

## Fluke

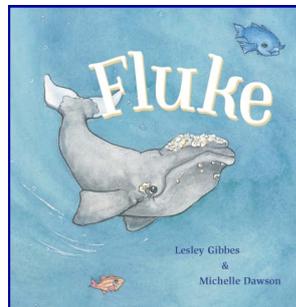
By Lesley Gibbes & Illustrated by Michelle Dawson

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Fluke, a southern right whale calf, is born under the shadow of the great harbour bridge. People flock to watch Fluke and his mother playing together in the sheltered waters of the harbour. Fluke is safe and happy in the warm harbour water... until one day he becomes separated from his mother. Fluke takes fright, panics and flees to the bottom of the ocean. Eventually he is found, nuzzled up against a moored yacht, and is reunited with his mother. The two of them stay in Sydney Harbour until just before summer when it is time for them to set off on their long journey south.



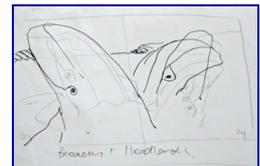
Teacher Notes have been based on those supplied by the publisher, Working Title Press. A full version is available from our website.

### Themes:

- Whales
- Harbour Bridge
- Separation
- Reunion

### Discussion Questions & Activities:

- Where was the little whale born? Can you tell just by looking at the first picture? If so, how?
- What city is the 'Harbour Bridge' located in? Have you seen the Harbour Bridge?
- What are some of the things that Sydney is known for? Are any others mentioned in the story?
- How did Fluke come to be separated from his mother?
- Describe how each of them felt during this time. Have you ever experienced being separated from your parents. Did you feel like Fluke? Explain.
- How do you think they felt when they were reunited?
- Interesting words: flukes, blowing spouts, peek-a-boo, churning, mournful, desperately, breached. How do they sound? What do they mean? What do they relate to in the story? E.g. What is a whale fluke? Why is peek-a-boo used in the story about a whale? How does the word churning make you feel?
- Look at Michelle Dawson's thumbnail sketch that she drew when creating the illustrations. Talk about what she has drawn – think about line, shape, space. Choose a picture from the book and make your own thumbnail sketches, using just paper and pencils. Don't be afraid to start again if you are not satisfied.



Many opportunities for discussion and activities can be drawn from the endpapers that are delightfully designed with waves of blue-hued lines providing 37 fascinating facts about the southern right whale.

- What are the migration patterns of the southern right whale? Use a world or southern hemisphere map to track where they go to in summer and winter.
- Using the information on the end papers measure out the length of Fluke and his mother. Use string, stones/rocks, sticks, tyres, blocks, or any other suitable materials. How many steps is it? How much shorter is Fluke? What is the difference in their lengths?
- Form – name the unique features of the southern right whale. What are the hard white growths around their heads? Do all whales have these?