



TEACHERS' RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED FOR

For readers 3 and up.
Preschool to lower primary

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KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **Learning areas:** English; Creative Arts; Humanities & Social Science
- **General capabilities:** Ethical understanding; literacy; critical and creative thinking; personal and social capability; visual literacy

REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

- To discuss new vocabulary, respond to texts and share feelings and thoughts about the events and characters in texts.
- To use and experiment with different materials, and create artworks to communicate ideas to an audience.
- To use the text as a springboard for general discussion and exploration of major themes.

THEMES

- Courage
- Heroism
- Friendship
- Adventure

PREPARED BY

Penguin Random House Australia

PUBLICATION DETAILS

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Go Home, Cat!

Sonya Hartnett
& Lucia Masciullo

PLOT SUMMARY

When Nicholas finds a silver coin in the garden, he tells his cat, 'I can buy liquorice with this!'

Nicholas loves liquorice more than almost anything.

'Stay home, cat,' he says, and sets out for the shop.

But as Nicholas walks down the street he hears a voice he knows . . .

A delightful story about the special bond between a boy and his cat, from the award-winning team, Sonya Hartnett and Lucia Masciullo, celebrating friendship, courage and the value of those we love.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Sonya Hartnett's work has won numerous Australian and international literary prizes and has been published around the world. Uniquely, she is acclaimed for her stories for adults, young adults and children. Her accolades include the Commonwealth Writers' Prize (*Of A Boy*), The Age Book of the Year (*Of A Boy*), the Guardian Children's Fiction Prize (*Thursday's Child*), the Children's Book Council of Australia Book of the Year for both Older and Younger Readers (*Forest*, *The Silver Donkey*, *The Ghost's Child*, *The Midnight Zoo* and *The Children of the King*), the Victorian Premier's Literary Award (*Surrender*), shortlistings for the Miles Franklin Award (for both *Of a Boy* and *Butterfly*) and the CILP Carnegie Medal (*The Midnight Zoo*). Hartnett is also the first Australian recipient of the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (2008).

Golden Boys, Sonya's third novel for adults, was shortlisted for the 2015 Miles Franklin Literary Award. *Go Home, Cat!* is her fifth picture book.

AUTHOR'S INSPIRATION

Sonya says:

Come Down, Cat! has always been a favourite of mine among my books – I love the wilful, contrary nature of cats, their charming and tyrannical ways. I like Nicholas too: his courage, his devotion. He seems to live in a strange, adult-less world in which he's allowed to make bold decisions and take brave, even dangerous actions. There's freedom, even wildness in the characters, though they are just a normal boy and an everyday cat living in a house in a suburb. I hope that's what readers take from both the Cat books – that you have it in you to be free and bold, that every child can be heroic. I like the love they have for each other. I like the word 'marl'. And, of course, I love Lucia's perfect illustrations. She never takes the easy route – if there is a surprising and challenging way to portray a scene, that is the direction

Lucia will take. I love that courage, in a book about courage.

I don't usually revisit my characters, but it was hard to resist coming back to this pair. Every pet owner has not just one, but a multitude of stories. It's amazing to see Nicholas's wider world through Lucia's fine depiction of the town. In *Go Home, Cat!* he seems older, more sure of himself, but still kind, still dreamy, still careful. The cat is as mischievous as ever, because cats don't change. It's been a joy to see them again.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR



Lucia Masciullo grew up in Livorno, Tuscany. She moved to Australia in 2007 and since then she has been happily working as an illustrator. She has illustrated more than 20 books, among which are the CBCA Honour Book and Prime Minister Award short-listed *Come Down, Cat!* by Sonya Hartnett, and the Our Australian Girl series. She now lives on the Gold Coast.

ILLUSTRATOR'S INSPIRATION

Lucia says:

My artwork was created during the long months of the Covid-19 lockdown. I was supposed to go to Europe, where my relatives and friends still live, but I had to cancel the trip. Instead I travelled with my imagination to several European countries: Italy, France, Spain, the UK . . . and this is probably why the city where Nic and the Marl cat live has quite a European influence. And I was inspired by art nouveau architecture for Nicholas's house and some of the houses in town.

