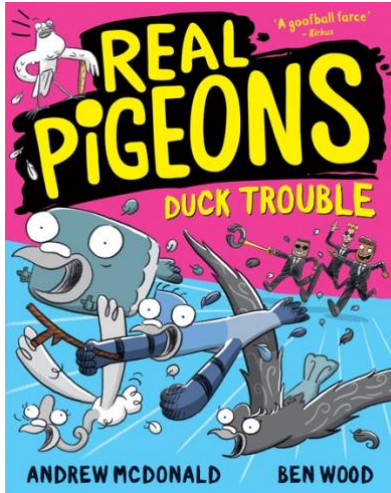


Teacher's Notes



Real Pigeons: Duck Trouble

Written by Andrew McDonald

Illustrated by Ben Wood

Teacher's Notes by Bec Kavanagh

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

RECOMMENDED FOR

primary-aged readers (ages 5+, grades 2+)

KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- Learning areas: English
- General capabilities:
 - AC9E2LA08
 - AC9E3LA09
 - AC9E2LE02
 - AC9E3LE02

THEMES

- Teamwork
- Friendship
- Trust
- Getting old
- Solving puzzles

SYNOPSIS

The Real Pigeons are back for another coo-ool adventure in *Real Pigeons: Duck Trouble!* In *The Mutant Mystery*, a mutant is on the loose, and it's attacking birds! Rock badly wants to impress the agents, but his disguises keep landing them in even more trouble. The Real Pigeons must join forces with the Secret Agents to catch the mutant, but Grandpouter doesn't trust the Secret Agents. Is there more to this than meets the eye?

Grandpouter Pigeon was responsible for bringing the Real Pigeons together, and he knows almost all the creatures in the city. But in *The Pocket Plot*, some of the pigeons start to wonder if Grandpouter Pigeon is getting too old to fight crime. So when a dastardly pickpocket starts to steal all the pockets in the city, Grandpouter Pigeon knows he has to solve the case and prove once and for all that he's not too old for crime-fighting!

Finally, in *Grains on the Brain*, something strange has come over the pigeons – their eyes are dim; their beaks are drooping; they want *graaaaaiinns!* Oh no, it's zompigeons! The zompigeons are taking over the city, and they're attacking all the non-zombie pigeons! Can the pigeons save the city from the attack of the un-bread??



ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ ILLUSTRATOR

Andrew McDonald is the author of the bestselling Real Pigeons junior fiction series. He loves writing stories that make kids laugh, wonder and leap into the air with surprise. His books have been shortlisted for the Readings Children's Book Prize and the Australian Book Industry Awards. Andrew is a regular presenter on the schools circuit, where he conducts writing workshops, talks about his life as an author and inspires kids to read, write, draw and be creative. Andrew lives in Melbourne, Australia.

Ben Wood is the illustrator of the bestselling Real Pigeons junior fiction series and the graphic novel series Hello Twigs. Drawn to stories that are funny and heartfelt, his lively illustrations reflect his love for graphic novels and animation. When not in the studio Ben speaks in schools and runs workshops about illustration. He lives in Naarm/Melbourne, Australia.

THEMES

Getting old

Some people think that getting old means you can't do as many things. In *The Pocket Plot*, Grandpouter feels sad that the other pigeons don't think he's good at crime fighting anymore, just because he's old and he doesn't have a pigeon power. But he proves that being old *is* a superpower, and gives him the wisdom and connections that allow him to save the day.

Trust

When the Real Pigeons meet the Secret Agents, all of them (except Grandpouter) are starstruck. The agents are cool and smart and have heaps of gadgets to help them fight crime. But Grandpouter doesn't think they can be trusted. Why not? Is he right? How do the Secret Agents betray the pigeons' trust?

WRITING STYLE

Cause and effect

Stories are interesting because things happen. We call these interesting parts of a story the **action**. But action doesn't just come out of nowhere – something has to make it happen. For example, in *The Mutant Mystery*, Dabblers the Duck pushes Rock hard. Because of that, Rock rolls into the old lady. Because of that, the lady falls into the water fountain. And because of that the Real Pigeons have to work together to save the day!

You can use this to come up with your own ideas for action-packed stories. Try it!

WRITING EXERCISE

Use the following template to come up with your own ideas for action-packed stories (the first one is filled in for you as an example).

Because of **this**, **that** happened!



- Because you pushed me, I fell into the water!
- Because _____, _____!
- Because _____, _____!
- Because _____, _____!
- Because _____, _____!
- Because _____, _____!

When you've written five, choose your favourite and see if you can use it to start writing your own story.

COMPREHENSION

- Have you noticed that pigeons are *everywhere*? Make a list of five different places you spot pigeons in the book.
- In *The Mutant Mystery*, what has Rock made a ball out of? What does he see from his hiding place?
- The Real Pigeons are introduced using adjectives. What is an adjective? What adjectives are used to describe Grandpouter Pigeon? What adjectives would you use to describe yourself?
- How many kinds of humans did Rock think there were? What kinds were they?
- What problems do the Real Pigeons encounter when they try to communicate with the Secret Agents? How do they overcome this problem?
- Who trained the mutant?
- In *The Pocket Plot*, the pickpocket steals more than just wallets – what else do they do?
- Who does Grandpouter Pigeon suspect of being the pickpocket? Why?
- What does Squab say to Grandpouter that makes him feel better about being old?
- Why have the cockroaches been stealing pockets? What else does Grandpouter discover when he finds them?
- What is Homey's pigeon power?
- What's wrong with the pigeons in *Grains on the Brain*?
- How do the zompigeons turn the other pigeons into zombies?
- What's the difference between the way a duck walks and the way a pigeon walks?
- Who's controlling the zompigeons? What does she want?

ILLUSTRATION STYLE

A visual pun uses pictures to convey the double meanings of some words – for example a sausage dog that looks like a sausage! What visual puns can you find in the book?



Can you draw your own?

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

- In *The Mutant Mystery*, the mutant is described as something that resembles 'a dog *and* a cat *and* a ferret' (p18). Draw a picture of what you imagine the mutant looks like using the descriptions of it from the book.
- Where might you find a dog or a cat or a ferret? Draw a map of some of the places the pigeons look for the mutant.
- The Secret Agents have all kinds of gadgets to help them fight crime. Design a gadget that you could use if you were in a crime-fighting situation.
- What is 'pocket transport'? Create your own pocket transport timetable for any pigeons in a hurry!

RELATED READING

Real Pigeons (series)

By Andrew McDonald and Ben Wood

Cross Bones (Series)

By Jack Hensliet and Chris Kennett

Pet Monster (series)

By Lili Wilkinson and Dustin Spence

