monkey baa

WHERE IS THE GREEN SHEEP?

Based on the book by Mem Fox and Judy Horacek
Written for the stage and directed by Eva Di Cesare

Learning pack

Monkey Baa respectfully acknowledges the Custodians of this nation and honours their continued cultural and spiritual connection to the lands, waters and seas.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present, on whose land we work, live and share stories.

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Hello!

This learning pack has been created to support teachers and students. It follows Where is the Green Sheep? across the pages of the book and into the world of the stage, providing an introduction to the story, its key moments and the creative choices behind the adaptation. It is built for Early Stage 1 and Stage 1, with activities linked to the Australian Curriculum.

Inside, you will find discussion prompts, pre- and post-show activities that invite students to explore characters, movement and imaginative play, and insights into how the story has been brought from page to performance.

The activities in this pack align with the General Capabilities and Cross Curriculum Priorities of Literacy, Creative and Critical Thinking, and Personal and Social Capability. Teachers should refer to their relevant state or national curriculum guidelines to connect activities with specific learning outcomes or assessment needs.

This resource was created by Alexander Andrews.

About Monkey Baa

We're a national Australian theatre company creating extraordinary theatre for young people. For nearly three decades we've been making shows that spark imagination, creativity and a lifelong love of the arts.

Our productions go on big journeys across Australia and beyond, reaching over 60 communities each year. We perform in busy cities and make sure to visit regional and remote towns. We work closely with schools, local groups and charities so that every young person has the chance to experience the joy of theatre.

Whether it's coming to see a show, joining a workshop at school, doing work experience with us or being part of our Youth Advisory Council, there are so many ways for young people to connect with our work.

We respect young people as an audience of now, not just the future. We love working together to shape everything we do and some of our most creative moments have been co-created with them.

About the show

Where is the Green Sheep? is an immersive visual theatre experience based on the beloved children's book by Mem Fox and Judy Horacek. We meet Blue Sheep who loves blue flowers and Red Sheep who loves to cartwheel in the fields, Bath Sheep who loves bubbles and Bed Sheep who loves to bounce... But where IS that Green Sheep?

Blending puppetry and animation, this beautiful production invites young audiences to join our three farmers on their quest to find the elusive green sheep. Co-created with students from Bankstown West Public School, this production integrates their voices as narrators, ensuring the work resonates deeply with young audiences.

Where is the Green Sheep? is a co-production with QPAC's Out of the Box in association with Arts Centre Melbourne, The Sydney Opera House and The Art House, Wyong.

Based on the book by Mem Fox and Judy Horacek
Written for the stage and directed by Eva Di Cesare
Illustrations copyright Judy Horacek
Photography by Robert Catto

Creatives

Eva Di Cesare
Writer and Director

Me-Lee Hay
Composer

Susie Henderson
Video Designer

Nat Jobe
Choreographer

Ebony Tucker
Performer

Judy Horacek
Visual Art Director

Kay Yasugi
Puppet Maker

Matt Cox
Lighting Designer

Paul Grabovac
Performer

Tobhiyah Stone Feller
Production Designer

Kailah Cabanas
Puppetry Director and
Assistant Director

Zac Saric
Sound Designer

Michael Ho
Performer

Themes

Curiosity
This story helps us use our curious minds. As we look for the green sheep, we start to notice little details and ask lots of questions. Curiosity is when we wonder, explore and look closely to discover new things.

Playfulness
The sheep in this book love to have fun. Some are being silly, some are trying new things and some just make us laugh. Playfulness reminds us that stories can be joyful and that using our imagination can make ordinary things feel exciting.

Differences
Every sheep in the book is different. They have different colours, different roles and different personalities. This shows us that being different is a good thing. Our differences make us special and make the world more interesting.

Patience
We don't meet the green sheep until the very end. That means we have to wait and enjoy the journey along the way. Patience is when we keep looking, keep listening and don't rush. When the green sheep finally appears, it feels extra special because we waited for it.

Behind the scenes

Where the idea came from

Turning Where is the Green Sheep? into a play started with a big question: How do you take a small picture book and turn it into an entire show? Eva Di Cesare, Judy Horacek and Kailah Cabanas sat together and talked about what makes the book special. They looked at Judy's funny sheep illustrations and the way the words sound when we read them aloud.

Eva decided the story needed both puppets and animation. Some sheep would be real puppets held by performers. Other sheep would appear on a big screen like moving pictures. Eva also spent time imagining what each sheep might do once it stepped off the page. Blue Sheep, Red Sheep, Sun Sheep and all the others were given their own little moments to help tell a bigger story.

