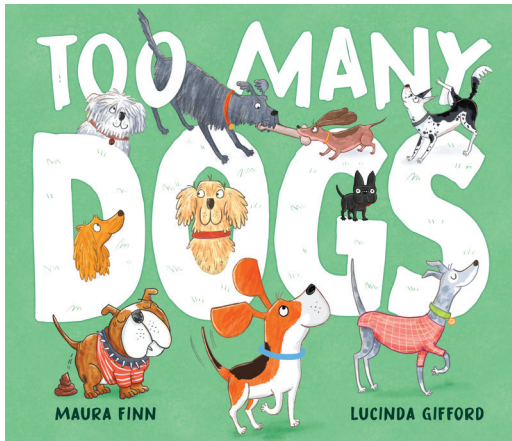




Teacher Notes

Too Many Dogs

by Maura Finn and illustrated by Lucinda Gifford

Teacher notes prepared by Bec Kavanagh

Publication details

Publisher: Affirm Press
ISBN: 9781922992253
Size/format: 230 x 270mm, 32 pages, HB
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Pub Date: 29 April 2025
Reader ages: 3-7 years

Themes

- Home
- Fitting in
- Freedom
- Belonging

About the Book

Percy is tired of being one dog all alone in a house full of cats! They are rude and messy and they blame Percy for things that definitely aren't his fault. He's leaving for a magical place where he can be free: the dog park.

Now he can have fun all day, with no cats to make a fuss! But it's hard out there for a top dog, and soon Percy realises that there might be something missing...

With rollicking rhyme by Maura Finn and hilarious illustrations by Lucinda Gifford, *Too Many Dogs* is the perfect gift for dog-lovers and cat-lovers alike.

About the Author and Illustrator

Born and bred in New Zealand, **Maura Finn** now lives in Melbourne with her husband and two young daughters. In her early writing days, she ran a rather lucrative playground business, swapping tailor-made poems for lunchbox leftovers. Now, many years later, she has rediscovered the joy and value of picture books through sharing them with her own children, and is delighted to think that her stories may contribute to other children's love of reading.

Lucinda is a hard working illustrator who has drawn the pictures for over 40 books, as well as for lots of websites, videos and posters. She has been drawing since she was a toddler in Scotland, when her teacher marvelled at her unusually terrifying sketches of witches. Now Lucinda lives in Melbourne and has a marvellous job where she gets to draw every day. Lucinda's favourite things to draw are castles, cavemen and creatures with big teeth or tentacles.

Before Reading

- Look at the title and cover of the book. What kind of animals do you think this book is about?
- Is there anything on the front or back cover that gives you a clue about what other animals you might see in the book?
- Is there really such a thing as too many dogs? Make a list of the pros and cons of having lots of dogs. What problems do you think Percy might encounter in the book?

Comprehension questions

- How many dogs does Percy live with?
- What are some of the things that Percy thinks about the cats?
- How does he feel when he first steps out into the world?
- Where does he go? What does he see there?
- Describe some of the things that Percy loves about the dog park.
- What is the first problem that Percy encounters at the dog park? How does he overcome it?
- What happens to Percy when he doesn't want to share his bone? How does this make him feel?
- How does Percy find his way home when he realises that he's lost?
- How have Percy's feelings towards the cats changed from the beginning of the story to the end?

Literacy

- **Suspense**
 - What is suspense? Why do you think that writers use suspense in their stories?
 - In *Too Many Dogs*, the writer builds suspense by introducing a sentence or idea on one page and waiting until the reader turns the page to finish it. For example

I will find somewhere new. Maybe somewhere like...

This!

- The ellipses (...) tell the reader that there's more to come.
- Describe your response as a reader to suspense in a story. Can you think of any other examples in story, film or television where suspense is used?
- Find another example of suspense in the book and write it below:

Literacy

- **Similes**
 - A simile is a tool that writers uses to describe an aspect of one thing by comparing it to something else.
 - For example 'her skin was as white as snow' (Snow White).
 - Find the simile in the book and write it below:
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- Why do you think the writer has chosen this simile? Can you think of any others they could have used that would have worked?

Final reflections

- What do you think Percy has learned by the end of the book? Have his feelings changed? How?
- This is the second book that this author and illustrator have created about Percy the dog. What do you think he might encounter in his next adventure?
- Write a sentence that describes how you felt about the book.

Creative Activities

- There are a LOT of different dogs (and cats!) in the book. Draw a picture of your ideal dog. What colour, shape and size would it be? What kind of 'fur-do' does it have?
- Percy gets lucky this time – the yowling of the cats help to call him home. Next time, perhaps he should take a map! Draw a map for Percy from his house to the dog park, adding your own details to show some of the things he might see (or sniff!) along the way.
- What do you think the cats got up to while Percy was away? Write a short story, or draw a picture that shows some of the things they did while their house was dog free.