



READERS' NOTES

TEACHER RESOURCES

Let's get everybody reading!

The importance of reading aloud and engaging young children in the joys of reading can never be stressed enough by *My Literary Adventure*! Reading should be a relaxing adventure, not a chore. Exercising young minds with new words, new concepts and imaginative stories and pictures is equally important as ensuring they have a healthy food diet. Reading regularly with young children inspires their vocabulary, their imagination, their confidence, and their sense of security. The following notes for *Winston Knows* can be used by Teachers, Librarians, and also parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters to extend this picture book through discussion and fun activity.



Winston Knows

Jan Gaebler Smith & Marie Jonsson-Harrison

Title: *Winston Knows*
Author: Jan Gaebler Smith
Illustrator: Marie Jonsson-Harrison

ISBN 9780994228901 (paperback)

For primary school age (from 3yrs-8yrs)

ABOUT THE STORY

Winston Knows is an engaging story about Winston the cat who has to stay indoors and never gets to go on walks--- or does he?

Using bright and colourful illustrations this book offers opportunity for read aloud engagement, amusement and discussion for primary age students. It is a heart-warming story about Winston the cat who puts on a pouty face when Betsy the dog goes on her daily walk with Nick, their owner. Winston, who likes to sleep, has a nice long nap in Nick's favourite chair while Betsy and Nick are away on their walk adventures. Happily, Winston doesn't miss out on the walk because his nose takes him to all the places where they have been when he sniffs Nick's walking shoes after he returns home!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jan Gaebler Smith graduated from the University of Hawaii in journalism and creative writing. She later gained profession qualifications in library and information management and is a former national President of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA). She had careers in public relations and corporate library management and university level teaching, before establishing a bookshop and art gallery. Jan has always loved children's picture books! Jan was born in Portland, Oregon, travelled broadly as a child with her family, but has lived most of her adult life in Adelaide, South Australia.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Marie Jonsson-Harrison is an accomplished artist throughout Australia, USA, Japan and Europe. However, this is the first children's book she has illustrated! Marie comes from a family of artistic individuals and has been immersed in art all her life. However, she only became a full time artist after a very successful career as an international fashion model and former Model of the Year. Marie injects her fun-loving and quirky sense of humour into her signature brightly coloured paintings that follow the Naïve Art style. Her artwork includes paintings, prints,

sculptures and several large scale ceramic and mosaic public sculptures. Marie exhibits her work to an Australian and international audience. Her designs have also been successfully transferred to a range of quilts, cushions, and she was also commissioned to do a design for the prestigious 'limited edition' cover of the Sv. Michelsen Danish chocolate box tin. Marie was born in Sweden and has called Australia home since she was a teenager.

DESIGNING THE BOOK

Jan provided Marie with the text of her story and they worked together to establish a storyboard of illustration ideas. Jan also gave Marie pictures of her pets Winston and Betsy —the real life cat and dog inspiration for this story. They then discussed the storyboard ideas and decided on the final accompanying illustrations to match the text and selected pages of the story, which Marie then painted with the exception of two illustrations, the cover and the fish shop, which she created as ceramic mosaics. Her illustrations are bright, colourful and humorous to capture children's interest and imagination.

BOOK FEATURES

Winston Knows is designed to be read aloud. It has the repetition pages of *Meanwhile Winston still lay sleeping* to engage smaller children in expectation and fun and the artist has also injected more fun with the mice at play while the cat sleeps!

For older readers, there is engagement with a *Where's Wally* aspect to the illustrations, with new discoveries to be found with each new reading. (A Catier clock, cat print wallpaper, etc.)

Discussion Points

The book provides several discussion opportunities about the environment, family life, keeping pets, telling time, the language of homophones (knows and nose) and exploring your neighbourhood, to name a few.

– *Younger primary children*

The illustrations provide many opportunities to engage younger children in discussion and extend their imagination, e.g. the playful mice while Winston is sleeping, the different things Winston and Nick see, and the shops they visit on their walk.

- Does Winston enjoy sleeping on Nick's chair during Betsy's walk?
- What do you think he is dreaming about?
- The story lends itself to discussions about family life and keeping pets.

– Older primary children

Can you tell how long Winston has been sleeping?

- The time on the clock changes through the illustrations so children can discover how long Nick and Betsy were out walking.

Why do you think Winston is an indoor cat?

- Winston looks like a British Shorthair cat... he may be a pedigree show cat.
- Many cat owners keep their pet cats indoors now because it is natural for cats to prey on birds and other wildlife. Many homeowners have special areas outside for their cats, so that they can get sun and fresh air but still protect their cat, and the environment, at the same time.
- As well as cats being predators, nowadays there are other animals and environmental dangers for cats themselves, such as snakes, garden pesticides, vicious dogs, motor vehicles, etc. that prevent cats from roaming safely outside.
- Cats, unlike dogs, do not need to have long walks outdoors with their owners for daily exercise. Why do you think this is so? Cats tend to be nocturnal and spend a lot of time sleeping, like Winston!
- Can you think of any other household pets that are kept in a confined space? (e.g., rabbits, chickens, birds, guinea pigs, etc.)

Does the mailman deliver letters to your street?

- Some houses don't have mailboxes and collect their mail from the post office.
- What are some reasons for having a special post box?

The Language of Homophones

Homophones are words that sound the same but have different spellings and meanings; *knows* and *nose* are homophones.

- The author could have titled this book **Winston's Nose, Winston's Nose Knows**, or **Winston Knows**. Do you agree with her choice? What would you have decided if you were writing the title of this book, and why?
- Can you think of some other homophones?

The Five senses

Winston has very good hearing and a very good sense of smell.

- Do you hear the sound of your front gate when you are asleep the way Winston did?
- Can you smell something cooking in the kitchen and know what it is without seeing it?

Spot the difference

After Winston starts smelling Nick's shoes he is still a bit sleepy. Can you spot the differences in what he sniffs to what Betsy and Nick actually saw? Can you see how the artist is having fun with you as a reader? Do you catch most of her jokes, e.g. an ice cream has become a hot dog, and the girl is the one with the moustache?

Follow up Activities

- Write a paragraph or story that includes an example of homophones.
- Visit a cat show and see British Short Hair cats.
- Have a talk from an environmentalist about keeping our birds and wildlife safe from domestic pet predators.
- Test your sense of smell and see if you can recognize something by its smell while blindfolded.
- Here are some other places where Winston might be confined:
 - a) in the cargo hold of an airplane when he travels to a new home interstate
 - b) at a veterinary hospital when he has an operation
 - c) at a cat show.
- Can you write a story or draw some pictures of adventures that he might have in these circumstances?