

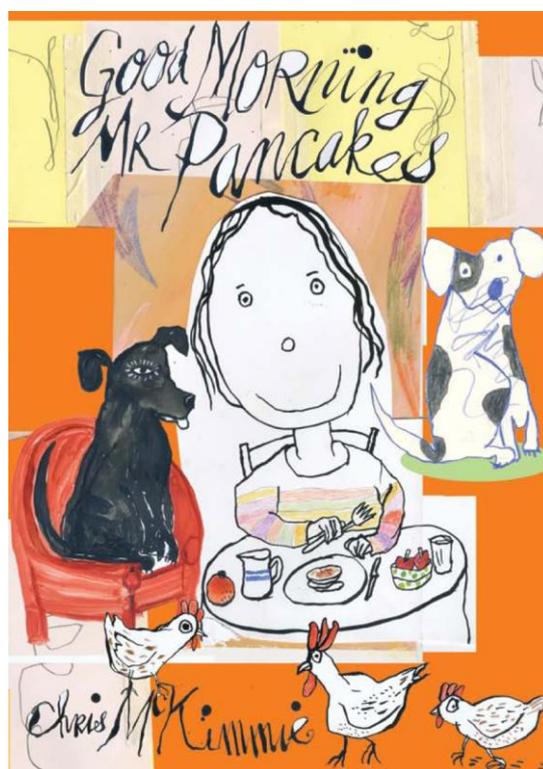
Teachers' Notes (Primary)
by Robyn Sheahan-Bright

Good Morning, Mr Pancakes
Chris McKimmie

ISBN 9781742377193
Recommended for ages 3+

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INTRODUCTION

Good Morning, Mr Pancakes is the fifth in a collection of extraordinarily child-centred and critically acclaimed picture books by Chris McKimmie. Like his *Two Peas in a Pod*, *Brian Banana Duck*, *Sunshine Yellow*, *Maisie Moo* and *Invisible Lucy*, and *Special Kev*, it's a celebration of imagination, adventure, a child's love for animals, and individuality — of pets, play and holidays! Told in McKimmie's distinctively naive text and images, with his characteristically whimsical humour, this latest work celebrates a child's joy in making preparations for another life by escaping the mundane and sailing away to an island, where she can lick the bowl, wear her hair as she pleases, and stay up all night by a fire. But most importantly it's an adventure from which she can come home again to those she loves.

THEMES

There are several key ideas or themes which flow through this work:

- Pets and Animals
- Holidays
- Islands
- Imagination
- Difference & Individuality

These themes could be considered in conjunction with the following school curriculum areas.

CURRICULUM AREAS

1. Study of history, society and environment
2. English language and literacy
3. Visual literacy
4. Creative arts
5. Learning technologies
6. Mathematics

The notes which follow are designed to be used largely in pre-school and lower primary classrooms, although some activities might be useful for upper primary or even secondary students. Teachers should be able to adapt them to suit the demands of their particular curriculum.

STORY SUMMARY

Bee is going on holiday to an island, but worries about her pets while she is away. Wally, Gregor, Henny, Penny, Benny, Sparky, Holly and Princess Princess Princess need to be taken care of. And so Deborah the fish is left in charge of the house for a week. Bee is a girl who has a lot to do. She's a 'very busy Bee' and all of her pets know that. Each day is full of surprises and even her morning pancakes are addressed as individuals! Bee is looking forward to a break, 'No Saturday full of football ballet tuba and chess. No homework.' She's going to spend a whole week on the island, 'drinking from puddles, hiding from spiders, speaking Dolphin and falling in and out of holes.' But after all this excitement, though, it's nice to know that when she gets home, Gregor and all the others will be waiting for her.

