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Who's the Gang in Our Street?

Written by Susanne Gervay

Illustrated by Nancy Bevington



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Who's The Gang in Our Street is a narrative non-fiction with supporting facts. It is written to delight young people about the antics and values of our loved Sulphur Crested Cockatoos. It combines creative imagery and information and is on the K-3 Australian national curriculum for Australian birds. It links into the social and emotional module where the Sulphur Crested Cockatoos have a social structure which embraces equality, inclusion, no bullying, loyalty and values that relate to the best of what we seek to teach children. They are also funny, playful, affectionate and smart. Sulphur crested cockatoos are part of Australian identity in both the city and bush.

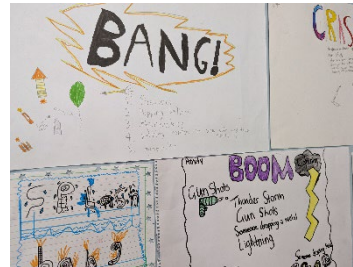
BEFORE READING

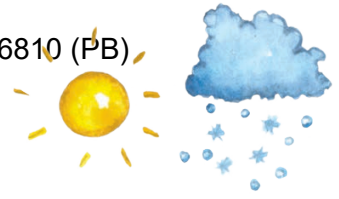
- Ask children what they understand by the word 'gang'. Lead discussion to understand that while often the word might refer to criminals e.g., a gang of thieves that its original interpretation, from the Old English root word 'gang' meaning journey, is a group of people who travel together.
- Generate class discussion on to which 'gangs' they belong such as sporting teams, Scouts/Guides, choirs or other group activities. Survey the class and graph the most popular gang activities.
- The Gang Show (Scouting) is a tradition around the world, originating to create a community spirit, learning experience for members and a way to contribute to artistic and cultural growth of the local community. Teach the nonsense Scouting song [Ging Gang Goolie](#) – it is a very old and popular 'round' song - (or ask your music teacher to do so)
- Show the cover and ask the children to predict who the titular gang might be. What do they know about cockatoos?



DURING READING

- What do you notice about the children in the neighbourhood? Is the setting urban or rural? What visual clues tell you this? [appearances, names, clothing, cityscape]
- Onomatopoeia is used throughout the text.
 - ✓ Make a list of the words you can find.
 - ✓ To extend, choose one of these [or another] and create an illustrated writing piece. Write your chosen word and then a list of examples that use or make that sound e.g. Splash: jumping into a pool, waves against against the shore, raindrops into a puddle. Put your word at the top of your page like a fancy title, your list of words and phrases down the page and illustrate. You could even conclude with a synonym for your original word.
 - ✓ Create an onomatopoeia alphabet chart
- The author uses adjectives (describing words) to make the story more interesting and engaging. Make a list of the adjectives you can find and then brainstorm others that will be useful in your own writing.
- What do you think is the author's purpose in writing this book? What have you learned from reading it? How could you share this information with others in an interesting way?
- Consider the terms: threatened, endangered, critically endangered and extinct. Write definitions for each and research some examples.
- There are [57 varieties of parrots](#) in Australia. Choose one to research and create a one-pager report. Compile these into a class book. {There are many free templates on the net}. Alternatively, create a PPS or photo story to share findings
- Each year the [Aussie Bird Count](#) gathers information about our bird population. As a class, or as individuals, keep track and submit your findings.
- Many people think cockatoo is a word from First Nations culture. Actually, it is thought to come from the Dutch word "kaketo", which is itself an adaptation from the Malay word, "kakatua". There are many different names for these birds across various First Nations languages: **"biliirr" (Gamilaraay)**, **"wayimaa" (Wiradjuri)**; **"gehr" (Bundjalung)**, **"kakalyalya" (Warlpiri)** and **"carapii" (Biripi)**. What is the language of the traditional owners of the land on which you live? Find out some names of animals in that language and compile a class dictionary, which could be illustrated.





