



OMNIBUS BOOKS

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Title	The Pocket Dogs and the Lost Kitten
Author	Margaret Wild
Illustrator	Stephen Michael King
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Previous publications

Margaret Wild

The Bush Book Club (Omnibus Books, 2014)
Tanglewood (Omnibus Books, 2012)
Harry & Hopper (Omnibus Books, 2009)
The Pocket Dogs Go on Holiday (Omnibus Books, 2008)
The Pocket Dogs Go on Holiday (Omnibus Books, 2008)
Puffling (Omnibus Books, 2008)
The Pocket Dogs (Omnibus Books, 2000)
The Midnight Gang (Omnibus Books, 1996)
Our Granny (Omnibus Books, 1993)

Stephen Michael King

I Love You Too (Scholastic Press, 2013)
Leaf (Scholastic Press, 2008)
The Pocket Dogs Go on Holiday (Omnibus Books, 2008)
Mutt Dog (Scholastic Press, 2004)
Where Does Thursday Go? (Scholastic Press, 2001)
Jack's Owl (Omnibus Books, 2001)
The Pocket Dogs (Omnibus Books, 2000)
Emily Loves to Bounce (Scholastic Press, 2000)
Henry and Amy (Scholastic Press, 1998)
The Man Who Loved Boxes (Scholastic Press, 1995)

Teachers' Notes

The Pocket Dogs and the Lost Kitten

Written by Margaret Wild

Illustrated by Stephen Michael King

Teachers' Notes by Rae Carlyle

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Introduction

Biff and Buff love living with Mr Pockets. They have their own warm beds, toys to play with and, best of all, they get to ride in the oversized pockets of his coat when he goes out. Being a Pocket Dog seems to them to be the best life in the world. Life, however, is full of change, and when there is a noise at the door one rainy evening and a wet and bedraggled kitten comes into their world, things will never be quite the same again. But will the change be for the better, or are the good times over for the Pocket Dogs and the lost kitten? With the compassionate help of the remarkable Mr Pockets, surely they can all find their way to live together in both peace and happiness.

About the Author

Margaret Wild is one of Australia's leading authors of children's books. Her many award-winning titles include *Toby*, *Our Granny*, *Miss Lily's Fabulous Pink Feather Boa* and *Woolvs in the Sitee*. *Tanglewood*, illustrated by Vivienne Goodman, was shortlisted in the CBCA Awards for 2013 and won the 2013 Environment Award for Children's Literature. It was also shortlisted in the children's category of the WA Premier's Book Awards for 2012.

This is Margaret's third story about the adorable Pocket Dogs.

About the Illustrator

Stephen Michael King's first picture book was *The Man Who Loved Boxes*, which he also wrote. Since then he has written and/or illustrated many children's books including *Patricia*, *Henry and Amy* and *The Little Blue Parcel*. His work has been recognised in many professional and readers' awards. Stephen has illustrated all three Pocket Dogs books.

Activities

English

When the lost kitten first arrives at Mr Pockets' front door, the Pocket Dogs hear a *scritch-scratch* noise, and then a *peep peep peep*. These words are onomatopoeic – when you say them, they sound like the noises they describe.

- 1) As a class discuss onomatopoeia. Some things to include in your discussion are:
 - What is onomatopoeia?
 - What other examples of onomatopoeic words can you think of?
 - When do people use onomatopoeia?
 - What does onomatopoeia add to a story?
- 2) Reread the story, identifying all the onomatopoeic words that you can find.
 - When does the author use onomatopoeic words?
 - What patterns can you see in types of sounds – are they all sounds made by the animals, or are there other sounds?
 - What else does the author do to indicate that these words are different from the rest of the text? (Hint: think about the font.)
- 3) As a class, go on an onomatopoeia treasure hunt in the library. Find as many books as you can that have onomatopoeic words in them – for a challenge try to find books where the onomatopoeic words are written in a different font.
- 4) As a class brainstorm as many onomatopoeic words as you can. Individually choose one of the words from the class brainstorming session, and design a font to complement your word. Create an artwork using your font that showcases your word. You will want to think about colour, and patterns that complement the meaning of your word: for example, *bang* might be surrounded by bright jagged lines in bold colours, while *swish* could be written on a background of smooth wavy curving lines in soothing colours. Create a classroom display with all the students' onomatopoeic artwork.
- 5) How many different words can you make using the letters in 'onomatopoeia'? (e.g. *pat*, *on*, and *no* are all spelt using only letters that are in *onomatopoeia*.) Have a class competition to see who can make the most words, and who can make the longest word. Bonus points for anyone who makes an onomatopoeic word!

When Biff and Buff imagine that Mr Pockets might start paying more attention to the little lost kitten than to them, and that they are not going to be loved as much any more, this makes them feel very unhappy.

