

# LET'S GET SERIOUS ABOUT GETING SILLY

The **GETS SILLY** series is meant to be fun. And, of course, it can just be read as is. And that is the most important thing.

- Read it aloud to your child.
- Read it often, if you can.
- The Gets Silly doggerel is written to be appealing to the ear and fun for a child to listen to. Have fun with them as you read with the rhymes on page pairs and the rhythm across the whole 22 pages.
- Explore with them which parts of the doggerel they remember. The author's grandkids love finishing the line on each page for him when reading the books and can even do it from memory without the book.

But if you are looking for ideas and suggestions on how to expand the enjoyment and learning from the books beyond this, here are a few for you to consider.

## COUNTING AND NUMBER RECOGNITION

The books are set up to help children with counting and number recognition. On each story page is a big, bold number of the page:

- Count with your child as the pages turn.
- Point out how the bigger numbers are made up from the early numbers – eg 12 is made up of 1 and 2.
- Count the animal icons on the page with your child. Point out how they are the same number as the numeral on the page.

## PATTERN RECOGNITION

Pattern recognition is a key skill. The books provide an opportunity to build this skill through the animal icons.

- Guide your child to recognise that the animal icons come in groups of five (when there are enough).
- On some of the later pages, show the child how easy it is to count in 5s to get to some bigger numbers, eg on page 15 the count would be 5, 10, 15.
- Extend that on pages which are not multiples of 5, eg page 16 where the count is 5, 10, 15 plus 1 is 16.
- Explore with your child whether they think the grouping in 5s helps them count, or if they think no grouping would be better.
- Ask them how they would arrange the animal icons, if they could.

## PROMPT WORDS

On every page, one or more words in the text are in **PURPLE**. These words refer to some action or some thing in the illustration.

- Explore with your child finding the “purple words” in the illustrations.
- Explore with them if they would have chosen the same words or different words to highlight.

## **IMAGINATION**

There is a lot of detail in the illustrations which can be used to allow your child to explore their own imagination.

- What in the illustration do they find most interesting?
- What do they find funniest?
- Would they rather be one of the human characters or one of the animals? Which animal and why?
- Help them describe a new page with an adventure of their own making.
- Ask them to describe one thing they would add into an illustration. Explore why they chose what they chose.

## **FOCUS ON DETAIL**

Because there is so much detail in each illustration there are a wealth of activities you can craft for your child from each page.

- “Find it” – name something in the illustration for your child to find.
- Turn that into a turn-taking game where you give them something to find and then they give you something to find.
- Explore with them what they most like in an illustration.

## **NOT ALL THE ANIMALS**

The dedication features all the animals used on the pages for the counting icons, plus a few.

- Play a game with your child to spot which animals in the dedication DO NOT appear on one of the pages, and which PAGE has the ones that do.
- Explore with your child why the author might have chosen a particular animal for a page. Sometimes it is obvious, and sometimes it is just random.
- Explore with your child which animals they would choose for each page.

## **NEW WORDS / BIG KID WORDS**

The book’s doggerel has not tried to limit itself to the vocabulary of a young child. You can use this as an opportunity to open your child up to new words.

- For words which are new to them, explore other words that might mean the same or a similar thing (synonyms).
- For older children, explore with them why the author might have chosen these unusual words.
- The doggerel gives an opportunity to introduce the concept of syllables – the separate, uninterrupted sounds that make up each word and each line of the doggerel. For children who are reading, it is a chance for them to count the number of “sounds” in each line. Are there the same number of “sounds” in each line? Or do some lines have a different number of “sounds”?

## NEW ANIMALS

Unless you live in Australia, it is almost certain some of the animals used in the counting icons will be unfamiliar, and even some of the animals used in the illustrations. And even if you do live in Australia, there may be animals that are new to you.

- With your child, spot the animals that you DO know.
- Spot the ones that your child DOESN'T know and name them for them.
- For older children, do some simple internet research with them to find out basic facts about a new animal.

