

WOMBAT SAID COME IN



STORYTIME KIT

WELCOME TO THE WOMBAT SAID COME IN STORYTIME KIT!

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- MEET AUSTRALIAN WILDLIFE
- DRAWING TIME
- STORYTIME ACTIVITIES
- MAKE YOUR OWN CRAZY QUILT
- MOVE LIKE AN ANIMAL
- ANZAC BISCUIT RECIPE
- HIDDEN AUSTRALIAN "GEMS"



ABOUT THE BOOK

Australian bushfires roar above Wombat's home. He is fortunate that his burrow is deep below ground and he is safe. He snuggles under his crazy quilt and drinks his tea. Soon his frightened friend Wallaby shows up at his door. "Help, Wombat! I c-c-can't reach my home! M-m-may I stay with you awhile?"

Wombat pauses only for a tick of the clock, and says, "Come in!"

Then, one by one, five uniquely Australian animals—the Wallaby, a Kookaburra, a Platypus, a Koala, and a Sugar Glider—seek refuge from the fires, and Wombat welcomes them all. When you have the heart of a wombat, there's always room for one more!

MEET THE CREATORS



CARMEN AGRA DEEDY, a *New York Times* bestselling author, has been writing and traveling around the world telling stories for more than twenty years. Her books have received numerous awards and honors. Born in Havana, Cuba, she came to the United States as a refugee, and like most immigrants, sees the world from multiple perspectives. She lives in Georgia.



BRAIN LIES has illustrated over thirty books, including the 2019 Caldecott Honor-winning *The Rough Patch*, and the *New York Times* bestselling Bats series. He lives in Massachusetts.



By Carmen Agra Deedy
Illustrated by Brian Lies
ISBN: 9781682633212
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MEET AUSTRALIAN WILDLIFE

Wombat Said Come In features six intriguing Australian animal characters. Did you know these amazing facts about these animals?



WOMBAT



A wombat's butt is their main form of defense. Mainly made of cartilage, their butts are very resistant to scratches and bites, and wombats can crush a predator's skull with their behinds.

Their teeth never stop growing. This is to compensate for the wear caused by their diet of grasses that can be abrasive to their teeth.

KOOKABURRA



Kookaburras have a distinctive call that sounds very much like a human laugh.

They are the largest member of the Kingfisher family, some of the only bird species known to be able to hover.

WALLABY



Wallabies are very similar to kangaroos, but smaller. Also like kangaroos, wallabies have strong legs and tails, and use their tails to maintain balance and hold themselves in a sitting posture.

When sensing danger, a wallaby will freeze up and make thumping noises with its foot to warn the others of the potential threat.

PLATYPUS



Platypuses don't have teeth inside their bill. To help ingest their food, they'll also pick up gravel from the riverbed, packing it into pouches in their cheeks and using it to help break up tougher food.

Early European scientists originally believed platypuses were a hoax, since they had never before come across an animal with the bill of a duck, the tail of a beaver, and the fur of an otter!

KOALA



Koalas get their name from a term in the indigenous Australian language meaning "no drink". This is because koalas get almost all their moisture from the eucalyptus leaves they eat and rarely drink water.

These cuddly looking creatures can sleep for up to 18-22 hours a day!

SUGAR GLIDER



These animals have a specialized flap connecting their front leg to their hind leg, giving them the ability to glide up to 148.5 feet (45 meters)!

When angry, sugar gliders will make a chattering noise that resembles a raspy bark or hiss. But if this warning doesn't work, they will strike with full force.



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Which animal is your favorite? On the next page, draw your favorite animal!

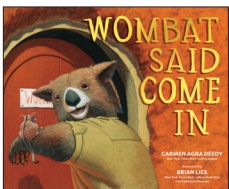
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DRAWING TIME

In the space below, draw your favorite Australian animal from the book. Using the lines provided, write why this animal is your favorite.





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STORYTIME ACTIVITIES



Picture Book Theater

Act out the story of *Wombat Said Come In*, giving each person a role as one of the different characters from the book.

