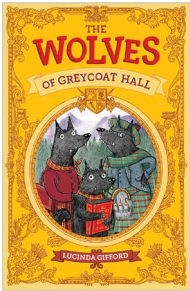




Walker Books Classroom Ideas



The Wolves of Greycoat Hall

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

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Outline:

A deliciously funny tale, with equally amusing illustrations, about being judged for what, rather than who, you are.

When Boris and his parents learn that Scotland is re-introducing wolves, they leave their mansion in Morovia for their Scottish homeland. But these wolves aren't planning to settle in the wild, oh no! Instead, they book into the exclusive Highland Hotel, from where they plan to enjoy Scotland's best tourist spots and cuisine. But is Scotland ready for holidaying wolves? Especially such hungry ones? And why are certain people so unhappy to see them? From spooky dungeons to scheming developers, the Greycoats' new adventure is full of surprising discoveries.

Author/Illustrator Information:

Lucinda Gifford is the author and illustrator of many well-loved books for kids. Her picture book "*Whitney and Britney Chicken Divas*" has been chosen for National Simultaneous Storytime 2020, while other recent work includes a new junior fiction series with Emily Rodda, *Monty's Island*, and *Saved!!!* a picture book collaboration with Lydia Williams, goalkeeper for the Matildas. Her books include the *Chook Doolan* series by James Roy and *The Adventures of Princess Peony* series by Nette Hilton (Shortlisted in the 2019 Speech Pathology Awards) and *The Cat Wants Custard* series written by P Crumble (Notable, CBCA awards 2017 and 2018). Her picture book *Dogasaurus* was also a Notable in the 2019 CBCA awards. Lucinda lives in Melbourne with her family and a very greedy dog.

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 4-6
- Ages 9-12

Key Learning Areas:

- English

Example of:

- Fiction

Themes/Ideas:

- Family
- Travel
- Adventure
- Differences



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Discussion Questions and Activities:

Before Reading

Before reading *The Wolves of Greycoat Hall*, view the cover and title of the book. Identify the following:

- The title of the book
- The author
- The illustrator
- The publisher
- The blurb.

Based on the cover, what do you think this story is about? How do you think it will begin/end? Revisit your answer after reading the story to see if your predictions were correct.

Exploring the Text

What are the themes in this novel? As a class or in small groups identify and list the themes. Individually write a statement of belief about each theme.

Identify the orientation, complication and resolution of the story. Ask students to try to identify this structure in other books or movies. As a class, discuss how these narrative features give meaning to stories.

Discuss the title of the book. Do you think this is a good title? Why or why not? If you were asked to choose an alternative title for the book, what would it be? Remember, a good title should capture the audience's attention and give them some idea of what the book is about.

Consider the world Lucinda Gifford has created in *The Wolves of Greycoat Hall*. How has she mixed fact and fiction? What elements in the world seem real, and what seems fantastical?

Do you think other animals in the world can talk like the Greycoats? Why or why not?

In small groups, explain how Boris demonstrates the following character traits in the novel:

- Resourcefulness
- Courage
- Resilience
- Compassion

Has anyone in the class been to Scotland, or have Scottish relatives? What have we learnt about Scotland from *The Wolves of Greycoat Hall*? Choose a Scottish term from the book (examples could include bannocks, kilt and loch) and write a paragraph about what the term means and why it's special to the Scots. You can learn more facts about Scotland at: <https://www.natgeokids.com/au/discover/geography/countries/facts-about-scotland/>.

"Boris stared after them. His tail drooped. Frightened of him? He was only a cub! He looked down at his face, reflected in the water. He didn't look scary at all. Just sad," (page 151). How does it make the Greycoats feel when people misinterpret them? Choose a moment in the book when Randall, Leonora or Boris does something that surprises or scares the humans around them. How might the person involved see things

differently to the Greycoats? What can both the wolves and the humans do to be considerate of each-other?

Randall is a polyglot, which means he can speak many languages: but he struggles to understand the Scottish fishmonger. Choose one of the pages the fishmonger speaks. Can you work out what he might be saying? Consider the context, check for clues in the illustrations and try saying it out loud too. Compare your answers with a classmate.

The Greycoats and Aileen make sure Wolfemina Hall is protected as a building of historical significance. Do you think this is an important thing to do? Why or why not? As a class, visit <https://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/places/national-heritage-list> and find out about heritage places near you.

Throughout the book there are extracts from *A Guide to Morovia*. How do they help your understanding of the characters and story? In what ways has Lucinda Gifford made these pages look different to the rest of the book?

"This train travels through Europe, up to Rotterdam, on the Dutch coast," Leonora explained as their baggage was being collected. "It's a long trip, so we'll sleep overnight in our own special cabin. Then we'll get the overnight ferry to England, where we'll sleep in another cabin. The morning after that, we'll take a train to Scotland," (page 23). Look at the Greycoats' journey across Europe on a map. Where do you think the wolves' fictional home country of Moravia could be located and why?

Boris loves to read about his ancestors. How much do you know about your relatives? Create a family tree with the relatives you know. Where could you go to learn more about your family?

Find another book by Lucinda Gifford in your library. How is it similar or different to *The Wolves of Greycoat Hall*?

Keep a "Vocab Journal" while reading the novel. Make a note of any words you come across that are unfamiliar and look up their meaning. Also keep track of any words or phrases that you particularly like and write a note next to each explaining why you like that word/phrase.

Creative Responses to the Text

Design your own cover for the book with new imagery and a new tagline that will persuade and interest people in reading the book.

The Greycoats have their own family crest. Design a crest for your family, including images and colours that are important to your family.

Boris and his family love food. Choose one of the meals Boris eats in the book and design an illustrated menu for it.

Many Greycoat relatives and ancestors are mentioned in *The Wolves of Greycoat Hall*. Choose one and write a short story about who they were and an adventure they might have had.