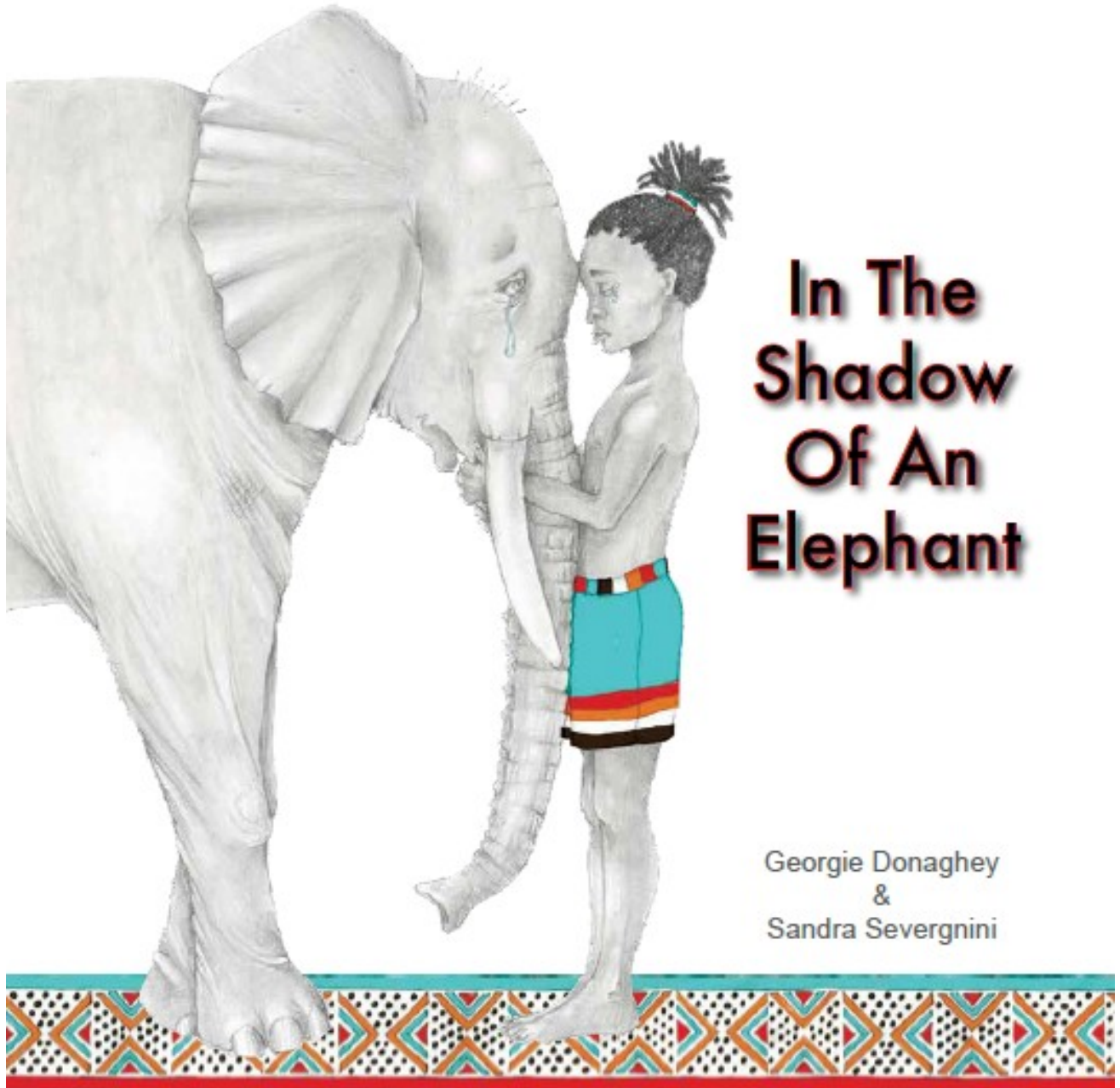


Notes for In the Shadow of an Elephant  
written by Georgie Donaghey and  
illustrated by Sandra Severgnini.



