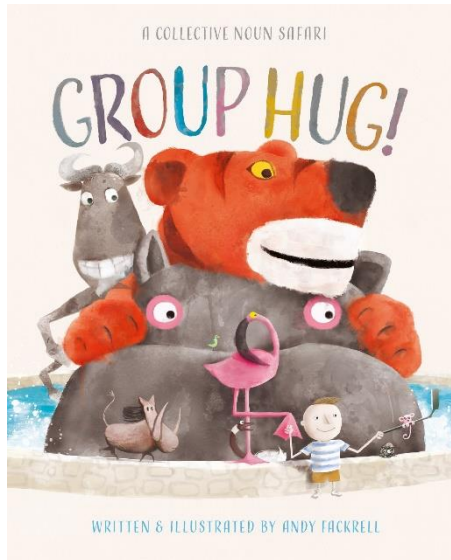


## Teachers' Notes

### Group Hug by Andy Fackrell



<https://fordstreetpublishing.com/>

#### **ABOUT THE STORY**

Come on safari around the world with Wilbur, an animal-loving city kid, with his BAF's (best animal friends) as he discovers the wonder of animal collective nouns.

While on his regular stroll around the zoo, Wilbur is transported into the wild – including The Serengeti, the Arctic, The Andes, The Australian Outback – to experience life within his favourite animal groups. His buddies not only regale him with jaunty, fact-filled rhymes, but allude to their recent problems caused by the changing climate.

A joyful ode to biodiversity, this epic tale is lavishly illustrated and playfully written, each page an explosion of colour and rhyme. Perfect for budding Attenboroughs and Goodalls, this educational book lyricises not only the majesty of animals in the wild, but the quirks of the English language.

This book supports The Lion's Share, a fund backed the United Nation's Development Programme – its mentor David Attenborough – and its work protecting our most vulnerable wildlife groups.

#### **INSPIRATION**

The book was inspired by two trips to Africa by the author and illustrator, Andy Fackrell.

On his first, to the Serengeti, he travelled with a Masai guide while tracking cheetah for an organisation in Kenya. At dusk, transfixed by the sights of sounds of the savannah, the two were late returning to camp. Driving in pitch blackness, their jeep careened into an aardvark hole. As hyenas surrounded the stricken vehicle, he and his mate willed it back to life. Later that night, a parade of elephants passed by his tent, their trunks gently brushing the canvas, sensing the slightly overwhelmed occupant.

The second trip was to South Africa to film a short documentary on the poaching crisis, for an NGO based in Los Angeles, Over & Above Africa. The film, also based on collective nouns, naturally led Andy to the idea for a picture book, that not only entertained and informed, but highlighted the problems for animals in the wild.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR

Andy Fackrell is one of the most awarded and recognised multi-dimensional creatives in the world. A career in advertising earned him the highest honours, including the Cannes Grand Prix for a film for Nike. An obsessive sports lover, he spent much of his career creating work for Nike and adidas, living in Portland and Amsterdam. He is now a film maker exploring documentaries on social and environmental issues. While painting for himself, and occasionally illustrating for other author's work, Andy lives by the beach in Sydney.

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

Maybe a child's only experience encountering a wild animal will be at a zoo. And while the morals of their containment can be a tricky subject, the awe of seeing them first-hand provides an intimacy that TV, as primarily an entertainment source, cannot. A zoo hopefully facilitates a life-long empathy and fascination with animal lives in the wild.

Australian zoos, particularly Taronga, support breeding programmes for endangered species, including Tasmanian Devils, Frogs and Bilbys. And while not all zoos in the world offer critical lifelines, there are many species reliant on their existence.

These programmes are argued to be detrimental to long term sustainability of species, as they defer attention away from threatened habitats. The Lion Share, in this regard, is focused on habitat restoration and preservation for endangered species. *Group Hugs!* stories reflect the ecosystems this fund is working in, particularly in Indonesian forests, home to orangutan and tiger populations. Further information can be found at [taronga.org.au/news/2018-07-11/breed-or-not-breed](http://taronga.org.au/news/2018-07-11/breed-or-not-breed) and [thelionssharefund.com/content/thelionssharefund](http://thelionssharefund.com/content/thelionssharefund)

*Group Hug!* is a teaching aid to biodiversity. Illustrated in great depth – the foreground, middle and background layers are more akin to an animated film – each spread features a supporting cast of unnamed species, all biologically correct to the ecosystem. For instance, in the Andes, alongside the Flamboyance of Flamingos we see a Knot of endangered, Lake Titicaca Water Frogs.

