# Diary of a Wombat

### **DIARY OF A WOMBAT**

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Story structure - List; Sequence

Special features - Engaging graphics depicting sequences

### Talk about - Digging

Discuss the types of things the wombat did during the day. What is her favourite thing to do? How can you tell? What do you think the wombat will do tomorrow?

How would you describe this wombat? Where do wombats usually live? What do they eat? Would they make good pets? What would be a problem if you had a wombat for a pet? What probems did the family in this story have with the wombat?

Look at the pictures in the story of the wombat sleeping. Can you lie in the same position? Pretend to be a wombat. How could you tell some-one you wanted apples for dinner?

### Working with Puppets - Wombat finger puppet

Pretend you are the girl in the family from the story - Diary of a wombat, by Jackie French. Using the finger puppet of a wombat, pretend you are having a 'Show and Tell' day at school and you are telling your clssmates all about your pet wombat. What could you tell them?

Take it in turns to take the finger puppet of the wombat. Try to make up seven sentences about the wombat - one for each day of the week.

### You can either:

- a) think up seven sentences to describe the wombat how she looks and acts
- b) make up seven sentences about the crazy things the wombat might do on each day of the week. (How ridiculous and outrageous can you make her activities?)

### Language Game

You will need: Tic Tac Toe board; copy of the book

10 counters (five each of two different colours)

Question word cards

How to play:

Place the question word cards face down on the table and put the game board between the two players. Give each player a set of five counters. Take turns in putting a counter on the tic tac toe board, aiming towards putting three counters in a row (horizontally, vertically or diagonally). Before you can put a counter on the board however, you have to turn over a question card and think of a question about the book that uses that question word.

Example questions for this activity:

Who was cooking the bar b que? Where did the wombat find some carrots?

When did the wombat like to sleep? What did the wombat like to eat?

Question cards for language game

what?

who?

when?

where?

why?

how?

Diary of a Wombat

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### Barrier games

Use a manilla folder as a barrier between you and the child. Make two copies of the backyard scene (enlarge them to A3 if you wish) and cut out the pictures of big carrots, so that each player has a set of twelve cards. Provide one set of the backyard scene and carrots to the child and keep one set for you.

Place the manilla folder between you, then arrange the carrots in various positions around the backyard. Give the child a set of instructions, which will provide the information to replicate your arrangement. After a few turns at this, have the child make an arrangement and then give you the directions to make a replica. Make sure you specifically set up the arrangement to practice the use of prepositions.

For example:

Put a carrot next to the swing. Put a carrot in the middle of the fence.

Put a carrot under the bike. Put a carrot on the roof.

To make the game slightly more difficult, give each player four small carrots and four big carrots to place around their scene. Instructions then have to incorporate size + prepostion.

For example:

Put a small carrot under the fence. Put a large carrot in the sky.

### Memory game

Have the children sit around in a circle. Cut up the cards that show different types of actions and put them in a pile in the middle of the group. The first player takes a turn by picking up a card and saying:

"On Monday, I (went for a swim)." (according to the picture on the card)

The player then turns the card face down in front of them and the next player takes a turn. The next player chooses a card from the pile, changes the day, remembers what was said and adds to the previous 'story'.

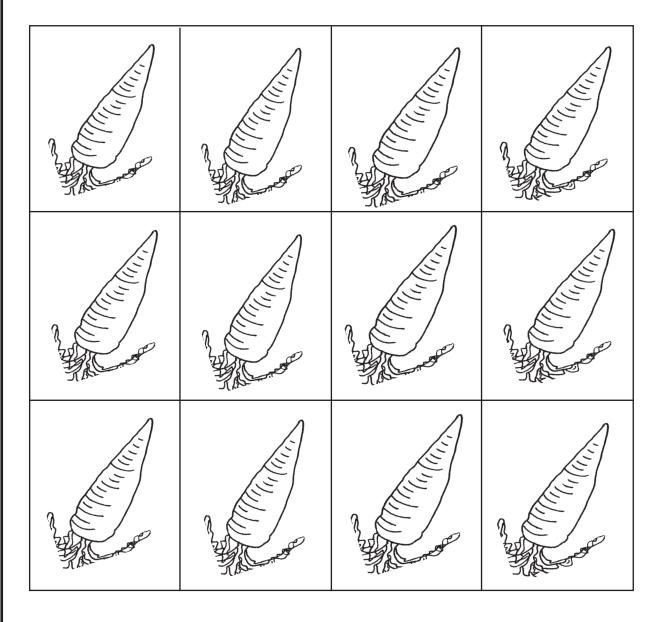
"On Tuesday, I (went for a swim and ate a sandwich)."