Because the manuscript is centred on Nicholas, I tried to focus my illustrations on the cheeky Marl cat instead, so if you look carefully the cat also appears on the page with the lolly shop window and on the page with the big tree.

I also added a couple of characters from my previous books with Sonya: the toy in the gutter (from: *The Boy*



and the Toy) and the boy on top of the tree (from: *The Wild One*).

Technique: I used acrylic gouache and colourful pencils.

My daughter Sofia (4 at the time) helped me by colouring the map in the endpapers.

THEMES

- **Friendship:** Looking at the book's illustrations and text, students can identify how the main character relates to his cat. What things do students think make their friendship special?
- **Courage:** Using the illustrations in the book, children can identify parts of the story to link to their own experience. They can talk about the use of different colours, techniques and other things of interest in the art and also talk about the artist and her techniques.

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

1. Look at the front cover of the book. Read the title together. Can you see what the title is referring to? What do you think the story will be about?
2. Open the book flat and explore the front and back cover as one large image. How does the choice of colours and the scene that is illustrated make you feel?
3. Read the blurb at the back of the book. What do you feel about it? What kind of things are you now expecting to see inside the book? What questions do you have?
4. Just inside the cover, before the title pages and the start of the story, are some illustrated pages. These are called 'endpapers'. What do the endpapers in the front of the book show you? What do they add to what you've already guessed about the story?
5. Read the story aloud as a group, pausing to take in Lucia Masciullo's artwork and observe all the detail and difference you can find on each page.

KEY STUDY TOPICS

Literacy, language and storytelling

Questions

1. How many characters are in this story? Do you think creatures other than people can be characters in a story? Can you think of other stories that have non-human characters?

Activity

1. **New Words:** Can you find three words in the book that are new to you? Try to work out what they mean from the context (the way they are used and what surrounds them).

Friendship

Questions

1. What do you notice about the very first page of the story? (Hint: what can you see?) What does it tell you about the characters in this book?
2. What does it take to be a true friend or companion?
3. In what ways is Nicholas shown to be a good friend to the cat?

Activity

1. **A map of your neighbourhood:** Draw a map of your own neighbourhood. Illustrate all the places and people special to you.
2. **Write a story about your own** experience of friendship with another person or pet. Include something you did to help your friend.

Courage

Questions

1. What do you think is the most important message in this book? What does it teach us about courage and heroism and about the sort of friends we should be?

Activities

1. Write a sentence about a time you were brave on a piece of paper. Place all of the pieces of paper inside a box anonymously. Your teacher will share with the class the experiences that have been listed and ask the students to write a story about being brave.



Visual literacy

Questions

1. How much of the story is told through the text and how much through the illustrations?
2. How do the illustrations help to establish the setting and mood of the story?
3. Consider the amount of detail in every illustration. How does the detail help to add to the story?
4. How does the illustrator manage to include emotion in her illustrations?
5. Choose your favourite illustration and explain to the class what it is that you like about that page. How did you react to that page as a reader?

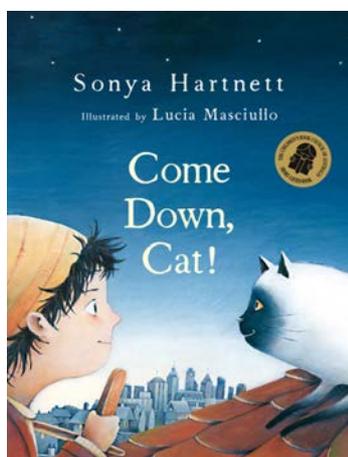
Cats!

Questions

1. What characteristics do cats have? List 5 words that describe a cat's behaviour and attitude towards people.
2. What sorts of things do cats like to do?
3. In what ways are they different from other pets such as dogs?
4. Is it easy to train a cat?
5. Is there anything cats are afraid of?
6. Looking at the title of the book, if you were to ask a cat to go home, do you think it would obey? Give reasons for your answer.