STUDY OF HISTORY, SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT

1) Pets and Animals

- *Question:* Bee has several pets: Gregor – Caterpillar; Wally – Cat; Henny, Penny, Benny – chooks; Sparky and Holly – dogs; Deborah – fish; Princess Princess Princess – pet leopard. Which of these pets is not quite like the others? (Answer: PPP, as she is not actually alive!) [See also **BLM 1**]
- *Question:* Bee makes up parcels for her dogs. What are your pet's favourite treats?
- *Question:* What other birds, insects or animals can you name which appear in the images?
- *Question:* What do you like about your pet? What don't you like about your pet?
- *Discussion:* What makes a good pet? Are there any animals, fish or insects which you think would not be good pets? Why?
- *Activity:* Some of the pets go to another home for the holiday – Wally to Kitty Kat Palace; Sparky and Holly to Neville's Luxury Hotel/Motel and Dog Spa; Henny, Penny, Benny to stay with Harry, Barry and Steggles, Uncle Larry's chooks. Write a story about what might have happened to one of them there.
- *Activity:* Gregor is an unusual pet. What other unusual pets do you know about? (Read Ursula Dubosarsky and David Mackintosh's *Rex* (Viking, 2005) as an example.) Then tell your own story about an unusual pet.

2) Holidays

Holidays are times when we do lots of new things, and when we break the routines of home.

- *Question:* What is your favourite holiday destination? Where would you like to have a holiday and why?
- *Activity:* Make a list of the things you'd do on your imaginary holiday.
- *Discussion:* What is the best holiday you've ever had? And what was the worst?

3) Islands

- *Question:* Bee's holiday is on an island. What do you imagine that you would find on an island?
- *Research:* Read about islands and the different types of island that exist, eg. desert, tropical, continental, oceanic, atoll, archipelago.
- *Activity:* Create an 'island diary' about being on an island for seven whole days. How might you spend your time? Who/what might you encounter there? What might you see, eat, do! This could be a **pictorial diary** in which each caption describes the different events and times on the island, in comic strip form.

- *Activity:* Islands evoke all sorts of ideas, eg. being shipwrecked, marooned, searching for treasure, going scuba diving, or doing scientific research are some of them. Make a list of words or activities which islands make you think of. Then write a story to go with any of these words or concepts.
- *Activity:* Describe your imaginary island and then draw a picture or map of it.
- *Activity:* What other books do you know about islands? [Try *Nim's Island*, by Wendy Orr; or *Chelonia Green, Champion of Turtles* by Christobel Mattingley.] Read some in class and discuss the different things which happen on them. [See also **BLM 5**]

4) **Imagination**

- Bee imagines a holiday in which she has 'ten hundred turkeys.' 'And one of them sleeps on the end of my bed.'
- *Question:* 'On my island I can drink out of large puddles. I lick my bowl. I can drink out of my hands.' If you had your choice, what would you like to be able to do, that you're not allowed to do at home?
- *Discussion:* Discuss the idea of a place where you can do anything. How would this place look in your imagination?

5) **Individuality and Identity**

- *Question:* In what ways is Bee an individual? Make a list of the things about her which make her different.
- *Question:* What do you think makes you different? Start with how you look, then your personality, interests, hobbies, your friends, family, house etc.
- *Question:* Who is the most unusual person you know, and why?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

1) The **language** in this book is often based on the **richly imaginative things** children say, and Chris McKimmie explains that several expressions came from things his grandchildren had said to him. For example, Bee says 'I am so excited about my holiday I think my head might fall off', or when she gets home she says 'It's like starting the world all over again'.

- *Question:* How do you feel when you get home from a holiday?
- *Activity:* Write down any unusual things which you say or which people in your family say. Then use this expression or saying as the basis for a story.
- *Question:* 'As slow as a snail or as fast an entire dog.' This is an unusual 'opposite'. What unusual opposites can you think of? [See also **BLM 4**]

2) Test Your Students' Comprehension

- *Question:* 'I watch spiders writing on the red sky. I am no little Miss Muffet.' Ask students what they think these two sentences mean?
- *Question:* In the second last page there's an image of a butterfly with the words 'It's me Gregor' beside it. What does this mean?
- *Question:* Has Bee really been on holiday or is she just imagining things?
[See also **BLM 2 & 3**]

3) Use the text as stimulus for writing.