In the Orangutan spread, the zookeeper, who has now joined Wilbur on his safari, is seen swinging from a tree, yelling the Orangutan sound for danger, *Pipsquark*.

Scientists believe this could be the first word humans learned. These fun facts, for each of the book's featured animals, provide content for illustrated bookmarks that supplement *Group Hug!*

An ingenious feature of *Group Hug!* are the end papers; a definitive, and fun, reference source. A world map of all known collective nouns is drawn on the inside front, with the matching animal names on the inside back. Collective nouns originated in the middle-ages within English hunting parties, with the intent to exaggerate the animal behaviour through exotic use of the English language. These light-hearted terms were intended to be humorous and sarcastic, but by the 15<sup>th</sup> Century became part of standard English language. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collective\\_noun](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collective_noun)

The effects of climate change are sensitively woven into each page, in both the illustrations and prose. *The river is lower these last few years, in better times, it's up to my ears.*

On first pass, these details may seem rather subtle, but are there for teachers and parents to expand on. (As the zookeeper yells *Pipsquark* we see a forest fire in the distance).

The tiger page has Wilbur riding on the feline's back, while playing his ukulele. This is based on a painting by Henri Rousseau, the 19<sup>th</sup> Century French painter who created lavish jungle scenes featuring exotic animals.

## ACTIVITIES

### Lesson 1: Inferring the Meaning of Collective Nouns

Learning Intention: We are learning to infer the meaning of collective nouns

Success Criteria:

- I can explain what a collective noun is
- I can give an example of a collective noun
- I can explain what a collective noun might say about a group

Foundation	Use comprehension strategies to understand and discuss texts listened to, viewed or read independently ( <a href="#">ACELY1650 - Scootle</a> )
Year 1	Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning about key events, ideas and information in texts that they listen to, view and read by drawing on growing knowledge of context, text structures and language features ( <a href="#">ACELY1660 - Scootle</a> )
Year 2	Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning and begin to analyse texts by drawing on growing knowledge of context, language and visual features and print and multimodal text structures ( <a href="#">ACELY1670 - Scootle</a> )

#### Before Reading:

- This book includes a range of collective nouns. What is a *noun*? (A word which is a name for a person, place or thing). What does collective mean? What does it sound like? (Sounds like collection or collect, comes from the same base word. It means a group, like a collection.) What do we now think collective nouns are?
- Do we know any examples of collective nouns? (For example, a school of fish, a litter of kittens, a herd of cows, a skulk of Arctic foxes on the cover.)

#### During Reading:

- As you reach each collective noun, discuss where you have heard the word before, and why the animal may have been given that collective noun. If necessary, explain what the words mean outside of their collective noun definition.
  - A bloat of hippos (*Bloat* means to make big with fluid or gas, for example if I were to drink five glasses of water my stomach would be bloated).
  - A passel of pygmy possums (*Passel* means a large group of people or things).
  - A flamboyance of flamingos (If you are *flamboyant*, you attract a lot of attention).
  - An implausibility of gnus (*Implausible* means not likely).
  - A wedge of geese, while flying (A *wedge* is an object with a thin end and a thick end, a bit like a triangle).
  - A gaggle of geese, on the ground (A *gaggle* only means a group of geese now, but it used to the way people described the sound geese make).
  - A streak of tigers (A *streak* is a long, thin line)
  - A troop of orangutans (A *troop* is a group of people or animals who are the same, and the word has been used for over 500 years).

#### After Reading:

- What do the words tell you about how the animals are moving or behaving? How is a gaggle of geese different to a wedge of geese?
- In small groups or as a whole class, create collective nouns for a group of students and describe how it impacts the way the audience thinks about them. For example, how would a bloat of students behave? When would you see them?

- Decide on a collective noun for your class and create a welcome display including either a photo of the class behaving accordingly, or individual self portraits of the class. For example, you might be 'A Knowledge of Learners' or 'A Fleet of Thinkers'.

