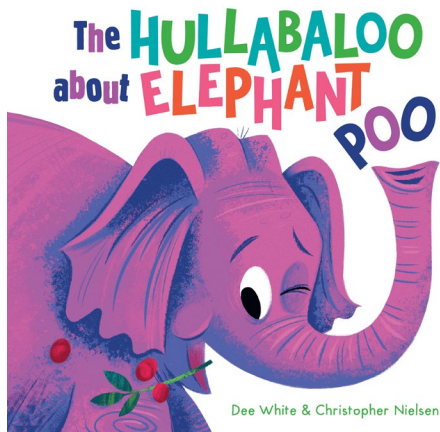


Classroom Resources



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The Hullabaloo about Elephant Poo

Dee White and Christopher Nielsen

BOOK SUMMARY

A humorous picture book about elephants and how surprisingly sustainable their poo can be!

*There's a hullabaloo about elephant poo –
what can you do with that beastly brew?
A hundred kilos daily from you-know-where.
That's the same body weight as a panda bear!*

The messy and totally true tale of elephants and the many uses for what comes from their busy behinds.

KEY LEARNING OUTCOMES

- AC9E2LY03
- AC9E2LA03
- AC9S2H01

THEMES

- Natural World
- Sustainability
- Humour

Recommended Reading Ages: 3+

Resources Created For: Lower Primary

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Before Reading

1. Establish a class learning wall to record reflections, questions and answers, relevant information, quotes, examples of writing techniques and speculations.
 - a) Start with students' responses to and speculation about the questions below.
2. Looking at the cover, invite students' observations:
 - a) What do the colours and cartoon-style illustrations suggest about the book? For example, funny, humorous, silly.
 - b) Have any of the students seen an elephant in real life?
 - (i) What do they look like?
 - (ii) How similar are they to the elephant on the cover?
 - c) Do they think the picture book will be fiction or non-fiction?
3. What do students know about elephants? Create an anchor chart with responses.
4. There are many stories about elephants – what are some of these?
 - a) Are they fiction or non-fiction?
5. Create a list of alternatives (school appropriate!) for the word poo: dung, droppings, scat/s, poop, excrement, waste, stool/s, night soil, manure, guano, muck, spoor, etc.
 - a) Add these terms to the learning wall.
 - b) These could also be separated into slang/scientific/animal related and so on.
 - c) Add to this list after reading the book, if more are found in the text.
6. Organise a bulk loan of books, both fiction and non-fiction, on elephants, sustainability and the digestive system.

During Reading

1. What do students first notice about how the picture book is written? This is a rhyming book.
 - a) Younger children may be able to predict the second rhyming word as the book is read.
 - b) Collate the pairs of rhyming words and add to the learning wall.
 - c) Add to the pairs to make rhyming families.
2. What do the students think now about whether the book is fiction or non-fiction?
 - a) Can an information book also be entertaining? Do students know of other examples?
 - b) What might the creators' purpose be, in making this book amusing?
 - c) Compare *The Hullabaloo about Elephant Poo* with a 'regular' non-fiction book about elephants.
 - (i) Make notes of differences and similarities between the two texts. This could be part of the learning wall with annotated diagrams of each.

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3. Introduce or review the term narrative non-fiction: narrative non-fiction is a genre of writing that uses literary style and technique to tell a factually accurate story.
 - a) What elements of literary style here are more usually found in fiction books?
4. Introduce or review the term sustainability.
 - a) What does it mean?
 - b) What examples are there in the book?
 - c) What practices are in daily life at school or home?
 - d) Identify practices from the picture book that could be implemented at school or home.
5. Compile a list of all the uses for elephant poo mentioned in *The Hullabaloo about Elephant Poo*.
 - a) For each use, find out the resource that is being spared, e.g. paper saves trees.
 - b) Explain/discuss how this helps with conservation and sustainability.

Writing

1. Research elephants and write a one-page information report with findings.
2. Use a template to create a report on a chosen species of elephant.
3. Write a rhyming poem about elephants either as a species or an individual.
 - Students may like to use the rhyming families they have collected to help them.
4. Create a set of 'Fact or Fiction?' cards on elephants. Use these with a partner to test out their knowledge.

After Reading

1. One of the fascinating real products created with elephant dung is paper. In small groups, have students create a poster or PowerPoint on the process. This [website](#) is an excellent starting point.
2. While manure has often been sold as a way of managing its disposal (e.g. horse/pony poo for sale at farm-gates), when did zoos start to do this? Here is an informative article from Perth Zoo that outlines their experience: [War on waste: Perth Zoo's daily manure mountain converted into high quality compost](#).
 - a) Research other zoos that sell zoo poo.
 - b) Write a list of what makes zoo poo so good for gardens.
 - c) What are the advantages/disadvantages for zoos?
 - d) Create an ad for selling elephant poo. This could be a digital poster, a video or a radio ad. Script it and add details to suit the chosen medium.

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3. The book mentions burning elephant poo to keep away mozzies. Burning dung has been a solution to this problem for hundreds of years.
 - a) How effective is it? How does it repel the mosquitoes?
 - b) Research other examples of both dung and cultures/countries that use this method.
 - c) What are the positives and negatives of doing so?
4. Research the factors that have led to elephants being on the endangered list.
 - a) As a class, brainstorm how you might take action to support the elephant populations.
 - b) Are there any products that we use here in Australia that contribute to one or more of these factors?
 - c) Students might choose to hold a fundraising event for one of the elephant conservation groups. Or they may mount an awareness campaign using information they acquire during the course of this unit. For example, most organisations that sell elephant-poo stationery use the funds to help orphaned elephants, fight poaching, and fight poverty in villages in Sri Lanka and other parts of the world; these organisations may be ones that students would like to support.
5. *The Hullabaloo about Elephant Poo* could lend itself to some interesting maths lessons.
 - a) Use everyday materials to replicate sizes mentioned in the book, e.g. use foam blocks or boxes to build a pile equivalent to the daily deposit of one elephant.
 - b) Compare the sizes of poo from an African elephant with an Asian elephant. Use clay to model respective sizes to scale.
 - c) Create a smallest to largest display of animal poos modelled from clay or other materials – pets might be a good starting point, e.g. mouse, cat, dog, cow, horse, then elephant-sized poo.
 - d) Estimate or research comparative weights of poo.

Resources

- [Videos of elephants pooping](#)
- [WWF: Fascinating Elephant Facts](#)
- [NatGeo Kids: Elephants](#)
- [Brittanica Kids: Elephant](#)

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About the Author and Illustrator

Dee White is the award-winning, international author of more than 25 books for children and young adults. She will do almost anything for a good story, including jumping out of a plane, touring the Paris sewers and sneaking up on an elephant. Dee runs writing classes and workshops at schools and festivals throughout Australia and overseas, and is passionate about history, the environment and supporting young writers to tell their stories. Visit her at deescribe.com.au

Christopher Nielsen is an Australian author/illustrator specialising in bringing joy and wonder to children through his art and storytelling. His illustrations are inspired by a deep passion for mid-century culture and design. In 2018 his first picture book saw him shortlisted for the CBCA Crichton Award for best new illustrator and in 2022 his book *Just One Bee* (written by Margrete Lamond and Anthony Bertini) received the CBCA Honour Award for Picture Book of the Year. When he's not busy with a book, he can be found raising his beautiful young family or playing with his band The Ramalamas.

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