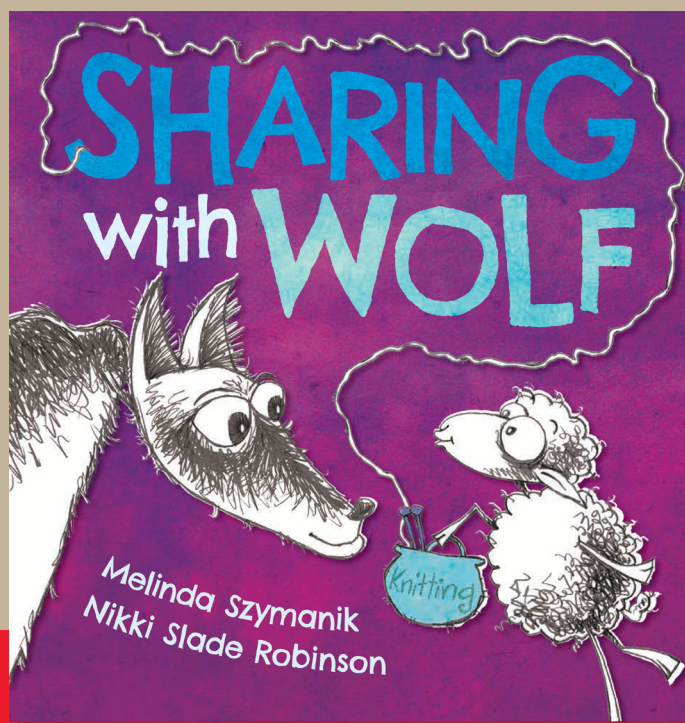


# Sharing with Wolf

By Melinda Szymanik  
and Nikki Slade Robinson

• Reading • Writing • Art • Thinking Skills •



## Synopsis

Wolf hangs a sign 'Room for rent. Apply Within.', on her front door. Lamb applies with a list of references. He's desperate for a place to live and tries to convince Wolf why he'd make a great housemate. But he's a little too trusting.

Wolf says straight up she can't share with a sheep ... she has a tendency to eat them. "It's in my nature."

But Lamb does not give up. He hires a sheepnotist to hypnotise Wolf out of the habit of eating sheep. But the sheepnotist uses the wrong choice of words. Yes, Wolf loves sheep... roasted, grilled or casseroled. Lamb thinks if Wolf got to know him, whether she might change her mind. Lamb shares his favourite things. Wolf does too but it hasn't changed her mind. She still loves sheep (meat). Lamb keeps making suggestions until Wolf gives up and lets Lamb enter her house. Later, Wolf hangs a sign 'Room for rent. Apply Within.' The observant reader will notice two sheepskin rugs on Wolf's floor.

## About the Author

**Melinda Szymanik** is the author of five Scholastic picture books, including *Fuzzy Doodle*, *The Song of Kauri* (2015 Storylines Notable Book) and *The Were-Nana* (2009 Children's Choice Winner at the NZ Post Children's Book Awards). She has also written junior novels, including *A Winter's Day in 1939* which was the winner of the Librarian's Choice Award at the 2014 LIANZA Children's Book Awards and a finalist in the 2014 NZ Post Children's Book Awards. Melinda lives with her family in Auckland, has a Bachelor of Arts degree in English at Massey University, and a Diploma in Children's Literature at the University of Canterbury.

## About the Illustrator

**Nikki Slade Robinson** is a graduate of the Wellington Polytechnic's Diploma in Visual Communication Design (Illustration) course. Nikki has illustrated many children's books, as well as having written and illustrated her own, including the *Munkle Arvur* stories. *The Little Kiwi's Matariki* won Best Picture Book at the 2016 NZ Book Awards for Children and Young Adults. She also received Storylines Notable Book recognition for *Muddle & Mo*; *Witch's Cat Wanted: Apply Within*; and *The Seven Stars of Matariki*. Nikki lives in Opotiki with her husband and two daughters.



