



# Black Dog Books

# Classroom Ideas



An imprint of  
Walker Books  
Australia



## Little Dog and the Summer Holiday

Corinne Fenton  
Robin Cowcher  
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\*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

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## Outline:

The summer holidays stretch out forever. Little Dog and his family set off with their caravan. A nostalgic and delightful story about the way family holidays used to be.

## Author/Illustrator Information:

**Corinne Fenton** is the author of over 25 books for children but her passion is picture books about social history. Her classic picture book *Queenie: One Elephant's Story*, illustrated by Peter Gouldthorpe, was an Honour Book in the 2007 Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA) Book of the Year Awards. *The Dog on the Tuckerbox*, also illustrated by Gouldthorpe, was named a Notable Book in two categories of the 2009 CBCA Awards.

**Robin Cowcher** is a freelance illustrator and currently lives in Melbourne, Australia. She studied at RMIT and worked for many years at *The Age* as an art director, illustrator and designer. *Little Dog and the Christmas Wish* (written by Corinne Fenton) was her first title with Black Dog Books. Her second picture book for Walker Books, *Reflection*, was written by Rebecka Sharpe Shelberg.

## How to Use These Notes:

This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

**These notes are for:**

- Ages 5+
- Primary years F-2

**Key Learning Areas:**

- English

**Example of:**

- Picture Book

**Themes/Ideas:**

- Animals
- Adventure
- Family
- Pets

### National Curriculum Focus:\*

**ENGLISH Foundation**  
ACELA1429  
ACELA1431  
ACELA1433  
ACELT1575  
ACELT1577  
ACELT1783  
ACELT1578  
ACELY1648  
ACELY1651

**Year 1**  
ACELA1453  
ACELT1581  
ACELT1582  
ACELT1583  
ACELT1584  
ACELT1586  
ACELT1832  
ACELY1655  
ACELY1658

**Year 2**  
ACELA1462  
ACELA1463  
ACELA1469  
ACELT1587  
ACELT1589  
ACELT1590  
ACELT1591  
ACELT1833

\*Key content descriptions have been identified from the Australian National Curriculum. However, this is not an exhaustive list of National Curriculum content able to be addressed through studying this text.



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## Discussion Questions and Activities:

Before reading the book, on the board or a large sheet of paper write “Summer Holiday”. As a class, think of words that make you think of summer holidays and write them on the board/paper. Have a discussion on how summer holidays could mean very different things to different people, for example some may go on a beach holiday, some may fly overseas to a country where it’s winter, etc.

Before reading *Little Dog and the Summer Holiday*, view the cover and title of the book and identify the following:

- The title of the book
- The author
- The illustrator
- The publisher
- The blurb.

What do you think the story might be about from looking at the title only? Do your ideas change after seeing the cover? Write your own story about a dog called *Little Dog and the Summer Holiday*.

Is *Little Dog and the Summer Holiday* a real or imagined story? What would you expect in a non-fiction book about a dog? What is the purpose of this text? Is it giving information, telling a story or giving instructions? How can you tell?

Why do the words “Little Dog” and “Jonathan” have capital letters? Why don’t other words, such as holidays, car, home, etc.?

When do you think the story is set? How can you tell?

Write a story about a holiday that your family has taken. Where did you go? What did you see, hear and do? Draw some illustrations to go with your story. Alternatively, you could write about an imaginary holiday.

Write and illustrate a sequel to this book where Jonathan, Little Dog and the rest of the family travel to another place in Australia. How do they get there? What do they see?

Compare *Little Dog and the Summer Holiday* to its companion book, *Little Dog and the Christmas Wish*. What is similar about these books? What is different?

Have a class discussion about Jonathan and Little Dog’s relationship. How do they feel about each other? Do you have a pet? Discuss your relationship with your pet and mention how it is similar and different to Jonathan and Little Dog’s relationship.

Make a list of the landmarks that Little Dog sees. Find where these are on a map to track Little Dog’s journey on his summer holiday.

Choose one of the landmarks or popular tourist areas in the book (Sydney Harbour Bridge, Manly, Bondi Beach, Three Sisters, The Dog on the Tuckerbox, Sydney Luna Park, etc.) and research it in your school library or online. What other information can you find about it?

Analyse one of the double-page spreads from the book.

Questions to ask could include:

- What do you look at first? Why? Then how does your eye travel around the page? (This is called the “reading path”.)
- What techniques and materials has Robin Cowcher used? (For example, pencil, watercolour, ink.)
- What perspective has she used? Is the picture shown close-up or from a distance?
- What objects are big and small? Why are they shown this way?
- What objects are in the foreground (front) of the picture? The background? Midground?
- What are the dominant colours? What mood (feeling) do these colours create?
- Where are the creatures or people in the picture looking? Why are they looking there? What effect does this have?

Find the following items in the illustrations and discuss what they were used for and if they are still used today or used in different forms:

- Quoits
- Tin billy
- Bush turkey
- Fly spray
- Box brownie camera
- Board games
- Esky
- Shell travel passports
- 1950s doll
- Annie’s bathers

Have students look at a selection of picture books from the library. Identify who the illustrators are. How many different styles of illustration can the students identify? How do they differ? What type of illustrations do they prefer?

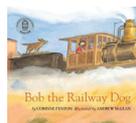
Write a list of the responsibilities involved in keeping a dog as a pet. What do dogs like and dislike?

Find other books by Corinne Fenton and Robin Cowcher in your library. Compare them to *Little Dog and the Summer Holiday*. How are they similar and different? Which is your favourite? Why?

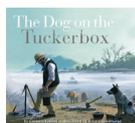
## Other books from Corinne Fenton and Robin Cowcher



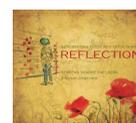
**Little Dog and the Christmas Wish**  
Corinne Fenton  
Robin Cowcher  
HB 9781742032368  
PB 9781925126914



**Bob the Railway Dog**  
Corinne Fenton  
Andrew McLean  
PB 9781925381238  
Classroom ideas available



**The Dog on the Tuckerbox**  
Corinne Fenton  
Peter Gouldthorpe  
PB 9781922077462  
Classroom ideas available



**Reflection**  
Rebecka Sharpe Shelberg  
Robin Cowcher  
HB 9781922179050  
Teacher notes available