



## Teaching Notes

### *Little Puggle's Song*

Written by Vikki Conley

Illustrated by Hélène Magisson

Published by New Frontier Publishing



#### SYNOPSIS

Little Puggle wants to join in with the bush choir but everyone knows that echidnas can't sing. The choir is especially in the spotlight now that Mr and Mrs Emu are waiting for their eggs to hatch. Is there a way for Puggle to be part of the welcome song for the Emu chicks?

#### AUTHOR BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Vikki has worked as a professional writer, with diverse communities in Africa, Asia and Australia, for over 20 years. She is an intrepid traveller, nature lover and creative all-rounder. Vikki writes and shares stories that celebrate the spirit of wonder, freedom and adventure that she wishes every child could enjoy.

She is one of the fastest emerging children's writers, with six books being released in the next two years, including ***Ella & Mrs Gooseberry***, to be released in August. Vikki is also the creator of the popular children's literature social media pages, ***Courageous Pages***.

#### ILLUSTRATOR BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Hélène Magisson started her artistic career as a painting restorer in Paris, where she was also trained in the art of medieval illumination. Hélène has lived in Africa, France and India. She has now settled down in Australia with her family. Her travels both inspire and enrich her work. In 2013, she started a new career in children's book illustration. Since then, she has illustrated several books including classics like ***The Velveteen Rabbit*** by Margery Williams Bianco and more contemporary stories like ***Slowly! Slowly!*** by TM Clark, CBCA 2018 Notable Picture Book of the Year.

#### EDUCATIONAL APPLICABILITY

***Little Puggle's Song*** features the unique flora and fauna of the Australian bush, as well as introduces children to the elusive echidna. The book also teaches children to follow their passions, even when the odds seem stacked against them



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#### DISCUSSION TOPICS

##### **Before and during reading:**

1. Show the children the book cover. Can any of them identify what kind of animal Little Puggle is?
2. Do they know anything about echidnas? Have they ever seen one?
3. Do they know what a baby echidna is called?
4. Have they seen or heard the songs of any of the other Australian birds or animals in the book?
5. Do they know the real names of Little Blue, Fantail, Fancy Crest and Brown Feather?
6. What is Puggle doing by the end of the book?