teacher toolkit

 SCHOLASTIC

# Writing and Illustration Style

*Sharing with Wolf* is a humorous picture book about a wolf looking for a housemate. The author has reversed the usual roles and has the wolf as the female and the sheep as the male in the story. The wolf's character is honest and confesses to Lamb that she tends to eat sheep and doesn't recommend Lamb move in. But the determined Lamb doesn't see the signs (sheepskin rug on floor) or the hints and moves in. The story ending is left open-ended, but the illustrator has left clues in the final illustration. The text is mostly dialogue with the occasional explanatory sentence, written in third person past tense. Each page has 2-4 sentences in white or black font laid over a colourful backdrop. The author uses a range of speech tags, for example, said, muttered, asked, begged, or action to show who is speaking such as 'she bleated ten times'.

The backdrop was drawn with digital collage, while the wolf and sheep were illustrated with a black lead pencil on paper and overlaid over the top of the artwork. The illustrator has used shading to make those characters stand out. The pictures contribute to the story giving hints such as the visual clue of the sheepskin rug on the floor, the recipe book, and the changing text on the knitting basket.

The book will appeal to 4-8-year-old readers who like humour and play on words.

## Shared Learning and Discussion Points

During the shared session encourage students to ask questions to clarify their understanding of characters and events. Have them make predictions, inferences and relate to their own experiences. Read the passages aloud and students read alongside or by themselves.

### ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

Look at the cover and read the blurb.

- Who are the main characters in the story?
- What do you think this story is about? Why do you think that?
- What do you already know about wolves and sheep? Predict what you think might happen in the story.
- What do you think the title is hinting at?
- Why is wool such a feature on the cover?