New Setting, New Story

Wombat Said Come In takes place in Australia, where Australian animals deal with a bushfire, which is a common occurrence in Australia. If the book had a different setting in another location, how would that change the story? As a group, think of a new location, pick a common problem that takes place in that location, and include characters that can be found in that location. For example, if this story took place in the ocean, what would be the problem, and what characters would you include?

Wombat the Musical

There is a repeated refrain that Wombat says to each of his new guests. If *Wombat Said Come In* was turned into a musical, and Wombat's refrain was turned into a song, what would it sound like? As a group, come up with a tune to go with the lines, and as you read the story, sing the refrain together.

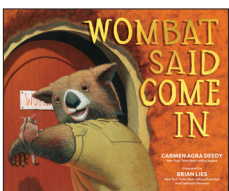
Sound Effects

Author Carmen Agra Deedy included onomatopoeia—words that sound like how they're spelled—in the story. As you read the story, whenever you come to an onomatopoeia word, have someone make the sound effect for the story.

Waltzing Matilda

Illustrator Brian Lies included a fun “hidden gem”* in an illustration: you can see Wallaby reading a book that says “Step Lively” on the cover. This is actually a dance step instruction book with a waltz shown, to represent the song “Waltzing Matilda.” “Waltzing Matilda” is a song developed in the Australian style of poetry and folk music called a “bush ballad,” and has been described as Australia’s “unofficial national anthem.” Have an adult teach the basic steps of a waltz, and have the group practice while the song “Waltzing Matilda” plays.

*For more hidden gems in the illustrations, look at the last page of this kit!



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MAKE YOUR OWN CRAZY QUILT

Wombat has a “certain crazy quilt”* that he loves to shelter under. Make your own!



What You Need:

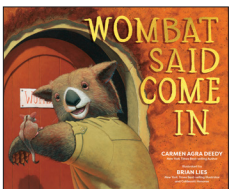
- Construction paper
- Markers and/or decorative papers
- Glue
- Scissors
- Large sheet of paper to mount paper patches
- Black markers



What You Do:

1. With the help of an adult, pre-cut random shapes of scrap paper to get started.
2. Pass a shape to each person to decorate. They can draw patterns or use scrap paper to decorate their quilt shape.
3. Using a large sheet of paper as the back of the quilt, glue on the different shapes as patches. Overlap or trim edges if needed.
4. To finalize the quilt, draw “stitching” by adding black Xs with black markers where the different shapes connect.

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Source: <https://kinderart.com/art-lessons/crafts/crazy-quilts/>



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MOVE LIKE AN ANIMAL

Learn more about the different Australian animals with this movement dice game!



Dice Instructions:

1. Using cardstock, print the template from the next page.
2. With the help of an adult, cut the template out.
3. Bend all the tabs and lines to make construction easier.
4. Glue it together to make the wildlife dice.

Game Instructions:

