

9780734401250 | PB

WHAT AM I? TEACHERS' GUIDE

What am I? Kim Dale

This lovely book, with its lift-the-flap format, will delight the reader. Children will be eager to discover what is hiding behind the page, and find the ability to guess for themselves exciting. The reader, as well as having fun, will learn a great deal about the flora and fauna of Australia, as the book imparts a lot about the habits and habitat of native creatures of this country. Kim Dale, in her first picture book, has presented us with stunning illustrations and wonderful words to accompany them. This book will appeal to all who read it and will be looked at time and time again and readers will derive a great deal of pleasure from it as well as knowledge. *What am I?* can be shared with very young children and children of school age.

Language

The text of *What am I?* is presented in a simple style which will be readily accessible to a young child. The poetic rhyming of the words and repetition of the title will enable the young readers to contribute interactively with the text by joining in the reading. Children will recognise letters and words as they become more familiar with the story. Young children are empowered by having some involvement in a story, and *What am I?* allows ample opportunity for this.

Activity

Hold up the book and show children the front cover, explaining what the book is about and how they may be able to guess what is behind the flap by listening carefully to the clues and studying the illustrations.

Read *What am I?* aloud. Encourage the audience to contribute to the text at the end of each page where they can say in chorus *What am I?*

Before lifting the flap to reveal the creature, ask children to guess from the clues given.

Once they are familiar with the book they can join in the telling of their favourite page or each child can take turns at presenting one animal, bird, or reptile from the book.

Show the children how words rhyme. The effect of descriptive words can be pointed out as can the effect of sounding words like *kerfuffle* and *snuffle* for the echidna.

Numeracy

What am I? provides numerous opportunities to look with young children at the concepts of shape and form in the natural world, as well as size, sets and counting.

Activity

Find: a clutch of eggs; some clumps of grass; triangular, square and round shapes. How many eggs are there? How many dingo pups? How many in the dingo family? How big is an emu? What about the size of an echidna, a kangaroo, a kookaburra?

Environmental Studies

Young children are aware of their environment. At a very early age they can be introduced to many factors affecting their wider surroundings. *What am I?* provides an excellent vehicle for doing this in the best possible context - the enjoyment of a good book.

Talk about the creatures presented in the book. How many children have seen any of these? Where? If they have seen them in their natural environment allow the children to describe the circumstances and their impression of the animal, bird or reptile. Have any children seen other native creatures in the wild, not depicted in the book? Some children may be able to talk about stories they have had read to them with creatures portrayed in *What am I?* They can talk about these stories.

From reading and looking at *What am I?* children can observe creatures around them such as kookaburras, magpies and possums and contribute their own information about these animals and birds.

A nature study corner could be established in the room to display feathers, pictures and drawings that the children produce. Talk about the colours of the Australian bush and how most creatures blend in. The issue of conservation can be introduced.

Extended Learning

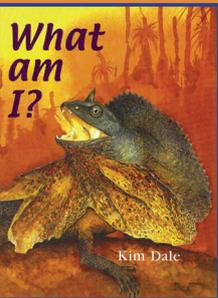
There are many ways of widening children's comprehension and knowledge through reading *What am I?* The author has provided a wonderfully useful list of Fauna Facts at the end of the book and from this all readers can gain more information about the subject matter of the book.

Activity

Using Fauna Facts find out the following information. The children may know the answers to some of these questions already. Ask them! Find out the names of the offspring for as many creatures as you can. Make a list of these with the children. What creatures can we expect to find all over Australia? Which would we never see, in the wild, in our state? What is a mammal? Which animals in *What am I?* are mammals? Which are birds? Which are reptiles? What is a marsupial? Which marsupials have pouches that are reversed? Why? Talk about the feel of the creatures in *What am I?* asking the children to imagine how they would be, emphasising that these are all creatures which are wild and therefore must not be touched. Which creatures come out at night? Which can be seen during the day? What is the word used for these different activities? What does an emu eat? Where does a fairy penguin lay her eggs? How are the young cared for? What makes the platypus unique? Why do koalas need to rest a lot? *What am I?* by Kim Dale is a beautiful book to have and share with children.

About the author

Kim Dale is a Melbourne-based artist and wildlife enthusiast. Kim has travelled extensively around the world and Australia, where she developed her love for wildlife, especially birds, and is a registered wildlife carer.



9780734401250 | PB

WHAT AM I? TEACHERS' GUIDE