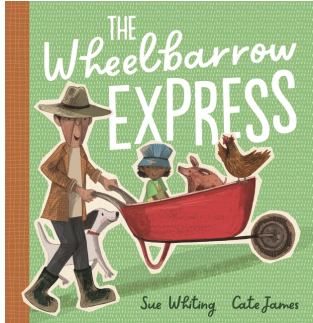




# Walker Books Classroom Ideas



## The Wheelbarrow Express

Author: Sue Whiting  
Illustrator: Cate James  
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\*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

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## Outline:

It's Tommy's last day at Pa's farm and it's time to say goodbye. Tommy doesn't want to go. Not yet. He loves the farm and its playful pigs and clucking chickens and galloping goats and the dam that is deep and blue and perfect for skimming stones. And he loves Pa.

But Pa has a plan: there's time for one last run on the Wheelbarrow Express. Toot! Toot! All aboard!

## Author/Illustrator Information:

Sue Whiting is an award-winning children's and YA author and editor who has worked in publishing for twenty+ years. Sue was senior commissioning editor and publishing manager for Walker Books Australia for many years before leaving in 2016 to concentrate on her writing. As a storyteller and schools' performer, Sue has informed, inspired and entertained thousands of kids across the country. She is also a freelance children's book editor and writing coach, and the author of numerous books, including the bestselling *Missing*, the acclaimed *The Book of Chance* and a number of CBCA Notable Books. Sue's latest books are *Pearly and Pig and the Great Hairy Beast*, the first in a new junior fiction series, and the narrative nonfiction picture book *The Echidna Near my Place*, illustrated by Cate James.

## How to Use These Notes:

This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

Ages: From 2 to 5 years

Key Learning Areas: English

Genre: Picture Book



# Walker Books Classroom Ideas

## Discussion Questions and Activities

### Before Reading

Before reading, view the cover and title of the book. Identify the following:

- The title of the book
- The author/illustrator
- The publisher
- The blurb

What do you think the story might be about from looking at the title only? Do your ideas change after seeing the cover?

#### *Activity:*

Write your own story using the title of the picture book.

Based on the cover, what do you think this story is about? How do you think it will begin/end? Revisit your answer after reading the story to see if your predictions were correct.

Discuss the title of the book. Do you think this is a good title? Why or why not? If you were asked to choose an alternative title for the book, what would it be? Remember, a good title should capture the audience's attention and give them some idea of what the book is about.

### Exploring the Text

#### Exploring the Text

##### *Discussion:*

- Who do you think the audience for this book is? Why?
- Is the book an imaginative, informative or persuasive text? How can you tell?

Literary techniques allow a writer to convey a deeper meaning in their text.

- What techniques can you find in this text? e.g. metaphor, imagery, alliteration, personification
- What deeper meaning can you draw from the text?

#### Exploring the Illustrations

##### *Discussion:*

- How do the illustrations add to the story?
- Do you think the illustrator has effectively told his story visually?

##### *Activity:*

Cover the text in the book and write your own story following the illustrations.

##### *Discussion:*

Choose one of the spreads and have a class discussion about the following illustration decisions:

- How do the illustrations add to the story?
- How do you think the people are feeling? What clues might there be in the pictures?
- Is there a main colour in this spread? How does it make you feel?
- Do the colours change from spread to spread? Why might that be?
- Do the pictures take up the whole page, or are they framed?
- Are any of the words bigger on the page than the others? Why could that be?



# Walker Books Classroom Ideas

## Exploring the Text in Depth:

1. Hide the words on the first page of the book and ask your class to describe what they think the little boy is thinking and feeling? Does he look happy or sad? What clues can they see in the picture? What could the bags mean?
2. In the text certain words use a different font. Discuss with the class why you would use a different font in a picture book? Would it make you read the words differently?
3. Ask the class to think of holidays and how it feels when they come to an end. Do a mindmap of all the feelings that they have. Are they happy to go home? Do they feel sad at the end of the holiday? Will they miss the person they had a holiday with?
4. Read the story to the class and ask them to concentrate on all the animals they see. Then ask them to sit down and draw all the animals that were on the farm.
5. Explain to the class what onomatopoeia is. Go through the book and look for all the examples you can find.
6. Write sentences using onomatopoeia either as a class or individually.
7. Imagine that you are going for a holiday on a farm. What are all the things that you would like to do on a farm? Draw a picture of, or write a story about the thing that you would like to do most.