AFTER READING

- Use the free [template and instructions](#) [credit:Lotta magazine] to make a flock of flying Australian birds or find other ideas on the internet.
- Other art/craft ideas are paper plate birds, 'toilet roll' cockatoos and face masks [many ideas on the internet including free templates]. These could be used for some simple drama activities based on the book e.g., small groups could act out something the cockatoos might do and the rest of the class guess what they are doing.
- Invite an expert or perhaps even the owner of a cockatoo or other parrot to visit and talk about the care and needs of the bird/s. Alternatively, arrange an excursion to a bird garden/sanctuary.
- Have a gallery walk and view all the research one pagers and compare the information about various birds.
- Billycarts and billycart races (derbies) were very popular in the past, and are still popular in some places today.
 - ✓ Have you ever ridden in a billy cart? Have you even seen one?
 - ✓ Where did the name come from? When were they first 'invented'?
 - ✓ Do some research and find some photos (some historical photos go back 100 years). Ask older family members or friends if they ever made or had a billy cart.
 - ✓ Compare billy carts past and present. How are they made? What materials would you need?
 - ✓ Write a set of instructions for building a billy cart.
 - ✓ Make a model billy cart from recycled materials.



ABOUT THE BOOK

Who's the Gang in Our Street Written by Susanne Gervay. Illustrated by Nancy Bevington.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Awarded the Lifetime Social Justice Literature Award for her books by the International Literacy Association, nominated for the Astrid Ingrid Memorial Award and an Order of Australia for literature, Susanne Gervay is recognized for her youth literature from pre-school to young adult novels on social justice. She engages young people in complex issues from multiculturalism, disability to peace.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Nancy Bevington is an energetic, multifaceted visual artist. Her artistic career spans over three decades, working in painting, illustration and concept creation and execution. Picture books are one of her real passions. Using her many styles and techniques she has the ability to interpret the written word and bring a story to life.

SPECIFIC CURRICULUM LINKS

Foundation, 1 – 3 Focus: Australian Animals

English

AC9E1LA08

AC9E2LA08

AC9EFLE02

AC9E1LE01

AC9E2LE01

AC9EFLE03

AC9E1LE02

AC9E2LE02

HASS

AC9HSFS01

AC9HS1S01

MATHS

ACMSP011

ACMSP263

ACMSP048

ACMSP069

BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE

AC9S1U01

Useful Links

- [Birds in Backyards](#)
- [Aussie Bird Count – Teachers page](#)
- [Animalia – Sulphur-crested cockatoo bio](#)



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Appendix

There are many freely available simple information templates suitable for a one-pager on animals. A search of the internet will yield multiple results with a variety of formats

Animal Name

Picture

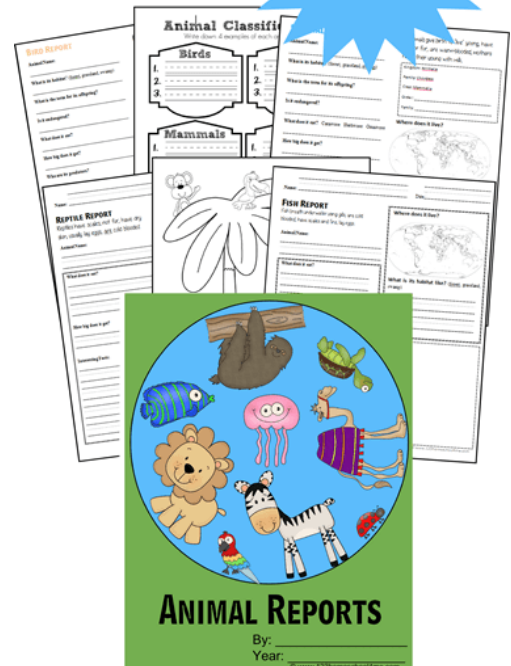
Facts

Other Information

Habitat



FREE



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