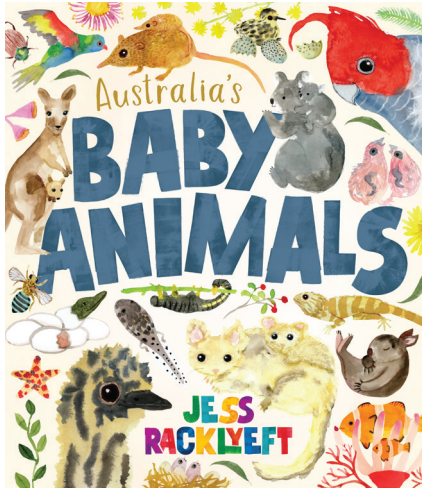




Teacher Notes

Australia's Baby Animals

by Jess Racklyeft

Teacher notes prepared by Bec Kavanagh.

Publication details

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Themes

- Australian animals
- Environment
- Citizen science
- Habitat
- Classification

About the Book

From underground burrows to treetop nests, and from sandy beaches to riverbeds, Australia's unique landscapes provide homes for baby animals to live and thrive in.

Here is a celebration of the animals that are born in this incredible country, from Snubfin Dolphin calves to Pygmy Possum joeys, Rainbow Lorikeet fledglings, Huntsman spiderlings, Thorny Devil hatchlings, and many more.

Come and take a closer look at the adorable baby animals and their habitats across Australia, from one of our best-loved picture book creators.

About the Author-Illustrator

Jess Racklyeft is an author and illustrator based in Fitzroy, Melbourne. From her home studio, Jess creates original paintings and prints for greeting card companies and various clients. But her favourite work of all is producing children's books! Jess has authored and illustrated several picture books and board books and has won several awards, including a CBCA Award.

Before Reading

- What baby animals have you encountered? Where?
- How would you describe Australia's baby animals?
- Explore the cover of the book – what animals do you think you'll find inside?

Comprehension questions

- What does endemic mean? What animals are endemic to your local area?
- What are some of the ways that we can prevent endangered animals from becoming extinct?
- What do mammals eat once they're born? Which animals in the book are mammals?
- Which baby animals hatch? Have you ever found an egg in the wild? Which animal did it belong to?
- What is special about the Kangaroo Island Echidna?
- Which animal stays in its mother's pouch the longest?
- Who cares for emu chicks?

Comprehension questions cont.

- What does a common ringtail possum have in common with a lesser long-eared bat?
- What is a baby snake called?
- What is the largest rainforest in Australia? What else is significant about this place?
- How does a baby flying fox stay warm?
- What is the scientific name for the tiger snout seahorse?
- Which animals migrate to a different place to give birth? Why?
- Whose baby is called a puggle?
- Where might you find a pobblebonk and a sacred kingfisher?

Literacy

- **Classification** is one of the ways that we organise or group information, making it easier for people to learn and understand. In the book, we are told that animals are classified into two main groups. What are they? How else are things grouped in the book? What other classifications have you encountered?
- **Vocabulary:** The beginning of the book contains a list of useful words. Which ones are new to you? Keep track of any new vocabulary you pick up as you read this book. Choose three words from your list and use them in a sentence.
- **Citizen Science:** Did you know that you can help scientists to better understand our native wildlife? Being a citizen scientist means observing the animals in your own area and sending information through to the organisations who study and support Australian wildlife.
 - Why do you think this information might be helpful?
 - Choose one of the following projects and sign up to become a citizen scientist.

- Take part in the Aussie Bird Count – <https://aussiebirdcount.org.au/>
- Listen out for your local frogs – <https://www.frogid.net.au/>
- Keep an eye out for echidnas – <https://biocollect.ala.org.au/acsa/project/index/8c3ae3b1-5342-40b4-9e72-e9820b7a9550?fbclid=IwAR2rwx16jEpm1NDwRg9jhYFjTOOpB36Z-www7vvPhYbaEpY-dggw66p1B-Y>

Final reflections

- What are some of the threats to the survival of baby animals?
- What can we do to look after the environments these animals call home?
- Which baby animals might you share your own home with (perhaps without realising!)?

Creative Activities

- Classification is the basis of several games including Guess Who and Twenty Questions. In both of these games, players ask questions to narrow down the classifications until they get to the answer. Use some of the classifications and illustrations in the book to design your own game. Make a list of questions. Below are some suggestions:
 - Is your animal nocturnal?
 - Is your animal an invertebrate?
 - Is your animal a mammal?
 - Does your animal live in water?
 - Does your animal go through metamorphosis?
- Create a diorama that shows the ideal habitat for your favourite Australian baby animal.
- Draw a map of your local area. Over the course of a week, mark all of the animals you encounter on the map, showing where you found them and including some notes that describe what they were doing at the time. Which are endemic? Are any endangered?