

## TEACHERS' NOTES



# BUILDING SITE ZOO

BY SOPHIE MASSON AND LAURA WOOD

TEACHERS' NOTES BY ROBYN SHEAHAN-BRIGHT

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# INTRODUCTION

'Every morning on our walk we see...'

A walk to school can be a daily routine or an adventure, depending on how you view the world. In this imaginative text, two children, accompanied by their grandfather, pass a construction site and see various types of construction machinery. But to them the machines look just like animals. So they imagine a Building Site Zoo!

Sophie Masson and Laura Wood have created a vibrant and energetic written and visual text that will encourage young readers to explore, write, draw and create.

## THEMES & CURRICULUM TOPICS

Several themes relevant to curriculum topics (Studies of Society & Environment, English Language & Literacy, and Visual Literacy) might be identified in this picture book:

## STUDIES OF SOCIETY & ENVIRONMENT (SOSE)

### • IMAGINATION

**ACTIVITY:** This text encourages children to see the extraordinary in the ordinary, such as imagining a machine is an animal. [See also English Language & Literacy below.] Do you imagine scenarios when you are walking to school, or to the shops, or to visit friends? What do you imagine? [See also Worksheet 1 below.]

**ACTIVITY:** Read other books about walking to school and/or the imagination, eg Margaret Mahy and Stephen Kellogg's *The Boy Who Was Followed Home* (Puffin, 1993, 1975); Dr Seuss's *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street* (Green Back Books, 2003; Vanguard Press, 1937); Lisa Shanahan and Gus Gordon's *Big Pet Day* (Lothian, Hachette, 2014); Hazel Edwards and Deborah Niland's *There's a Hippopotamus on Our Roof Eating Cake* (30th Anniversary Edition, Penguin, 2011, 1981) and sequels.

## • MACHINERY

**ACTIVITY:** Write a list of the machines that appear in this book. Write another list of other machines that are used in construction.







Discussion Point: Invent and draw your own construction machine.

**ACTIVITY:** Read and compare this book to others and create a classroom display of books about building or construction site machines. [See Bibliography.]

## • ANIMALS

**ACTIVITY:** Write a list of the animals that appear in this book. Write another list of other animals that might look like machines.

**ACTIVITY:** Using the table below, write the relevant word in the second column.

ANIMAL	MACHINE/ EQUIPMENT	ANIMAL	MACHINE/ EQUIPMENT
			
			
			



## • URBAN LIVING & STREETSCAPES

**ACTIVITY:** Children in the inner city live in a landscape that is very different from those who live in small towns or in rural settings. This book depicts high-rise apartments and ongoing construction as a major part of their lives. Write a list of all the things one might see on the street in a big city.

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LITERACY

Study the writing style employed in this picture book, and examine the following sub-topics:

## • LITERARY DEVICES, RHYMING & WORD PLAY

**ACTIVITY:** Find examples of the use of literary devices in this book, eg 'Silky smooth sauce' (alliteration); 'The cranes are fishing' (personification).

**ACTIVITY:** This is a rhyming text. Here is a list of the rhymes: Zoo/too; Street/meet; Roar/more; Down/town; Jaws/sauce; Can/sand; West/best; Sky/high. Which one is an imperfect rhyme? (Answer: Can/sand) Choose one of the rhymes and come up with your own rhyming word.

## • VERBS

**ACTIVITY:** Make a list of the verbs (or 'doing' words) in this book that relate to construction, eg 'flattens', 'churns', 'dig'. Invite students to make their own lists of other such construction words.

## • HUMOUR

**DISCUSSION POINT:** What did you find funny in this book?

## • STRUCTURE OF FABLE OR FOLK TALE

**DISCUSSION POINT:** This story has a cumulative tale structure. Like any traditional fable or folk tale, it has key narrative features such as a strong idea or concept, a journey (to school), with a series of meetings, sometimes a turning point in the predicted action (which doesn't occur here), and a resolution. What turning point might have occurred in this story?

**DISCUSSION POINT:** What does the resolution suggest?

## • WRITING TASK

**ACTIVITY:** Invite students to write a story beginning: 'Every morning on our walk we see...'

## • CHARACTERS

**ACTIVITY:** Imagine each animal/machine's character. Write a list of adjectives to describe that character, eg Bull – Quarrelsome; Beaver – Persistent; Giraffe – ? etc.

# VISUAL LITERACY

## • COVERS

**ACTIVITY:** Design a new cover for this book.

## • STORYBOARD

**ACTIVITY:** The storyboard of this book consists of 32 pages beginning with a half-title page, imprint page and title page. Discuss the design of a storyboard with your students.

## • ENDPAPERS

**ACTIVITY:** Look at the endpapers of this book which feature a safety cone (sometimes known as a witch's hat) alternately upright and inverted. Create your own pattern for an endpaper design using a hard hat like those worn by construction workers. Draw and then photocopy it to achieve uniformity in each image, copied multiple times; then colour the images in bright colours to create a vibrant patterned paper to cover one of your school books.