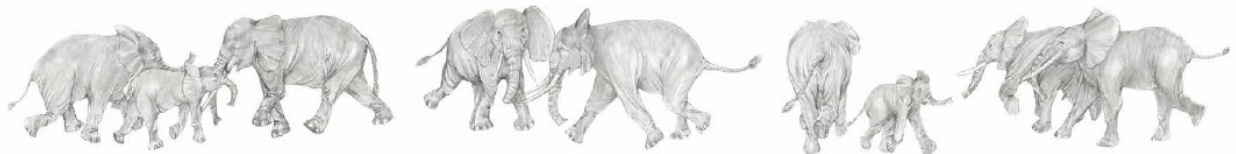
## **Outline:**

In the Shadow of an Elephant by Georgie Donaghey and Sandra Severgnini is a gentle story about sorrow, determination and friendship between boy and elephant set on the African Savannah.

Educators and parents will find the story's subject matter thought provoking and filled with content that will generate a variety of discussions both at home and in the classroom.

Readers will be introduced to loss and bereavement with the positive overtones of the strength that can come from friendship between boy and elephant.

In the Shadow of an Elephant is a book with global significance that touches on the continued destruction that poaching poses in today's world.



## Author/Illustrator Information:

### Georgie Donaghey

Founder of Creative Kids Tales, past President of the Children's Book Council of Australia Sutherland Sub Branch and former radio host of The Author's Shelf, is committed to helping others on their writing journey. She is the author of the picture books *Lulu*, released by Wombat Books and *Clover's Big Ideas*, published by Little Pink Dog Books. Both titles are featured on Kinderling Kids Radio. Lulu can also be enjoyed by young travellers through both the Virgin and Qantas inflight entertainment channels and on the Kindergo Kids app.

*In the Shadow of an Elephant*, is due for release in 2019 through Little Pink Dog Books. Besides publication in the *Heat Anthology* (for adults) she is also the publisher of *The Creative Kids Tales Short Story Collection Volumes 1 and 2*.

For more information about Georgie check out her **author website**:

[www.georgiedonaghey.com.au](http://www.georgiedonaghey.com.au)

or visit **Creative Kids Tales**:

[www.creativekidstales.com.au](http://www.creativekidstales.com.au)

### Sandra Severgnini

After being the owner of an art gallery and retail store, Sandra finally decided it was well and truly time to nurture her lifetime passion and focus on the wonder that is children's picture books.

Her fascination for the amazing world around her inspires her and brings sensitivity and humour to her illustrations.

This is the second book Sandra has illustrated for Little Pink Dog Books, the first being the delightful *Where's Lucky?*

More of Sandra's work can be viewed on her website [www.severgnini.com.au](http://www.severgnini.com.au)



*In the Shadow of an Elephant* written by Georgie Donaghey, illustrated by Sandra Severgnini

## Teacher information

These notes are for Primary school students and can be used from K-6 depending on the area you wish to focus on.

These notes explore different areas of the English syllabus, themes of relationships, loss, animal conservation and elephants.

Questions and activities cater for all different levels of learners, with a Bloom's taxonomy questioning chart in the area of animal conservation (links to Geography, History, English and Science).

## Curriculum Links

Here are some of the links these teacher notes have with the Australian Curriculum.

## English

### ES1

Identify some differences between imaginative and informative texts (ACELY1648)  
Recognise that texts are created by authors who tell stories and share experiences that may be similar or different to students' own experiences (ACELT1575)

Share feelings and thoughts about the events and characters in texts (ACELT1783)  
Identify some features of texts including events and characters and retell events from a text (ACELT1578)

Use comprehension strategies to understand and discuss texts listened to, viewed or read independently (ACELY1650)



## **Stage 1**

Discuss how authors create characters using language and images (ACELT1581 )  
Discuss how depictions of characters in print, sound and images reflect the contexts in which they were created (ACELT1587)

Compare opinions about characters, events and settings in and between texts (ACELT1589)  
Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning about key events, ideas and information in texts that they listen to, view and read by drawing on growing knowledge of context, text structures and language features (ACELY1660)

Discuss characters and events in a range of literary texts and share personal responses to these texts, making connections with students' own experiences (ACELT1582)

Discuss the characters and settings of different texts and explore how language is used to present these features in different ways (ACELT1591)

## **Stage 2**

Draw connections between personal experiences and the worlds of texts, and share responses with others (ACELT1596)