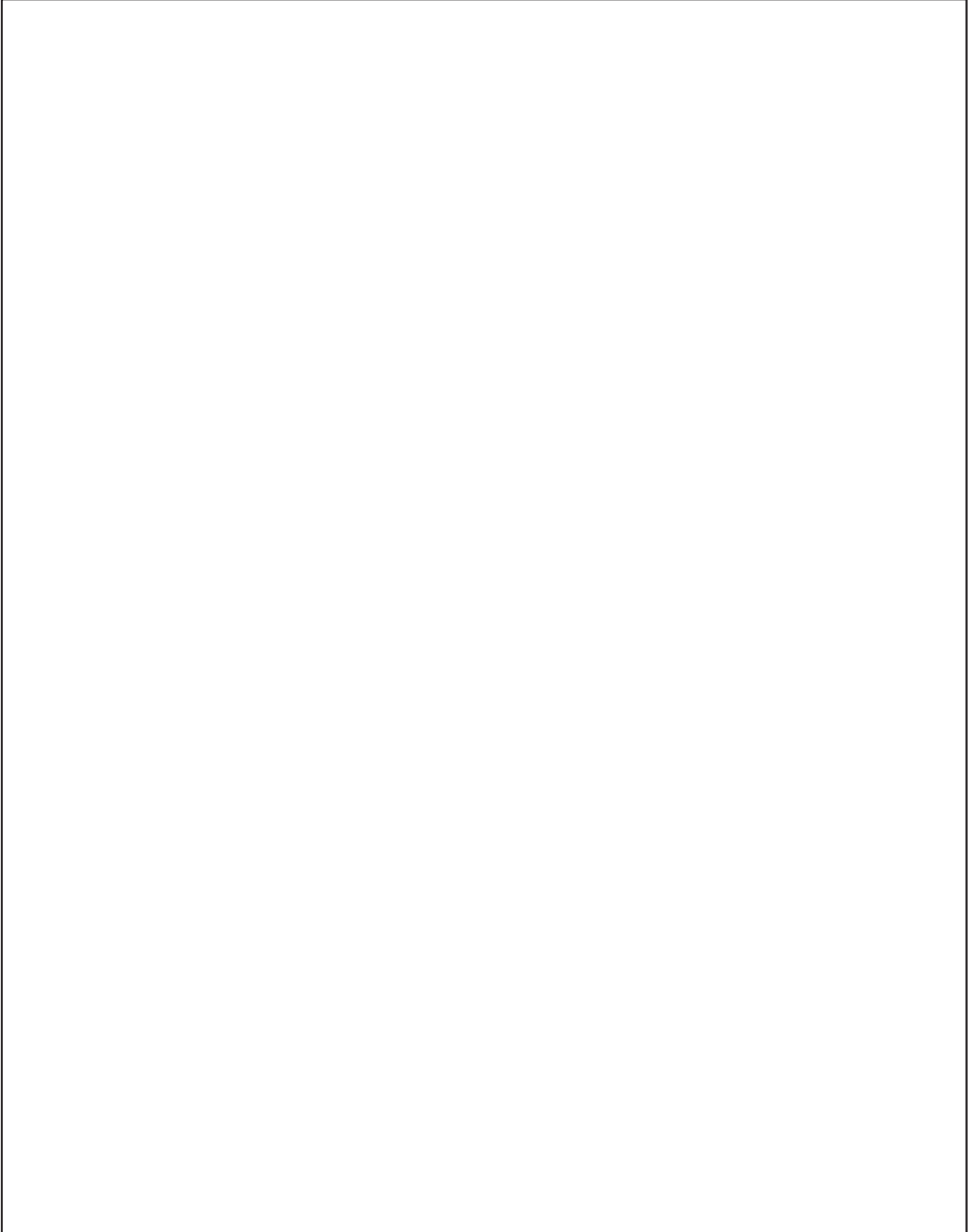
##### **After reading:**

1. Which part of the story did they like the most and why?
2. Who was their favourite character? Have they ever seen that animal in real life?
3. Puggle wants to sing. Are there any hobbies or activities that the children would like to pick up?
4. Do they like music? If so, what kind of music do they like? Have they ever thought of the sounds of the Australian bush as music before?

## Drawing Activity

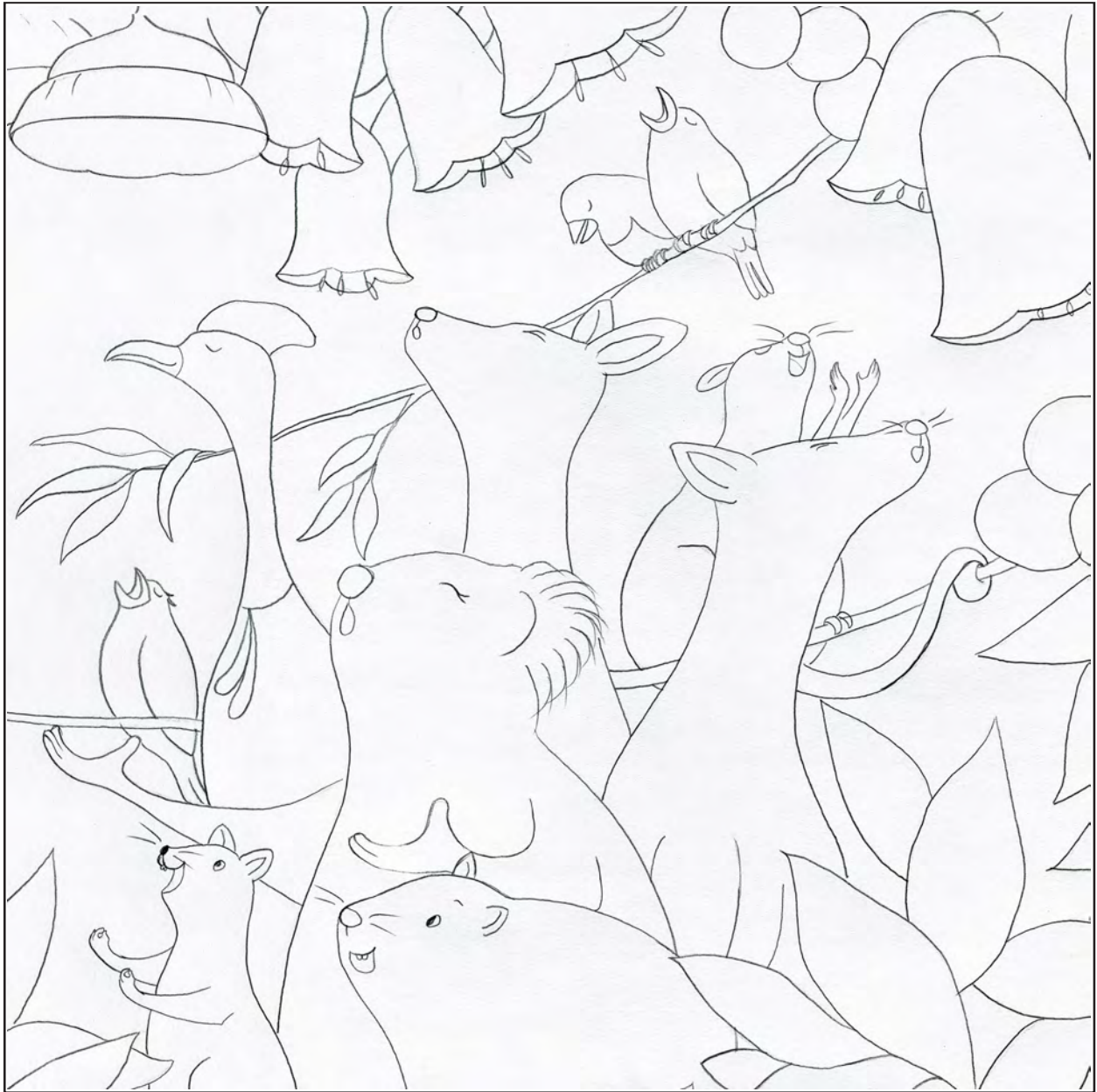
Draw your favourite character from ***Little Puggle's Song***. Before you start to draw, do a little research on the animals. You can visit the library to find a book or look up information online: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com>