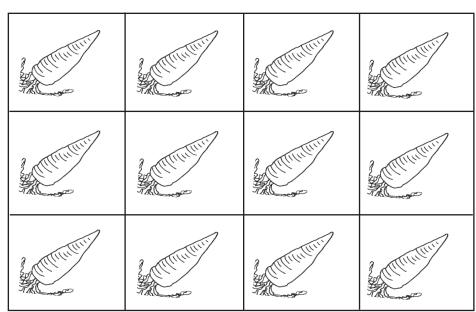
Play continues around the group until one player forgets one of the actions.

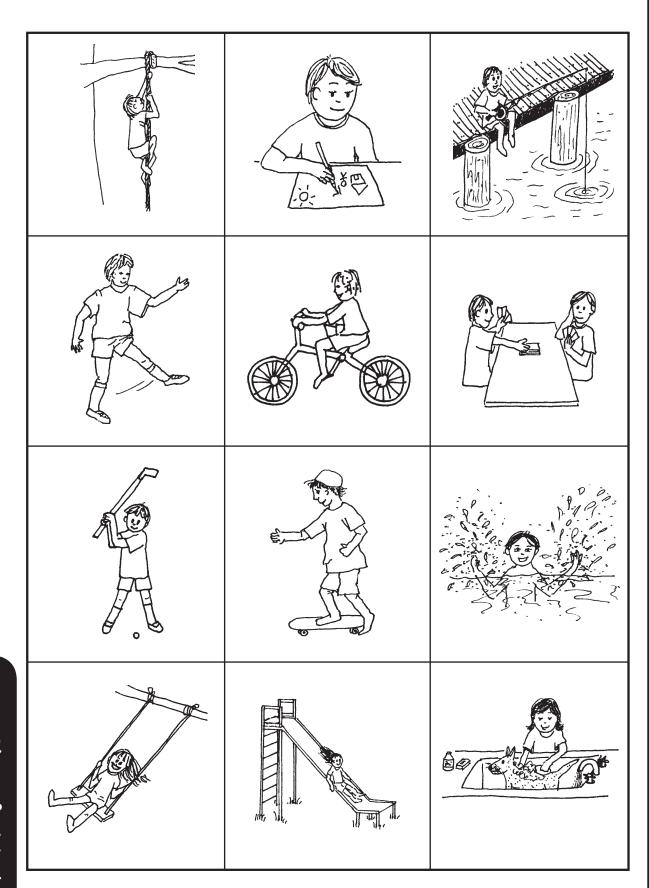
"On Wednesday, I (went for a swim, ate a sandwich and wrote a story)."

"On Thursday, I (went for a swim, ate a sandwich, wrote a story and rode my bike)."

# Barrier game - Backyard scene + carrots







### LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES

### Sounds

### Counting Syllables

Put out in front of the group four counters in a row. Have the pictures of Australian animals cut up into individual cards. Tell the children that you will be saying some words and they have to listen carefully to the number of beats or claps in each word. Start with the word 'wombat', saying it slowly, dragging out some of the sounds. As you say it, tap your finger on each counter to emphasise the number of syllables: wom - bat.

If the children need a few more examples - either take some words from the story (e.g. carrot, dig, oats, sleeping) or some common animal names (e.g. dog, cat, rabbit) and tap each word out using your finger and the counters. Alternatively, have the children clap these words with you as you say and clap each one.

Then, put the pictures of Australian animals in a pile face down. Take turns around the group to turn over a card, say the name of the animal and then try tapping out the syllables - either using the counters or clapping. Focus on 1-3 syllable words in particular. If some children have difficulty with this task, scaffold them to ensure success by saying the word with them, breaking the word clearly into the syllables.

### Rhyming

Have the children try to decide the three favourite activities for this wombat - eat; dig; sleep. Put out the picture cards for these three activities and the column of squares. Work around the group with each child trying to think of a rhyming word for each of these words in turn. As a child thinks of a rhyming word, have them colour in one of the squares under the target word. When all possible rhymes have been thought of, move to the next target word. At the end, consider which word has the most rhyming words associated with it.

