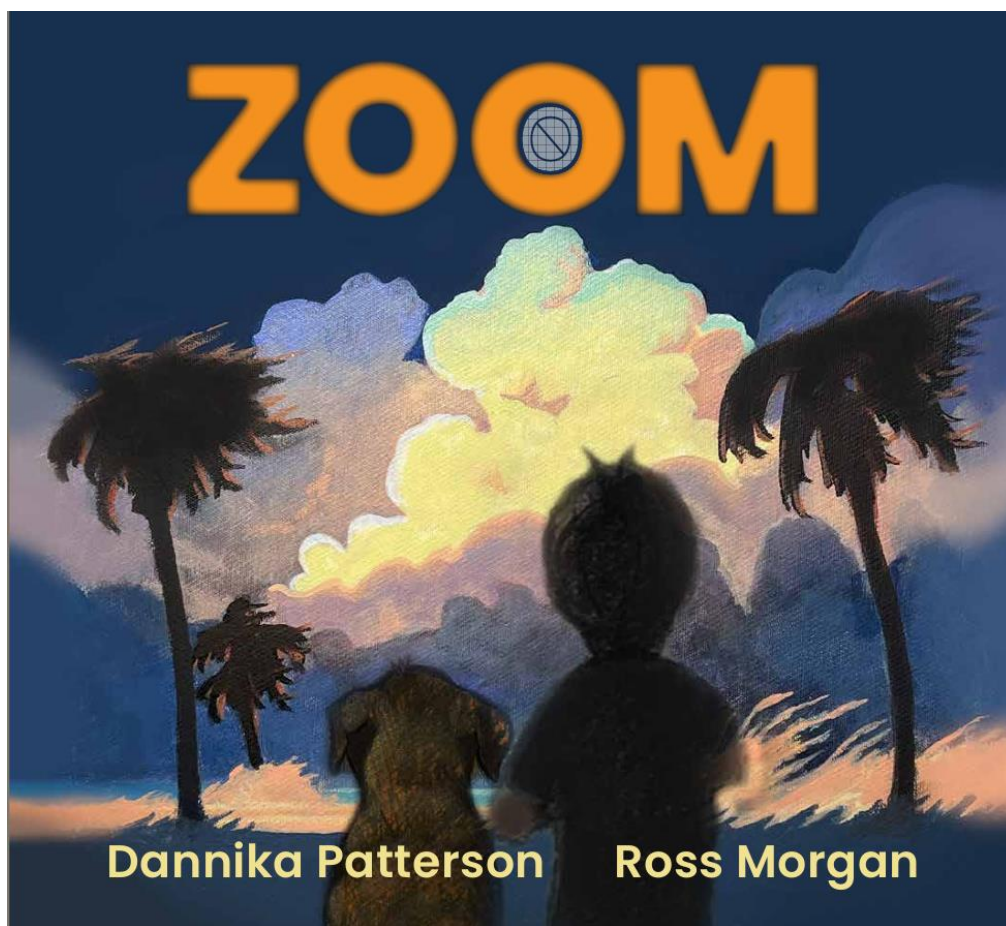


# TEACHING NOTES

*Zoom by Dannika Patterson and Ross Morgan*



## **Book Blurb:**

Tom's day at school was the worst. His troubles feel like looming storm clouds – they're all he can see.

But then he picks up his grandfather's old-fashioned camera and changes the focus and the view.

Tom recalls all the things that went wrong in his day, and zooms out to see a bigger picture...

***A tender story about perspective, reframing, and resilience.***

Compiled by Dannika Patterson (Author) with contributions from Ross Morgan (Illustrator)  
*Version 1.0, June 2024*

**Summary:**

Zoom is a picture book that encourages children to reframe challenging situations and consider the “bigger pictures”, especially after tricky days at school. This title has been created for an intended audience of 4–9-year-old children, especially those with low frustration tolerance and high anxiety (conditions currently being experienced by an exponentially growing number of young children in Australia and globally).