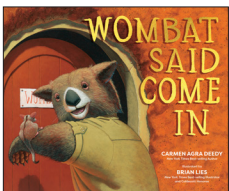
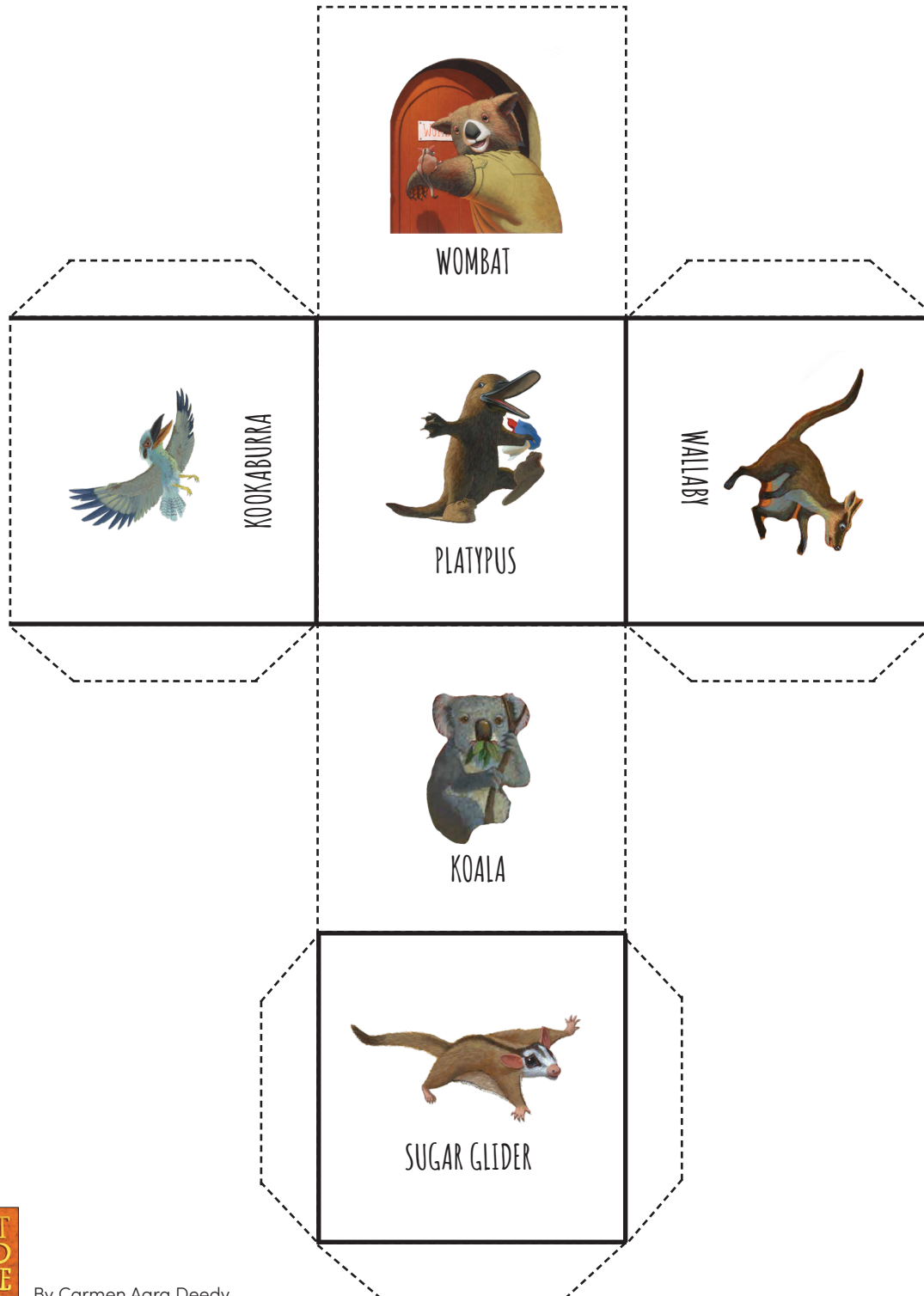
1. Decide on whether you will imitate movement, sound, or both.
2. Take turns throwing the dice.
3. Imitate the animal that the dice lands on. For help, look up videos online that show the different movements and sounds these animals make.

Animal	Movement	Sound
WOMBAT	Get on all fours (arms and legs) and hustle around the room. Wombats also LOVE to dig!	A wombat's vocalization sounds like the grinding of teeth. <i>Ch, ch, ch, ch!</i>
KOOKABURRA	Imitate a flying kookaburra by putting your arms out and flapping.	They have a call that sounds like a laugh. <i>Coo, coo, cah, cah, cah.</i>
WALLABY	Hop around on your two feet to imitate a wallaby.	Make a thumping noise by stomping your foot on the ground, or make a hoarse noise to sound an alarm to others.
PLATYPUS	A platypus swims. Make swimming movements with your hands, cupping them to resemble paddles.	A platypus makes low-pitched growling sounds.
SUGAR GLIDER	Imitate a sugar glider by "gliding," or jumping with arms and legs outstretched.	Sugar gliders can make a raspy hiss or barking sound, like a cicada, or can make small chirping noises.
KOALA	Yawn and fall asleep (remember koalas sleep in a tree, so no curling up on the floor) or pretend to climb the tree or eat gum leaves.	Koalas bellow. The best way to describe it is that they sound like a grunting pig. The experts make a koala sound by breathing in, not out.