FURTHER READING FROM PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA

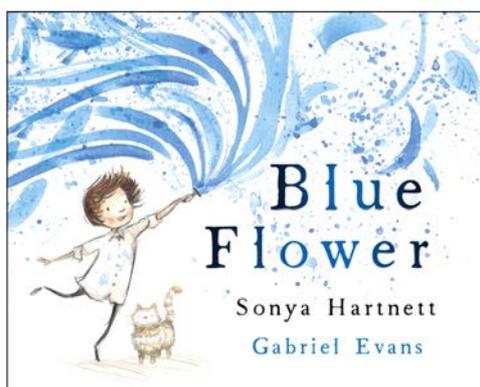


Come Down, Cat!
by Sonya Hartnett & Lucia Masciullo

Why this story? Read the first picture book from the combined talents of Sonya Hartnett and Lucia Masciullo introducing Nicholas and Cat, and telling their story of friendship and bravery, and the things we are capable of doing for those we treasure most.

The day is ending, night is falling, and Nicholas's cat won't come down. High on the roof she licks her paws while Nicholas worries about her up there all alone. How can he coax her into the safe, warm house? She doesn't even want to come down from the roof . . . or does she?

[Teachers' resources available.](#)



Blue Flower
by Sonya Hartnett
& Gabriel Evans

Why this story? Read another wonderful picture book by Sonya Hartnett with glorious illustrations by Gabriel Evans about finding beauty and difference in individuality. A story about self-esteem, resilience and the discovery that being different can be something wonderful.

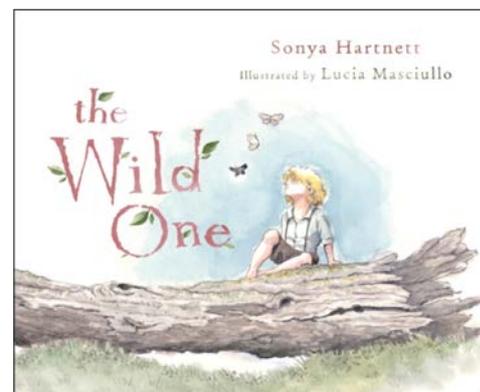
I lay down and put my nose in the grass. The grass was dotted with yellow flowers, but blue ones grew there too. I rolled over and looked at the trees and the clouds, and thought about things for a while.

'Not all clouds are white,' I said, and Piccolo looked at me.

'Not all trees are tall. Not all birds are brown. Not all cats are tabby like you, Piccolo. Some are black. Some are orange. Some are calico.'

Piccolo swished his stripy tail. I plucked a flower and showed it to him. 'This flower isn't yellow, but it isn't wrong. It is what it's supposed to be. No one would want it to be yellow. Everyone would say it's lovely just the way it is.'

[Teachers' resources available.](#)



The Wild One
by Sonya Hartnett & Lucia Masciullo

Why this story? Read another picture book by multi-award-winning author Sonya Hartnett that celebrates nature and difference, the wonder of the childhood and the importance of creativity.

Charlie met the wild one when he was young. Together they caught tadpoles, and watched spiders weaving webs. But as the sun rose and fell, and the moon circled the world, Charlie forgot the wild one's magic – until it was almost too late to remember . . .

From acclaimed picture-book partnership Sonya Hartnett and Lucia Masciullo comes a celebration of the wonders of childhood, the beauty of nature and the wild that lives in us all.

[Teachers' resources available.](#)



ORDER FORM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	SCHOOL YEAR	RRP	QTY	TOTAL
Go Home, Cat!	Sonya Hartnett & Lucia Masciullo	9781760899493	Pre-1	\$24.99		
Blue Flower	Sonya Hartnett & Gabriel Evans	9781760894450	K-2	\$24.99		
Come Down, Cat!	Sonya Hartnett & Lucia Masciullo	9780143506997	Pre-1	\$19.99		
The Wild One	Sonya Hartnett & Lucia Masciullo	9780670076970	K-2	\$24.99		
TOTAL						

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