The illustrations in this book play with the central concept of perspective throughout the visual narrative, the concept of zooming in and out through a camera-lens, as well as using weather to reflect mood and emotion. There are three key perspective pages that are text-less, inviting readers to observe that by changing one’s perspective or ‘zooming out’ on a problem, we are often able to view it from a different perspective, or with additional context that allows us to learn and grow from the experience, and to be kinder to ourselves (and those around us).

On library, home and therapist bookshelves, *Zoom* fills a gap for a resilience-building, perspective-enabling picture book that addresses a range of relatable everyday school-based issues for the target 4–9-year-old age-group.

**Key Features:**

- A deeply relatable, tenderly written and beautifully illustrated picture book about a child whose school-day troubles feel overwhelming.
- Tom is a relatable protagonist to every kid who has had a tough day at school. He gains a fresh perspective as he learns to ‘zoom out’ from his perceived mistakes.
- This book encourages readers to see beyond their immediate challenges to the bigger picture.

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- Written in flowing prose, this story features a range of literary devices including alliteration and assonance.
- Ross Morgan's deeply sensitive illustrations are richly layered mixed media acrylic paintings on canvas board. They are multi-layered with hidden elements that enhance the themes of the story.
- Both the text and illustrations encourage visual literacy via the symbolic use of the background landscape to portray a child's changing emotions.
- A valuable resource for parents, teachers, counsellors and wellbeing professionals focussed on helping young children build their toolkits of strategies to increase resilience and decrease anxiety.
- Text-less feature pages highlight the important non-verbal communication that happens between the characters. These pages allow children to experience the main character's shifted perspective and reflection without written narrative, encouraging observation and inviting interactivity with the additional contextual details provided in the visual narrative, especially in a read-aloud context.

### **Themes:**

Resilience, Perspective, Reframing, Anxiety, Frustration Tolerance, Self-Esteem, Photography, Weather.

**Age suitability:** Prep to Year 4 [*these notes reflect the span of abilities in this range and may need adjusting to suit individual classes*]

### **Before Reading:**

- Looking at the cover, students might have suggestions/responses to what this story may be about.
  - ✓ Do they recognise the characters or other elements?
  - ✓ What relationship might the two characters shown on the cover have?
  - ✓ What time of day or weather event does the cover scene depict?

- ✓ Do they know the term 'zoom'? To what might it refer?
- ✓ Where might this story be set?
- ✓ Have any of the students read books by Dannika Patterson or Ross Morgan before?
- ✓ What other responses do students have to the cover art? Can they guess how these illustrations have been created?
- ✓ Is this a fiction or non-fiction book? How can we tell?
- Does this book cover remind you of any other book covers?
- Have students individually complete a K/W/L template and construct a class one which can be added to for duration of the unit of inquiry.
- Establish a class learning wall and collate the various initial reflections/responses as a starting point.
- Secure a bulk loan from the school library of related books both fiction and non-fiction for classroom free reading (*titles on similar themes as well as other titles by Dannika Patterson and Ross Morgan*)

### **During Reading:**

- Define and understand these terms in the text. When words have multiple meanings, consider context to decide which meaning is most likely intended at each occurrence:

**- zoom:**

to move or travel very quickly or suddenly

*and*

to rise sharply (referring to a figure or level)

*and*

to change smoothly from a close-up to a long-shot or vice versa (using a camera lens)

**- torrent:**

a strong and fast-moving stream of water or other liquid

*and*

an overwhelming outpouring of (something, typically words)

- Closely examine each double spread before reading text, and note interesting points e.g., What mood/s and information do the illustrations convey? Consider aspects: palette/colours, use of light/dark/shadow, tone, symbolism, facial expressions, use of white space. After reading the text, discuss the impact of the illustrations to enhance meaning or mood.
- Begin some research into storms and match up facts about lightning, thunder, cloud formation, precipitation and rainbows with the text and/or illustrations. A Venn diagram might be useful here.
- Introduce or revise the term **onomatopoeia**. These words on page 12 are onomatopoeic. Find others in the text and then add more suggested by students. Add these to the learning wall.