Game adapted from: mothernatured.com/printables/wildlife-animal-movement-dice/

MOVE LIKE AN ANIMAL DICE TEMPLATE

Make a copy of this template on cardstock. With the help of an adult, cut out along the dotted line, then glue/tape together to create the dice for the game.



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ANZAC BISCUIT RECIPE

Anzac biscuits* are a favorite Australian treat, including for Wombat.



Ingredients:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup rolled oats
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup desiccated coconut
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- Pinch of salt
- 1 stick ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) unsalted butter, roughly chopped
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup golden syrup (if you can't find this, you can use maple syrup or honey instead)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking soda

Get help
from an
adult!

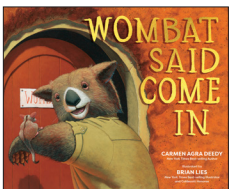
Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line two cookie pans with baking or parchment paper.
2. In a large mixing bowl, add flour, oats, sugar, coconut, cinnamon, and salt. Give it a quick mix.
3. In a medium saucepan, add butter, golden syrup, and vanilla. Place on medium heat and stir until butter has melted and mixture is smooth.
4. Remove from heat and immediately add baking soda. Keep stirring for 30 seconds or so until baking soda is completely mixed through. Mixture may bubble and foam slightly—this is fine.
5. Pour butter mixture over dry ingredients and stir until completely coated.
6. Working quickly, scoop roughly 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons of dough and roll into a smooth ball using your hands. Gently flatten each cookie dough ball until they're about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick. Place on baking trays, leaving room for the cookies to spread out.
7. Bake in the oven for approximately 11-12 minutes. Keep in mind the cookies will harden as they cool.
8. Let the cookies cool for 10 minutes before carefully transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.

Enjoy with your favorite cup of tea!



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Recipe adapted from: sweetestmenu.com/anzac-biscuits/



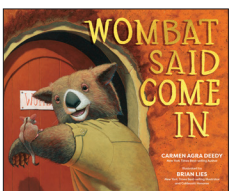
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HIDDEN AUSTRALIAN "GEMS"

Illustrator Brian Lies added these hidden gems in the illustrations for *Wombat Said Come In* to sneak in extra tidbits about the country and culture of Australia. Take a closer look and see if you can spot these in the book!



- Wombat's yummy cookies are Anzac biscuits, an important part of Australian and New Zealand history. It's been claimed that during World War I, these sweet cookies were sent by wives and women's groups to soldiers abroad because they kept well during transportation. They're called Anzac because of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC).
- There are a few images of boab trees toward the beginning of the book. These are striking trees that grow in part of Australia and have a very unique look due to their swollen-looking trunks.
- Wombat's slippers resemble a particular Australian pest, cane toads, an invasive species to the continent.
- Wombat's tea cozy, or tea warmer, is in the shape of a cassowary, a large, flightless black bird found in Australia.
- You might spot an opened jar with a label that says "Mita Veg." This is a play on Vegemite, a popular food spread many Australians will add to their toast.
- Did you see something on Wombat's belt buckle? It's a nod to the infamous reef sharks in Australia's barrier reef.
- The book Wallaby is reading is a dance step instruction book, with a waltz step shown on the cover to represent the song "Waltzing Matilda," the "unofficial national anthem" of Australia.
- There are two hats on Wombat's hat rack. These hats are often worn by people in the Australian Outback. One of them is a cork hat, which has corks on strings hanging down; the swinging corks can help keep flies away from your face and neck.
- Wombat has very unique mugs! One mug has a boab tree. Another mug has "Adelaide Fringe" written on it, which is a large annual arts festival held in Adelaide, Australia. A third mug has an image of the Sydney Opera House on it, a very iconic building in Sydney, Australia.
- Wombat has a "certain crazy quilt" that he loves to shelter under. Quilting has a very rich history, particularly with Australia. "Crazy quilts" are made with oddly shaped scraps of colorful fabric, which were made popular during the Victorian era in the 1800s.
- Is that a pile of orange dirt on Wombat's grandfather clock? It resembles the famous Uluru, formerly known as Ayers Rock, which is a large rock formation that has an important and sacred significance to the indigenous people in that region of Australia.



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