

Teacher's Notes



Real Pigeons Flap Out

Written by Andrew McDonald

Illustrated by Ben Wood

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

RECOMMENDED FOR

primary-aged readers (ages 5+, grades 2+)

KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- Learning areas: English
- General capabilities:
 - AC9E2LA08
 - AC9E3LA09
 - AC9E3LA10

THEMES

- Loyalty
- Friendship
- Bravery
- Problem solving
- Finding your strengths
- Doing good

SYNOPSIS

Your favourite feathered crime-fighters are back in *Real Pigeons Flap Out!* In *The Empty Tummy Mystery*, the Real Pigeons think they've hit the jackpot when they find a huge pile of seeds, but soon they find themselves in the middle of a new mystery. Somebody is stealing lunches in a *weird* way – after they've been eaten! Will the Real Pigeons find out whodunnit before their tummies are totally sucked?

In *Silvercrop*, Grandpouter Pigeon's long-lost twin brother shows up unexpectedly and starts doing really evil stuff. Every time Frillback tries to stop him, he uses her super strength against her. Can Frillback save the day *without* using her super strength? And what is the big lie that Silvercrop has accused Grandpouter of telling his friends?

There's a new bird in town – the Dovestroyer. Everyone knows that doves think they're better than pigeons, even though they're the same kind of bird! But when the Dovestroyer is dove-napped, the Real Pigeons must swoop in to save the day and rescue their enemy (even if they don't want him to become the new city mascot).

Real Pigeons Flap Out includes three brand-new adventures from the coo-lest birds in town.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ ILLUSTRATOR

Andrew McDonald is the author of the bestselling Real Pigeons junior fiction series. He loves writing stories that make kids laugh, wonder and leap into the air with surprise. His books have been shortlisted for the Readings Children's Book Prize and the Australian Book Industry Awards. Andrew is a regular presenter on the schools circuit, where he conducts writing workshops, talks about his life as an author and inspires kids to read, write, draw and be creative. Andrew lives in Melbourne, Australia.

Ben Wood is the illustrator of the bestselling Real Pigeons junior fiction series and the graphic novel series Hello Twigs. Drawn to stories that are funny and heartfelt, his lively illustrations reflect his love for graphic novels and animation. When not in the studio Ben speaks in schools and runs workshops about illustration. He lives in Naarm/Melbourne, Australia.

THEMES

Friendship:

The Real Pigeons friendship is tested when they discover that Grandpouter has been lying to them about who he is. But even though they're upset about the lie, the Real Pigeons forgive Grandpouter, because that's what friends do. As Frillback says 'You *could* have trusted us, but it's OK. Starting the Real Pigeons was the best thing you ever did.'

- Write about a time that you've forgiven a friend, or that one has forgiven you. What other qualities are important in friendships?

Mysteries and Problem Solving:

- There are some things we expect to find in all mystery stories. Suspects are one. What else do you expect to find in a mystery story? Come up with a list of elements that you can look for in a story that will help you to know whether it's a mystery or not.

WRITING STYLE

The Real Pigeons are always faced with a mystery (or two, or three!) Luckily, they're egg-septional crime fighters. And all good crime fighters know that the first thing you have to do when solving a mystery is to come up with a list of suspects.

Fill in the following template as you read, and make predictions about which suspect you think stole the lunches – did you pick the right suspect?

The Empty Tummy Mystery:



Name of suspect	Reason for being a suspect	Picture of suspect	Guilty or not guilty?

When Doves Crime:

Name of suspect	Reason for being a suspect	Picture of suspect	Guilty or not guilty?

COMPREHENSION

- Explore the first page of the book – what dangers do you see?
- What does a single seed taste like to a pigeon?
- What has the seedy human lost?
- Who are the Real Pigeons? Draw a picture of your favourite pigeon.
- Who is the pigeon's number-one enemy?
- What is weird about the way someone is stealing people's lunches?
- Rock is the Master of Disguise – what are some of the disguises he uses in the book?
- What could go wrong if a pigeon had eaten the Seedy Human's million-dollar seed?
- What traps do the pigeons set for the Seedy Human?
- What food gives Frillback her super strength?
- Who is Silvercrop's twin brother? Describe some of the similarities and differences between these two characters.
- What are some of Frillback's other skills?
- What is Grandpouter's secret?
- Who is the official city mascot?
- Who do you think would win in a fight between doves and pigeons? Why?
- What's so special about pigeon eyes? What are they good for?
- Why does Love Cat keep putting the Dovestroyer in a cage?



WRITING EXERCISE

What is a pun? Discuss the meaning of the word 'pun', and why some writers use them in stories. Make a list of all of the pigeon-puns you encounter as you read.

Can you come up with a pigeon pun that *isn't* in the book?

ILLUSTRATION STYLE

Each of the Real Pigeons has a special pigeon power. What are they? How does illustrator Ben Wood capture each pigeon power in the illustrations?

If you were a Real Pigeon, what would your pigeon power be? Draw a picture of yourself as a pigeon and include an element that provides a clue towards your power.

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

- Design a new villain for the Real Pigeons to confront. Would it be a bird or another animal? Give it a name and draw a picture of it. What would this villain do?
- Who is your favourite pigeon? Design and create your own pigeon costume, and march in a pigeon-parade at your school. Can you get your whole flock together to pose in the pig sig?
- There's a special mini-adventure in this book! What is it? Draw your own eight-panel comic strip that shows an unseen part of Trent's twig-venture.
- Start to observe the pigeons that live in your local area. What kinds of pigeons (and other birds) do you see? What kind of characters do you think they'd become in a story? Start to observe the habits and behaviours of the birds around you.

RELATED READING

Real Pigeons (series)

By Andrew McDonald and Ben Wood

Cross Bones (Series)

By Jack Hensliet and Chris Kennett

Pet Monster (series)

By Lili Wilkinson and Dustin Spence