### Words

### Describing - adverbs

Work through the book with the children highlighting all the things that the wombat did in the story. Point out to the children how short and simple many of the sentences are. Explain that you are going to go through the various things the wombat did, and then you are going to say two words that might describe that action. The children have to decide which word best describes how the wombat did it. Some of the words may fit appropriately, some adverbs are actually opposite, while others may not relate to that verb at all.

e.g.	sleep	soundly	or	briefly
	eat	hungrily	or	curiously

### Verbs (compare)

Using the page showing - Morning; Afternoon; Evening; Night, talk about the things the wombat did at each of these times. Then go around to each child and have them talk about the activities they enjoy at those times. Help the students to focus on the verbs in these discussions. Write some of the verbs up and highlight activities that are the same between the children in the group, and between the children and the wombat.

### Sentences

### Formulating sentences

As a group, discuss what type of an animal the wombat is, and what he looks like. Then review the verbs that you generated in the previous activity. Help the children develop a key sentence that combines what the wombat looks like and highlights his favourite activity.

e.g. The wombat is a brown furry creature, that enjoys sleeping much of the time.

Next, look at the pictures of Australian animals, focusing the talk around what the animal looks like and the things that animal likes to do. After some discussion, the group works together to formulate a key sentence modelled along the same format as the 'wombat' sentence.

### Similes

Look at the page of Australian animals and as a group think of something that is special about that animal.

e.g. a sleepy koala a prickly echidna a bouncy kangaroo a shy platypus

Then think of a time when you as a person might feel something similar - i.e. when do you feel sleepy?, prickly?, bouncy? etc. When you have brainstormed some ideas, try putting them into a sentence, phrased as a simile. Again, an example sentence has been provided to model from.

e.g. I had worked hard all day and was feeling as sleepy as a koala.

After a good night's sleep, I got out of bed feeling as bouncy as a kangaroo.

My sister made me so angry, I felt as prickly as an echidna.

There were so many people at the party, I was as shy as a platypus.

### **Text**

### Text Innovation

From all the previous activites' discussion, focus on a diary of things you do at school - breaking it into four sections - first session / second session / lunch / third session; over just five days - Monday to Friday. Brainstorm verbs for all the things you do at school. Write down your ideas on the planning page (ideas don't have to be totally realistic).

Identify the funny things that the wombat did - i.e. rolled in the dust, fought with the door mat, banged on rubbish bins etc. Have the children talk about the sort of funny things or problems that might happen at school.

e.g. spilling paint over the floor sleeping in math falling off the chair being bored in class

Help the children think of something that would be like demanding carrots (e.g. losing a pencil and asking the teacher for a new one each day). Then, have the children write out a simple story based on the ideas of things you do at school during one week. Keep the language very simple - like that in the story. It may be quite difficult to follow the story out line exactly, so simply work through five days of a school week, where Monday shows the things that usually happen, and then have one incident on each day. Also, have the main character ask for a pencil each day - but try to make up different ways for him or her to ask, or happen to find one.

### Text

### Cause and Effect

Point out to the group that the wombat did a number of things to tell the humans what she wanted - bashing on garbage bins, chewing on the door, and chewing on various things until they got the message. Talk about whether they think this would really work - i.e. if you bashed on the rubbish bin, would Mum understand that you wanted an ice-cream?

Put out the cause and effect page and discuss the flow of action from wanting carrots -> to bashing on the garbage bin -> to getting the carrots. Talk about the flow of action in the language terms of :

- e.g. Because the wombat wanted some carrots, she bashed on the garbage bin.
- or The wombat wanted some carrots, so she bashed on the garbage bin.

Then read through the What if ...? type scenarios on the next page of the resource materials and discuss with the group what would happen or what they would do, in each of these situations. Again, scaffold the children's responses into the cause / effect language from the example above.

### Hide and Seek

Before the group comes into the room, hide the pictures of carrots around - in on and under various objects. Tell the children that they are to take turns to find the hidden carrots. As a child goes off and finds a carrot, they bring it back to the group and explains where they found the carrot, giving clear language to describe where the carrot was hiding. If the children enjoy the game, let the children take turns at hiding the carrots and finding them.

