

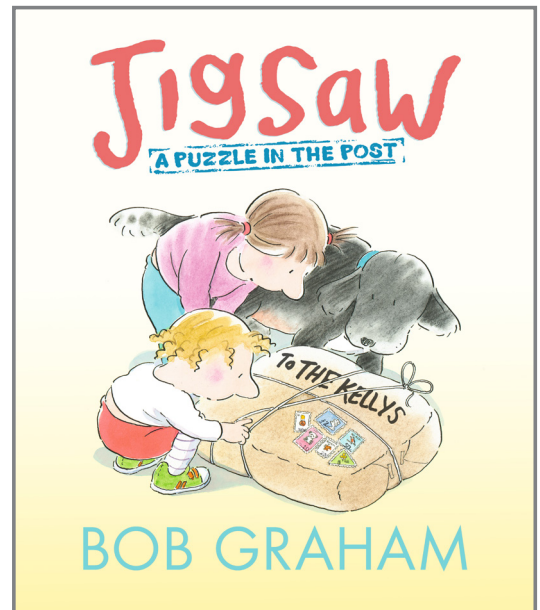
Jigsaw: A Puzzle in the Post

AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR
BOB GRAHAM

SCIS: 5411194

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower Primary



SYNOPSIS

'Oh, let's do it!' say Kitty and Katy and Mum when a thousand-piece jigsaw puzzle mysteriously arrives in the post. 'I have time on my hands,' agrees Dad. Starting in winter with the edges, by autumn they're almost done, only to discover that one piece is missing. Mum is sure that it must have accidentally gone out with the rubbish, so they pile into the car to comb through the local tip ('shouldn't take long'). There they uncover forgotten letters, train tickets, discarded newspapers, and old photos yellow with age, but finding the missing piece is starting to seem like wishful thinking. 'Let's wish, then,' says Katy.

As in all of Bob Graham's work, the beauty here is in the details, with visual perspectives that offer a bird's-eye view or take us underfoot, wordless sequences letting us in on a secret. Is it sheer luck—or perhaps the power of hope—that creates an ending to the story?

ABOUT THE CREATOR

Bob Graham is a Kate Greenaway-winning bookmaker who has written and illustrated many acclaimed children's picture books including *Ellie's Dragon*, *The Poesy Ring*, *Home in the Rain*, *How to Heal a Broken Wing*, *How the Sun Got to Coco's House*, *Max*, *Jethro Byrde: Fairy Child* and *The Underhills*. His 2011 title, *A Bus Called Heaven*, is endorsed by Amnesty International UK and was the winner of the 2012 Children's Book Council of Australia Picture Book of the Year Award—a prize Bob has won an unprecedented seven times. He has been awarded the prestigious Prime Minister's Literary Award in Australia twice, in 2014 for *Silver Buttons* and in 2017 for *Home in the Rain*. Bob lives in Melbourne, Australia.

STUDY NOTES

- View the cover and title of the book. Identify the following:
 - The title
 - The author/illustrator
 - The publisher
 - The blurb.
- What do you think the story might be about from looking at the title only? Do your ideas change after seeing the cover?
- Write your own story using the title *Jigsaw: A Puzzle in the Post*.

- Who do you think the audience for this book is? Why?
- Is *Jigsaw: A Puzzle in the Post* an imaginative, informative or persuasive text? How can you tell?
- Write a book review on *Jigsaw: A Puzzle in the Post*. Include what you liked about the book, who you think would enjoy it the most and mention any other books you think are similar.
- On the whiteboard or on a large sheet of paper, place an image of the cover of *Jigsaw: A Puzzle in the Post* and surround it with words that describe the book. Include words that describe what you liked and what you disliked about the book.
- Most stories start after the title page. Where do you think this story begins? Look at the pages before the title page. Why do you think Bob Graham decided to start the story here?
- Compare this to other picture books that start after the title page. How does this change how you read the story?
- Read though the first few pages of the book, stop when you get to ‘“Let’s get started” said the Kellys’ with the image of the recycling truck. As a class, discuss what they have just seen happen in the story. Do the Kellys know about the missing piece? What do the children think will happen next? When will the Kellys realise? What do they think will happen when they realise?
- Ask the class to imagine they were doing the puzzle at home, what would their response be when they realised a piece was missing?
- Listen closely to the author’s description of what the family found while they were searching through the rubbish. Do you think they were searching through rubbish or were they searching through memories, thoughts and feelings that have been passed on, thrown out, lost or forgotten? Discuss with the class if they have ever lost something important to them, a note, a piece of a game, a favourite sock? Did they ever find the item again or are they still wondering what ever happened to it?
- At the end of the story, once the puzzle is complete, Kitty and Katy write (and draw) a letter to their mysterious puzzle sender and post it to ‘sumwear’. Do you think that the letter will reach the puzzle sender? Do you think that it might reach someone else who might appreciate it all the same? Do you think that the person who sent the puzzle forgot to write who it was from? Or do you think it was on purpose to maintain some mystery?
- Have a class discussion about different ‘random acts of kindness’ such as people leaving books to be discovered by strangers or paying for the coffee of the person in the line behind. Ask the children if they have ever heard of or experienced a random act of kindness and how it would make them feel if this happened to them. Why do they think that people participate in random acts of kindness? Are there any random acts of kindness that they could think of to participate in?
- Analyse one of the double-page spreads from the book, then answer the following questions:
 - What do you look at first? Why? Then how does your eye travel around the page?
 - What techniques and materials has Bob Graham used? (For example, pencil, watercolour, ink.)
 - What perspective has he used? Is the picture shown close-up or from a distance?
 - What objects are big and small? Why are they shown this way?
 - What objects are in the foreground (front) of the picture? The background? Midground?
 - What are the dominant colours? What mood (feeling) do these colours create?
 - Where are the people in the picture looking?
 - Why are they looking there? What effect does this have?
- How do the illustrations add to the story? How would the story be different if there were no illustrations?