## • COLOURS

**ACTIVITY:** Each animal is depicted in a colour that isn't typical of them, eg a green beaver. This adds to the imaginative nature of the story. Some of the fonts used in the written text are multicoloured as well. Invite students to create a drawing of an animal and then to colour it imaginatively.

## • CRITICAL LITERACY

**ACTIVITY:** Examine the pictures carefully. What other funny or intriguing things did you notice in the images? [See Worksheet 2.]

## • DRAWING

**ACTIVITY:** Draw a picture of the animal that matches a forklift machine. [See Worksheet 1.]

# CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

1. Write a script for this book and then act out the scene for your classmates.
2. Design a poster to advertise this book. [See Bibliography for resources.]
3. The title of any book is important. What other title might this book have had?
4. Create a book trailer for this book. [See Bibliography for resources.]
5. Make a model of any of the machines in this book. Use discarded resources such as clingwrap tubes, craft paper, foil, bottle tops etc.
6. Write a song about the Building Site Zoo.
7. Create a comic strip of three images based on one of the incidents described in this book, using speech bubbles.
8. Finish this sentence: 'I think a monkey looks like a [what machine?] because []'.



9. Observe all the things on one double-page spread of this book. Then close the book and write a list of everything you've seen on that spread. Compare your list with that created by other members of your class.

10. Create a display of all the books you've read, and the writing and drawing you have done for this unit.

## CONCLUSION

This is a charming story about children engaged in an everyday activity but also exploring their imaginations. It will encourage young readers to view their world imaginatively and to relish the opportunity to observe, imagine and create stories. Machines and animals are of great interest to young readers and this book encompasses both, so it is bound to become a popular favourite.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sophie Masson was born in Jakarta, Indonesia, to French parents. She has spent most of her life going back and forth between Australia and France. Sophie writes for adults, teenagers and children; she is published in Australia, the US, Italy and the UK. Winner of the Australian Young Adult Aurealis Science Fiction and Fantasy Award and shortlisted for many others, she has also written for stage, radio and newspapers, magazines and literary journals. She is fluently bilingual and frequently returns to France to visit family. She lives in New South Wales, Australia, with her husband and they have three children. Sophie is the Australian correspondent for the ACHUKA website – [www.achuka.co.uk](http://www.achuka.co.uk) – and her own website is: [www.sophiemasson.org/index.html](http://www.sophiemasson.org/index.html)



# ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Laura Wood is an independent illustrator currently living in Bristol, UK. She grew up in the north of Italy devouring books, drawing on the kitchen walls of her parents' house and imagining animals could talk to her and become her friends. 'Now I spend my days creating visual worlds and truly enjoying every minute of it. In particular, my favourite part of the illustration process is the moment I stumble upon things in a text that weren't there before (or maybe they were just hiding between a comma and an exclamation mark). Or the minute I run into the right colour palette for a story. That's when the world begins to really come to life. Oh, and did I mention bumping into funny (and furry!) characters in amusing stories? That really makes my day.' [www.laurawoodillustration.com/About](http://www.laurawoodillustration.com/About)

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Shanahan, Lisa *Big Pet Day* ill. by Gus Gordon. Lothian, Hachette Australia, 2014.

Zanni, Louise *Archie and the Bear* ill. by David Mackintosh. HarperCollins, 2017.

See also lists such as:

'Great Picture Books to Spark Imagination' Pernille Ripp October 23, 2015. <<https://pernillesripp.com/2015/10/23/great-picture-books-to-spark-imagination/>>

## WEBSITE RESOURCES ON BUILDING OR CONSTRUCTION SITES

'Building Machines for Kids' by Bambo-Jambo YouTube June 21, 2017. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h28PpMRnZkE>>

'Construction Equipment and Trucks for Children' by ZipZapPower YouTube January 31, 2014. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BeoZ03sQE9s>>

'Construction equipment for children' by Toy Scouts YouTube December 20, 2014. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x9rOwFgOBo0>>

'Learning Construction Vehicles for Kids' by Organic Learning YouTube October 26, 2015. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lnisljBSV9w>>

## NON-FICTION TEACHING RESOURCES

Chinn, Mike *Writing and Illustrating the Graphic Novel: Everything You Need to Know to Create Great Graphic Works* London, New Burlington Books, 2004, 2006.

Stowell, Louie *Write and Draw Your Own Comics* ill. by Jess Bradley, Neill Cameron, Freya Harrison, Laura Howell, Adam Larkum and Igor Sinkovec. Usborne, 2014.



## WEBSITE TEACHING RESOURCES

'Book Trailers' *Insideadog*

<<https://insideadog.com.au/teachers/book-trailers>>

'Book Trailers' *Mrs Mac's Library*

<<http://www.mrsmacslibrary.com/book-trailers.html>>

DeFelice, Karen 'Twenty-Five Ways to Design an Awesome Poster and Create a Buzz for Your Next Event' *Design School* March 13, 2015.