## Lesson 2: Shared Writing - Planning

Learning Intention: We are learning to choose powerful words in our stories

Success Criteria:

- I can explain what a collective noun is
- I can give an example of a collective noun
- I can explain what a collective noun might say about a group

Foundation	Understand the use of vocabulary in familiar contexts related to everyday experiences, personal interests and topics taught at school ( <a href="#">ACELA1437 - Scootle</a> )
Year 1	Understand the use of vocabulary in everyday contexts as well as a growing number of school contexts, including appropriate use of formal and informal terms of address in different contexts ( <a href="#">ACELA1454 - Scootle</a> )
Year 2	Understand the use of vocabulary about familiar and new topics and experiment with and begin to make conscious choices of vocabulary to suit audience and purpose ( <a href="#">ACELA1470 - Scootle</a> )

Using the *Group Hug!* as a model, innovate on the text either as a whole group, in small groups, in pairs, or individually.

Start reading the book 'Wilbur's safari starts at the zoo, to learn a collective noun or two!'. Change the name 'Wilbur' to your class name, a student's name, or the teacher's name.

Discuss which animals you might see as you walk around the zoo, and create a list. Develop a collective noun for each group of animals, either from a list of existing collective nouns, or by innovating and creating your own collective nouns. If using official collective nouns, it is worth searching the internet for options as many animals have options, such as geese being a gaggle on the ground or a wedge in the sky.

With the list of animals, students think about what the collective nouns say about them, and what they might be doing.

Share the collective nouns and descriptions developed as a group. Discuss how you will be creating your own version of *Group Hug!* and that this is your plan, and that in the next lesson you will develop it further so keep thinking about your animals and what they may be doing.

## Lesson 3: Shared Writing - Noticing Rhyming Patterns

Learning Intention: We are learning to notice rhyming words and use them in our writing

Success Criteria:

- I can give find some rhyming words in a text
- I can give examples of rhyming words
- I can use rhyming words in my own writing

Foundation	Understand that some language in written texts is unlike everyday spoken language ( <a href="#">ACELA1431 - Scootle</a> )
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Year 1	Understand patterns of repetition and contrast in simple texts ( <a href="#">ACELA1448 - Scootle</a> )
Year 2	Understand that different types of texts have identifiable text structures and language features that help the text serve its purpose ( <a href="#">ACELA1463 - Scootle</a> )

Read through *Group Hug!* and notice rhyming words. Work through the Gradual Release of Responsibility, beginning by explicitly noticing the rhyming words (*zoo* and *two*), and then on the next page notice that the rhyming words (*buddy* and *muddy*) are at the end of the lines, just like on the last page. Wonder aloud if that might continue.

Include the students as they start to pick up on the pattern, being explicit that the words sound alike. Have the students repeat the words, break them into onset and rime (b-uddy and m-uddy). If appropriate for the rhyme, ask the students if they can come up with any more words which also rhyme, and explain that they could have been used too. Stop the book once all students have a grasp of the rhyming concept. Do not read the entire book unless it suits your class.

Revisit the list of collective nouns created in the last lesson, and pick the easiest word to rhyme with. Brainstorm words which could be used as their rhyming pair. If appropriate, explain that in rhyming, it is sometimes okay to be a bit creative with grammar or words to make the rhyme work, for example: A gang of monkey, swinging and dancing and being funky. Really this should be a gang of monkeys, but the rhyme works better without it. Explain that rhyming is about sounding right rather than being the way we talk usually.

Start with the whole group, finding rhyming words which could be used to describe the collective nouns, and then allocate collective nouns to individuals or groups of students, differentiating by the ease of rhyme and the amount of support given.

After students have found rhyming words, collect these together and explain that you will use these to create your own class version of *Group Hug!*

## Lesson 4: Shared Writing - Innovating on the text

Learning Intention: We are learning to innovate on texts

Success Criteria:

- I can recognise how a pattern is used in a text
- I can make a small change to a pattern of a text to make it different and my own
- I can use the pattern of a text to create my own version

Foundation	Retell familiar literary texts through performance, use of illustrations and images ( <a href="#">ACELT1580 - Scootle</a> )
Year 1	Recreate texts imaginatively using drawing, writing, performance and digital forms of communication ( <a href="#">ACELT1586 - Scootle</a> )
Year 2	Innovate on familiar texts by experimenting with character, setting or plot ( <a href="#">ACELT1833 - Scootle</a> )

Explain that to *innovate* means to make changes to something, especially doing something a bit different that people may not have thought of before. Give an example of eating a snack – you could rearrange the order in which you eat to innovate, or you could combine two pieces of food together, like using two slices of apple and a piece of cheese to make a cheese and apple sandwich.