Crunch	Gulp	Crumble

- Identify phrases that use alliteration or assonance throughout the text.
- What mood, emotion or story is suggested by pages 13-15? Discuss the use of expression, colour, tone and shading here. Compare these pages with the mood/emotion suggested on pages 28-30. Note similarities/differences.
- Use the Learning Wall to explore and record the use of noun groups/phrases and adjectival groups/phrases to describe more fully a character, place, thing, or idea.

- Examine the day's 'mistakes' as they are described/shown on page 14. Discuss if these examples are relatable and ask students for other memories or ideas about what might be upsetting in a school day for them.
- Compare the images of 'spilled paint', 'dropped lunchbox' and 'second-last place' shown on page 14 and compare them with the 'bigger pictures' shown on spreads 22-23, 24-25 and 26-27. What can be understood about each situation by reflecting on/being shown the 'bigger picture' with additional context.

### **After Reading:**

- In small groups have students research the following and create a classroom display e.g. wall murals or dioramas:
  - ✓ **Weather:** lightning, thunder, clouds, precipitation, rainbows.
  - Photography:** Does the camera that Tom's Grandpa gave him look like cameras you've seen? How have cameras changed over the years? Identify parts of 'old-fashioned' and 'modern' cameras in a 'then and now' comparison – lens, shutter, etc. Ask students to draw pictures of the different types of cameras they have seen: instant, digital, SLR, etc, and label their parts.
  - ✓ **Support figures:** Who are the people (or animals) you might turn to for support when you have a tricky moment or 'bad' day? Who provides comfort for Tom in this story? How?
- Address any unanswered questions on the learning wall and discuss findings as a whole class. Add any new questions/wonderings that arise during the reading.
- **Weather and Emotions:** Discuss how different types of weather can reflect different emotions. Show/identify examples from the book and ask students to describe how the weather reflects Tom's feelings.

**Writing:**

- Write a diary entry as a student at Tom's school who was an observer of one of the events that upset him. Explore their perspective of this event. What did they see? How did it make them feel? What might they have said (or wanted to say) to Tom?
- Write a descriptive passage to inform a reader of how you might experience a storm like the one that builds, breaks and passes throughout the course of this story. Use as much 'show, don't tell' as possible.
- Write and illustrate a pattern poem about a camera, and/or the ability to 'zoom'. Suitable choices could be acrostic, shape, cinquain, haiku or an onomatopoeia poem depending on the ability of students.
- Information report. Present research on the weather pattern of a storm.
- Have students ask their families if they can recall a tricky situation, disappointment or mistake from their primary school days. They could ask how they recall feeling at the time as well as how they feel about it now, after time has passed. Share these stories.
- Talk about the range of different feelings that students have had at school. Ask how they might show these feelings with pictures.
- Discuss how pets can sense our emotions and show empathy, like the character of 'George', the dog in this story. Invite students to share stories of their own pets showing empathy or offering comfort.

**Activities:**

- **Vignettes:** Fold a piece of paper into four. Students create four vignettes to show their favourite pages from the book.
- **Brain breaks:** Inside or outside: Freeze Frame Game. Participants work individually or in groups to freeze their bodies (like a photograph) to

create a single scene that conveys an action, concept or emotion. Others guess and discuss what they are trying to convey.

- **Role Play:** Ask students to act out different emotions and ask others to guess which emotion they are showing. Discuss how they use body language and facial expressions to show feelings, just like the character's bodies and facial expressions were used in illustrations to convey unspoken emotions.
- **Character Trait Portraits:** As a class, determine the attributes that Tom demonstrates as a character. Students could select a designated number of other character traits they think would be important. Depending on ability, adjust task to suit. If appropriate, students may investigate their own unique character traits by completing a survey like the [Free Strengths Survey](#) offered by the VIA Institute on Character.

