



TEACHERS' RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED FOR

Lower and middle primary
(ages 6–8; years 1 to 3)

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KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **Learning areas:** English
- **General capabilities:** Literacy, Critical and creative thinking, Personal and social capability

REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

- Develop independent reading
- Encourage discussion around animal conservation

THEMES

- Friendship
- Celebration
- Zoos and animals

PREPARED BY

Penguin Random House Australia

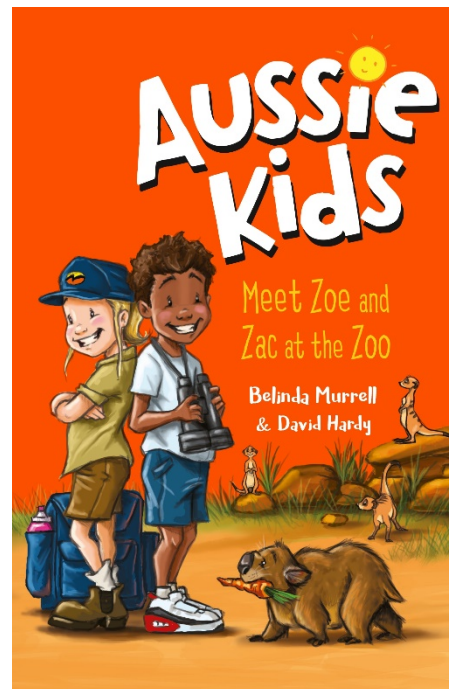
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Aussie Kids: Meet Zoe and Zac at the Zoo

Belinda Murrell and David Hardy

PLOT SUMMARY

Hi! I'm Zoe and this is Zac.

We're so lucky we live at the zoo!

As a birthday treat, we're helping out with the animals.

We can't wait!

Aussie Kids is an exciting new series for emerging readers 6-8 years.

From a NSW Zoo to a Victorian lighthouse, or an outback sheep farm in WA to a beach in QLD, this junior fiction series celebrates stories about children living in unique places in every state and territory in Australia.

8 characters, 8 stories, 8 authors and illustrators from all 8 states and territories!

Come on an adventure with Aussie Kids and meet Zoe and Zac from New South Wales.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Belinda Murrell has worked as a travel journalist, technical writer, editor and public relations consultant. Her overseas adventures inspired her work as a travel writer for the *West Australian* newspaper and *Out & About with Kids* travel magazine. Her work has also appeared in the *Sun Herald*, *Sunday Telegraph* and *Sydney Morning Herald*. While Belinda studied Children's Literature at Macquarie University, her passion for children's books was reignited when she had her own three children and began telling and writing stories for Nick, Emily and Lachlan. Belinda's books include the Sun Sword fantasy trilogy, Scottish timeslip tale *The Locket of Dreams*, French Revolution timeslip tale *The Ruby Talisman*, Australian timeslip tales *The Ivory Rose* and *The Sequin Star*, and Australian historical tales *The Forgotten Pearl*, *The River Charm* and *The Lost Sapphire*. Belinda's Lulu Bell series for younger readers, about friends, family, animals, and growing up in a vet hospital has sold over 200,000 copies. Pippa's Island is Belinda's latest series. Belinda is also an author ambassador for Room to Read and Books in Homes.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

David Hardy is an Indigenous artist, with over 8 years of feature film animation experience with Walt Disney Animation Studios. David is also an author and illustrator of his own book series with Magabala Books, *Alfie's Search for Destiny* and *Alfie's Big Wish*. David has also illustrated other book titles such as *On the Way to Nanas*, *Beatbox Brothers* and *The Proud Foots, Shaka Shaka Hawaii*. He lives in Sydney with his wife May and two kids Caden and Summer.

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

1. Look at the cover of the book. What do you think the characters will be doing in the story?
2. Can you name the animals on the front cover?
3. Look at the map on the back cover. What does it tell you about the story and its location?

AUTHOR'S INSPIRATION

Belinda says:

'I grew up in a vet hospital with lots of wonderful animals. When I was a teenager, I spent a week working with the vet at Western Plains Zoo. He had a pet wombat just like Toby.'

Questions

1. The author loves animals and has grown up with them in her life. How do you think she has used this love and knowledge of animals in the story? Can you find an example of this in the story?
2. Do you think Belinda would have been able to write about animals so well if she hadn't grown up surrounded by animals?

WRITING STYLE/STRUCTURE

Questions

1. How many chapters does this book have?
2. Look at the decorative illustrations in the chapter headings. Do you think they give the reader a hint of what is to come in the story?
3. Zoe is very excited about her day helping out at the zoo. Do you think that she gets the experience she wants? Or is she surprised by some of the things that happen?

Activities

- Look at the chapter heading illustrations. Are there alternative images that could have been used instead? Create a new chapter opening page for Chapter 5 using a different image than the binoculars.
- Find an example in the story of Zoe reacting in a surprised way.
- Stories have a beginning and middle and an end. And a problem is usually introduced for the main characters at the start of the story. What do you think the main problem or worry for Zoe and Zac? Can you find the moment in the story when this problem is resolved?

KEY STUDY TOPICS

Friendship

Questions

1. Zoe and Zac have been friends since they were babies. Have you got a friend you've known for a long time? Tell us about some things you like to do with your friend?

Activities

- Make a list of the things that are the same about you and your friend. List some things that are different. Remember to include likes and dislikes, physical differences and food tastes. Share this list with your friend. Does your friend agree with what you've written?



Celebration

Questions

1. Zoe and Zac get to help Zoe's mum at the zoo as a special birthday treat. Can you think of a time where you've been allowed to do something special with your mum, dad or best friend?
2. What are some other special events that your family group celebrate together? Do you celebrate these events by doing something different or out of the ordinary?

