



OMNIBUS BOOKS

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Title	One Woolly Wombat
Author and illustrator	Kerry Argent
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Teachers' Notes

One Woolly Wombat 30th Anniversary Edition

Kerry Argent

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About the Book

One Woolly Wombat is a delightful counting book that has been entertaining children for thirty years. Kerry Argent's gorgeous illustrations of Australian fauna and flora are an excellent education tool for young children. This new edition features extra artwork by Kerry Argent to celebrate this special anniversary, not only of the publication of the book itself, but also of Omnibus Books as an Australian publishing house.

About the Author/Illustrator

Kerry Argent is one of Australia's finest and most highly acclaimed illustrators. *One Woolly Wombat* was her first published picture book, completed while she was still at art school, and went on to become an international bestseller. For over a decade, Kerry combined illustrating books with her job as Art Director at Omnibus Books. Kerry's artwork has gained worldwide recognition. Some of her most popular books are *A Bush Birthday*, *Sebastian Lives in a Hat*, *Derek the Dinosaur*, *Thank You Santa*, *Gotcha!*, *Wombat Divine* and *Too Loud Lily*. Kerry's illustrations are particularly popular with children. Her most distinctive traits as an artist are her soft, rich colour work using coloured pencils or watercolour and pen and ink, and the warmth and humour with which she captures the endearing characteristics of animals. More recently she has written and illustrated *India the Show Stopper* and *Ruby Roars*.

Study Notes for Teachers

1. *One Woolly Wombat* is a great starting point for creative fun and teaching children to think about how they read. It's important to reread picture books, as children will notice new elements and learn with each reading.
 - The first time you read through the book, teach children how we read from left to right. On this reading just show the children the illustrations instead of reading aloud to them. Have them come up with their own story of what the animals are doing.
 - Read through the story once without showing the children the illustrations. As a class have them create tableau scenes in response to each page. This is a good

exercise to practise counting and working together. Where only a few children are needed in the scene, the remaining children can be responsible for positioning the actions of the children playing the animals on the page.

- Read the book and ask children to mime the actions of what each group of animals is doing.
- Ask children to respond to the activities on each page. Is this their idea of fun?

2. Use *One Woolly Wombat* as a guide to learning how to count:

- Have children count the animals on the page to reinforce the numbers they hear. They can also count the various objects on the page they see. Like one beach chair, etc.
- Assign each child a number from the book and ask them to paint their number on an A4 sheet of paper that you can pin up around the class as a reminder of what numbers look like.
- As you read the text, ask children to try to shape each number with their bodies.
- Talk about why counting is useful. Think up scenarios where knowing your numbers is important. Ask them to come up with a list of things we use numbers for: keeping time, dates, phone numbers, street numbers, etc.
- Have children practise their counting by collecting items in number groups. For example, they could go outside into the playground and collect one leaf, two blades of grass, three sticks, four pebbles, etc.
- If children have access to the Internet, the Australian Government has a terrific website with counting games for young children:
<http://www.abc.net.au/countusin/>
- Older children can be asked to create their own counting books using *One Woolly Wombat* as a guide.

3. *One Woolly Wombat* is an ideal book to discuss native Australian animals:

- Read through the book slowly and at each page see what children know about the different species of animals. For each animal come up with a list of *describing* words.
- If possible, take your class on an excursion to a zoo or wildlife park where the children can see the animals from the story. Have them draw what they see. If

you aren't able to leave the classroom, think about showing children footage from a wildlife documentary or from the Internet.

- Introduce the concepts of native and habitat. Explain that the word 'native' means that animals or plants belong somewhere and you wouldn't find them anywhere else in the world. See if anyone can name an animal and the place it comes from. Explain that the word 'habitat' means home. That is, the specific place an animal lives. It might be in a tree, under a rock, in the ground or in the sea. Look at the different animals in *One Woolly Wombat* and see if children can match them up with the correct habitat.
 - Play a game where children pick an animal from the book to impersonate and see if the others can guess from their body language what animal they are.
4. Use the activities in *One Woolly Wombat* to prompt discussion and activities:
- Ask children what they should take to the beach (bathers, towel, sunscreen, etc). They can look at the illustration and see what the woolly wombat has with him.
 - As a class, look at the page where the kangaroos are dancing for fun. Have a dance session for the children. Begin with a warm-up where everyone stretches. Give children instructions like bending to the side like a tree swaying in the wind or moving their arms in circles as if they are swimming. When you have done your warm-up, get children to run or skip on the spot to the music to get started. Then give them instructions like *hop like a kangaroo* or *climb like a possum* or *swim like a platypus*.
 - Have children make their own yoyos so that they can play like the dingoes. You can make simple yoyos using string, balloons and water. 1) Fill a balloon with a little bit of water so it is the size of an apricot, then blow air into it until it is the size of an apple. Once this is done, tie the end tight. 2) Make a loop in the string for your finger and tie the other end to the balloon.
 - Ask the children if anyone has visited the bush before. Perhaps they have seen the animals from the book in the wild. As a class, come up with a list of adjectives that describe the bush.