### Examples of Positive Character Traits

Active	Curious	Kind
Admirable	Creative	Lively
Adventurous	Dedicated	Loving
Agreeable	Easygoing	Loyal
Amiable	Educated	Neat
Amusing	Enthusiastic	Nice
Appreciative	Exciting	Optimistic
Athletic	Extraordinary	Organized
Authentic	Fair	Passionate
Benevolent	Firm	Patient
Brave	Focused	Peaceful
Bright	Forgiving	Playful
Brilliant	Friendly	Polite
Calm	Generous	Principled
Capable	Gentle	Reliable



Caring	Good-natured	Respectful
Charming	Grateful	Responsible
Cheerful	Happy	Self-disciplined
Clean	Hardworking	Selfless
Clear-headed	Helpful	Sincere
Clever	Heroic	Skillful
Compassionate	Honest	Strong
Confident	Hopeful	Sweet
Considerate	Humble	Thoughtful
Cooperative	Innocent	Trustworthy
Courageous	Intelligent	Understanding
Courteous	Inventive	Unselfish
Creative	Joyful	Wise

- Invite students to define their own positive attributes and create a 'character trait self-portrait'. They may like to use additional illustrative elements to reflect key character traits.



- **Weather & Emotions Art:** Have students show how they feel using weather and colours to capture and portray a single emotion. Older students may enjoy using the same materials that illustrator Ross Morgan used to create the illustrations for *Zoom*: acrylic paint on canvas board. For younger students, watercolour or washable poster

paints on matte cardboard or paper may be a more appropriate choice.

- **Race:** Set up a running race, similar to the race depicted in the book. After the race, talk about the emotions each child experienced and if this was related to their place in the race, or something other factor.
- **Book blanket lunch/picnic:** Read or re-read this story outside with the same snacks Tom eats for afternoon tea in the book: apples, choc-chip biscuits and milk. Consider and discuss: can food impact mood?
- **Pavement Chalk 'one-pager':** in pairs or small groups summarise the narrative of the story using chalk art on pathways or playground. Take a gallery walk afterwards to share different depictions.
- **Photography Challenge:** Using whatever types of cameras are at your disposal (e.g. the digital camera on class/library iPad), ask students to create their own pair of 'zoomed in' and 'zoomed out' contrast scenes, like those shown on pages 22-23, 24-25 and 26-27. Take a walk around the school, perhaps to an oval or garden area and invite the children to experiment with the zoom function to capture two pictures: one 'zoomed in' that features a close-up of a detail/object and the other 'zoomed out' to provide a different perspective and/or additional context. Examples may include a cloud with a specific shape vs the broader sky, one blooming flower vs an entire garden, one piece of rubbish vs the entire eating area after lunchtime, one ant vs a whole line of ants climbing the bark of a tree.
- **Rule of Thirds (Photography):** Discuss/introduce the 'rule of thirds' as a fundamental principle of composition that can make photographs, like those Tom might take using his grandpa's camera in the story, more appealing and interesting. Imagine a tic-tac-toe grid overlaid on your camera viewfinder or screen. This grid divides the image into nine equal parts – three horizontal and three vertical sections. The key idea is to place the subject or points of interest along the lines or at

the intersections of this grid. Instead of centering your subject/object, consider positioning it along one of the grid lines or at an intersection. The rule of thirds helps create balance and visual interest.

- Using an overhead projector, find some examples of photographs that demonstrate the rule of thirds used well (and a few where it is not used well). Use a whiteboard marker to show the grid described on these example images.
- Encourage students to experiment and explore the rule of thirds creatively by taking photos, inside and outside the classroom, sharing with each other, and providing peer feedback.
- **Aperture (Photography):** For more advanced students or those actively interested in learning more about photography, the term aperture might be explained. Aperture refers to the opening in the camera lens that controls how much light enters. It's like the pupil of our eye.

**Big vs Small Aperture:** When the aperture is wide open, like a big circle, more light enters. This is great for low-light situations or when you want to create an unfocussed or blurry background effect. A smaller aperture, like a tiny circle, lets in less light. It's useful for landscapes or when you want everything in focus.

