Sumatran rainforest to animals, people and the environment, peoples' views and perception of the environment and ways that it can be protected.

- Where is the Sumatra? Locate it on a map.
- What are its geographical characteristics?
- What animals and habitats are found in the rainforest?
- What are the interrelationships in the rainforest?
- Why is this an important environment?
- How is the rainforest used by different people?
- What is the impact of fire on the habitats and animals?
- What is the monsoon and when does it happen?
- How can rainforest habitats, species and environments be protected?

Suggested resources

- WWF [Sumatra and Borneo | Animals, People and Threats](#)
- Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra [Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra](#)

Take action

Students will be motivated to take individual and collective action to help protect orangutans and tigers in Indonesia. It is also important that students are given the opportunity to take personal action in a local sustainability or environmental challenge such as biodiversity enhancement or waste management.

Students plan, draft and publish an informative and persuasive multimodal text, choosing text structures, language features, images and sound appropriate to purpose and audience, including appropriate multimodal elements, illustrations and diagrams.

Suggestions:

- Students create an iMovie movie or trailer to persuade an audience to contribute towards protecting endangered species such as orangutans and tigers.
- Students communicate their point of view in a personal response to the text *The Big Old Rambutan Tree*. For example: a speech with visual and auditory components, a SlideShow, a poster, or an advertisement.

Reflect on learning

Complete the K-W-L chart, completing the What I LEARNT section.



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Using Bloom's Taxonomy: Six Thinking Levels

Use the following examples to help shape the students' progression toward higher level thinking, beginning with remembering and continuing sequentially through each process. The teacher can easily adapt this though the selection of other learning tasks from this resource.

Content → Process ↓	The Big Old Rambutan Tree	Orangutans	Sumatran Tigers	Sumatran Rainforest
Remembering	How did Ginger and Stripes help each other?	Why is having an opposable thumb important?	Do tigers and orangutans normally live together?	Where is Sumatra? Locate it on a map.
Understanding	Investigate the Rambutan tree and its fruit. Which fruit do you like/dislike? What is the most unusual fruit you have tried?	Write an information report about orangutans. What are the threats to orangutans and their habitats? How can orangutans be protected?	What is palm oil and how is it used? What impact does the production of palm oil have on tigers?	Case study of the significance of the Sumatran rainforest to animals, people and the environment and ways that it can be protected.
Applying	Write an imaginative short story about an adventure Stripes had in the time he was away from Ginger, and the emotions he felt.	Research organisations who look after orangutans. Share this information with others.	Write a conversation between two tigers as deforestation is taking place.	Find an organisation that protects the Sumatran rainforest. What questions would you ask someone working for the organisation?
Analysing	How does Ginger's relationship with Stripes develop through her use of touch? What does she do that shows love to Stripes? Brainstorm ways you show kindness to friends and classmates, adding these to a mind map.	View episodes from Orangutan Jungle School - Meet the Babies Awaiting your Help such as 'Bedtime'. Students create their own bedtime procedure, using images and text, then compare this to an orangutan's bedtime procedure.	Tigers throughout Asia are vulnerable to extinction. What do you think is causing wild tiger numbers to decline? Compare the impact of palm oil plantations and paper mills on the tiger's habitat.	What is the difference between a rainforest and a jungle?
Evaluating	Does the book have a character that would be an ideal role model? Describe the characteristics you select and why they are important.	Find other texts such as <i>The Big Old Rambutan Tree</i> that feature orangutans. Do they present a similar message? How well does each type of text inform and persuade?	Do you think looking after tigers in zoos or nature reserves is a good or bad thing? Why is it important to save tigers from extinction? Evaluate different solutions for protecting tigers.	Place in ranking order the impact on habitat of activities such as land clearing, logging, fire, decreased rainfall and introduced species in Sumatra.
Creating	Communicate your point of view in a personal response to the text <i>The Big Old Rambutan Tree</i> . For example: a speech with visual and auditory components, a SlideShow, a poster, or an advertisement.	Create a poster of an orangutan's hand that uses visual language to inform and persuade others about protecting orangutans and their habitat.	Design a new or unusual product that promotes the preservation of Sumatran tigers and sustainability of their habitat.	Create an iMovie movie or trailer to persuade an audience to contribute towards protecting endangered species such as orangutans and tigers.

As a result of a successful crowd funding campaign, this book supports the work



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