Bonus: see if you can draw what you think each animal's song would 'look' like around them.



## Colouring Activity

Colour in the Australian bush choir. Can you remember what sounds they make?



## Little Puggle's Song Word Search



### Find these words:

puggle

echidna

fancy crest

emu

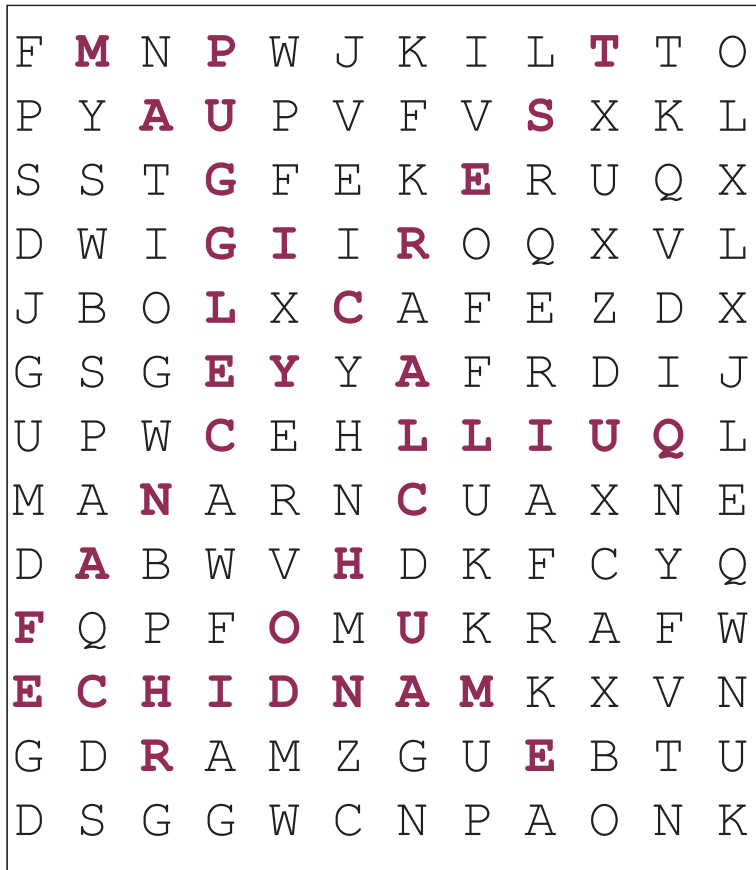
choir

quill

magical



## Little Puggle's Song Word Search Solution





## STORY ARY by Vikki Conley

Instructions to make a clay puggle, caterpillar and koala mamma with her joey.



What you will need:

- Quick-dry clay (terracotta for puggle, white for caterpillar and koalas). Plasticine, modeling clay and playdough can also be used, however they cannot be painted.
- Small twigs snapped or cut to 3cm lengths (for puggle's quills).
- Stems of gum leaves, cut away from leaf. Retain full stem length, including the curl at the non-leaf end (for caterpillar's antennae).
- Children's acrylic paint (white, black, grey, blue/grey).
- Fine paintbrush.
- Toothpicks.
- Water in a dish for bonding clay.
- Water in a container for washing brushes.
- Fishing wire/line (60cms).