**These days, most people use digital cameras on their mobile phones, which have inbuilt technology that adjusts aperture automatically.**

But on 'old-fashioned' manual cameras (like the one in this story) and digital SLR cameras (like the one your annual school class photographer probably uses), aperture is adjusted using a f-number (low f-number for big aperture, high f-number for small aperture).

### **Top Tips for Teachers:**

- Encourage students to think about their own feelings and how they might show them in pictures.

- Discuss how weather, colours and body language can represent emotions.
- Incorporate storytelling and art to help students express their emotions creatively.
- Include discussions about pets and their emotional connections to humans.
- By using a range of the activities outlined in these Teaching Notes, teachers, parents and therapists can help students better understand and express their emotions through art, just like the illustrations in *Zoom* help tell Tom's story.

### **Related resources:**

#### **Other books by Author Dannika Patterson:**

2018 Picture Book: *Jacaranda Magic* (Australia)

2019 Picture Book: *My Tribe* (International)

2019 Poetry Collection: *SeaSpray17: Ocean Photography & Haiku Poetry* (Australia)

2019 Graphic Novel: *Project Volcano* (Pacific Island Region)

2019 Graphic Novel: *Between the Cracks* (International)

2020 Picture Book: *Scribbly Gum Secrets* (Australia)

2020 Picture Book: *Day & Night* - DMind Educational Publishing (Hong Kong)

2020 Picture Book: *Giving* - DMind Educational Publishing (Hong Kong)

2020 Picture Book: *Beach Kindy* (Australia)

2020 Early Reader: *A Cyclone Called Celia* (Pacific Island Region)

2021 Picture Book: *Sera, The Shell & The Storm* (UK and Fiji: A Save The Children International Project)

2022 Early Reader: *Look at That!* (Library for All - Solomon Islands Series)

2023 Picture Book: *Hedgehog the Wonder Dog* (Australia)

2023 Picture Book: *Heavy* (Australia)

2023 Picture Book: *I Can't Wait to Play!* (Australia)

2024 Picture Book: *The Silverback's Song* (Australia)

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Version 1.0, June 2024

**Other books by Ross Morgan:**

- *Molly Moores has a House Like Yours*
- *Hedgehog the Wonder Dog*
- *The Gargoyle*
- *Glow*

**About the Book:**

Title: Zoom

ISBN: HB: 978-1-922696-43-4; PB: 978-1-922696-42-7

Publication Date: 1 September 2024

Format: 250wide x 233mm high

Format: 32pp Hardcover Picture Book + 32pp Paperback Picture Book

Publisher: Ford Street Publishing

Author: Dannika Patterson

Illustrator: Ross Morgan

**About the Author:**

Dannika Patterson is a children's author, presenter & freelance writer with degrees in Journalism & Psychology. For 20 years, Dannika used her wordsmithing skills to help businesses around the world tell their stories more effectively. In 2017, she discovered that writing books for kids is WAY more fun & soul-rewarding. She has since written numerous books for children including *Jacaranda Magic*, *Scribbly Gum Secrets* and *Hedgehog the Wonder Dog*, which was shortlisted for the 2023 Speech Pathology Australia Book of the Year Awards. Dannika's words and workshops entertain, educate and empower children in a gentle, joyful way.

*Zoom* is her 17<sup>th</sup> published book title.

You can learn more about Dannika Patterson and her books, school workshops and community appearances at her website -

[dannikapatterson.com](http://dannikapatterson.com)

**A Note from the Author:**

This story is one that is very close to my heart. It's a creative work that has allowed me to blend my unique mix of qualifications, experience and passions together - child psychology, parenting and writing for children – to create a beautiful (thanks to Ross Morgan) and practical picture book resource that I hope will be used to comfort and support children through tricky moments and hard days.

