



The Flood

Nigel Gray
& Elise Hurst

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Teachers' notes

When the rain comes pouring down Mrs Farmer has no choice but to let the farm animals inside with some very funny results. She ends up with dogs in the kitchen, pigs in the laundry, cows in the dining room, sheep in the sitting room and hens that lay eggs in all sorts of surprising places. When the water recedes she sends them all back outside...but not for long.

About the author

Nigel lives in a house on poles on the side of a hill where, safe from the danger of floods, and with his dog, Chica, sitting on his feet, he writes stories for children. He has written many books including Early Bird and Robin Hood's New Clothes.

Nigel lives in WA.

About the illustrator

Elise Hurst has written and illustrated many books, but never has she drawn so many chickens. Elise works from her studio at home in Melbourne. Nearby are tigers and elephants, bears and bats. And luckily, chickens (who were most helpful). Elise has a website with lots of drawings on it

www.elisehurst.com

Themes

The overriding theme of the book is loneliness and companionship. Mrs Farmer is an independent woman who is obviously happy but enjoys the company of her animals. The book also leads discussion of weather.

Ideas for further discussion and research

1 FLOODS AS DISASTER

Look at the different kind of floods:

- rainstorm flooding
- rivers breaking their banks
- dams breaking
- floods from the sea

Look at recent flooding disasters:

Queensland and other areas around Australia

Flooding overseas, Philippines, Bangladesh, China, Africa, USA

Look at flood-related problems like mudslides, destruction of roads and bridges, houses and farming land, no electricity or tap water. Toilets not working.

2 LONELINESS (AND FLOOD AS METAPHOR FOR ISOLATION).

What if someone lives on their own and no one comes to visit?

Would they be happier if they had a pet cat or dog?

How would they be happier or healthier?

What about people in hospital or old peoples homes who have no one to visit them?

How would they feel?

Look at how people are affected when they are isolated by floods.

3 COUNTING (for younger readers)

As well as 2,3,4,5,6 and 12, there are various numbers of animals, eggs, etc. in the illustrations.

How many sheep and how many lambs are in the sitting room?

How may chickens have roosted on Mrs Farmer's arms? And so on.

4 FARMING

What kind of farm does Mrs Farmer have?

What other kinds of farms are there?

Unusual types of farms in other parts of the world. e.g. reindeer farming in Finland or tulip growing in Holland.

Would you like to live on a farm and why?

If you would rather live in the city, why do you think it is better?

5 WEATHER

What different kinds of weather are there?

Which kinds of weather don't you get where you live?

Record the weather at your school for a week:

make up a wall chart and each day you can record the

Temperature,

Rainfall or snow (if any)

wind, etc.

Fine, cloudy or sunny

Look at EXTREME weather conditions around the World.

Severe drought

Snow and ice most of the year

Places where it rains every day of the year

Places where it never rains (Patagonia)

Places where they have sandstorms

6 TREATMENT OF ANIMALS

Factory farms

Stations

Transport of animals

kindness to pets

Animal cruelty and the work of the RSPCA

Loved animals: lambs, bears