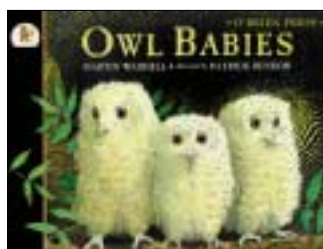


OWL BABIES



by Martin Waddell, colour illustrations by Patrick Benson

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This is a story that addresses one of the most deep-rooted fears of the small child: fear of abandonment. Three owl babies awaken one night to find that their mother has gone. The eldest, Sarah, valiantly tries to comfort and reassure her siblings, explaining that Mummy has gone to find food for them. The middle owl, Percy, is unconvinced and begins to imagine all the terrible things that could happen to his Mummy. The youngest owl, Bill, refuses to be comforted and insists that he wants his mother. This is repeated again and again and, as the tension builds, even Sarah begins to have doubts. Then Mummy returns to a tumultuous welcome and the torment is over. A story with a universal theme and a satisfying conclusion.

LANGUAGE – ENGLISH

- ◆ Exploring possibilities and probabilities, difference between what *could* happen to Mummy and what *probably did* happen.
- ◆ Language of movement: Swooping, gliding, hopping, flapping.
- ◆ Discuss making wishes: Wishes of each character, making a wish-list.
- ◆ Discuss: Describe homes of owls, children's own homes.
- ◆ Discuss illustrations: Darkness of woods, night-time, dark sky/blue sky.
- ◆ Identifying repetition, questions, exclamations, demands.
- ◆ Word-patterns: OWLS, PROWL, LOW, SWOOP, WOOWOO.

SESE

- ◆ Living things: General, simple owl characteristics, habitat, food, different types of owl.
- ◆ Processes of life: Development of owlet into adult owl, dangers facing protected birds.
- ◆ Practical: Look for owl pellets under trees, fences and poles; these can be found wherever owls sleep, perch and nest.
- ◆ Plants: Various types of woodland, deciduous/coniferous trees; animals/birds/insects that live in woodlands/trees.

SPHE

- ◆ Myself: Feelings and emotions; common childhood fears, such as fear of separation from

parent or guardian; how to comfort oneself when anxious, developing the ability to think calmly and to be rational.

- ◆ Dealing with fear: Concentrating on probabilities rather than on possibilities.
- ◆ Myself and my family: Role of siblings, such as responsibility for younger family members, helping, supporting, loving each other.

MATHEMATICS

- ◆ Numeration: The concept of three.
- ◆ Sorting according to size and age. Characters match branches: Big branch = Sarah; small branch = Percy; piece of ivy = Bill.
- ◆ Scale: Levels of anxiety, escalating levels of anxiety as story progresses.
- ◆ Ordering: Differences in size and age.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- ◆ Movement: Flying, swooping, gliding, hopping, bouncing, perching, waiting.
- ◆ Chasing games: Catch tiny prey, in and out of trees, stop on signal, when caught, owls and mice sit and go to sleep.

VISUAL ARTS

- ◆ Owl paperweights: Painting on smooth stones.
- ◆ Leaf rubbings: Make rubbings, cut them out and use as feathers.
- ◆ Hand shapes: Draw around hands to make large leaf-shapes.
- ◆ Cardboard owl: Draw owl on cardboard, add movable wings using paper-fasteners.