

## These notes are for:

- Primary
- Years 2-6
- 7+yrs old

## Key Learning Areas:

- English
- HSIE
- Art

## Example of:

- Non-Fiction
- Visual text
- Reference book (index & glossary)

## Experience of:

- Reading & writing
- Listening & speaking
- Viewing/visual literacy
- Researching
- Creating

## Themes:

- Environment
- Conservation/sustainability
- The Arctic
- Migration
- Habitats
- Animals
- Survival

\*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

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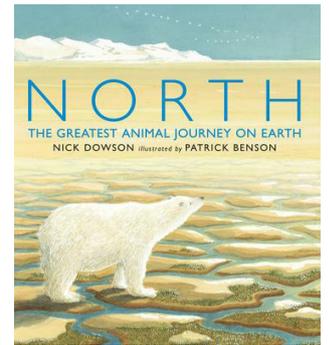
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## Overview

### North

#### The Greatest Animal Journey on Earth

By: Nick Dowson  
 Illustrator: Patrick Benson  
 ISBN: 9781844287758  
 ARRP: \$29.95  
 NZRRP: \$31.99  
 No. of Pages: 32  
 Oct 2011



## Outline:

A passionate nature lover and a renowned artist trace the awe-inspiring Spring migration of millions of creatures to the Arctic – the greatest journey on Earth.

This is a book full of creatures: birds, fish and mammals. They are all embarking on one long, intense journey that will take them across oceans and continents, for thousands of miles – braving predators, starvation and extreme weather conditions – to reach the very top of the world.

This extraordinary migration is beautifully captured in Nick Dowson's lyrical narrative and Patrick Benson's stunning illustrations. The text also includes a glossary, index and conservation information at the back. This makes it the perfect vehicle for implementing the new Australian curriculum focus on sustainability, as well as promoting strong environmental values.

## Author / Illustrator Information:

**Nick Dowson** is an author and illustrator who is passionate about natural history. He has written two books in Walker's Nature Storybooks series: *Tigress* and *Tracks of a Panda*. Nick lives with his wife in Suffolk, England.

**Patrick Benson** has illustrated many children's books, including *The Sea Thing* by Russell Hoban, the Walker Classics edition of *Moby Dick*, and *Owl Babies* by Martin Waddell, which has sold over 2 million copies. He has won both the Mother Goose Award and the Kurt Maschler Award for his work. Patrick lives in Scotland with his family.

## 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.

## Classroom Ideas for *North*:

### Geography/Science

- Trace the journeys of the different animals mentioned in the book on a globe or in an atlas.
- Use the index at the back of the book to find answers to these questions:
  1. What country do bar-tailed godwits start their journey from?
  2. What are skuas and how do they get food?
  3. How does the Arctic change in Spring? In Summer?
  4. What distance do terns travel on their migration?
  5. What does a bowhead whale's thick skull enable it to do?
- Use the internet or reference books to research one of the animals from the book, then create a poster or Powerpoint presentation on them. Use the following questions and tasks as a guide.
  - Where does the animal live?
  - Draw and label a picture of it.
  - Draw a diagram showing its life cycle.
  - What type of habitat does it have?
  - What does it eat and how does it gather food?
  - Are there any threats to its survival?
  - Why did you choose this animal?
- On page 6, the author describes the Arctic as being like "an icy desert". What would it be like to live in an icy desert? What would be some of the challenges you as a human would face?
- Read the information about the Arctic at the back of the book, then use the internet to look for appropriate photographs to illustrate this section. Create a slideshow you could show to an audience as this information was read aloud.
- Create a diorama of the Arctic in a cardboard box.
- In "About the Arctic", the author mentions that global warming has caused the icecap to start melting. What are some things we can do to help stop this? Create a poster to make people more aware of global warming and how they can help prevent it.
- Teachers: Find a variety of lesson plans and resources to help teach your class about climate change on the UNESCO website at: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/climate-change-education/cce-clearinghouse/pedagogical-resources/primary-materials/>

### English/Language

- Although *North* is a non-fiction book, the language used by the author is highly descriptive and poetic. For instance, "With bright scales like mirrors, they swerve together, fin to fin" (33). Choose one page of text and copy it into your book. Use one colour highlighter to mark words, phrases or sentences which you consider informative in tone, and a different colour to mark words, phrases and sentences which are more descriptive or poetic. Why do you think the author uses both styles of language in the book? What is the purpose of each? Overall, do you think *North* is more like a long poem or a reference book? Why?
- Examine the way the written text is laid out on the page. Does this remind you of anything? In what way does the text on each page resemble a poem? Consider line length, pace and word choice.

- The author uses a variety of language techniques to help bring the animals' journeys to life in the reader's mind. In pairs, look for examples of each of the following techniques then complete the following table in your workbooks. An example has been done for you.

## Techniques:

- Strong verbs – action words which create a strong picture in the reader's mind. Eg. "glides" (12).
- Alliteration – a sound technique where words beginning with the same sound or letter are positioned next to, or near, each other. Eg. "big, blubbery" (30).
- Assonance – where words with the same vowel sound in the middle are placed near each other in a sentence. Similar to alliteration, except that the sounds are *inside* the words, rather than at the start. For example, "seas freeze deep" (4).
- Simile – a descriptive technique where one thing is compared to another using the words "like" or "as". Eg. "step like ballerinas" (25), "strange as fairytales" (33).
- Personification – where something non-human is said to have human abilities or emotions. Eg. "Winter grips the Arctic" (50).

