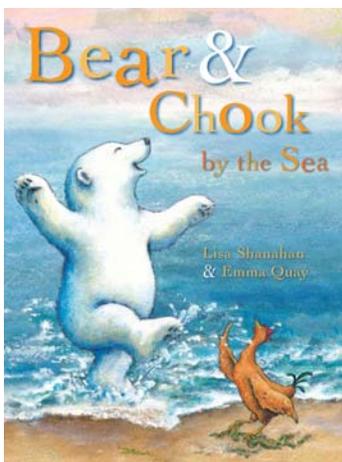


Bear & Chook by the Sea

Author: Lisa Shanahan | **Illustrator:** Emma Quay



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Teachers' Guide by Robyn Sheahan-Bright

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INTRODUCTION

Bear and Chook are the dearest, and yet unlikeliest, of friends. Bear is always rushing at new experiences 'like a bull at a gate' while Chook prefers a much quieter life! Their joyous adventures are punctuated by their mishaps and resolved by their care for each other.

In this second book, Bear decides that they must visit the sea. Chook reluctantly accompanies him and at each juncture of their journey finds something to be frightened of.

'I want to go home' is Chook's repeated refrain, until the tables are turned. For when they arrive at the beach, Bear is overwhelmed by the power of the sea, and then he decides that he wants to go home!

In this second book about them, there are laughs, tears, and poignant moments which are warm and evocative for the young reader.

Lisa Shanahan's delightful stories about these friends are beautifully drawn and painted by Emma Quay. Bear and Chook are two of the most endearing characters depicted in picture books, and they are likely to be enduring characters too! For they are a 'classic' pairing, in the tradition of Arnold Lobel's *Frog and Toad* or Rosemary Wells's *Max and Ruby* series.

And who knows what this delightful duo will get up to next? Stay tuned for the next installment!

TOPICS & THEMES

Several **topics and themes** are covered in this work, which might provoke class discussion:

- **Friendship**

Activity: Discuss the nature of friendship. What qualities does a good friend have? Is Bear a good friend to Chook, and Chook to Bear?

Activity: Write an acrostic poem using the letters in the word 'Friendship'.

- **Fears**

Question: What are you afraid of? Do strange noises frighten you, as they do Chook, in this story? Are you afraid of the sea?

- **Bears**

Activity: Make a list of all the kinds of bears that you can think of.

- **Chooks**

Activity: Draw a chook and then colour your picture in. (See websites listed in the Bibliography for guidelines on how to draw chickens.)

Activity: How many folk tales feature chickens? (e.g. Henny Penny.) Read some of these folk tales, and some contemporary picture books featuring chickens listed in the Bibliography.

LANGUAGE & LITERACY

- **Descriptions in this work are beautifully crafted and evocative.** e.g. 'breeze came sniffing and licking'; 'wind is as warm as honey toast'; 'That's a holiday sky'; 'sea shone like a lizard's skin'.

Activity: Try to come up with original and inventive descriptions like these.

- **This book is part of a series of two books in which the same characters appear.**

Questions: What other things might have happened to Bear and Chook on their way to the sea? Write some further incidents into this story. What other adventure might they embark on? Come up with the title of the third book in the series, and briefly describe what happens in it.

Activity: Read other series of books about animal friends such as Lisa Wheeler's *Fitch and Chip* series, Arnold Lobel's *Frog and Toad* series and Rosemary Wells' *Max and Ruby* series. Discuss the characters and the way their relationships are portrayed.

- **Rhythm and Repetition are used effectively in this book.**

Activity: As Bear and Chook journey on their travels their movement is described with the repeated words (which also demonstrate the device of 'onomatopoeia' or sound echoing sense): 'Flomp, flomp, scratch, scratch, flomp, flomp, scratch.' Have students create their own sequence of words with this sort of rhythm to describe making a journey.

- **This is a Cumulative story with a repeated refrain, a model used in many folk tales and contemporary picture books.** e.g. 'I want to go home,' whimpered/ moaned/gasped/wailed Chook', and then the action is reversed when Bear nearly drowns and he says 'I want to go home'. The journey they embark on is also like that of a folk tale. Bear tells Chook that the sea is 'Just around the pond, under the bridge, through the forest and over the mountain'.

Activity: Write a story using this model. a) First come up with another unlikely pairing of two animals which are rather different. (One of the funny things about Bear and Chook is that one is so big and the other is so small.) Many folk tales use such a substitution. e.g. The Hare and the Tortoise. b) Begin with something like 'One day a goanna and a kangaroo were on their way to? when ? happened.' c) Use repetition, rhythm and other devices to tell the story.

- **Reviews**

Activity: Write a review of this book commenting on the style of writing, and of the illustrations, and the ideas the story conveys. How successful is it? Did you like it, and why?

VISUAL LITERACY

- **The Storyboard in a picture book is designed to enhance the text, and the format of the book, and its internal layout is selected carefully.** Here the format is 'portrait' i.e. a rectangle which is taller than it is wide, in which the illustrations are double page spreads with the action moving from left to right as in a journey. (However, the spreads do become landscape when the book is opened.)