- 6) Some words which can be used to describe the feeling of unhappiness are *sad*, *morose*, and *despondent*.
 - As a class brainstorm, and think of as many different words as you can that can be used to describe negative feelings.
 - As a class, think of as many different words as you can that can be used to describe positive feelings.
 - Think about when you aren't feeling particularly positive or negative – what words might be useful in describing these in-between feelings?

- Individually or in pairs, choose one of the 'feelings' words that your class has thought of, and write a definition of the word including an example of something that might make you feel this way. Once you have written your own definition, find the definition that is in the dictionary. In large letters write your word in the centre of an A4 piece of paper and write both your definition and the dictionary definition underneath it. Illustrate your work, and use everyone's pieces to make a class display of a 'feelings wall'.
- 7) What other words can be used to describe the way Biff and Buff are feeling? Think of different words that might describe their emotions, as well as words that might describe how both the kitten and Mr Pockets feel as well. Make a feelings timeline outlining the events in the story and how the different characters feel at each point in time. Draw a horizontal line across the page, mark on it the major events in the story, and then note next to each event how all of the main characters are feeling at that point.
 - 8) Write a short story with characters who feel a range of different emotions during the course of the story. Use the words displayed on your 'feelings wall' in your writing to help describe what the characters are thinking and feeling.

Creative Activities

- 9) Write a story about a time in your life when someone new has come into your life – maybe a new friend at school, a new brother or sister, or another family member or friend moving into your house. In your story use lots of 'describing' words to help show how everyone was feeling – your story can be either fiction or non-fiction.
- 10) Mr Pockets has a coat with large pockets for his Pocket Dogs to ride in. Design an outfit for a pet to ride in for a character called Mr Hat, Mrs Scarf, Ms Shawl, or Mr Shoes – or you can invent a character with a clothing name of your own!
- 11) What do dog and cat pawprints look like – are they the same as each other? Create a design for wrapping paper or wallpaper based on animal pawprints that Mr Pockets might like to have in his home or use to wrap presents.
- 12) Design a new coat for Mr Pockets that Molly can ride in too – without upsetting Biff and Buff. Draw a picture of the coat and label all the important parts of it.
- 13) Draw a picture of yourself with an animal that you would like to carry around in your pocket.
- 14) Make a pet bed out of paper and cardboard for a cuddly toy that you own – look at the pictures of the pet beds on the last page of the story for ideas and decorate your bed.

- 15) Act out the story of *The Pocket Dogs and the Lost Kitten*. Have a narrator read the story aloud while students act out the different roles. Perform the story at assembly or for another class.
- 16) As a class play a game of charades. Take turns acting out one of the emotions listed on your 'feelings wall' from activity 6.
- 17) Write a poem about welcoming a new member to the family. You can base your poem on *The Pocket Dogs and the Lost Kitten*, or on an experience of your own.
- 18) If you could be a pet animal, what would you like to be and why? Write a paragraph explaining your choice, and then paint a self-portrait of you as an animal.
- 19) What do you think happens next in Mr Pockets' house? Think of some adventures that you would like to read about Molly and the Pocket Dogs having.
- 20) When Biff, Buff and Molly curl up together on the armchair with Mr Pockets, they all feel happy, safe, and loved. Draw or paint a picture of a situation where you feel happy, safe, and loved. Share your artwork with the class.

Health

When Biff and Buff start to worry that the new kitten will replace them in Mr Pockets' life, they stop sharing their belongings with her and make it clear that they don't like her. The kitten is so sad at the way they are now treating her that she goes to leave the house and look for a new home.

- 21) When people feel threatened, lonely, jealous or afraid, as Biff and Buff do, they might behave in a way that hurts or upsets others. As a class discuss how Biff and Buff show their feelings and how Mr Pockets responds to them. Some things you can include in your discussion are:
 - What are Biff and Buff worried about that might happen?
 - Why do they think this might happen?
 - How does Mr Pockets react to their fear?
 - Biff and Buff can't explain to Mr Pockets in words – how does he know what they are feeling from their actions?
 - How do you act when you are feeling sad, hurt, scared or lonely?
 - What are some things that people do when they are feeling jealous or threatened?
 - How can we help people realise that they don't need to feel jealous or sad? What can we say to them or do for them to help them feel better?

- When things change at home it can be scary. How can we help ourselves feel better and manage when things change at home – when someone leaves or joins the family?
- How did Molly feel when Biff and Buff were showing that they were worried she would replace them in Mr Pockets' affections?
- Why did Molly try to leave?
- What did Biff and Buff do to make her feel better?
- What did Mr Pockets do to help all three of them?
- What can we do to help someone who is feeling unwanted, as Molly did? What can we say to them to make them feel loved and included?