- *Activity:* Make up a **haiku poem** about Bee's feelings about her island holiday. Haiku is a Japanese lyric verse form having three unrhymed lines of five, seven and five syllables, usually describing nature or the seasons.
- *Activity:* Write a list of the titles of Chris McKimmie's books. They are all really interesting titles. Come up with an interesting book title like them. Write a brief 'blurb' for the story which might go with that title. Design a book cover to go with your imaginary title.

4) Names are always important in each of Chris McKimmie's books.

- *Question:* Each of the pets has an unusual name. If you had a dog, cat, chook, caterpillar, or fish what would you call it and why?
- *Question:* What other names might rhyme with Henny, Penny and Benny?
- *Activity:* Bee calls a crab Mr Sidewalker. Make a list of sea creatures and then give them names which describe them in some way.

5) Expressions of Speech or playing with words are two aspects of what we might call the 'sub-text', or 'intertextuality' in this book [See also **Visual Literacy** below].

- *Question:* What references to fairy tales did you notice in this text?
- *Question:* Bee says that 'At night there is stardust on the air.' What does this mean?

6) Humour is always central to the ideas in Chris McKimmie's books.

- *Question:* What funny things did you notice in the book?
- *Activity:* What funny things do your pets do? Write a story about one of them.

7) The conclusion of a story is important in cementing its themes. This story ends with Bee coming home and starting all over again.

- *Question:* What do you think really happened at the end of this story?
- *Question:* How else might it have ended? Make up an alternative ending.

VISUAL LITERACY

1) Chris McKimmie's drawings of Bee's world and the pets she loves are child-like and impressionistic. They might be called 'naive' in being suggestive of a child's drawing, and actually do include some drawings by Chris's grandchildren, son and wife.

2) The Typography and lettering is like a child's drawing as well.

- *Activity:* Take the picture or map of the imaginary island (which you've drawn above) and write a text on it in your own hand lettering. Try to vary the size and look of the letters to make it look interesting.

3) Medium is described on the back page: 'The images are done in acrylic paint, watercolours, coloured pencil, ink, lead pencil and collage.' McKimmie has invited various members of his family to contribute to the images and lists how they've done that at the end of the book.

- *Activity:* Examine the picture on the front endpaper which is largely done in coloured and lead pencil. Draw a similar scene depicting your family and pets.

4) The pictures in this book have emotional impact too.

- *Activity:* When Bee comes back from the island she is depicted in the boat with several animal friends, and the image reminds one of the famous 'The Owl and the Pussycat' poem by Edward Lear, in which they sail in 'a beautiful pea-green boat' with a sense of joyous celebration of life. Try to create your own image of being very happy and free.

5) Each of Chris McKimmie's books contain intertextual references and jokes in the pictures which refer to underlying themes or ideas.

- *Activity:* For example, a bee appears in some of the images. Why? (Clue: Think about the expression 'as busy as a bee', which appears at the beginning of the book. Look closely at what Bee is wearing in the final frame as well.)

- *Question:* What other 'sub-texts' did you discover in the images in this book?

6) Colour plays a large part in this text as it does in Chris McKimmie's previous two titles.

- *Activity:* How many colours can you find in these pictures? [See also **BLM 1**]
- *Question:* What words for colours are included in the book? (Answer: greens, red, blue.)

7) Design encompasses every aspect of a picture book's construction, and includes the front and back cover image, the endpapers, a dedication page, a title page, 16 double page spreads, and a final imprint or publication details page. The juxtaposition of images and words on each page contributes to meaning in this and in other books.

- *Question:* What do the **endpapers** in this book suggest?
- *Activity:* Examine the **front and back cover**. What meaning do you make from the images? What other information is contained on the back cover?
- In some spreads a **comic/cartoon style** is used employing 'speech bubbles' including dialogue. Eg. In the picture of the fish under the ocean they are having a conversation which includes a few funny jokes. Create your own image of fish chatting like this and come up with some funny conversation.