Activity: The other formats used in picture books are landscape and square. Imagine if one of the pictures had been designed in a landscape format. How might that have changed the picture?

- **The Medium** used in this book creates a delicate image, with a 'blurred' edge to the figures, and executed on a grainy, dense paper which adds to the beauty of the work. Emma says that: 'Although I did use plenty of water mixed with the paints for the illustrations, to give parts of the images a delicate, translucent quality, I used **acrylic paints** rather than watercolours for both *Bear and Chook* books. I like the fact that, as acrylics are waterproof, one is able to build up many layers of transparent washes of colour without the artwork becoming overworked or 'muddy'. In parts of the artworks, particularly in the scenes at dusk or early in the morning, the acrylics were applied directly from the tube to give a thick, rich and opaque covering.'

Activity: Read Emma Quay's article on her work [Quay, Emma 'Characters: Animal or Human?' http://cbca.org.au/downloads/EMMA_QUAY.pdf] or information on her website, and choose some points from it to discuss with your students.

- **Creating engaging animal characters in picture book illustrations, is a real skill.**

Activity: Examine the other animal characters Emma Quay has created, *Reggie and Lu (and the same to you!)* (2004) – about two pigs– and, with author Meredith Hooper *Emily and Alfie* (2006) – about two penguins. How does she make her characters so endearing? Visit her website to read about how she creates her characters. Try to create your own pair of animal characters; give them names and some characteristics, and then draw them.

CREATIVE ARTS

This title could be used to stimulate:

- **Displays**

Activity: Create a classroom display of books about bears and chickens, or animal friends. Read and discuss them. Add your stories and illustrations to the display.

- **Puppet Plays**

Activity: Create puppets of Bear and Chook and put on a puppet play of their adventures.

- **Performance**

Activity: Have students act out the parts of Bear or Chook, and practice walking like them.

- **Craft**

Activity: Make Bear or Chook masks to wear. [For instructions see: 'Chicken Mask' *Activity Village* [co.uk http://www.activityvillage.co.uk/chicken_mask.htm](http://www.activityvillage.co.uk/chicken_mask.htm) and 'Bear Mask Craft' *ShowKidstheFun.com* <http://www.showkidsthefun.com/activity/bear-mask-craft.html>]

CONCLUSION

Bear and Chook are the best of friends—unlikely ones, but firm friends all the same. They comfort each other and support each other, and they generally require the other's assistance at completely different times.

They're different—as good friends often are. But in their hearts they're as close, as close, can be.

BLACKLINE MASTER 1 PICTURE BOOK PAIRS

Here is a list of animal partners who appear in a number of picture books and folk tales. Try to match them up.

HARE	TOAD
BRER RABBIT	MOUSE
JACK	CHIP (PIG)
FROG	MIA (CHICKEN)
PEPO (A PIG)	TORTOISE
LION	WILBUR (PIG)
RICKY (RABBIT)	BRER FOX
MAX (RABBIT)	GIANT
CHARLOTTE(SPIDER)	RUBY (RABBIT)
FITCH (WOLF)	LOLO (A CHICKEN)

BLACKLINE MASTER 2 FINISH THE TITLES

Finish the titles of these picture books which feature the names of chickens or bears.

1. Henny...
2. Brown Bear, Brown Bear, See?
3. We're Going on a ... Hunt.
4. The Little Red...
5. Big Red Hen and the Little Lost ...
6. Shutting the In
7. Mrs Chooks
8. Whacko the
9. Can't, Little Bear?
10. ... and Bear.

Answers: 1. Henny Penny 2. Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? 3. We're Going on a Bear Hunt 4. The Little Red Hen 5. Big Red Hen and the Little Lost Egg 6. Shutting the Chooks In 7. Mrs Wilkinson's Chooks 8. Whacko the Chook 9. Can't You Sleep, Little Bear? 10. Dog and Bear

BLACKLINE MASTER 3 BEST OF FRIENDS COLOURING IN

Colour in this picture of Bear and Chook.



EMMA QUAY 2009

BLACKLINE MASTER 4 BEAR AND CHOOK QUIZ

Questions:

1. What sort of bear is Bear?
2. What was the title of the first book which came before this one?
3. How do they get to the sea from where they live?
4. What or who do they hear on their journey?
5. Bear has a pack on his back, but what does he carry over his shoulder on the journey?
6. When they first see the sea, how is it described?
7. How does Chook describe the sand?
8. What was Chook doing while bear was 'dancing by the water's edge'?
9. What happened when Bear went for a swim?
10. What does Chook make Bear when they get home?