The design team then made the stage look like the book. They used flat shapes, bright colours and painted textures so the stage felt like the pages had opened up. Everyone worked together to test the puppets, the music, the animations and the lights until the whole world felt right.

In the end the team made a play that is gentle, funny and joyful. It keeps the spirit of the book and lets young and older people enjoy the story together in a new way.

Let’s chat with Eva

What made you choose this book for a play?
I love reading lots of books. This one kept popping up every time I went into a bookshop. Judy’s pictures made me laugh and Mem's words felt warm and fun. I started to feel excited about the theatrical possibilities and that told me this was the right book to pursue.

How did you imagine the story onstage?
When I first read it I immediately imagined puppets and animation. Blue Sheep was always going to be a big beautiful puppet and little scenes for Blue Sheep and Bath Sheep started forming straight away. From the beginning I knew the puppets, Judy’s illustrations and the music would tell the story theatrically.

Was it hard to make a whole show from a short book?
Yes. Because there are so few words we looked closely at the pictures and imagined what each sheep might do. I spent a week writing ideas for Blue Sheep and the others. After that we worked together to add puppetry, animation, sound and light so the story was clear.

Do you have a favourite moment?
Bath Sheep always makes me laugh. Cheeky and funny. We have been working on this show for two years and that scene still makes me happy. I also love Scared and Brave Sheep. I see myself in that sheep.

What was it like working with your team?
Wonderful. A blessing. I work with people who are kind, creative and full of ideas. We share our thoughts and try things out together. As the director I do have clear ideas about how I want the play to be. But with such a talented team, someone often has a great idea we had not thought of yet. So we work slowly and carefully, piecing the show together by pooling our ideas.

What do you hope people feel during the show?
I hope they feel joy. So many young people and their families know this special book and love it deeply. I hope they feel even closer to it when they see the sheep come to life onstage.

About the illustrations

Judy Horacek is the original illustrator of the book and a very important collaborator as the Visual Art Director in the creation of the show. She has been involved from the very beginning, shaping the visual world through her illustrations.

Judy provided original drawings and created new artwork especially for the production, which is projected onto a large screen and animated to move and interact with the actors and puppets.

Let's chat with Judy

What did you think when you first heard your book was going to become a play?
When Eva suggested it, the first question was how you would even do it. We realised puppetry and animation felt like the right way to bring the book to life.

How did you choose what was puppetry or animation?
That was one of the trickiest parts. We did not know straight away what should be live, what should be puppets, or what could be animated, and some choices changed as we went.

Is there a small moment you love?
I really love the rain sheep. In the book the rain is black static lines. Susie has reversed it into white lines drifting down, which feels simple, beautiful and very true to the drawing.

What has collaboration been like for you?
I usually work alone with a blank piece of paper, so being in a room with lots of people bringing different skills has been wonderful fun. Working out how a small two dimensional drawing becomes a three dimensional character without losing its personality has been fascinating.

Let’s chat with Susie and Tobhi

What is challenging about using animation in a show?
Susie: Animation is locked in once you make it, but live performance is flexible. Bringing the two together can be tricky, yet it is really satisfying when it works.

What are some of your favourite moments?
Susie: I have a lot of love for what we have affectionately called Kite Sheep. It is a beautiful drawing in the book, and in the show we have expanded what that shape does so it gets to have little cameo moments in other parts of the story.

How did you turn Judy’s pictures into a stage set?
Tobhi: Judy’s drawings are flat like a picture on a page, so we kept that look onstage. We made big flat shapes out of plywood to look like hills, a car, a cannon, and lots of other props. The floor has a special print that looks just like her watercolours in the book.

What was challenging about making the set?
Tobhi: Judy uses soft colours that can disappear when bright theatre lights shine on them. I had to make the colours a little stronger so that when the audience looks at the stage it still feels like her artwork.

About the animation and design

Production Designer Tobhiyah Stone Feller brings Judy Horacek’s artwork to life onstage with colour and playfulness, while Susie Henderson designs the animation and video that adds movement to the world.

Tobhi designs the look of the stage, props, costumes and textures that feel like the pages have opened up in front of the audience. Susie designs the animation and video, taking Judy’s illustrations and adding movement and rhythm so the images shift, flow and come alive onstage.

About the puppets

The sheep puppets are made by Kay Yasugi and then their movement is directed by Kailah Cabanas.