The seed of this story began as I observed over many years that there are often significant shifts in a child's experiences at school throughout Year 2 and Year 3. These shifts include a learning focus that shifts from 'reading to learn' instead of 'learning to read', slightly more complex friendship issues, peer comparisons, emergence of traits like perfectionism, low frustration tolerance, anxiety and more. After journeying through some of the challenges of this age in the schooling journey with my own two children and observing countless more 'like' scenarios in the many schools I have the privilege of visiting each year as part of my job, I wanted to create a picture book that could be used as a resource to help build resilience in young children. My hope is that through reflecting (validating) their experiences of relatable big-little school-based problems in its pages, this book helps children with worries, low self-esteem, low frustration tolerance or high anxiety feel seen, heard and empowered. May they be supported to grow in resilience and learn to lessen anxiety through techniques like the one reflected in this book, trying to view the 'bigger pictures' to change their perspectives and be kinder to themselves. And on their inevitable 'worst' days, may they seek and find comfort in a pet, a parent, or a plate of choc-chip biscuits. May they feel safe in experiencing and expressing their full range of emotions.

I am so grateful for Ross Morgan's skill and sensitivity in illustrating this story, especially in terms of the ways he shows non-verbal communication between the three main characters of Tom, Mum and George (the dog). There's a huge pile of research that suggests they keys to a child feeling comfortable

to share information with a parent or carer about their day are constancy of connection, presence and non-verbal communication. For parents and carers, it's important they allow themselves the grace of a moment to prepare themselves to be fully present and non-reactive to best support their child through tricky times. Ross has depicted these unspoken elements beautifully.

### **About the Illustrator:**

Ross Morgan is an award-winning fine artist and illustrator with a genuine interest in stories that explore sensitive, heartfelt topics and emotive characters. His background as an exhibition artist, portrait painter and surrealist have given him a unique approach to illustrating books. In 2021 he was shortlisted for the SCBWI Australian Picture Book Illustrator Award (emerging illustrator), and was highly commended for the same award in both in 2022 and 2023. He loves searching for quiet little moments that are filled with magic.

### **Notes from the Illustrator:**

**Reflecting on School Memories:** When I was asked to create the illustrations for the picture book "Zoom," I thought about my own school days. I remembered feeling sad or worried sometimes. Now, as an adult, I see these moments helped me grow. This story is about those feelings, shown through the main character, Tom.

**Visualizing Tom's Experience:** To draw Tom, I imagined myself back at school, thinking about what he might feel. I thought about the different ways to show his changing emotions visually. Firstly, I thought of creating a series of facial expressions, however, I began to realise that many of the emotions that Tom was experiencing were the 'quiet inner' emotions that are often difficult to show visually. Therefore, I thought of adding another visual layer to the illustrations that could help represent his inner thoughts and emotions.

**Using Weather to Show Emotions:** You may notice the passing storm clouds, lighting, rain, beams of sunlight and the colours of the rainbow seen from Tom's bedroom window. This changing landscape, and colour through the story helped me find another way to explore Tom's emotions.