Discuss how language is used to describe the settings in texts, and explore how the settings shape the events and influence the mood of the narrative (ACELT1599)

Discuss how authors and illustrators make stories exciting, moving and absorbing and hold readers' interest by using various techniques, for example character development and plot tension (ACELT1605)

Identify characteristic features used in imaginative, informative and persuasive texts to meet the purpose of the text (ACELY1690)

Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning and begin to evaluate texts by drawing on a growing knowledge of context, text structures and language features (ACELY1680)

Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning to expand content knowledge, integrating and linking ideas and analysing and evaluating texts (ACELY1692)



### **Stage 3**

Identify aspects of literary texts that convey details or information about particular social, cultural and historical contexts (ACELT1608)

Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts (ACELT1613)

Show how ideas and points of view in texts are conveyed through the use of vocabulary, including idiomatic expressions, objective and subjective language, and that these can change according to context (ACELY1698)

Identify and explain characteristic text structures and language features used in imaginative, informative and persuasive texts to meet the purpose of the text (ACELY1701)

Navigate and read texts for specific purposes applying appropriate text processing strategies, for example predicting and confirming, monitoring meaning, skimming and scanning (ACELY1702)

Analyse how text structures and language features work together to meet the purpose of a text (ACELY1711)

Analyse strategies authors use to influence readers (ACELY1801)

### **Science**

#### **Stage 2**

Living things can be grouped on the basis of observable features and can be distinguished from non-living things (ACSSU044)

Science knowledge helps people to understand the effect of their actions (ACSHE051)

Living things have life cycles (ACSSU072)

Living things depend on each other and the environment to survive (ACSSU073)



### **Stage 3**

Living things have structural features and adaptations that help them to survive in their environment (ACSSU043)

Scientific knowledge is used to solve problems and inform personal and community decisions (ACSHE083)

The growth and survival of living things are affected by physical conditions of their environment (ACSSU094)

Scientific knowledge is used to solve problems and inform personal and community decisions (ACSHE100)

### **Sustainability cross-curriculum priority**

OI.1 The biosphere is a dynamic system providing conditions that sustain life on Earth.

OI.2 All life forms, including human life, are connected through ecosystems on which they depend for their wellbeing and survival.

OI.3 Sustainable patterns of living rely on the interdependence of healthy social, economic and ecological systems.

OI.4 World views that recognise the dependence of living things on healthy ecosystems, and value diversity and social justice, are essential for achieving sustainability.

OI.5 World views are formed by experiences at personal, local, national and global levels, and are linked to individual and community actions for sustainability.

OI.6 The sustainability of ecological, social and economic systems is achieved through informed individual and community action that values local and global equity and fairness across generations into the future.

OI.7 Actions for a more sustainable future reflect values of care, respect and responsibility, and require us to explore and understand environments.

OI.8 Designing action for sustainability requires an evaluation of past practices, the assessment of scientific and technological developments, and balanced judgements based on projected future economic, social and environmental impacts.

OI.9 Sustainable futures result from actions designed to preserve and/or restore the quality and uniqueness of environments.





## Discussion questions and activities.

### Before reading the book

**Look:** Look at the front and back cover. Why did the publisher choose to spread the main image over both pages? Why didn't they just leave this to the front cover only?

**Think:** What do you think 'In the Shadow of an Elephant' will be about? How is the book cover helping you?

**Wonder:** A blurb is a short description of a book, film, piece of music or any other piece of creative work. On most books there is a blurb on the back cover to describe what the story is about. Turn to the back cover of this book and read the blurb. How does reading the blurb change your opinion on what the book is about? What might 'dancing in the shadow of an elephant' mean?

**Seek:** Use a map. Find out where the Savannas of Africa are. Discuss the names of the two characters mentioned and their origins - Lualani (name meaning?) and Jabari (means brave one).

### After you have read the book

#### Story setting

How is the setting described to us? How do the illustrations support the setting of this story? Use your five senses to discuss the words used and the accompanying images.

Use the five senses chart for students to fill in while you read the book a second time:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1GChiN6F3xwbUzQakjIKKFgNRbSM9O4Eu99hszTLhnF4/present?ueb=true&slide=id.p>





## **Stories with a twist**

This story has two dramatic events that not only change the direction of the story but also affect how we feel towards the story.