Activities

- Make a list of all the different celebrations you and your family are a part of during the year. Share this list with a classmate. Do you have the same things on the list or are there celebrations that are different?
- Can you find an example in the story of Zoe and Zac celebrating something or sharing an exciting moment together?

Zoos and Animals

Questions

1. Zoe and Zac are very lucky to live at a zoo. Can you think of some other unusual places that kids might live?
2. Zoe's mum mentions that zoos can be really important to help animals that are endangered in the wild. Can you think of any other animals, apart from lions, that might be endangered?

Activities

- Create your own zoo – draw a map and show all the different areas and animals that feature in your zoo. Include animals from different countries and a section for animals that live in water.
- Write a short story from the point of view of an animal who lives in a zoo. Perhaps pick one of the animals Zoe and Zac looked after. Eg wombat, lion, giraffe, meerkat or elephant.
- Pick your favourite zoo animal and write a poem about it. Share the poem with your classmates.

ILLUSTRATION

David Hardy has created the illustrations for *Meet Zoe and Zac at the Zoo*.

1. How do you think the illustrations add to the story?
2. Look at the way David has only used the colour orange in the pictures. Do you think this is

effective? Would it have worked as well if the colour was different? eg purple or green.

3. Turn to the illustration on page 19. How does the illustrator create the sensation of the lion's breath? Draw a picture using the same effect. Perhaps choose a different setting and a different animal for your picture.
4. Before David worked as a book illustrator, he worked as an animator for companies such as Disney. Do you think this shows in his illustration style?

FUN FACTS PAGE

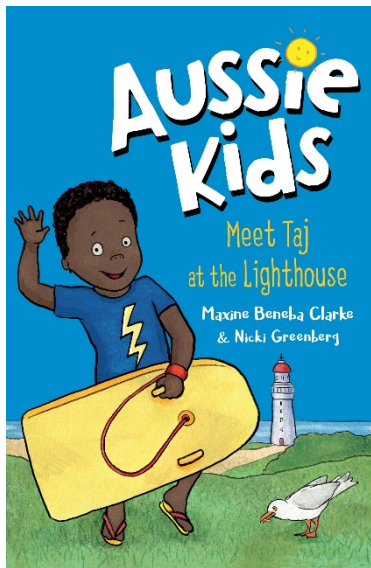
At the back of the book there is a section called 'Fun Fact about Animals'.

Activities

- Make a list of other animals you might see living in a zoo. Draw a picture of these animals next to their name on the list.
- Look at the information about the animals on the Fun Facts page. Choose an animal from your list above and write your own 'fact' about that animal. Try to pick a fact that other people might not know about, or might find interesting.



FURTHER READING FROM PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA



Aussie Kids: Meet Taj at the Lighthouse
by Maxine Beneba Clarke
and Nicki Greenberg

Hi! I'm Taj.

This is my favourite T-shirt.

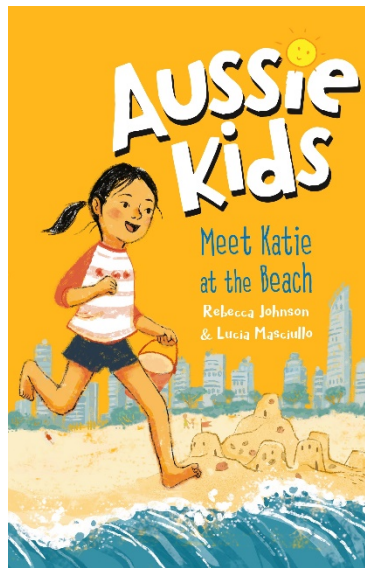
I brought it to Australia from my old home.

My family came here after a long journey.

It was hard at first, but now I love my new home!

Come on an adventure with Aussie Kids and meet Taj from Victoria.

[Teachers' resources available.](#)



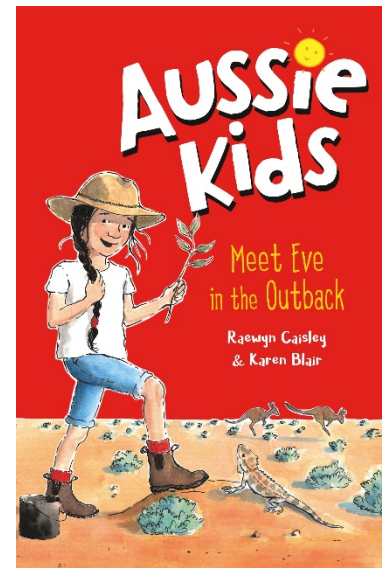
Aussie Kids: Meet Katie at the Beach
by Rebecca Johnson
and Lucia Masciullo

Hi! I'm Katie.

I have a wobbly tooth that won't come out! But it's not going to spoil my trip to the beach. We're going to eat mangoes and play beach cricket!

Come on an adventure with Aussie Kids and meet Katie from Queensland.

[Teachers' resources available.](#)



Aussie Kids: Meet Eve in the Outback
by Raewyn Caisley
and Karen Blair

Hi! I'm Eve.

I live at a roadhouse in the Nullarbor. We don't get many visitors. But today my cousin Will is coming. We'll have so much fun!

Come on an adventure with Aussie Kids and meet Eve from Western Australia.

[Teachers' resources available.](#)

ORDER FORM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	SCHOOL YEAR	RRP	QTY	TOTAL
Aussie Kids: Meet Zoe and Zac at the Zoo	Belinda Murrell and David Hardy	9781760893651	1-3	\$12.99		
Aussie Kids: Meet Taj at the Lighthouse	Maxine Beneba Clarke and Niki Greenberg	9781760894528	1-3	\$12.99		
TOTAL						

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