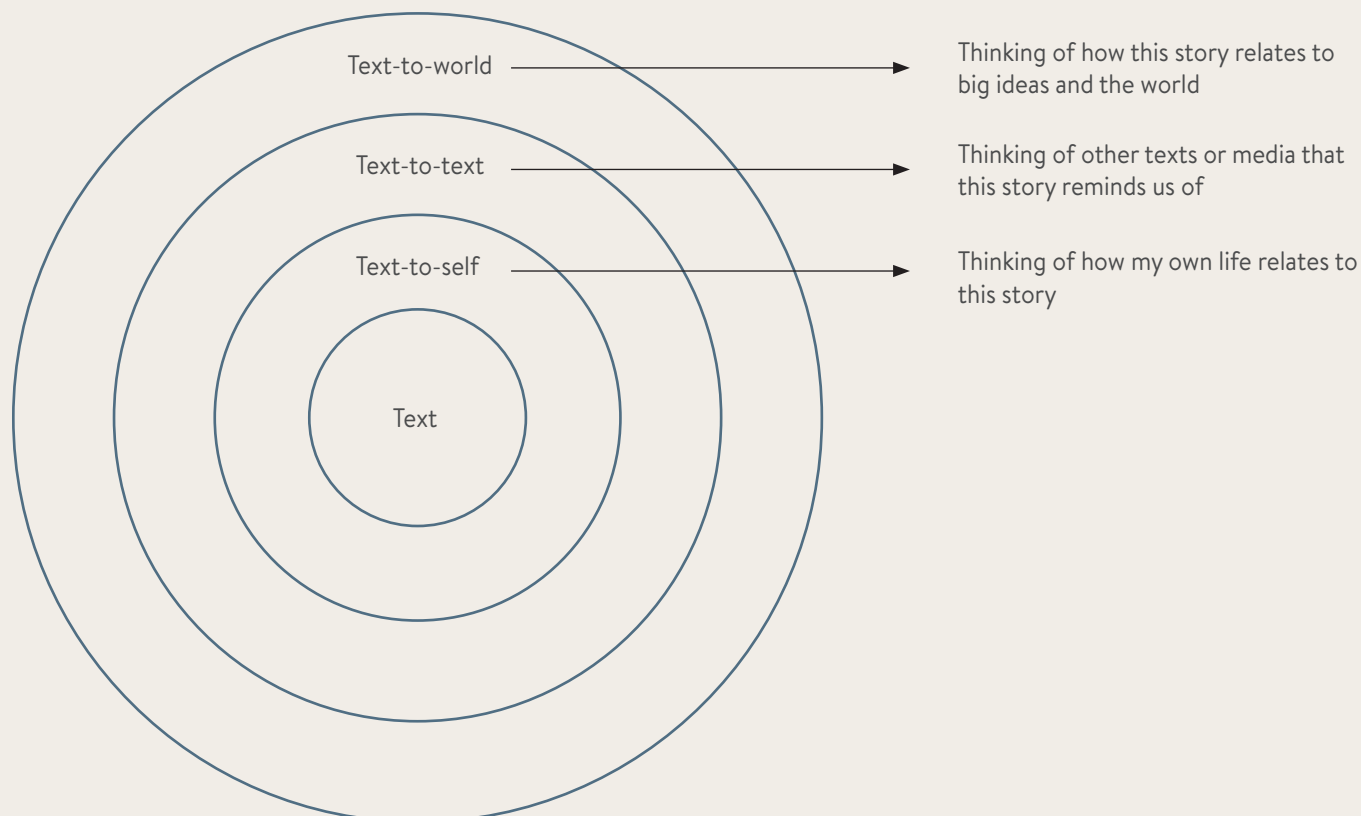
### Comprehension questions

- What do you think the endpapers, on the inside front and back cover, trying to tell the reader?
- Why has Wolf put up a sign – what is she advertising for?
- Why does she want a new housemate?
- What are references in a story and why do they help?
- What does Lamb mean by 'I'm a quiet sort who loves minding my own business.' Why does he think this is a good thing?
- What is a flock?
- What does Wolf mean when she says, 'I... ah... have a tendency to eat them. It's in my nature.'
- What is 'sheepnotism'? Is it a real word?
- What's a 'ewe'? Why don't we say, 'an ewe'?
- What's the problem with the words the sheepnotist used on Wolf?
- What is Lamb's favourite food? What do you think will be Wolf's favourite food?
- Why is there plenty of Wolf's favourite food around in Spring?
- Why is Lamb's plan to dress like a wolf flawed?
- What two words in the story sound the same but are spelled differently? (nose, knows)
- What has Lamb offered to do around the house?
- How would you describe Lamb's personality?
- How does the writer let us know that Wolf is not so honest or as innocent as she has been making out?
- Do you think Wolf is telling the truth when she says she is always looking for a new housemate because it costs too much to live alone? What is your proof?
- What do you think happened to Wolf's other housemates?



# Activities

## ACTIVITY 1: MAKING CONNECTIONS



Ask the students to share connections, using their prior knowledge, that they've made with the story with a partner.

Ask questions for Text-to-self like: What did they already know about wolves and sheep? Has anyone made a connection to knitting? Can anyone relate to having housemates?

Text-to-text questions such as: Has anyone made a connection to other books with the same sort of characters/animals? Has anyone watched a TV programme/movie about these types of animals/characters?

Text-to-world questions: Can anyone remember where wolves and sheep live in the world? What is the big idea in the story?

## ACTIVITY 2: PAINT AND SCRIBBLE ART

Ask the students to look closely at the art in the book. Can they see two styles? Discuss the two styles. Encourage students to work in pairs. Tell them they're going to redraw the last scene but instead of Lamb ending up as a sheepskin rug – he's going to move in with Wolf. Will it be a happy, sad, or funny scene?

Together they will paint a background of Wolf's house inside or out. While that is drying, they will draw a picture of Wolf and Lamb and will place that on the painted scene. Underneath they will explain what is happening. They could use speech bubbles, or just write it as an explanation. Display the artwork in the classroom.

## ACTIVITY 3: THREE WISHES

A genie lands in the middle of the story and grants the two main characters three wishes. What do they wish for and why? Would the wishes change anything in the story? Why?

Written by Maria Gill