CREATIVE ARTS

This text might encourage students to explore it through other forms of creative arts.

MUSIC & DANCE

- *Activity:* Make up your own sea ballad about Bee's sailing to and from the island and the things which happen there; set it to music which you like; and then create a dance to go with it.

CRAFT AND DESIGN

- *Activity:* Make an octopus like the one in this book. Create it out of papier mâché and add streamers to it for the legs.
- *Activity:* Make a model of the 'feast under a blue tree' like the one Bee has, using plasticine or play dough.
- *Activity:* Using pictures cut from magazines, pieces of cloth, fur, feathers etc and your own drawing and colouring, create a collage that shows all of Bee's pets together in the back yard.
- *Activity:* Create animal masks to represent Bee's pets.

DRAMA

- *Activity:* Take turns wearing the animal masks and create 'sound tableaux' of Bee's menagerie by imitating the sounds and movements the animals make.
- *Activity:* Act out Bee's adventure.

LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES

This book might be used as a tool for investigations on the Internet.

- *Activity:* Explore **website links to related topics** such as:

Islands

Bee's island has everything she wants on it. Find out what you might find on an island and how many different types of islands there are in the world:

Island <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Island>>

Island Maps, Ocean Maps, Islands of the World, Worldatlas.com

<<http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/io.htm>>

Australian Islands Australia's Cultural Portal

<<http://www.cultureandrecreation.gov.au/articles/islands/>>

Pets and Animals

Looking After Gold Fish by Mina Sorvese

<<http://www.howtodothings.com/pets-animals/how-to-look-after-a-goldfish>>

Pets are Very Special <http://www.teachingonline.org/specialpets.html>

'Category: Drawing Animals' *WikiHow* <<http://www.wikihow.com/Category:Drawing-Animals>>

'How to Draw Animals' *How StuffWorks*

<<http://home.howstuffworks.com/how-to-draw-animals.htm>>

MATHEMATICS

Students will find several objects to count and mathematical concepts to express in relation to this book.

- *Question:* In what other way might you write 'ten hundred turkeys'? (Answer: One thousand turkeys.)
- *Question:* How many chooks does Bee own? And how many does Uncle Larry have? How many all together? (Answer: Three/Three/Six.)
- *Question:* How many holes are on Bee's island? (Answer: One hundred.)
- *Question:* How many strawberries are on the plate on the feast under the blue tree? (Answer: Four.)
- *Question:* How many things are on the table? (Answer: One apple, pie, piece of watermelon, piece of chocolate cake (with one cherry on top), piece of cheese, turkey, spoon, knife, little dish, vase with seven flowers in it; two pears, jugs, glasses, forks; three plums; four strawberries; five oranges.)

CONCLUSION

Bee is a girl who likes to engage with the world on her own terms. This book is a witty and wise insight into how children imagine the world beyond their everyday routine, and long for change. It's about the joy of holidays, about a child's love for her pets, and the power of the imagination. Bee's story is further evidence of Chris McKimmie's delight in children's behaviour and language, and his skills in interpreting them with joyous artistic abandon (with a little help from his family!) Bee is like her predecessors, a thoroughly original heroine whose imaginative antics will delight her readers.

ABOUT THE WRITERS

CHRIS MCKIMMIE

Chris McKimmie was the convenor and originator of the illustration program at the Queensland College of Art, Griffith University. He wrote, illustrated and designed a series of 8 children's books in the 70s, and has designed many covers for the University of Queensland Press. Represented in the *Graphis Annual*, he has worked as a graphic designer and publications designer for the ABC, the National Parks and Wildlife Services and the University of WA Press. He was production designer for the award-winning short film 'Stations' and the feature-length film 'Australian Dream', and wrote the lyrics for the songs in both films. He exhibits paintings and drawings. To see more of his art and read more about him, go to his website at www.chrismckimmie.com

