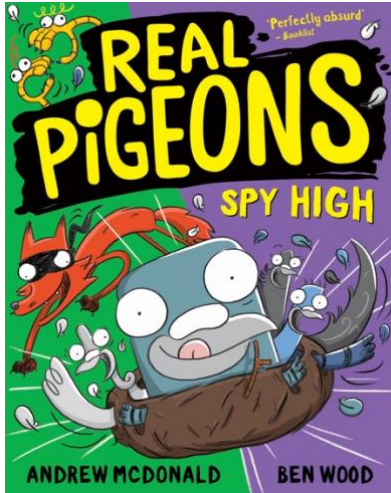


Teacher's Notes



Real Pigeons: Spy High

Written by Andrew McDonald

Illustrated by Ben Wood

Teacher's Notes by Bec Kavanagh

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

RECOMMENDED FOR

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

KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- Learning areas: English
- General capabilities:
 - AC9E3LE03
 - AC9E2LE05
 - AC9E3LE05

THEMES

- Sharing
- Teamwork
- Danger
- Revenge
- Habitats

SYNOPSIS

The Real Pigeons are back in this high-flying mystery – Real Pigeons: Spy High! In *The Highest Mystery in the World* the pigeons have to wear their warmest disguises to brave the ice-cold skies. Swifts have been falling from the sky, and it's up to the Real Pigeons to save them – after all, Real Pigeons fight crime everywhere! But can they save Sailor Swift from the most dangerous bird in the high skies?

Squab might be small. She might not have any feathers yet. But she has something even better – a pigeon power. Squab can move things with her mind! In *Squab Squad*, Squab needs to use her pigeon power when her sworn enemy, Clawzy, get's kit-napped. Because how can Squab be a crime-fighting pigeon without a sworn enemy??

And then in *Attack of the Locusts*, the Real Pigeons have a problem! One of the city pigeons has seen something worrying from inside the weather bureau – a pack of locusts is heading for the city! That's bad news for the pigeons – locusts eat everything! Can the Real Pigeons stop locust attacks??



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

Crimes

Red Fox is about to do a crime in *The Highest Mystery in the World*. What makes something a crime? What kind of crimes can you think of? What happens if you commit one of these crimes? What are some of the reasons that people commit crimes?

Enemies

All crime-fighting pigeons have a sworn enemy. In fact the Real Pigeons have many! Discuss some of the sworn enemies you've encountered in other Real Pigeons stories. What makes someone an enemy? Do crime-fighting pigeons really need enemies? Have you ever been surprised to discover that someone wasn't as bad as you thought they were?

WRITING STYLE

Setting is an important part of any story – there's no action without somewhere for it to happen! Discuss the main settings in the book. In the real world, setting is a kind of habitat – what kind of habitat do the Pigeons normally live in?

But setting can also be used to *make* things happen in the story. For example, in the book, an 'icy wind blast' freezes the Pigeons and makes them unable to move. Settings can also provide hiding places, homes, clues and obstacles.

WRITING EXERCISE

Describe some of the settings in the book. Use one of them to write a scene where the setting makes something happen to one of the characters from the book.



COMPREHENSION

- How can you tell that Red Fox is about to do a crime?
- What is a swift? What are swifts good at? What *aren't* they good at? Why?
- How do the pigeons overcome the problem of the ice-cold skies?
- Which famous singer do you think inspired one of the characters in the book?
- What's the most dangerous bird in the high skies?
- Why did Red Fox hide in the Real Pigeons' nest? How does he help the Pigeons?
- Who is really inside the cloud? What do they want?
- What is different about Squab? What is her pigeon power?
- Who is Squab's sworn enemy? Why?
- What clues does Squab find that lead her to Clawzy?
- What goes wrong with the Pigeons' disguise in *Squab Squad*?
- What are some of the terrible things that locusts do?
- Some of the other creatures claim they're responsible for summoning the locusts – how do the Real Pigeons figure out who is lying?
- How does Rock use the icy-winds of the high skies to defeat the locusts?

ILLUSTRATION STYLE

Clouds are excellent disguises because they can change shape to look like anything. What are some of the things that clouds look like in the book? Spend an afternoon cloud watching and draw pictures of what you see in the clouds. Could any of these be inspiration for a disguise for the Real Pigeons?

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

- Red Fox tells the Real Pigeons that the sky is for losers – rude! What are some of the things that the sky is good for? Do you agree with the Real Pigeons, that the sky is awesome? Or do you agree with Red Fox, that the ground is best? Prepare an argument and have a class debate – who will win?
- Make your own versions of Perry Falco's puppets and use them to put on a puppet-show version of one of the adventures in the book for your class.
- The Real Pigeons make paper planes to help them fly in the high skies while their feathers are frozen. Design and make a paper plane that the Real Pigeons could use – have a plane-flying competition and measure whose plane travels the furthest!
- Imagine that you have Squab's pigeon power – you can move objects with your mind! Write a story about what you would do if you had this power.
- Come up with a plan that could help the Real Pigeons stop the plague of locusts.



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

Barkly Mansion (series)

By Melissa Keil and Adele K Thomas