## Instructions

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1. @cZZY`dcZ`(") Xb`Waid[`Xa/n#GdaWaj ci`ahb ddi]`l`↑]`cd`Xg/X`h`dgacZh#
2. E`cX]`d[[`[dj`g`hb`Vaa%#`Xb`e`ZXZhi]`M`l`a`VZXdb`Z`i]`Z`[ZZi!`ej`i`VhYZ#
3. E`cX]`VcY`hb`ddi]`i]`Z`Waid`b`V`Z`V`hazcYZghcdj`i`#
4. Gently press two areas at the base of the snout to make two eye sockets.
5. Use a small fingertip of water to smooth out the body shape and snout.
6. Shape each 0.5 cm piece for the feet. Each should have a flat piece to connect to the body, and enough to become the toes.
7. With the toothpick, scratch three lines for the toes.
8. On each foot, do crisscross scratching (score) on the area where you will connect it to the body.
9. Also score the four places on the body where you will connect each foot. Two feet will point forward at the front of the body, two will point slightly outwards from the back.
10. Dab a tiny bit of water on each crisscross scratched area on the body. This process is called 'score (scratch) and slip (water or slurry).
11. Connect each foot by smoothing its 'connecting bit' completely into the body. It is important to follow these steps closely, and smooth well to ensure the feet are bonded well (so they don't fall off during the drying process). Very young children may need help with this step.
12. For the quills, carefully push twigs into the body. Start the front quills about two-thirds of the way back, so you have room for the eyes.
13. Stretch the fish-wire tight, then run it under your puggle close to the table. This will remove it from the table without damaging its shape.
14. Carefully place it in a safe and warm spot until it is completely dry (approx. 1 hour in full sun/summer and ½-1 day in winter), before painting.
15. Using a thin brush, practice making the eye dots on a piece of paper first, until you are happy.
16. Paint on the white eye dots first, and the black mouth. Wait for the white paint to dry, before adding the black eye dot.
17. Ta-da!





For the caterpillar:

1. Knead one 3-4 cm ball of clay. Roll ball until smooth with no cracks or lines. Roll ball into a small thin sausage shape.
2. You will have enough clay to make a big caterpillar. Or you can split your clay to make two small caterpillars.
3. Break off about a fifth of your sausage. Roll it into a smooth ball to become the head. Score and slip the base of the head and the broken end of the sausage, to connect. Smooth the join with a dab, so that it is well bonded.
4. Gently twist the sausage so that the caterpillar's body has a curl, per the photo.
5. You may need to smooth and flatten the point where your caterpillar sits on the table, so that it will stay upright. If you have opted for the larger caterpillar, you may need to insert a toothpick (from sitting point to head) to keep his body upright.
6. Insert two leaf stems into the top of the head for the antennas.
7. Follow the last five steps from the puggle instructions. However, paint your caterpillar and allow the paint to dry, before adding the eyes and mouth. Also, paint two black nostrils, per the photo.



For the koalas:

1. Knead three 3-4 cm balls of clay. Roll balls until smooth with no cracks or lines.
2. Cut one ball into half. One half will be used to make two sets of ears. The other half will make the joey's head and body. During the process, you may need to give and take from each half, to get the right proportions.
3. Roll one half into two balls – one bigger (body), one smaller (head). Using the smaller ball, shape the joey's head.
4. With the larger ball, shape the joey's body. Make its tummy concaved, so that it will hug the mamma's back.
5. Score and slip the base of the head and the top of the body. Join them together, smoothing down all sides, so that they are well bonded to form a neck.
6. Form a body and head shape for the mamma, then repeat the joining process.
7. Split the other half of the ball into two portions. One will be smaller to make the joey's ears, the other larger to make the mamma's ears.
8. Shape the ears so that you have a flat section in between two round, thumb-pressed in ears. Use the toothpick to press in small markings on the edge of each ear, per photo.
9. Score and slip the flat section of the ears and the backs of each koala's head. Then join and smooth.
10. Follow the last five steps from the puggle instructions. However, paint your koala creation grey and allow the paint to dry before painting the white ear edges, eyes, nose and mouth.



## Coffee Filter Flowers

What you will need:

- Coffee filters
- Thick felt pens
- A squirt bottle filled with water
- Green or brown pipe cleaners

Instructions:

1. Smooth out the coffee filter on a plate.
2. Select several colours and draw concentric circles on the coffee filter, filling in the middle circle completely.
3. Using the squirt bottle, spray the filter two or three times in the centre.
4. Leave it for about five minutes so that the colours run into each other. Add another squirt of water if the colours haven't run to the end of the filter.
5. Leave for about 20-30 minutes to dry.
6. Cut 3 inches off the pipe cleaner and set this aside.
7. Push the end of the remaining pipe cleaner through the centre of the coffee filter. Push it through until about an inch is sticking out of the flower and roll this inch into a ball.
8. Wrap the three inches of pipe cleaner that you have set aside around the base of the coffee filter.
9. The end result should look like this!



Credit to DLTK Holidays  
<https://www.dltk-holidays.com/spring/mcoffee-filter-flower.htm>