Kay designs and builds all the puppets, turning the book's flat drawings into three dimensional characters that can move and perform onstage.

Kailah works with the performers to show them how each puppet moves and behaves so the audience believes the puppet is alive and telling the story.

Let's chat with Kay and Kailah

How did you make the puppets?
Kay: I looked closely at the book's pictures and turned the flat drawings into real puppets, thinking about what each one needed to do, like making Wide Sheep big but light enough for the seesaw.

What was the hardest part?
Kay: This show has sixteen puppets, which is the largest number I have ever made for one project. Some puppets are tiny and others are much bigger. I also like using recycled materials, so I had to find items that already existed but were still strong enough to last through rehearsals and performances.

How do performers learn to use puppets?
Kailah: Some performers have used puppets before and some have not. I tell them not to worry. Puppetry is a partnership between the performer and the puppet. When someone does it well, the audience watches the puppet and forgets about the performer.

What is your favourite moment?
Kailah: I love the moment when Scared Sheep becomes Brave Sheep. The puppet climbs the ladder and steps onto the diving board. Three performers work together to move the puppet, which lets us show lots of detail.

Let’s chat with the actors

Which sheep is your favourite to perform with?
Michael: My favourite sheep to perform with is Sun Sheep because I get to sit back, relax and soak in the sun with a mocktail in hand. Sun Sheep also gives the best attitude!

How do you make the puppets feel alive onstage?
Paul: To make the puppets feel alive on stage, I make sure my puppet’s eyes are always looking around and focusing on something. If you ensure the puppet is always looking at or trying to understand something new every couple of seconds, it will feel alive. Another tip to keep a puppet alive on stage, if it cannot look around much, is to make your puppet breathe. Slow and steady breaths help the puppet feel alive on stage.

What do you hope young people will feel in the show?
Ebony: I hope young people feel happy and playful when they see our sheepy friends on stage. All of us can be scared sheep sometimes, but remember we are also cheeky like Bed Sheep, strong like Brave Sheep and full of joy like Rain Sheep.

About the performance

In the show three performers work together to bring the whole world and all the sheep to life. They play friendly farmers who guide us through the story.

Paul Grabovac, Michael Ho and Ebony Tucker use their acting and puppetry skills to help show what the sheep are doing and feeling. Sometimes they lead the story by moving objects around the stage. Other times they work in teams to make a single sheep come alive. They also help us look in the right place so we can follow the adventure.

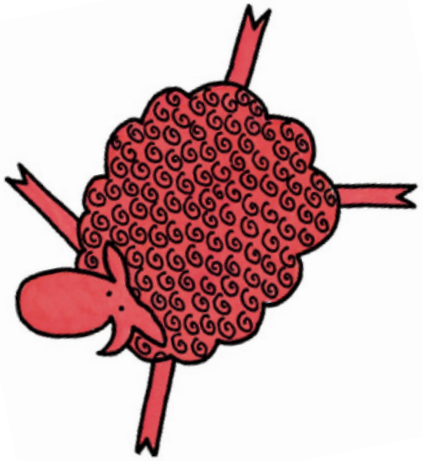
Meet some
sheep!

Here is the blue sheep

Blue Sheep appears on stage as a puppet who loves anything blue and happily munches every blue flower she can find. She gobbles them up one by one. She tries other colours like orange and red but does not like them at all, then spits them out with a very funny look.

If you were a sheep, what colour would you be and why?

And here is the red sheep



Red Sheep appears as an animation on the screen at the back of the stage, bursting into view in a whirl of red. She cartwheels across the hills with joyful energy, flipping and spinning in bright red colours while Blue Sheep watches in disbelief.

If you were a sheep, what special talent would you have?

Here is the bath sheep

Bath Sheep also appears as a puppet and she loves a good wash. The farmers help give Bath Sheep a warm bubbly bath, and she has a very playful time while they clean and dry her. The scene is full of gentle water sounds and bubbles, and the farmers work together to take care of their friend.

Classroom activity

In pairs, one person is the bath and the other is the sheep.

- The bath stands still and makes a gentle round shape with their arms, as if holding warm bubbly water.
- The sheep steps inside the pretend bath and uses slow, light movements to play with the bubbles. They can wiggle their fingers like rising bubbles or make swooshing hands like splashes.
- The bath gently shows where bubbles appear by raising their hands or shifting their shape a little.
- The sheep follows the bubbles and explores how they might move, float or pop.
- Swap roles so everyone gets a turn being the bath and the sheep.

