

Lamont Books Standing Order

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Teacher Notes and Activities

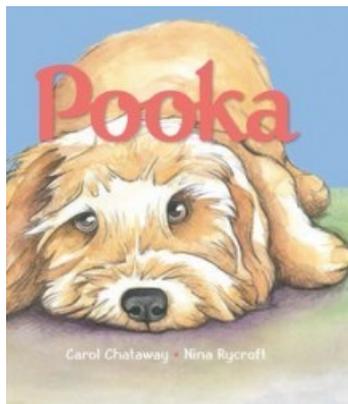
Pooka

By Carol Chataway & Nina Rycroft

ISBN 9781921504372

\$24.95

Told from a small boy's point of view, *Pooka* is a heartwarming story about love, coping with and accepting loss. From the moment Pooka turns up on the doorstep everyone loves her, in spite of Grandad's warning, '*Don't go getting too attached*'. When Pooka's owner finally comes to pick her up the small boy is angry and sad, but with the help of his family he begins to '*look forward to tomorrow again*'.



Teacher Notes taken from those prepared by Janet McLean and supplied by the Publishers, Working Title Press. A full version is available at www.workingtitlepress.com.au.

DISCUSSION POINTS AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

- The points Carol Chataway would like the reader to take from *Pooka* include:
 - It's what's inside you that counts
 - Appreciate the time you have with a loved one
 - Never close your heart, there is always something/someone that needs your love
- Read the story with the children. Pace the reading to evoke the responses of the family:
 - The boy's happiness, and growing attachment to Pooka
 - His deep sorrow when he has to give Pooka back to her owner.
'Stupid heart. It didn't know how to stop loving. Whenever I thought of Pooka, I still loved her. With every beat of my stupid heart.'
 - Grandad's gruff concern for the boy. *'Heading for heartbreak,' grumbled Grandad.*
 - Mum's practicality – going out to look for the owner and putting up 'Lost Dog' posters
 - The way the boy's parents and Grandad, help him to get over his loss, by reminding him of what he learned
- Talk about how the boy started to feel better about losing Pooka:
 - The passage of time - time to be alone to feel sad and angry
 - The support of his family – understanding how he is feeling, reminders about how good it had been to have Pooka, even for a short time
- Talk about how, when he had come to terms with losing Pooka, then something unexpected happened, adding to his understanding of life's ongoing pattern of challenges and pleasure.
- This story will prompt the children to tell you stories about their own dogs or other pets. Ask the children to write and/or draw their own stories. Transcribe the stories for the youngest children, who are still learning to write. Their stories will be much more complex and interesting, if they can dictate their thoughts to you.
- Bring photos of your own pet/s. Display these so that the children can look at them and tell each other stories about their own pets.