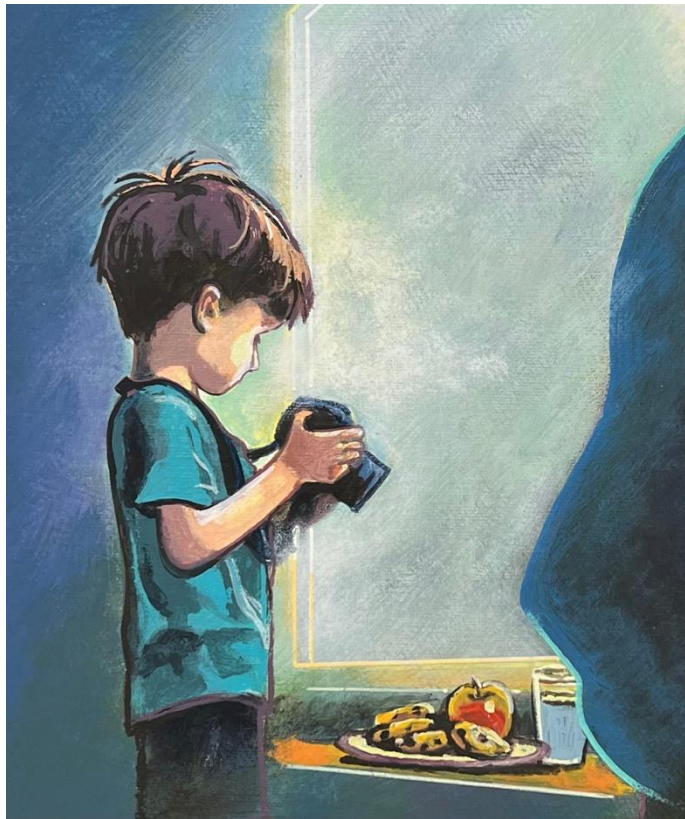
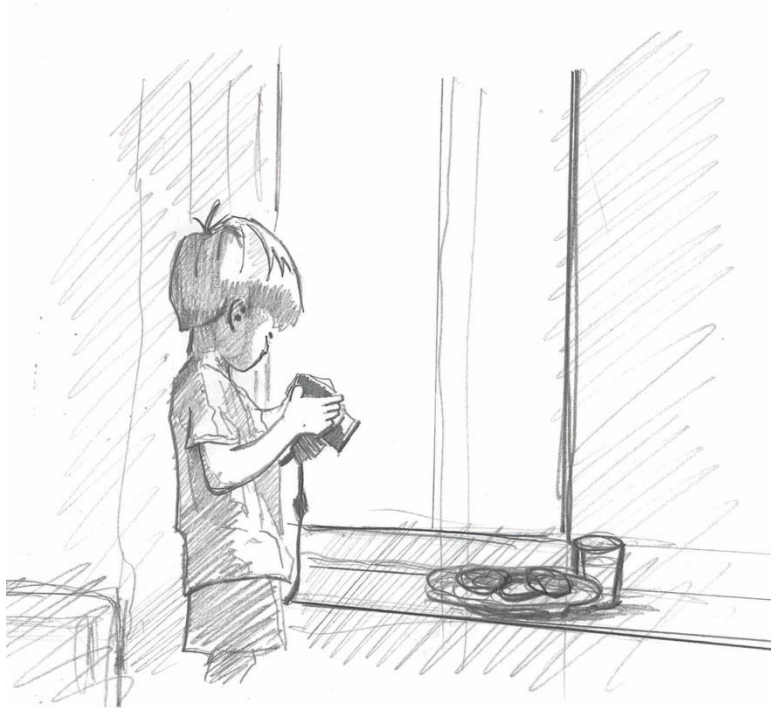
**Creating the Illustrations:** To capture this 'moody' landscape I decided to create all my final illustrations as acrylic paintings on canvas board. This gave me the option to explore the changing light, colours and tone throughout the story. All the final artworks in the book are hand painted using acrylic paint on canvas boards.

I started all the illustrations by doing some preliminary pencil sketches and taking some reference photos. I was very lucky to have one of my nephews act out some of the poses I needed to capture Tom's gestures. Having a number of photos to work from also helped me better understand the light, colour and tones that I needed in the composition.

Here's a photo of my drawing board set up and one of the final acrylic paintings in progress.

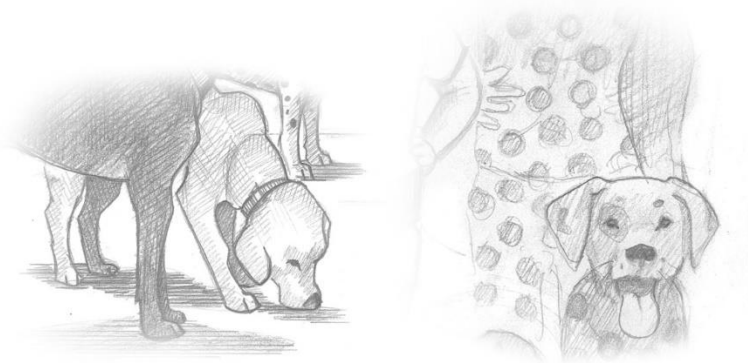






**Including Special Characters:** There is another special character in "Zoom"—Tom's Labrador companion. You might recognize this background character from another story that Dannika Patterson wrote, and I illustrated, *Hedgehog the Wonder Dog*. Dogs are such empathetic creatures and can often tell when someone isn't feeling well. Their body gestures are full of visual emotion. It felt right to include this special connection in the story.

