
Wonderful Wasps

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Audience: Ages 5–9.



Wonderful Wasps by Katrina Germein opens eyes of all ages to the many other types of wasps.

I read this book to my reception classes this week during their science lesson. They were amazed at how bright and colourful the different species were and how they each had such important jobs.

Did you know there are other wasps than the European wasp? These five-year-olds did not!

The wonderfully illustrated pages explaining pollination and showing images of other pollinators sparked conversation about what creatures we had seen in our gardens and what they might have been doing whilst they were visiting. It was valuable to discuss that other pollinators exist, not just the European wasp or the European honeybee.

The reception students connected with the text and images on the pages outlining how insects aren't cuddly, furry, or strong, like other Australian native animals, but they were just as important. They enjoyed seeing images of the wasp "homes" and spoke about how they could teach others about leaving these homes alone. Some students had seen similar structures in their backyards and could now identify who they belonged to.

We explored the teacher notes provided by CSIRO and also explored the wasp lifecycle. Students used plasticine to model the different stages of the wasp lifecycle, adding arrows to show the flow and how the cycle continues.

It wasn't written in the teacher notes, but I had the classes attempt to draw a scientific illustration of the incredibly accurate, numbered wasps that are shown inside the front cover of the book. The images clearly show the head, thorax and abdomen, wing structure and positioning.

I would recommend this book for a junior primary audience, the message is simple and open to discussion around unfamiliar terms (fauna, flora, etc.). The information section and the glossary of terms would suit a slightly older audience (Year 3). These delve deeper into facts about pollination, including species-specific information about the colourful wasps in the story.

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