

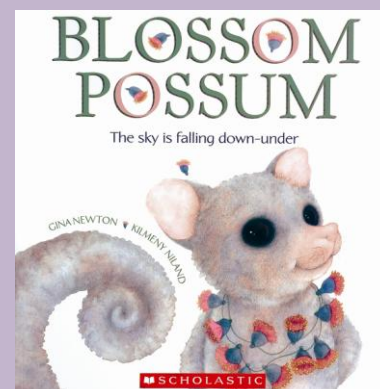
### Play is the most powerful way young children learn.

- Every time you play, sing or read with young children they are learning about language.
- The following activities have been designed for early childhood professionals to use as a starting point for developing children's early literacy skills through play.
- Please feel free to adapt them for the home and with children of different ages.
- Don't forget to record your own ideas, activities that worked really well, relevant songs and rhymes in the Notes section opposite.
- Visit our website [www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au](http://www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au) for more fun printable activities based on this book.

### Engaging with Language and Literacy

*There is more treasure in books than in all the pirate's loot on Treasure Island.* — Walt Disney

- Introduce the book to the children by showing them the front cover and reading the title.
- Talk about the sub title *The sky is falling down-under*. Do any of the children know what it means? Where is down under?
- Blossom Possum is based on the traditional tale Henny Penny you may like to read or retell this story to the children.
  - What things are the same about both the stories?
  - What are the differences?
- What do the children notice about all the animals' names?
  - Can the children make up their own funny rhyming names like Messy Tessie or Crabby Abby?
- You can play a game of *I Went Shopping* which is similar to a cumulative tale. The first child starts by saying I went to the shops and I bought a banana, the next child says I went to the shop and I bought a banana and a pineapple and continue around the circle.
- Can the children retell the story – whom did Blossom Possum meet first? Who did she meet next? You may like to use puppets for retelling the story. The children can choose who they would like to be Echo Gecko, Joanna Goanna or Toey Joey.



### Blossom Possum

Gina Newton & Kilmeny Niland

#### Notes

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- Make a collection of books about the animals in the story – what interesting facts can the children find out about possums, cocky's, gecko, joeys, goannas and platypuses?

## **Being Creative Through Play**

### Gumnut Necklace

- Make your own gum nut necklace like Blossom Possum wears on the front cover of the book.
- Many gum trees are currently in flower – ask families if they can collect some flowering gumnuts for the children to use.
- Using fishing line and green gum nuts help the children thread the gum nuts onto the fishing line using large sewing needles.

### Australian Animal Masks

- Using small paper plates cut in half the children can make their own masks.
- Which animal will they choose?
- Don't forget to include feathers, faux fur, cotton wool, and shiny wrapping paper for the children to use to decorate their masks.

### Sand Play

- In either the sand tray or the sand pit make your own Australian bush scene.
- Think about including some small gum tree branches to use as trees, pieces of wood, bark, stones, gum nuts and flowers. The children may like to bring some flowers or gumnuts from home.
- On a hot day you may like to include water to make a creek.

## **Exploring Our World**

### Write a letter to the Prime Minister

- Blossom Possum is very worried about the sky falling and decides to go and see the Prime Minister.
- What are the children in your centre worried about?
- Encourage the children to write a letter to the Prime Minister with their concerns.

### Drawing Maps

- Reread the story to the children. Where did Blossom Possum go on her way to find the Prime Minister?
  - *Down the track, round the back of beyond, over the hill, past the black stump ...*

## **More Books About Australian Animals:**

*Bobbie Dazzler* by Margaret Wild

*Koala Lou* by Mem Fox

*Possum Magic* by Mem Fox

*Dairy of a Wombat* by Jackie French

*Baby Wombats Week* by Jackie French

*The Three Kangaroos Gruff* by Kel Richards

*The Wheels On the Bus* by Mandy Foot

Any books by Steve Parish

## **Useful Websites and Links:**

### **For Printable Activities:**

[www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au](http://www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au)

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For more book suggestions, information and activity sheets visit [www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au](http://www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au)

The information within this resource file is provided by The Little Big Book Club. Enquiries to admin@tbbcinc.com.au. The Vegemite Little Aussie Reader is a project developed in partnership with The Little Big Book Club and Kraft Foods. The Little Big Book Club is known as *The Advertiser* Little Big Book Club in South Australia and *The Courier-Mail* Little Big Book Club in Queensland and *The Daily Telegraph* Little Big Book Club in New South Wales.

- Give the children a large piece of paper and ask them to draw a map of Blossom Possum's Journey.
- You may like to have some maps for the children to look at.
- Gardening magazines are great for cutting our pictures to decorate the children's maps.
- Ask questions like *Where is the back of beyond?*
- Alternatively you could make one big map as a group.

### Blossom Possum Obstacle Course

- Recreate Blossom and her friend's journey using climbing equipment.
- Can you make a hill to climb over, or a black stump to go past or a log to cross the creek just like Blossom and her friends?

### **Enjoying Dramatic and Musical Play**

**Role-play not only stimulates children's imagination but also helps with social development.**

### Blossom Possum Dress Ups

- The children can use the masks they made to re-enact the story.
- You could also provide tails for Blossom Possum, Toey Joey, Joanna Goanna and Echo Gecko, a feather boa for Rocky Cocky and flippers for Abacus Platypus.
- The children may like to try the obstacle course in their masks just like the animals in the story – watch out for By-Jingo Dingo!

### Move like animals

- Can the children
  - Trot like Blossom Possum,
  - Strut like Rocky Cocky,
  - March like Joanna Goanna,
  - Bounce like Toey Joey,
  - Shuffle like Abacus Platypus or
  - Dance like Echo Gecko

Sing songs about Australian Animals for example:

- *Cuddly Koalas*
- *Kookaburra Sits in the Old Gum Tree*
- *Jump Kangaroo Joe*

(The music for is featured on the following website)

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<http://www.kididdles.com/lyrics/k011.html>

- *Tie me Kangaroo Down Sport*

Youtube has a version of song sung by the Wiggles featuring Rolf Harris

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EUERRPKA2\\_w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EUERRPKA2_w)

## Rhymes and Songs

### Jump Kangaroo Joe

Jump! Jump!  
Kangaroo Joe!  
Jump! Jump!  
Come on, let's go!

Jump! Jump!  
Up hill and down!  
Jump! Jump!  
Right into town!

### Kookaburra Sits In The Old Gum Tree

Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree  
Merry merry King of the bush is he  
Laugh Kookaburra  
Laugh Kookaburra  
Gay your life must be!

### Cuddly Koalas (sung to the tune of Ferres Jacques)

Cuddly koalas  
Cuddly koalas  
Possums too  
Possums too  
Wallabies and wombats  
Wallabies and wombats  
Kangaroos  
Kangaroos

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