*Preliminary pencil sketches of 'George' from 'Hedgehog the Wonder Dog':*



*Preliminary pencil sketches of 'George' from 'Zoom':*



**About the Publisher:**

This book was published by Ford Street Publishing, based in Melbourne, Australia. See more books from Ford Street Publishing at

<http://www.fordstreetpublishing.com>

**AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM (VERSION 9.0) OUTCOMES**

English	
Foundation	AC9EFLA07 AC9EFLE02 AC9EFLE04 AC9EFLY06 AC9EFLY07 AC9EFLA08 AC9EFLE03 AC9EFLY05
Year 1	AC9E1LA04 AC9E1LA09 AC9E1LE02 AC9E1LY02 AC9E1LY06 AC9E1LY07 AC9E1LA03 AC9E1LA06 AC9E1LA07 AC9E1LA08 AC9E1LE02 AC9E1LE03
Year 2	AC9E2LA08 AC9E2LY02 AC9E2LY06 AC9E2LY07 AC9E2LE02 AC9E2LE03 AC9E2LY03
Year 3	AC9E3LA09 AC9E3LA10 AC9E3LE02 AC9E3LY02 AC9E4LY02 AC9E3LY06 AC9E3LY07 AC9E3LE04 AC9E3LY05 AC9E3LE05
Year 4	AC9E4LY06, AC9E4LY07 AC9E4LA04 AC9E4LA11 AC9E4LE03 AC9E4LY03
HASS	
Foundation	AC9HSFK02 AC9HSFS02 AC9HSFS04
Year 1	AC9HS1S01 AC9HS1S06 AC9HS1K02
Year 2	AC9HS2S01 AC9HS2S02 AC9HS2K02
Year 3	AC9HS3K02 AC9HS3S01
Year 4	AC9HS4K09 AC9HS4S01
Science	

Foundation	<a href="#">ACSSU002</a>
Year 1	<a href="#">ACSSU211</a>
Year 2	<a href="#">ACSSU031</a>
Year 4	<a href="#">AC9S4U02</a>
The Arts	
Foundation -3	<a href="#">AC9AVA2D01</a> <a href="#">AC9AVA2C01</a> <a href="#">AC9ADRFD01</a> <a href="#">AC9ADRFC01</a> <a href="#">AC9AVAFD01</a> <a href="#">AC9AV AFC01</a> <a href="#">AC9AVA2D01</a> <a href="#">AC9AVA2C01</a> <a href="#">AC9AVA2P01</a>
Years 3-4	<a href="#">AC9AVA4P01</a> <a href="#">AC9AVA4D01</a> <a href="#">AC9AVA4C01</a> <a href="#">AC9AVA4P01</a>
Health and Physical Education	
Foundation	<a href="#">AC9HPFP03</a> <a href="#">AC9HPFM04</a>
Years 1-2	<a href="#">AC9HP2P03</a> <a href="#">AC9HP2P01</a> <a href="#">AC9HP2P05</a>
Years 3-4	<a href="#">AC9HP4M01</a> <a href="#">AC9HP4P01</a> <a href="#">AC9HP4P02</a> <a href="#">AC9HP4P06</a> <a href="#">AC9HP4P10</a>
Technologies	
Years 1 and 2	<a href="#">AC9TDE2K01</a> <a href="#">AC9TDI2K01</a> <a href="#">AC9TDI2P04</a>
Years 3 and 4	<a href="#">AC9TDI4K01</a> <a href="#">AC9TDI4P06</a>