What kinds of movements can show bubbles floating or popping?

Here is the bed sheep

After Bath Sheep has finished getting clean, she becomes Bed Sheep. The farmers tuck Bed Sheep under a warm blanket and help it get ready for sleep. Bed Sheep tries very hard to settle, but it still has lots of energy and keeps popping back up. The farmers use quiet, caring movements to guide Bed Sheep toward rest, showing how bedtime can be calm even when a little sheep is not quite ready to sleep yet.

What helps you feel calm when it is time for bed?

What sounds or movements make bedtime feel quiet and safe?

What could you do to help a little sheep who is finding it hard to fall asleep?

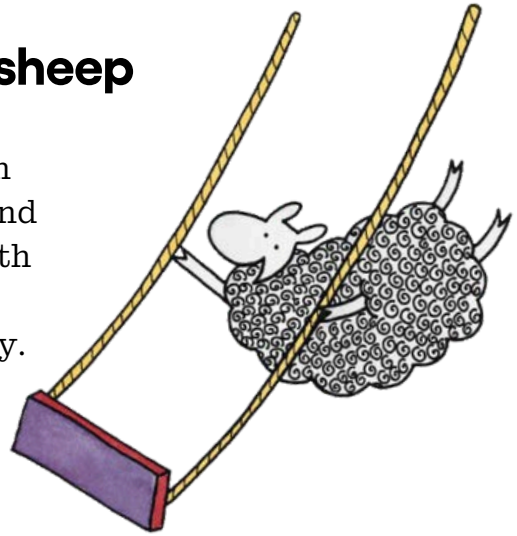
Here is the thin sheep and here is the wide sheep

Thin Sheep is tall and narrow, and Wide Sheep is big and broad. These two puppet sheep love exploring the farm together, and their different shapes help them play in funny and surprising ways.

What is something special about you that makes you who you are?

Here is the swing sheep

Swing Sheep appears as an animation on the screen and loves to glide back and forth on a swing, soaring higher and higher through the sky.



What is something you love to do that makes you feel happy or free?

But where is the green sheep?

The farmers look everywhere for Green Sheep, but she is still missing. Each time they ask the question, the search becomes a little bigger and a little more exciting and everyone wonders where Green Sheep is hiding.

When someone is missing in a story how does it make you feel?

Where would you look first if you were helping to find Green Sheep?

Classroom activity
Students connect by looking for something green, practising teamwork, listening and spatial awareness.

- The teacher chooses a green item and hides it in the room while students close their eyes.
- One student starts searching. The rest of the class gives clues by calling: “colder” when the student moves away from the object, “warmer” when they move closer, “hot!” when they are right near it.
- When the green object is found, everyone celebrates.
- Another student hides it and leads the next round.

Before the show

First impressions

Objective
Students will explore their initial ideas about sheep, colours and characteristics in preparation for the world of Where is the Green Sheep?

Materials
Large sheet of butcher's paper or whiteboard, markers.

Instructions
Write the word "Sheep" in the centre of the board or paper. Ask students to call out any words, colours, actions or images that come to mind.

Record everything around the centre word. Group similar ideas together (for example, colours, behaviours, places sheep might be found).

Introduce the idea that the story features many different sheep who all behave differently.

Discussion questions
What kinds of sheep might be in the show?

What clues does the title of the show give us about the story?

In their wool

Objective
Students will use imagination and physical exploration to build an understanding of how performers create different sheep characters onstage.

Instructions
Explain that each sheep in the story moves in its own special way. Ask students to stand in a space and copy a simple movement for a sheep, such as bouncing, grazing or wobbling.

Next, tell students they will create their own original sheep. Ask them to decide:
- How does my sheep move?
- How does my sheep feel today?
- What sound might my sheep make?

Students practise their movement in their own space. Then invite a few students to demonstrate their original sheep for the class without speaking. The class guesses the sheep's mood or personality.

Discussion question
How did changing your movement help your sheep feel different?

Soundscape sheep

Objective
Students will explore vocal variation and rhythm to prepare for the sound-based narration and puppetry in the show.

Instructions
Tell students they will build a sheep choir. Demonstrate a few baas: happy, sad, excited, slow. Students echo each one.

Divide the class into small groups. Assign each group a type of baa and act as conductor. Signal when each group should baa loudly or softly.

Encourage students to listen carefully, just like performers do in rehearsals. Finish by combining all baas into one playful soundscape.

Discussion questions
Which sound was easiest or hardest to copy?