Technique	Example	Page	Why the author has used it (effect)
simile	"strange as fairytale"	33	Makes the narwhales seem mysterious and beautiful.

- Write your own description of an animal incorporating some of the language techniques used in the book. You may like to present your ideas as a poem.
- Make a list of the animals' actions as described in the book. For instance, wolves "slinking" through the snow, snow geese "grubbing" a stubble field. (Hint: look for the verbs!) Devise movements to convey these actions, then take turns performing an action to the class while the others guess which animal you are representing.
- Look at the glossary in the back of the book. Were there any words you needed to look up which weren't included? Make your own glossary containing these words. (Make sure it is alphabetical!) Use an online puzzle-maker to create a crossword using these words and the words from the glossary. (A good puzzle-maker is available at <http://www.readwritethink.org/parent-afterschool-resources/games-tools/crossword-puzzles-a-30183.html>) Exchange puzzles with a classmate.
- Write a story about your journey from the point of view of one of the creatures in the book.

## Visual Literacy

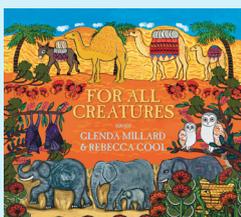
- In *North*, the story of the animals' migration is conveyed through both words and images. Which tells the story more vividly for you, the pictures or the written word? Was there any information you were able to get from one and not the other? Discuss your answers with a classmate. Do they read and learn in the same way as you?
- Look at pages 4-5. What ideas about the Arctic is the illustrator trying to convey on these pages? What techniques do they use to do this? Think about their choice of colour, the use of brushstrokes, the relative size of the bear compared to the background, and the positioning of the bear.

- What are the main colours the illustrator has used in the book? Why do you think these colours have been chosen? Think particularly about how they make the reader feel and how they help establish the setting of the action. If you were writing a story set in a desert what colours would you use most? Illustrate a page from this story.
- The illustrator uses a variety of angles and perspectives throughout the book. For instance, overhead/bird's eye (p19), high angle (p5), eye-level (pp44-5), low-angle/undershot (p20), close-up (p33), mid-shot (pp24-25), long shot (pp16-17) and establishing shot (p1). Identify the different angles and perspectives the illustrator has used in the book and discuss why they may have chosen each. For example, does it help focus attention on a particular object or creature? Establish the setting? Make the reader feel sympathetic – or unsympathetic – towards a particular creature?
- Choose one scene and try drawing it from a different angle or perspective. How does it change the mood or effect of the picture?
- Throughout the book, the illustrator has experimented with layout and composition, often using the printed text as a frame or divider for their illustrations. Layouts include vertical panels, horizontal panels, full-page illustrations and double-page illustrations. Discuss the choice of composition on each page. What does it emphasise or give information about? For instance, does it convey distance or length of time? Allow the illustrator to show a sequence of events? Draw the reader's attention to a particular detail?
- Why do you think there are some pages without words, or with just a few words? Write your own story about an animal or species then try to present it using illustrations only. Try to use a variety of layouts, angles and perspectives to move the story along.

## Maths

- The text tells us that grey whales make a 5000 mile journey each year. Work out how long this is in kilometres. Imagine you were making this journey on plane. Use a carbon calculator such as <http://www.chooseclimate.org/flying/mf.html> to calculate how much fuel your journey would use if you flew a) once b) every year for an average life span of 80 years.

## Other Walker titles you may enjoy

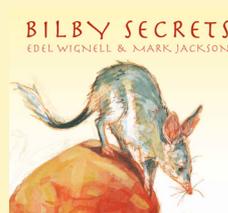


### For All Creatures

Author: Glenda Millard  
 Illustrator: Rebecca Cool  
 ISBN: 9781921529818 (HB)  
 AU\$29.95/NZ\$32.99

For all creatures – the great and the small, the winged and the walking, the singing and the silent – we are thankful.

This second collaboration by an award-winning author-illustrator team is a celebration of the beauty and mystery of animal life in its many forms. With its reverent attitude towards nature, the book subtly emphasises the importance of conservation and of living in harmony with the Earth. Readers will delight in the lithe poetic language, complemented by Rebecca Cool's vibrant and beautifully detailed illustrations.



### Bilby Secrets

Author: Edell Wignell  
 Illustrator: Mark Jackson  
 ISBN: 9781921529320 (HB)  
 AU\$29.95/NZ\$31.99

Bilby Secrets depicts a young bilby's birth, habitat, behaviour and diet, tracing his journey from his mother's pouch to his first independent excursion into the desert.

The book is an innovative fusion of storytelling and non-fiction, with each page containing both a narrative section and factual information about bilbies. The two distinct writing styles are highlighted by the use of contrasting fonts, giving readers an understanding of language conventions, as well as drawing them into the wonders of the bilby world.

For information about new releases, the latest awards news and links to a range of teacher resources, sign up to our [education newsletter](http://www.walkerbooks.com.au/Teachers) at [www.walkerbooks.com.au/Teachers](http://www.walkerbooks.com.au/Teachers)