



PEEKING ducks

Published by Windy Hollow Books 2010

Teachers' notes

Written by Krista Bell
Illustrated by Sally Rippin

About the author

Krista Bell won her first writing award aged eight, but more recently was short listed for the NSW Premier's History Awards with 'Lofty's Mission'. She has studied languages, run a bookshop, worked for a publisher, and reviewed books on radio and in print. Krista travels regularly, giving writing workshops to young readers and adults.

Although Krista's family had ducks as pets for many years, an inspirational trip to China gave her the idea for her 23rd book, 'Peeking Ducks'.

www.kristabell.com

About the illustrator

Sally Rippin spent three years in China studying traditional Chinese painting. She has written and illustrated over thirty books, many of them award-winning. Sally and her family live in Melbourne near Merri Creek where they often wander looking for ducks. They have spotted lots of brown speckly ones, but no Peeking ducks yet.

www.sallyrippin.com

Reading

Before reading

The title of the book is Peeking Ducks. What might the Peeking refer to?

Look at the front on the front cover and the characters on the title page. What clues does this give you as to the setting of the book?

After reading

What do you think was the main message of the book?

Why do you think the ducks wanted to explore the big river?

What might have happened if their sister had not caught up with them?

Why do you think Krista chose ducks as her main characters?

Context and further research

Why do you think the ducks have been given the names they have? Do some research in to Chinese rivers and see if you can find out the significance of the ducks names?

What are the activities that the ducks encountered along the river?

What can you find out about life along the rivers in China?

Why do you think the rivers are so important to the people?

Try to come up with a scene of a typical day along the river?

At one stage the ducks encounter some other ducks being transported on bamboo rafts along the river to market by hawkers. What are hawkers? What else may be transported along the river on bamboo rafts?

Why would they use bamboo rafts instead of driving along the road in cars to the market?

How do you think the life along the river may differ from life in Beijing?

Illustration

What do you notice about the style of illustration?

What do you think Sally has used to do the artwork?

Why do you think the colours are muted, what feeling do they give the book?

Why do you think Sally chose to depict the tourist boat in a different style with much brighter colours?