ROBYN SHEAHAN-BRIGHT

Dr Robyn Sheahan-Bright operates justified text writing and publishing consultancy services, and publishes regularly on children's literature, Australian fiction, and publishing history. She was inaugural director of and is a Life Member of the Queensland Writers Centre, and was co-founder of Jam Roll Press. Her latest publications include *Paper Empires: A History of the Book in Australia (1946-2005)* (2006) co-edited with Craig Munro, *Kookaburra Shells Port Curtis Literature* (2006), and *Hot Iron Corrugated Sky: 100 Years of Queensland Writing* (2002) co-edited with Stuart Glover. She has chapters in several textbooks including *Making Books* edited by David Carter and Anne Galligan (UQP, 2007) and *Crossing the Boundaries* edited by Michelle Anstey and Geoff Bull (Pearson Education, 2002). Her PhD thesis traced the development of the Australian children's publishing industry, and she teaches for Griffith University (Gold Coast) and USQ. She is coordinating judge for the *Somerset National Novella Writing Competition for School Age Writers* and has judged other awards including chairing the *Prime Minister's Literary Awards Children's and YA* judging panels (2010-11).

BLM 1**ODD ONE OUT**

Find the 'odd one out' in the following lists. Write your answer and a brief explanation in the fourth column.

Category	Example 1	Example 2	Example 3	Answers
1. Sea Creatures	Dolphin	Sardine	Shark	
2. Pets	Dog	Cat	Caterpillar	
3. Birds	Owl	Turkey	Chicken	
4. Names	Bee	Larry	Harry	
5. Islands	Stradbroke	Moreton	Norfolk	
6. Insects	Spider	Caterpillar	Bee	
7. Coast	Ocean	Sea	Beach	
8. Food	Pancakes	Toast	Chocolate Cake	
9. Fruits	Watermelon	Strawberries	Apple	
10. Games	Chess	Football	Skipping	

QUIZ

1. What does Bee say first thing in the morning?
2. What is Bee's cat called?
3. What sort of creature is Gregor?
4. What does Bee need to do for the chooks before she leaves?
5. What does Bee pack for the dogs?
6. Who is 'too wild to go to the island'?
7. What does Bee call the ocean on her island?
8. What two fish are named in the picture of the fish in the ocean?
9. What are stars made of, according to Mr Sidewalker?
10. Who is sitting at the table under the blue tree with Bee having a feast?

SIMILES

Finish these common expressions or similes which describe one thing by comparing it to another, and which refer to some word or image used in this book:

1. As busy as a
2. As wise as an
3. As big as a
4. As free as a
5. As sick as a
6. As slow as a
7. As tangled as a web.
8. Like a out of water.
9. Like a pack of animals.
10. As happy as

THIS IS YOUR ISLAND!

Add your own images to these four pictures of islands and make up a caption to go below each picture.



ANSWERS FOR BLACKLINE MASTERS

BLM 1	1. Dolphin (it's a mammal not a fish). 2. A caterpillar (it's not a domesticated pet nor an animal). 3. Bee (it doesn't rhyme with the others; it is also the name of a person, not an animal). 4. Owl (it sleeps during the day and the others at night). 5. Norfolk (it's off the NSW coast; the others are off the coast of Queensland).6. Bee (it flies; the others don't). 7. Beach (it's a land mass; the others are water masses). 8. Chocolate Cake (You don't usually have cake for breakfast!). 9. Strawberries (you have to peel a watermelon or an apple, in order to eat the fruit; strawberries are eaten whole). 10. Skipping (this game is not mentioned in the book; chess and football are).
BLM 2	1. Good Morning Mr Pancakes. 2. Wally. 3. A caterpillar. 4. They need their toenails painted. 5. Bone, treats, toy, rug. 6. Princess Princess Princess her pet leopard. 7. Chatterbox Ocean. 8. Shark and sardine (a dolphin is a marine mammal or animal; a whale is also a marine mammal). 9. Raindrops. 10. A bee.
BLM 3	1. Bee. 2. Owl. 3. Whale. 4. Bird. 5. Dog. 6. Snail. 7. Spider's. 8. Fish. 9. Wild. 10. Larry.