



Reading Notes

A Giraffe in the Bath

Mem Fox and Olivia Rawson

SYNOPSIS:

A giraffe in the bath – does that make you laugh?
Or a frog in the flour?
Or a sheep in the shower?
An owl with the flu?
Or a roo on the loo?
A crocodile with style – does that make you smile?

What makes *you* laugh? This very funny picture book suggests increasingly silly and hilarious possibilities, introducing the child reader to an eclectic mix of wildlife along the way. Each spread bursts with the colour and humour of Kerry Argent's incredible illustrations, and the carefully structured text invites multiple re-readings.

WRITING STYLE

A rollicking, joyous text, pitched at a young audience, this book is perfect for introducing children to poetry and meter. Mem Fox and one of her students, Olivia Rawson, use short rhyming couplets to give their writing pace, and engage the child with the repeating rhythms of their language. By framing the book as a series of questions, they invite interaction and participation in its telling.

Mem is well known for carefully considering the weight and merit of each word she writes, agonising over its placement. Her methods are evident in the tight, streamlined structure of this book, leaving the gaps and pauses that have allowed Kerry Argent to maximise her gifts as a visual storyteller.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mem Fox was born in Melbourne, Australia, but spent some of her childhood in Africa. She wrote *Possum Magic* while taking a second degree in children's literature, and it went on to become the best-selling children's book in Australia. She has since written almost thirty books for children and now specialises in literacy.

Mem has been presented with many awards including the 1990 Dromkeen Medal for distinguished services to children's literature; a 1991 Advance Australia Award for her outstanding contribution to Australian literature; a medal in the 1993 Australia Day Honours awards, for services to the cultural life of Australia, and an Honorary Doctorate of Letters from the University of Wollongong, Australia, in 1996.

She worked as an Associate Professor of Literacy Studies in the School of Education at Flinders University, South Australia for twenty-four years. She now travels widely as an international literacy consultant and writes for children and adults (including the best-seller *Reading Magic*.) *Possum Magic*, is still the bestselling picture book ever in Australia and *Where is the Green Sheep?* was the winner of the 2005 Children's Book Council Award for Book of the Year - Early Childhood. It has sold over half a million copies to date. She lives in a beachside suburb in Adelaide, South Australia, and is married with one adult daughter.

Olivia Rawson trained as a teacher at Flinders University where she was taught by Mem Fox. She gave up the excitement of teaching for the mayhem of motherhood. She loves Adelaide, where she lives with her husband and three children.

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

Kerry Argent's illustrations for this text are phenomenal! Rich in visual detail, vibrant and magical, they can be pored over for hours, and are perfect for teaching children to label and identify animals. Mem and Olivia's text sings and is a joy to read aloud. In combination, these talented individuals have created a book that children will want to revisit again and again. *A Giraffe in the Bath* is set to become a classic – a must-have for schools, home and libraries everywhere.

STUDY NOTES/ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHERS

THEMES:

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION:

CHARACTERS:

ACTIVITIES:

MARKETING AND PROMOTION:

ADVERTISING

PUBLICITY

EDUCATION MARKETING

ON-LINE