

PANDAMONIA

CHRIS OWEN AND CHRIS NIXON

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YEAR LEVEL: Kindergarten–Y3

CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITY: Sustainability

ABOUT THE BOOK

When visiting the zoo, whatever you do, **DON'T WAKE THE PANDA!** Join in the fantastic fun as one grumpy panda sets off a frenzy of wild partying.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chris Owen hails from Sussex on the south coast of England. A former radio journalist and newsreader, he migrated to the sunnier climes of Perth in 2003, where he changed careers to become a primary school teacher. Aside from writing, Chris cites walking, snorkelling and eating homemade apple pie and custard as his principal passions in life.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Chris Nixon is an illustrator, designer and creative director based in Perth, Australia. From children's books to animation, commercial illustration to large scale public art, Nixon threads a distinct style across all scales and sizes to extend his creativity.

THEMES

- Zoo animals
- Natural habitats
- Diversity
- Rhyme
- Humour

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

- Kindergarten–Y3 English
- Kindergarten–Y3 The Arts (Drama; Visual Art)
- Kindergarten–Y3 Biological Sciences

USEFUL WEBSITES

- Author's blog: <http://chrisowenchildrensauthor.wordpress.com>
- Illustrator's website: <http://www.chrisnixon.net>
- World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Giant Panda Facts: <http://www.worldwildlife.org/species/giant-panda>



CLASSROOM IDEAS

Animal antics – interactive read-aloud with play-acting

As a class, create actions to accompany each page of *Pandamonia*. Read the book aloud, inviting students to stand up and perform these actions at the appropriate points (e.g. *When the hippos get jumpy they usually hop* – children hop on the spot).

Readers theatre

Present a reading of *Pandamonia* at your school assembly. Divide the verses among students. Children who are not readers should design zoo animal masks to act as the various characters during the performance, providing sound effects and movement.

Rhyme time – animal poetry

1. There are many rhyming pairs in the story – point to the rhyming words on each page. How many rhyming pairs can you find in the entire book?
2. How has the author used rhyme, rhythm and repetition in his verses? Can you write a verse or a poem in the same style? Choose a zoo animal that has not already been included in the book (e.g. a tiger) and create your own poem/verse.
3. Working with a partner, create a list of ten rhyming pairs that relate to the theme 'The Zoo'.
4. What is alliteration? Find five examples in the book, e.g. *tamarins tango, snakes serenade*.
5. In pairs, think of an adjective or verb to accompany each of the following nouns (animals). Remember, your word must begin with the same sound as your animal (e.g. *cranky crocodiles*): penguins, wombats, koalas, lemurs, rhinos, elephants, pandas, lions, emus, flamingos.
6. Create your own acrostic poem about your favourite zoo animal using alliteration.

Imaginations run wild – short story titled '_____ ' for a day

Choose your favourite zoo animal from *Pandamonia*. Imagine that you can live as this animal for one day – what kinds of adventures will you have? Will you live in the wild or in a zoo?

Animal artwork

1. What style has the illustrator used to draw the characters – realistic, cartoon, artistic, fantasy? What do you like about this style? What would you have done differently if you were the illustrator?
2. Can you think of a zoo animal that is not in the story? Design an illustration for this animal modelled after Chris Nixon's style. (Hint: consider his use of shapes, patterns, repetition, colour palette etc.) What materials will you need to create your artwork? You might like to try *Styrofoam Printing*. Etch a picture of your animal into a piece of foam using a sharp pencil. Ink it up with block ink using a roller. Print onto paper or cardboard.
3. Write a rhyming verse to accompany your illustration – describe what your animal does when the panda wakes up. Display illustrations and accompanying narrations around the classroom.

Inquiry project – giant pandas

As a class, research and write a response to the following questions:

1. Approximately how many giant pandas are left in the world?
2. Why are giant pandas an endangered species?
3. What can you do to help?

Biological science

1. How many different species can you count in *Pandamonia*? Are there any species you have never heard of before? Research one of these animals and create a fact sheet about them. Use the following subheadings: name, habitat, diet, life cycle, labelled diagram, conservation status.
2. Create a table with the following column headings: mammals, birds, fish, insects, reptiles, amphibians. Classify the animals in *Pandamonia* into the correct category. What other animals can you add to each column?