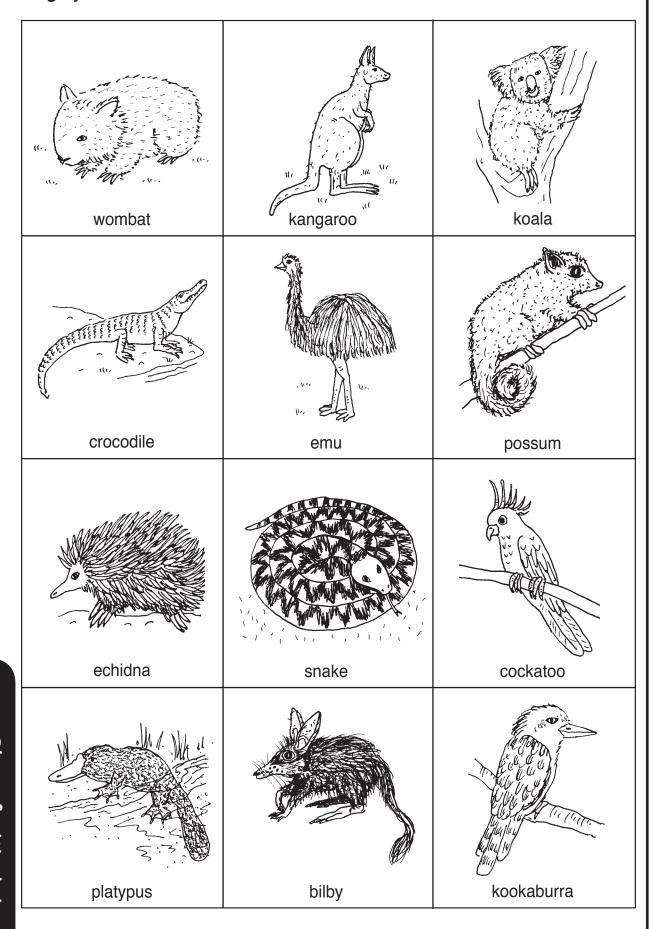
Play the game as - Hot and Cold. The person who has hidden the carrots gives clues to the other children using the language terms 'near' and 'far'.

e.g. There's a carrot hidden near the chair.

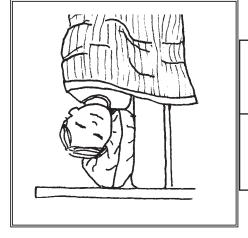
There's a carrot hidden far away from the table.

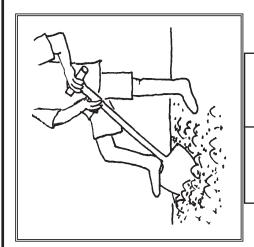
Then as the children get close to or further away from the carrot, the children can say - You are getting nearer. You are getting further away.

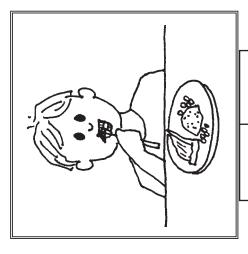
## **Counting Syllables**



# Rhyming



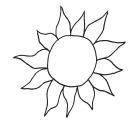


eat	hungrily
fussily	noisily
sleep	frequently
deeply	briefly
dig	vigourously
carefully	timidly
fight	bravely
fiercely	happily
bash	loudly
gently	angrily
scratch	softly
enthusiastically	quickly

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Diary

Words	-	Verbs



sleep

Morning

dig

Afternoon

eat

Evening



sleep

Night

Sentence Formulation

3

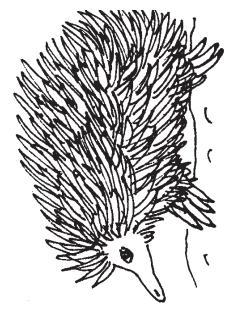
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\_\_ , that likes to

The wombat is a brown furry creature, that enjoys sleeping much of the time.

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My sister made me so angry, I felt as prickly as an echidna.

, I felt as \_\_\_\_\_ as \_

Diary of a Wombat

Monday

Morning:

Middle:

Lunch:

Afternoon:

Went home.