What are these events and why are they part of storytelling?

Draw a plot line for this story to show the climax in this type of narrative.

Why do we need these types of events in stories when they are upsetting?

## **Representation**

How has Georgie Donaghey used different language to describe how:

- Lualani feels when she can't find her mother?
- Lualani feels when she is happy in the fields?
- Jabari and Lualani look after each other?

Students are to write down words and sentences they think answer these questions.

Use the tool 'Think, Pair, Share' to swap ideas with other class members.

## **Now look at the illustrations:**

How has the illustrator, Sandra Severgnini, represented feelings through the different colours throughout the story?

Why has Sandra only coloured in some of the illustrations? Explore why there is no colour for the sky or earth on some pages. What is this adding to the story?

Why have some pages in the story been trimmed with the colourful edging of green, orange, red and black?

Use the tool 'Think, Pair, Share' to swap ideas with other class members.



## Questioning

As students read, you can build up their skills in how to ask questions. Follow this model to help teach them how to ask different types of questions. They can answer the questions given and then create their own.

**Memory questions:** These questions ask you to recall a fact from the story. (simple and easily found answer)

*Who was Lualani?*

*What happened to Lualani's mother?*

**Questions to explain:** These questions ask for a longer response from the story. (easily found answer)

*What did Lualani and Jabari teach each other?*

*How did Lualani help Jabari when his father died?*

**Questions to evaluate:** These questions ask for opinion plus evidence.

*Why was Lualani happy to trust Jabari and his father?*

*Why is life full of happiness and sadness? Relate this to the story.*

**Big thinking questions:** These questions do not have a right or wrong answer but seek out creative responses based on the text.

*What sorts of feelings would Jabari have towards the grasslands as an old man? Why? Why did the herd scatter at the start of the story? What sorts of things might cause this to happen? Why?*



## Themes to explore

### Relationships



What is a relationship?

What are the different types of relationships in this story?

**Activity:** List the different types of relationships in this story with examples.

### Family

Jabari is Pappa's son. How do you feel towards a caring adult in your life? How do they help and support you?

**Activity:** Write a letter from Jabari to his Pappa, telling him about life now that he has passed away. Focus on both the positive and negative feelings he might have.



## Friendship

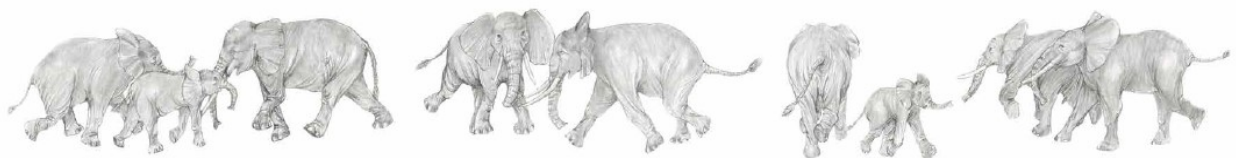
This story is told in past tense. It is a story told about Lualani and Jabari's life together. After reading the book, draw a timeline of the development of this friendship. Link this to the plot line created in the **Stories with a twist** section.

In your plot line, outline the main event that triggered the friendship between Lualani and Jabari.

**Activity - Questions to explore further:** Do you think they would have been friends if this event had not occurred? How did their friendship become stronger?

**Activity - Link to students:** Who are your friends? How do they help and support you? Write down or draw a memory of a time you made a new friend. Explore through writing and drawing how you met them and the fun things you did together.

**Activity - Link to other texts:** Explore other stories told about relationships between people and animals.



## Loss

At the beginning of the book we meet Mamma only to see her taken away from Lualani. How did Lualani react when she couldn't find her? How do you think she would have continued to live without her mother if Jabari and Pappa had not come along?

Jabari loses Pappa and then Lualani. How did he react when they passed away?

**Activity** - List some words to describe how the characters in this book deal with someone dying. Explore this further. Can these words be grouped into different categories?



Sometimes we know death is coming while other times it hits upon us suddenly.

How do we react differently to these types of deaths?



