



# Walker Books Classroom Ideas



## Helping Little Star

Author: Blaze Kwaymullina and Sally Morgan  
Illustrator: Sally Morgan  
ISBN: 9781921977770  
ARRP: \$24.95  
NZRRP: \$27.99  
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\*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

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## Outline:

When Little Star falls off the edge of Night Sky, he meets Python, Dingo and Kangaroo. Will his new friends be able to help him get home?

## Author/Illustrator Information:

Blaze Kwaymullina loves writing children's books and hearing kid's opinions of books. He also enjoys working in the area of oral history and helping people get their stories told. He currently works as a lecturer.

Sally Morgan is both a writer and a visual artist. Sally loves animals and is passionate about the Australian bush. Sally has written books for both children and adults. Her autobiography, *My Place*, is an Australian classic. It has been published in a special children's edition called *Sally's Story*. Together with her adult children, Sally wrote the *Stopwatch* series. Sally is a respected visual artist whose work has won international acclaim. She is represented in galleries in Australia, US and elsewhere. Sally is a descendant of the Palyku people of the Pilbara region of northwest Western Australia.

## 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.

### These notes are for:

- Primary years F-1
- Ages 3+

### Key Learning Areas:

- English

### Example of:

- Picture book

### Themes/ Ideas:

- Helping others/ kindness
- Home
- Australian animals
- Teamwork

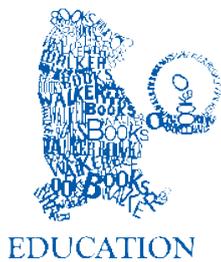
### National Curriculum Focus:\*

English content descriptions:

Foundation  
ACELA1430  
ACELA1432  
ACELA1786  
ACELA1440  
ACELT1575  
ACELT1783  
ACELT1578  
ACELY1651

Year 1  
ACELA1787  
ACELA1447  
ACELA1449  
ACELA1453  
ACELT1581  
ACELT1582  
ACELT1586  
ACELY1655  
ACELY1658  
ACELY1661

\*Key content descriptions have been identified from the Australian National Curriculum. However, this is not an exhaustive list of National Curriculum content able to be addressed through studying this text.



# Walker Books Classroom Ideas

## Discussion Questions and Activities

### Before reading

What do you think the story might be about from the title of the book only? Where do you think it is set? Do your ideas change after seeing the cover?

What is the first thing you look at on the cover of the book? This is called the “salient object” (the object that stands out most). Why is your eye drawn to this object? Compare your response with other classmates. Are their salient objects the same as yours?

What are the main colours used on the cover of the book? Why do you think the illustrator has chosen these colours? What feelings do you associate with each of them?

### After reading

Listen to the story being read aloud without looking at the illustrations. Then read the story while viewing the illustrations. Do the illustrations change your understanding of the story in any way? How?

Is *Helping Little Star* an imaginative story or an information book? How can you tell? Discuss the features of each text type.

What do sentences begin and end with? Find examples of these in the book.

Why do some of the words start with a capital letter even when they are not at the beginning of a sentence?

Read the class an Aboriginal Dreaming story. In what way is Blaze Kwaymullina and Sally Morgan’s story similar and different to these stories? Why do you think this is the case? The following website might be useful in sourcing stories:

- [www.abc.net.au/dustechoes/dustEchoesFlash.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/dustechoes/dustEchoesFlash.htm)

Some stories have a moral, which means the story is trying to teach the reader a lesson. What is the moral of this story? Is there more than one? Do you know any other stories that have a moral?

The animals in *Helping Little Star* are all Australian. Visit a zoo or nature park to see these animals close up, or research them on the internet. What other animals could Little Star have met along the way? How could they have helped him get home? Write another page for the book where Little Star meets another animal that helps him. How does the animal help? Illustrate your story in a similar style to Sally Morgan’s illustrations in the book.

Look at the illustrations Morgan has used throughout the book. How do these enhance the stories for the reader?

Discuss the events or characters Morgan has chosen to represent for each story. Are they what you would have shown if you were given the task of illustrating the book? Why or why not? Choose one part of the story and create an alternative illustration for it. Present your work to the class.

Research “traditional Aboriginal art” on the internet or in your library. What similarities and differences can you see with the illustrations in *Helping Little Star*?

*Helping Little Star* is written by two authors. Choose a partner and write a story together, either making something up on your own or using one of the following story-starters:

- making up stories in pairs with each person saying one word alternately, e.g. “Once” “upon” “a” “time” “there” “was” “a” ...
- “alphabet stories” where words begin with consecutive letters of the alphabet, e.g. “A boy called David every fortnight got horrible ideas ...”
- using internet story prompts
- reading the first page of a book you’ve never read before and continuing it on
- using a picture or photograph as inspiration
- using a piece of music as inspiration
- observing a stranger in the street and writing a story about who they might be
- choosing a well-known story and telling it from a different perspective
- choosing an important historical event and asking what might have happened if it had turned out differently
- selecting five words at random from the dictionary and incorporating these into a story.

Little Star wanders too far from home (Night Sky) and gets lost. Have you ever wandered too far from your home or parents? What happened? Did anyone help you? What is the best thing to do if you can’t find your parents in a public place?

As a class, make a *Helping Little Star* mural for a wall in your classroom. Cut out animal shapes from large sheets of paper and paint them in a similar style to the book. Stick the animals to the wall to create a scene where Dingo, Mother Kangaroo and Python are all helping Little Star back to Night Sky.