Explain to students that we can also innovate on texts, using the base of what the author has created and changing it a bit to make it our own. Re-read a section of *Group Hug!* and notice that the pattern of the text is in two line groups, and the last word of each line rhymes. Go back to the rhyming words from the last lesson and the collective nouns created earlier, and innovate on the text using these as a basis.

Work through the Gradual Release of Responsibility, starting with the whole group and creating your own two-line rhyming groups of words, and allowing students to move off in small groups as they feel confident to try their own. The amount of independence will depend on the group of students, and this can be completed in small groups as guided reading and writing over several days, or with the whole group, or with students working in pairs.

As each successful description of a group is created, draw the group’s attention to it, have the ‘authors’ read their two-line rhyming groups of words, and then ask others to repeat it.

Reflect by collecting all of the two-line rhyming groups together and noticing how students have innovated on the text, and how they have been successful.

**Lesson 5: Interacting with text**

Learning Intention: We are learning to think about what makes a text enjoyable

Success Criteria:

- I can give my opinion of a text
- I can listen to other people’s opinions of a text
- I can ask other people questions about their opinions to help me to better understand their views

Foundation	Listen to and respond orally to texts and to the communication of others in informal and structured classroom situations ( <a href="#">ACELY1646 - Scootle</a> )
Year 1	Engage in conversations and discussions, using active listening behaviours, showing interest, and contributing ideas, information and questions ( <a href="#">ACELY1656 - Scootle</a> )
Year 2	Listen for specific purposes and information, including instructions, and extend students’ own and others’ ideas in discussions ( <a href="#">ACELY1666 - Scootle</a> )

Explain that today we are thinking about our opinion of both *Group Hug!* and our own version of the text which we are creating. Explain that an opinion is what you think about something, whether you like it or not, and why you feel that way. Explain that opinions are our own, and not everyone agrees with an opinion. Give the example of the taste of fish. Ask several people to explain how fish tastes, and discuss how none of them are right or wrong because an opinion cannot be wrong, it is just how you feel.

Read through a section of *Group Hug!* which has been especially popular with the class, and ask people to explain what they enjoy about it. What makes it good? Encourage students to ask questions of each other to bring out more thoughts, for example, if a student says they like the picture which accompanies the streak of tigers, have another student ask them what they like about the picture. If they like the music notes which are on the picture, ask them if helps them to hear what might be happening in the picture.



As skills are transferrable to our own version of *Group Hug!*, ask if there is a way in which we can use the things which we enjoy about the original which we can copy, for example putting the collective noun in a different colour. Use this opportunity to start to plan the pictures which will complete the story.

Give the students a page our own text and ask them to plan and explain what would make their page very enjoyable to whomever reads it. This might include typesetting options, such as coloured text or different fonts, or details in the pictures.

To reflect, have students explain what they have decided to do to make their texts more enjoyable for the audience.

In preparation for the next lesson, type up and print out their pages, ready to illustrate.

## Lesson 6: Creating Texts

Learning Intention: We are learning how pictures add to stories

Success Criteria:

- I can notice how a picture helps me to understand a story
- I can explain how a picture helps me to understand a story
- I can use pictures to help others to understand my story

Foundation	Create short texts to explore, record and report ideas and events using familiar words and beginning writing knowledge ( <a href="#">ACELY1651 - Scootle</a> )
Year 1	Create short imaginative and informative texts that show emerging use of appropriate text structure, sentence-level grammar, word choice, spelling, punctuation and appropriate multimodal elements, for example illustrations and diagrams ( <a href="#">ACELY1661 - Scootle</a> )
Year 2	Create short imaginative, informative and persuasive texts using growing knowledge of text structures and language features for familiar and some less familiar audiences, selecting print and multimodal elements appropriate to the audience and purpose ( <a href="#">ACELY1671 - Scootle</a> )

Explain that pictures are an important part of picture story books, and they don't just decorate the pages but they also help us to understand what the author's message. Select two or three pages of *Group Hug!* and invite students to notice how the picture adds to the story.

Have students draw the pictures which they planned for the class innovation on *Group Hug!* Remind them that their picture should help people to enjoy and understand the story. If they finish quickly, have them ask other people what they like about the picture, and if they have any suggestions to make it better.

Collect all of the illustrated pages together and read them as a class. Make the book sharable either by taking photographs of each of the pages and posting them online for families to enjoy, or by laminating all of the pages, binding them together and adding it to the class library.