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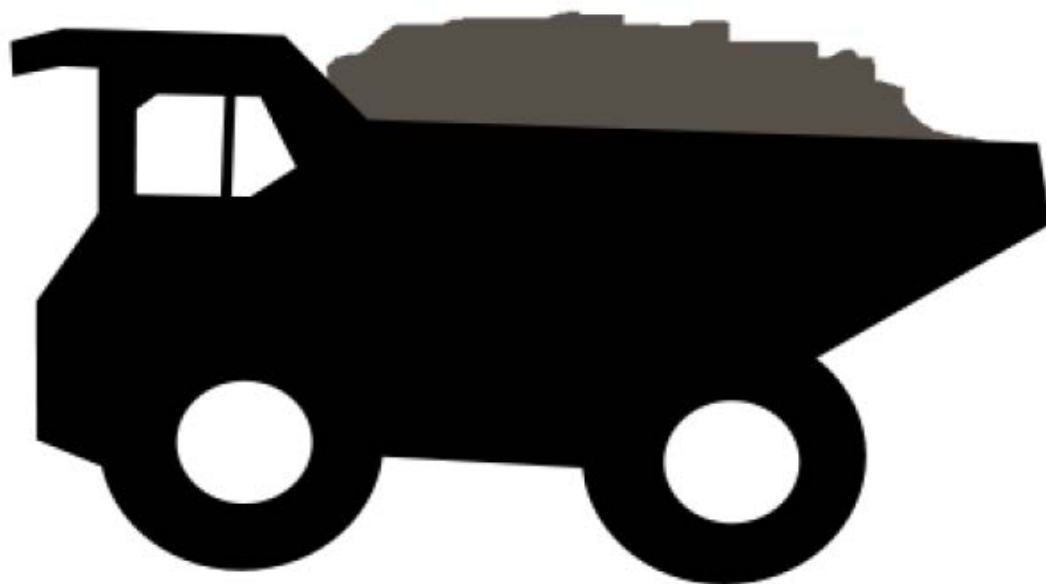
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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF THE NOTES

Dr Robyn Sheahan-Bright operates justified text writing and publishing consultancy services, and is widely published on children's literature, publishing history and Australian fiction. In 2011, she was the recipient of the CBCA (Qld) Dame Annabelle Rankin Award; in 2012, of the CBCA Nan Chauncy Award for Outstanding Services to Children's Literature; and in 2014, the QWC's Johnno Award.

## WORKSHEET 1 CREATE A BUILDING SITE ANIMAL!

Draw the rest of this picture making this dump truck into an animal. Then colour the rest of the image in. Make a display of the 'Building Site Zoo' images in your classroom to see how very differently each student has illustrated this building site animal.



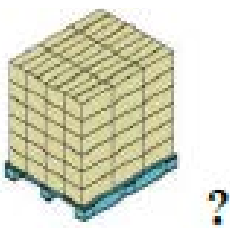


## WORKSHEET 2 OBSERVATION & COMPREHENSION QUIZ

1. What time is it when the two children go to school?
2. In what sort of home do the children live?
3. Why might their grandfather take them to school?
4. What colour is the hippo?
5. What does the bull remind the children of?
6. What can you see in the hippo's mouth, apart from dirt?
7. Safety cones appear in the images. What other piece of equipment beginning with 'safety' appears?
8. What safety item are these men wearing?



9. In the picture featuring the beaver there are sheets stacked on a ?



10. What is this piece of equipment attached to?



ANSWERS: 1. Three minutes to 8.00 am 2. They live in a high-rise apartment 3. They live with him and/or their parents are shift or early workers 4. Red/ orange 5. A bulldozer 6. Dice, a button and a ring 7. Safety barriers/ fences 8. Hard hats 9. A pallet 10. A crane.

### WORKSHEET 3 MATHEMATICAL QUIZ

1. How many giraffes are in the row below?



2. If you take two giraffes away from the row above, how many would you have?

3. How many hippos appear in the row below?



4. Which of the images is the odd one out in the row below, and why?



5. How many cranes are in the following row?



6. Subtract the number of bulldozers from bulls below.





7. If you multiply the number of kangaroos below, by five, how many would you have?



8. How many machines or construction equipment images are depicted on this worksheet?










9. How many animals are depicted on this worksheet?

10. How many hard hats can you see on this worksheet?

ANSWERS: 1. Four 2. Two 3. Four 4. The hippo is the only animal 5. This is a trick question: there are four cranes (machines) and four cranes (birds) Total: Eight 6. Five bulldozers from six bulls = One 7. Three x Five = Fifteen 8. Twenty-seven 9. Twenty-two 10. Three

## WORKSHEET 4 BUILDING SITE ZOO

Write the relevant word below each of these images

		
1.	2.	3.
		
4.	5.	6.
		
7.	8.	9.

Answers: 1. Hard hat 2. Jack hammer 3. Excavator/digger 4. Safety cone (Witch's hat) 5. Dump (Tip) truck 6. Bulldozer 7. Cement mixer 8. Scaffolding 9. Crane.