

## Grandma Wombat

By Jackie French

Illustrated by Bruce Whatley

### Grandma Wombat



JACKIE FRENCH & BRUCE WHATLEY

The award-winning creators of the bestselling *Diary of a Wombat*

### Book Summary:

From the award-winning, best-selling creators of *DIARY OF A WOMBAT* comes another Wombat picture book - this time about more senior members of the species.

It is said that becoming a grandparent is one of life's greatest joys, and Mothball certainly enjoys the pleasure of looking after the adorable new baby wombat. But like all new babies, this little fellow is so active ... and curious ... He sure does get up to all sorts of mischief, which is pretty hard on a granny who does love to eat, sleep and scratch.

### Curriculum Areas and Key Learning Outcomes:

**Grandma Wombat** suits the following Australian Curriculum content descriptors:

#### Foundation (Kindergarten/Prep)

English

ACELA1429	ACELT1575	ACELY1650
ACELA1786	ACELT1783	ACELY1652
	ACELT1578	
	ACELT1580	

#### Year 1

English

ACELA1444	ACELT1581	ACELY1656
ACELA1787	ACELT1582	ACELY 1788
ACELA1453	ACELT1584	ACELY1660
	ACELT1586	

#### Year 2

English

ACELA1469	ACELT1589	ACELY1665
	ACELT1591	
	ACELT1593	

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Notes by: Christina Wheeler

**Appropriate Ages:** Ages: 3+

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## KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- English

## REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

*Grandma Wombat* continues the series of Jackie French and Bruce Whatley's Wombat series and explores the unique relationship between grandparents and their grandchildren. It especially picks up on the doting nature of grandparents and importance of manners. The illustrations allow for excellent visual literacy activities.

## THEMES

- Wombats
- Relationships – grandparents/grandchildren
- Adventure
- Manners

## About the author

Jackie French is an award-winning writer, wombat negotiator, the Australian Children's Laureate for 2014/2015 and the Senior Australian of the Year for 2015. She is one of Australia's most popular children's authors, and writes across many genres.

Visit Jackie's website: [www.jackiefrench.com](http://www.jackiefrench.com)

## About the illustrator

Bruce Whatley is one of Australia's most highly regarded and talented authors and illustrators for children, both here and internationally. In 2002 Bruce paired with author Jackie French and illustrated *Diary of a Wombat*, which was the start of an extraordinary creative collaboration that sparked many other books.

Visit Bruce's website: [www.brucewhatley.com](http://www.brucewhatley.com)

## Before Reading

- From the front cover, make predictions about the relationship between Mothball and her grandson. How do these two wombats appear different in nature? How are you different from your grandparents?
- From your experience of other books in Jackie French's *Wombat* series, what do you think these wombats might get up to in *Grandma Wombat*?
- Discuss the illustration on the dedication page of the kangaroo with the young wombat in its pouch. What clues does this give about the text?

## Discussion Questions

- How is the relationship between grandparents and their grandchildren unique? Share examples of experiences you have with your grandparents that you don't have with your parents.
- Mothball believes that wombats are ALWAYS polite. Using the illustrations to support your ideas, discuss whether or not this is the case.
- In small groups, invent some creative ideas as to how Mothball's grandson came to be in the kangaroo's pouch.
- How does the body language of the sheep and dog tell us about their reactions to the young wombat's adventures?
- Look at the page in which the sky divers are awaiting their jumps. Why do you think there are no words on this page? What can we tell about the young wombat's personality from this page?
- What do you think is going through the young wombat's mind on the very last page? Take particular notice of the silhouette under the parachute.
- In what ways do we know exactly what Mothball likes and dislikes in *Grandma Wombat*? Categorise these ideas into two lists - verbal and non-verbal.

## Classroom Activities

### Reading and Viewing

- Mothball believes her grandson has excellent manners. Find illustrations in the text that support or contradict her beliefs.
- Compare *Grandma Wombat* with other picture books about grandparents, discussing how they are similar and different. Titles include:
  - *Old Pig* by Margaret Wild
  - *Potato People* by Pamela Allen
  - *Brian Banana Duck Sunshine Yellow* by Christopher McKimmie
  - *The Perfect Present* by Fiona Robertson
  - *My Nanna is a Ninja* by Damon Young
- How did Mothball and her grandson solve their problem of being hungry?
- Choose a page opening that allows for visual literacy, such as page 'Am so glad I have a well-behaved grandson'. How do the two wombats' different facial expressions and gestures help give additional meaning to the text?
- How have Jackie French and Bruce Whatley created characters using a combination of words and images?

### Speaking and Listening

- With a friend, share your feelings and thoughts about the events and characters in *Grandma Wombat*. What is your favourite part of the story? Who is your favourite character? Why?
- Recreate *Grandma Wombat* in a dramatized version. Perform this to an audience.
- Retell *Grandma Wombat* in your own words, either to a friend or by recording your voice on an app such as iMovie or Explain Everything.
- The young wombat seems to love adventure. In small groups, invent another set of adventures that he could embark on the next time he visits his grandmother.

### Writing and Representing

- Write and illustrate your own picture book entitled *Grandson Wombat*, telling this story from the young wombat's point of view.
- Select another native Australian animal around whom you can create a story. Research this animal's behaviour, diet, appearance and special features and incorporate these into your story.
- Write a reflection about the relationship that you share with a grandparent or another special friend or relative. What do you enjoy doing together? What have you learnt from your grandparents?
- Write a reflection about *Grandma Wombat*, sharing your opinions and feelings about the text. Swap reflections with a friend.

- Use a graphic organiser to compare the behaviour (or 'manners') of various Australian fauna such as koalas, cockatoos, kangaroos and wombats.
- Why are manners important? What are examples of good manners and bad manners? From the text, find which manners are important to Mothball. Create a small "Book of Manners" for your class.

#### **Grammar, Punctuation and Vocabulary**

- Much of *Grandma Wombat* is written in one or two word sentences. Rewrite the text using full sentences.
- Peer-edit a friend's story. Use a common editing key to identify any errors, for example circling a letter that should be a capital, or underlining any parts of sentences that sound confusing. Give some positive and constructive feedback to your friend.
- Complete the word grid for the textless page opening in which Mothball's grandson leaps out of the plane (Worksheet 1). This could be repeated for other textless pages.



## Worksheet 1 – Grammar, Punctuation and Vocabulary

Complete the following vocabulary grid, choosing appropriate nouns, verbs and adjectives for each character on the page. Use your vocabulary to write a sentence about each character.

Noun (subject)	Wombat	Seagull	Man
Verb	sat	squawked	
Preposition	on	at	
Noun (object)- could be a noun group	the man's head	the wombat	
Adverb (extension)	happily	loudly	

eg The wombat sat happily on the man's head.

The seagull squawked at the wombat loudly.