# Monday



Morning: Wrote Stories



Middle: Did math

Lunch: Played footy with friends

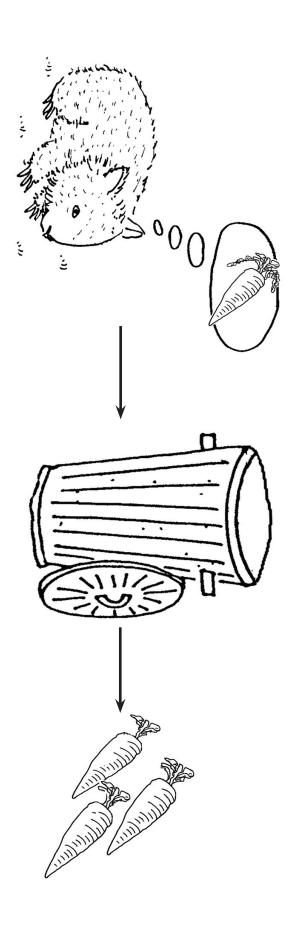
Afternoon: Went to library



Went home.



Text - Cause & Effect



### Text - Cause & Effect

What would happen if ....



.... you bashed on the rubbish bins at home?

.... you dug a deep hole in the backyard?

.... you put the wet clothes in the dirt?

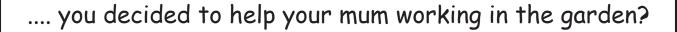
.... you bashed a hole in the door?

.... you spilt a can of paint all over the ground?

What would you do if ...



.... you needed a new pencil for school?



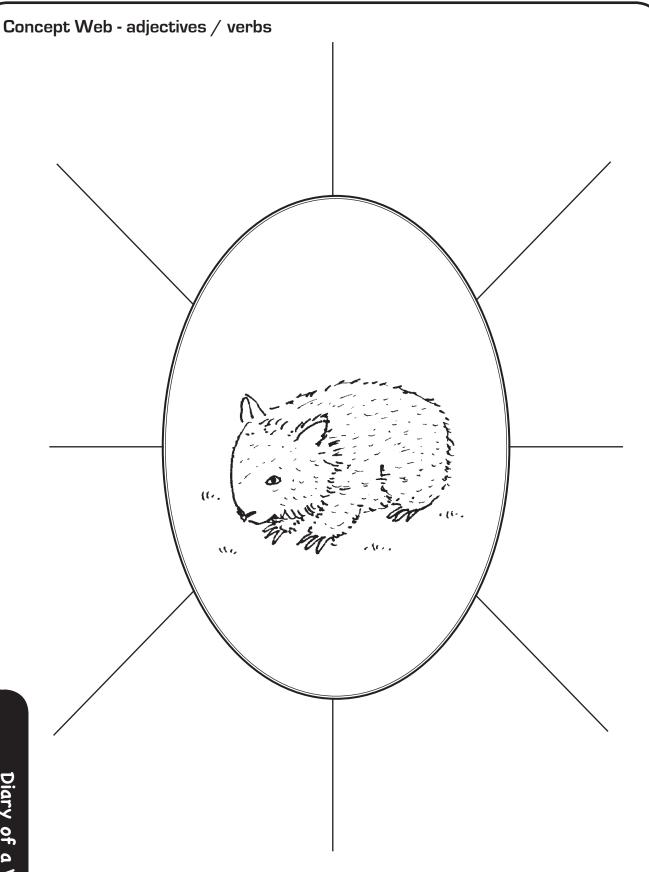
.... you were feeling very tired?

.... you had a really itchy spot on your back?

.... you were very dirty after digging in the garden?

.... you didn't like what Mum had given you for dinner?





Make two concept webs for 'Wombats':

- 1. Think of words to describe the wombat in this story.
- 2. Find all the words (verbs) that talk about what the wombat did in the story.

Text - True / False / I don't know / Maybe	
This wombat likes digging holes.	
The wombat is an animal that lives in America.	
All wombats love eating carrots.	
Wombats are curious animals.	
This wombat made a big mess.	
Wombats are bigger than kangaroos.	
On Tuesday the wombat slept.	
Dad likes his sausages with dust on them.	
The door mat won the battle with the wombat.	
Wombats prefer to sleep in the morning.	
The wombat found some carrots in the car.	/ombat
This wombat doesn't like wet holes.	Diary of a Wombat
Humans like wombats.	Diar