Answers: 1. A polar bear. 2. Bear and Chook 3. 'Just around the pond, under the bridge, through the forest and over the mountain'. 4. Frog, Owl, Train and Stone. 5. A beach towel. 6. 'The sea shone like a lizard's skin'. 7. He says it's 'crunchy'. 8. 'Chook scratched and pecked and poked.' 9. 'A big, big wave slicked up from the deep' and he was tossed by the waves and thrown onto the shore. 10. Warm honey toast.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lisa Shanahan grew up in a small suburb of Sydney, near the Georges River, with her younger brother and sister and a large cast of lost and found cats. After finishing high school, she studied Communications at the University of Technology where she majored in writing, before going on to train as an actor at Theatre Nepean, the University of Western Sydney.

It was while she was teaching drama that she wrote her first play for children. That experience helped convince Lisa that not only did she want to be a writer, but also in fact that she wanted to be a writer for young people. She has gone on to become an award-winning writer of picture books and novels. Her books are published both in Australia and internationally.

Lisa's first novel, *Sweetie May* (illustrated by Kerry Millard) published in 1998, was listed as a CBCA Notable Book. Her next project a picture book, *What Rot*, illustrated by Eric Lobbecke, was also a CBCA Notable Book. Lisa continued to delight children with her two pirate rascals and the charming Sweetie May in *Sweetie May Overboard*, once again illustrated by Kerry Millard's humorous and wacky drawings.

Some of Lisa's well-loved picture books with the illustrator Emma Quay include *Bear and Chook* and *Daddy's Having a Horse*, both of which were short-listed for the CBCA Book of the Year for Early Childhood. Pirates were a feature again in Lisa's next book, the funny, tender portrait of a mother and her daughter in *My Mum Tarzan* illustrated by Bettina Guthridge.

Lisa has also collaborated with the illustrator Wayne Harris. Their books together include *Gordon's got a Snookie*, winner of the APA Best Designed Children's Picture Book of the Year 2003, *The Postman's Dog*, winner of the 2006 Speech Pathology Book of the Year for lower primary. Their latest offering together is the delightful bedtime book *Sleep Tight, My Honey*, which was an ECA Picture Book of the Year, 2008. Lisa's first novel for teenagers *My Big Birkett* was published to critical acclaim both in Australia, where it was shortlisted for the CBCA Book of the Year for Older Readers in 2007 and in the United States, where she toured America as part of the 'Random House Teen Voices Tour'.

Lisa is very excited about *Bear and Chook by the Sea*, the much-anticipated sequel to her best-selling collaboration with Emma Quay. She describes writing the text for this story about two familiar friends as being “one of the best, most exhilarating experiences of my writing life.”

Lisa continues to live in Sydney, with her husband and their three sons (and so far, no lost and found cats!) nearby the river of her childhood. For more information on Lisa visit her website: [http:// www.lisashanahan.com](http://www.lisashanahan.com)

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Emma Quay grew up in a village near Cambridge, England. She has drawn voraciously since childhood, and eventually graduated with an Honours degree in Graphic Design from Newcastle upon Tyne Polytechnic, specialising in illustration and printmaking. Shortly after graduation, a selection of Emma's illustrative work was purchased by the Victoria and Albert Museum, London for its permanent collection of prints and drawings. She continued to exhibit her monoprints and charcoal sketches, travelling to Morocco, India, Nepal and Bhutan to sketch, whilst also working as a freelance illustrator.

Since moving to Sydney in 1993, Emma has illustrated a wide range of children's picture books, two of which have been short listed for the Children's Book Council of Australia's Book of the Year Awards: *Bear and Chook* and *Daddy's Having a Horse*, both written by Lisa Shanahan. Emma's collaboration with writer Meredith Hooper produced two CBCA Notable Books: the popular *Thank You for My Yukky Present* and *Emily and Alfie*, which also received a Whitley Award from the Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales. Emma both wrote and illustrated *Reggie and Lu (and the same to you!)* (2004)—a CBCA Notable Book in 2005. The following year, the bestselling early childhood picture book, *Good Night, Me*—a collaboration with writer Andrew Daddo—was selected as the National Simultaneous Storytime book, when the book was read to over 40,000 children all over Australia. Emma's second collaboration with Andrew, *Cheeky Monkey* (an ECA Picture Book of the Year, 2008), depicts a family waking up and getting ready for their day-full of warmth, role play, games and silly names.

Emma's books are published internationally, and she has toured in Korea and presented her work all over Australia, often with Lisa Shanahan. Emma lives in Sydney with her Australian husband and their two daughters, and works from a studio in her home. She is currently

working, as author, with illustrator Anna Walker, on a series of titles for very young children called *Friends for Keeps*, in addition to illustrating another of her own picture book texts. For more information on Emma visit her website: <http://www.emmaquay.com>

For additional Teachers Notes written by author and illustrator, visit:
<http://www.emmaquay.com/teachers.html>

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. She has taught writing for children and young adults at Griffith University (Gold Coast), and co-edited (with Craig Munro) *Paper Empires a History of the Book in Australia 1946-2005* (UQP, 2006). Recent articles have included a celebration of Shaun Tan's work for *The Australian Author* (December 2007), a profile of Jan Pienkowski for *Magpies* (March 2008), and one on Indigenous Publishing (May 2009), also for *Magpies*. She writes teachers and reading group notes for a variety of publishers.