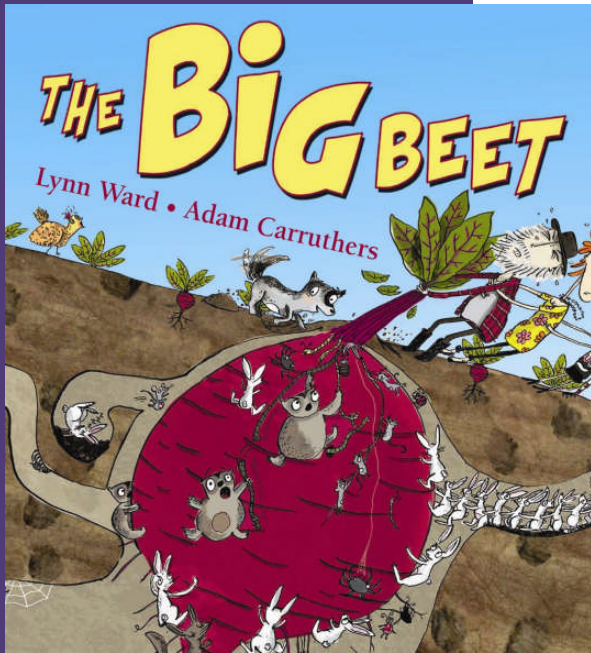


Teachers' Notes

The Big Beet

Lynn Ward

Illustrated by Adam Carruthers



OMNIBUS BOOKS

Category	Picture book
Title	The Big Beet
Author	Lynn Ward
Illustrator	Adam Carruthers
Extent	24 pp
Age	Pre-school age
ISBN	978 1 86291 966 2

Teachers' Notes by Madeline Holmes

Contents

About the Story.....	2
About the Author.....	2
About the Illustrator.....	2
Study Notes for Teachers.....	2

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About the Story

The Big Beet is a delightful story about a very stubborn beet and how an extra pair of hands, no matter how small, can make a world of difference. With engaging illustrations and colourful characters, this is a perfect text to introduce young children to rhyming words.

About the Author

Lynn Ward is an Australian children's writer who has published stories in the *School Magazine* (NSW), *Little Ears*, *Fandangle Magazine* and *Storybox*, an online magazine. She has also had two short stories published in the *Book for Fiji* anthology. She has won awards for writing in the CYA (Children and Young Adults) competition held in conjunction with the Brisbane Writers' Festival, and the Kathleen Julia Bates Writing for Children competition.

About the Illustrator

Adam Carruthers is an illustrator and graphic designer based in Melbourne. He graduated from Swinburne National School of Design with a BA (Hons) in Graphic Design and works for Flaming Rhino Design. He lives in Altona with his wife, two children and two little dogs. His other illustrated works include the picture book *Ruffy and Me*.

Study Notes for Teachers

1. *The Big Beet* is a great starting point for visual literacy learning and teaching children to think about how we process meaning. It is important to reread picture books as children will learn new things with each reading.

- On the first reading, show the children the illustrations rather than reading aloud to them. By doing this, they learn to infer meaning from images.
- When you read the story aloud for the first time, emphasise to younger children that we read the words from left to right.
- See how children respond to the illustrations. Ask them to describe what the pictorial clues tell us that the words don't. What can they see happening under the big beet?

- Ask children to describe the characters from what they observe in the illustrations.
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2. Use *The Big Beet* to introduce the idea of basic themes. Use questions that help children think about what the story might be saying.
 - Begin by asking the children what they think the story is about.
 - Have a discussion about lending a hand to those in need.
 - Do children know their neighbours? What does the word neighbour mean to them?
 - Did they expect the little girl in the frilly pink tutu to make a difference? Were they surprised when she did?
 - Why do the characters persist in pulling out the beet when it is so challenging? Should they have given up earlier and settled for beetroot out of a can?
 3. Use *The Big Beet* to introduce rhyming concepts and new words.
 - To begin, ask children to describe the language used in the story and see if anyone suggests that the words rhyme or sound similar.
 - Explain that words rhyme when they have similar sounding endings. Reread the story and ask children to identify the rhyming words. For older children, focus on the spelling so they can see the pattern.
 - Form a circle and have one child pick a word. Ask their neighbour to think of a word that rhymes with the chosen word and so on. Begin again.
 - When they've grasped the concept, have children make up their own rhyming stories to illustrate.
 - Ask children to identify any unfamiliar words in the story.
 - Once you have explained the meaning of each new word, have the children demonstrate their understanding by using it in a sentence.
 4. *The Big Beet* is an excellent book to talk about what we eat and where it comes from:
 - Ask children to look at the vegetable patch in the story. What else might they expect to find in a vegetable garden?
 - See how many children have vegetable gardens at home. Talk about healthy eating and the benefits of growing food.

- If you have the space, consider making a class garden so children can learn about plants and be responsible for growing produce and tending the garden. For further information, visit this useful site:
http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/Gardening_for_children
- Ask children to describe their daily meals and using their examples, come up with a typical day's menu. See if children can identify where each item of food may have come from. Explain the journey different foods might take to wind up on someone's plate. Children could show the cycle in illustrations.

5. *The Big Beet* is a great starting point for drama games and creative fun:

- Using the story for inspiration, have children draw themselves and their friends pulling out a big beet or another vegetable of their choosing.
- Hold a tug-a-war game where children imagine they are pulling out different vegetables from the garden. How many different vegetables do children know?
- Ask children to come up with their own set of characters who might help them pull out a big beet.
- On a reading of the story, ask children to mime the actions they hear. See if they can recreate the scenes in the story in tableau form.
- Ask children to act like the different characters in the story. How might an elegant doctor walk?
- Hold a burger lunch day. Invite children to bring fresh produce from their gardens at home.