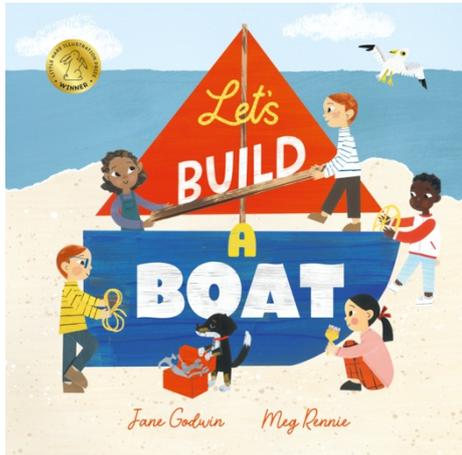


## Teacher's Notes



### *Let's Build a Boat*

Written by Jane Godwin

Illustrated by Meg Rennie

Teacher's Notes by Bec Kavanagh

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### LEARNING OUTCOMES

#### RECOMMENDED FOR

3+ aged readers (grades prep - 2)

#### KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- Learning areas: English
- General capabilities:
  - ACELT1783
  - ACELY1656
  - ACELT1585

### THEMES

- Teamwork
- Imagination
- Overcoming challenges
- Creativity
- Play
- Rhyme

### SYNOPSIS

A group of children decide to build a boat – what colour will it be? How many seats will it have? They want to make a boat that's strong enough to sail the seas, and last all summer, so everyone will need to help, and they'll need to work on it until it's finished, even when they're tired!

When the boat is finished, will it survive the ups and downs of the ocean and the weather? Even if it doesn't, the children know that they'll be able to mend their boat together.

*Let's Build a Boat* is a gentle rhyming story about having an idea and working with your friends to bring it to life.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ ILLUSTRATOR

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**Jane Godwin** is the highly acclaimed author of over twenty books for children. Her work is published internationally, and she has received many commendations, including the Queensland Premier's Award (Children's Books), and short listings in the CBC Book of the Year Awards, the Prime Minister's Literary Award, the New South Wales Premier's Literary Award (Patricia Wrightson Prize), the YABBA Awards, the Speech Pathology Awards, The Family Award for Children's Books, and the Australian Book Industry Awards. Jane spends as much time as she can working with young people in schools: running various literature and writing programs, making books and encouraging students in their own creative ventures. Jane lives in Melbourne, Australia with her family.

**Meg Rennie** is a visual artist and illustrator from Melbourne, with a passion for characters and community. Meg's intricate mixed media collages have been published and exhibited across Melbourne, New York and the United Kingdom. She is the winner of the inaugural Little Hare Illustration Prize 2020.

## THEMES

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Have you ever had a wild idea? *Let's Build a Boat* walks a fine line between imagination and reality. On the one hand, it explores themes of working together to turn a dream into reality. On the other, it's about dreaming big, and letting your imagination take you on an adventure – in this case on the high seas. Readers will have their own thoughts on where the line between imagination and reality is exactly, but the story invites discussion about where ideas come from, and the kinds of qualities (teamwork, resilience, persistence and bravery) to make them a reality.

## WRITING STYLE

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Jane Godwin uses simple rhyming couplets to give the story a steady, sing-song rhythm. Readers will be familiar with this style, which is common to many picture books (and nursery rhymes). Rhyming couplets offer a predictable rhythm for readers developing their literacy and confidence, and in this story mimic the pattern of waves. Discuss the way the text is spread across the pages in the book and identify the rhyming couplets. Why do you think some of the couplets are broken up, while others are grouped together on the same page?

## COMPREHENSION

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1. Where are the children when they first come up with the idea to build a boat?
2. How many boats can you see on the first page?
3. What does a boat need?
4. Based on the story, make a list of the steps needed to build a boat.
5. How long does it take to build?
6. What happens to the boat when they take it out to sea?
7. Why do the children in the story need to be brave?
8. Does the story have a happy ending? Why/why not?



## WRITING EXERCISE

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The story talks about a 'building song' – write your own building song using the music from a song you like. Perform it for other people in your class.

## ILLUSTRATION STYLE

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Every sailor knows how important the weather is for a smooth voyage! When the story starts, the sun is streaming through the window onto the floorboards. But as the boat starts to come to life and when the children set sail, the sea starts to become stormy. Discuss how the illustrator uses colour, shape and texture to capture the movement of the waves and show the changes in the weather.

## CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

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1. Design and draw your perfect boat. What will it look like? What colour are all the parts? Add some special features to make your boat unique.
2. Where would you go if you had your own boat? Write a short story about your dream destination.
3. Everyone has a job to do in the story – even the dog! Rewrite the story from the dog's point of view. What do you think it would say when the boat capsizes?
4. Describe a time you've worked as a team to bring someone's idea to life. What was your role? Did you have to overcome any challenges? What was the best part of the project?

## RELATED READING

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*Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak  
*Today We Have No Plans* by Jane Godwin

