

# Cheeky Dogs

Target Age: 3-5 yrs



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Too Many  
**CHEEKY  
DOGS**



## Overview

Bring a book to life using the arts! This resource is based on Children's Book Council of Australia Award-winning book *Too Many Cheeky Dogs* by author Johanna Bell and illustrator Dion Beasley. The resource features Activity Guides for 'before, during and after' reading or viewing the story.

The book is set in the remote Northern Territory town of Tennant Creek. The story introduces children to some of the places and characters that live in Dion's world. It is written in a simple repeating style that supports children's language development. The Cheeky Dogs are the central characters whose numbers increase on each day of the week.

The animated video of the Cheeky Dogs text can be shared with children instead of or in combination with the original book. This video features an Auslan interpreter to support and educate all children, and creates a connection to indigenous illustrator Dion Beasley who is deaf and experiences muscular dystrophy. This story can be used as a starting point to explore and deepen children's understandings about Indigenous Australia. When embedding learning about Aboriginal history and culture first find out if any of your students identify as Aboriginal and ask their family or carers if they would like to share their culture with the class.

## Why?

This immersive approach to literacy aims to engage children cognitively and emotionally, and to spark and foster a life-long love of reading.

Children need to see, feel, play and discuss concepts to build new ideas and consolidate new language.

The creative strategies used in this resource can support all learners to share and extend on their existing knowledge.

## Parts of the resource

- ✓ *Too Many Cheeky Dogs* animation - video
- ✓ *Too Many Cheeky Dogs* reading by Westfield - video
- ✓ Dion Beasley's postcard - video
- ✓ Three activity guides with immersive literacy ideas.

## Early Years Learning Framework Links

**Learning Outcome 2:** Children are connected with and contribute to their world: 2.2 Children respond to diversity with respect.

**Learning Outcome 4:** Children have a strong sense of identity. 4.3 Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another.

# Before Reading or Viewing the Story

Introduce activities related to the Cheeky Dogs narrative before sharing the text. These shared experiences will support children's engagement, language development and comprehension of the text.

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## Pets

Discuss children's experiences of dogs or pets. What are the dogs like that we know? Are they cheeky? Or sleepy? Record their descriptive words.

## Play

Play the Simon Says game and have children pretend to be 'cheeky or sleepy' dogs. Explore different descriptive words together.

## On Friday I walked to the clinic

and guess what I saw?

## Sing

There are many simple songs that help children learn the days of the week. Share or sing one of these and encourage children to sing along.

## Discuss

What day is it today? What things do children do on specific days of the week?



## Share

Find out about the illustrator and where he lives by watching the Postcard video featuring Dion and Tennant Creek.

## Connect

What do they notice about Dion? What do they notice about his town? How is it the same or different to where they live?



## Spark

Use pictures, Lego or blocks to create a display about places in your community or town that you regularly go to and share this with children.

## Create

Discuss and record the places where children go. Encourage children to make, draw or build their worlds.

# While Reading or Viewing the Story

The same story can be shared numerous times and be brought to life in a multitude of ways; this will help consolidate the language and connected concepts. Here are some ideas for immersing children into the story.

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## Show

Use expression, body language and even costume items (like dog ears) to create the world of the story.

## Move

Watch the Cheeky Dogs animated video and see if children can copy some of the sign language (Auslan) movements.

## 4 green cheeky dogs riding the seesaw!



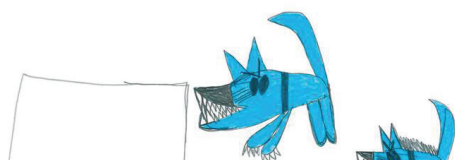
## Number

Represent the number of dogs on each page using toys or by having children stand up and pretend to be the dogs.

## Count

How many dogs are there? Count out loud together and make it playful by integrating musical elements. For example, the pitch can go higher as the numbers get bigger or children can clap after each number.

## 3 blue cheeky dogs scratching at the door!



## Connect

Set up a paint and easel, and as each new colour is introduced in the story, bring it to life with brush strokes. Children can also be given this exciting job.

## Feel

Pass around props related to the story that children can hold; like dog puppets, or a football.



## Prompt

Ask questions that help children connect with the story. For example, have you ever been on a see-saw or been swimming in a waterhole?

## Act

Role play parts of the story as a group and consider integrating props. For example, lay down some blue material and say "Let's stop and have a swim in the waterhole too".

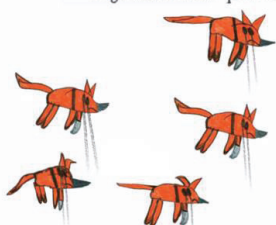
# After Reading or Viewing the Story

The rich experience of the text should spark further play and language development. What are children's understandings of this world? Retell and discuss the concepts from the story.

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How did the orange cheeky  
dogs hurt their paws?



## Retell

Use the illustrations or props and encourage children to retell parts of the story.

## Pretend

Add images, props or costumes that connect to story into a role play corner. For example, there could be Grandpa's clothes, a crocodile puppet or bandages to wrap sore dogs' paws in.

Yesterday  
I walked to  
**Grandpa's camp**  
and guess what I saw?



## Play

Change the Grandmother's Footsteps game to relate to the story. For example, Grandpa could have Cheeky Dogs creeping up to him.

## Create

Make signs and recreate the different places the Cheeky Dogs go in the book around your centre. Use indoor and outdoor space. Where will the waterhole be?



## Learn

Explore sign language (Auslan) further by having an incursion with an interpreter.

## Discuss

Why do people use sign language?



## Indigenous perspective

Did children notice the murals in Tennant creek? Discuss dot paintings.

## Learn

Invest in an incursion from a local First Nation education group to share knowledge about this local culture. Do any of your students identify as indigenous?