How does sound help us understand a character's feelings?

Where might the green sheep be?

Objective
Students will use prediction skills to think about the central mystery of the show.

Materials
Paper, pencils.

Instructions
Tell students, "The whole play is searching for the green sheep. Where do you think she might be hiding?"

Students draw their prediction. Encourage them to think about places that are quiet, warm or playful.

Invite volunteers to share their pictures.

Place drawings on a wall or board to revisit after the performance.

Discussion questions
Why do you think Green Sheep would hide there?

What ideas helped you choose your hiding spot?

After the show

Sheep in the spotlight

Objective
Students will reflect on character and movement choices they observed in the show.

Instructions
Ask students to choose a sheep they remember clearly from the performance.

Have them stand and recreate one movement the sheep made onstage such as cartwheeling like Red Sheep or bouncing like Swing Sheep.

Invite volunteers to show their movement to the class. Discuss how performers used their bodies to help puppets feel alive.

Discussion questions
What did the performers do to help you understand that sheep's personality?

How did the movement help tell the story even without words?

Make your own sheep puppet

Objective
Students will apply basic puppetry techniques inspired by the show.

Materials
Sheep templates or blank paper, colouring pencils, scissors, tape.

Instructions
Students colour and cut out a simple sheep shape.

Demonstrate three puppetry rules used by performers:

- Breath: gently move the puppet up and down as if it's breathing.
- Focus: turn the puppet's head slowly to look at something.
- Movement: give the puppet one signature action such as hopping or sliding.

Students practise bringing their puppet to life in pairs.

Invite volunteers to introduce their sheep to the class.

Discussion question
What makes the puppets look alive?

Postcard moments

Objective
Students will collaborate to recreate key moments from the performance using still images.

Instructions
Divide the class into small groups. Assign each group a moment from the show such as Bath Sheep splashing, Slide Sheep zooming or Rain Sheep dancing.

Students work together to create a still image that captures the moment. Encourage clear shapes, levels and expressive faces.

Groups present their freeze frames while the rest of the class guesses the scene.

Discussion questions
What helped your group decide how to make the scene clear?

How did teamwork help you create a stronger image?

Where was the green sheep really?

Objective
Students will compare their predictions with the real reveal from the performance and reflect on storytelling.

Materials
Students' original prediction drawings.

Instructions
Display students' "Where might the green sheep be?" drawings from before the show.

Invite them to compare their prediction with the actual ending. Ask students to redraw the real hiding place or add details to their original drawing to show what surprised them.

Discussion questions
How was the real reveal different from what you expected?

Why do you think the creators chose that hiding spot for the Green Sheep?

Dear Monkey Baa: writing a letter

Objective

Students will reflect on their theatre experience by writing a letter to Monkey Baa, sharing their thoughts about the show and practising early writing skills.

Materials

Paper, pencils, optional letter template.

Instructions

Tell students they will write a letter to Monkey Baa, the theatre company that created Where is the Green Sheep?.

Explain that letters are a way of telling someone what you enjoyed, what you learned or what questions you still have.

Begin by modelling a simple structure on the board:

- A greeting: “Dear Monkey Baa,”
- One thing they enjoyed in the show
- One sheep they remember
- One question or message for the performers
- A sign-off: “From …”

Encourage students to draw a picture to go with their letter if writing is still emerging. Support students by offering sentence starters such as:

- “My favourite sheep was …”
- “I liked when …”
- “I want to know …”

Collect the letters and display them in the classroom or send them to us at Monkey Baa:

Monkey Baa Theatre Company
The Arts Exchange
Level 4/10 Hickson Road
The Rocks NSW 2000

Discussion questions

What did you want to tell Monkey Baa about your experience?

Which sheep did you choose to write about and why?

How did writing the letter help you remember the show?

Book a workshop today

Our classroom workshops bring the magic of theatre making to thousands of students across Australia.

These dynamic sessions build courage through creativity, giving students practical skills across all areas of theatre. Our fun and flexible workshops can be tailored to suit your students' needs, abilities and areas of study.

Show workshops

Immerse your students in the world of our shows. These engaging, interactive workshops unpack themes through drama games and activities, supporting classroom learning and helping students connect more deeply with the story and its characters.

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Step behind the scenes and into the creative process. Our hands-on workshops build skills in acting, puppetry, playwriting, design and more. Each session is tailored to inspire students, giving them the tools to express themselves and tell their own stories.

To learn more or book a workshop, visit our website: monkeybaa.com.au

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