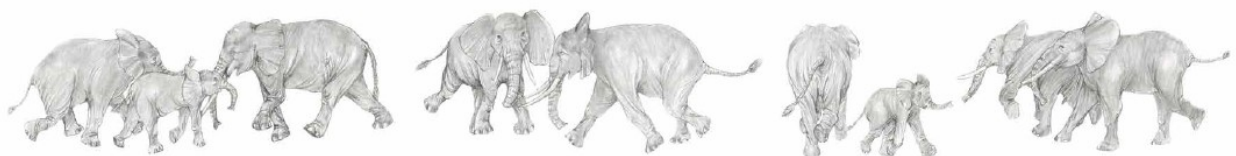


**Activity** - Compare the two types of loss explored in this story (Lualani suddenly loses her Mumma, Jabari loses his Pappa and then Lualani when they are older). Is it easier to lose someone when they are older because we expect that to happen? Or is it just as difficult?

Loss of an animal that is special to us can also be difficult. How is losing an animal we love different to losing a person we love?

*Insert image (Jabari losing Lualani)*

**Activity** - How can we cope with death or loss of a loved one? Explore different ways we can get on with our lives but not forget the memories we have with that special animal or person. Draw an image of someone or something you have lost with memory words placed around the picture. If you do not know anyone or anything that has died, use Pappa or Lualani.



## Animal conservation

Use the following questions to explore the topic of elephant conservation. Using Bloom's taxonomy, start from remembering and work your way through up to creating. Under each section there are questions suited to different ability levels which the teacher can chose at his or her discretion.

### Remembering

What sort of environment do elephants needs to live in to survive?

Where is Africa?

What is animal conservation?

What did Jabari and Pappa do to help Lualani survive?



### Understanding

How are the actions of Jabari and his Pappa helpful to the elephant?

Why do people kill elephants? There are many different reasons they are killed for around the world. Explore these.

What do you think Lualani was thinking when she couldn't find her mother? Draw a thought bubble and include your ideas inside it.

What do you think she thought when she first met Jabari and his father? Draw a thought bubble and include your ideas inside it.





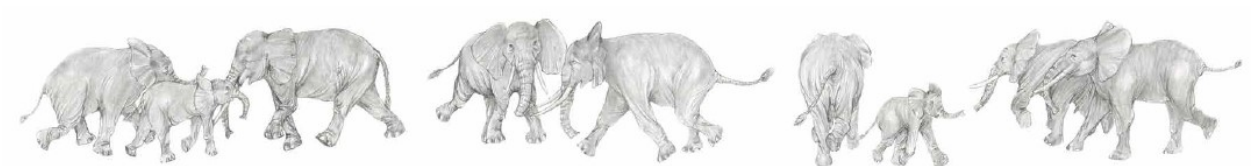
## Applying

Create a way to share information with others about the importance of elephant conservation. This could be a video, brochure, game or advertisement.

Research organisations in Africa who look after orphaned elephants. Share this information with others in an engaging way.

What questions would you ask someone who hunts or kills animals for fun or for their fur or tusks? What do you think their answers would be?

Create questions to ask people who look after orphaned elephants. Find an organisation you can email these questions to.



## Analysing

If Jabari and his Pappa had not looked after Lualani, what may have happened to her? What do you think happened to the rest of the herd?

Research the different populations of elephants in the wild and create different types of graphs. (Example: bar graph to compare different populations in each country and a picture graph to show the map of the world and the populations.)

Find out how many elephants are killed each year because of human activity. How can any of these methods be stopped? Are there organisations helping to stop this?

Are there any problems with using the words *animal conservation*? Could we use a different word to help people look after elephants? Explore the language used by organisations around the world.

## Evaluating

Do you think looking after elephants in reserves or zoos is a good or bad thing? Compare the different places where elephants can live and the best solution for protecting elephants who are in danger.

Is there a better solution to setting up animal conservation reserves in Africa? What else could be done to help save these animals?

Write a letter to someone in your society who can help stop illegal trade in animal products.

## Creating

Can you create a solution to stop animal poaching in places like Africa? Create an advertisement, educational package, better hobby to take up etc.

If you were to run an animal refuge, what would it look like? Explore what these places look like and create your own.



## Study of elephants

As part of a science unit of work, students in your class could explore elephants. Here are some possible areas to explore.

Different types of elephants. Compare and contrast the different types of elephants in the world.

The life cycle of both types of elephants.

Where they live.

How they live.

How humans interact with them now and in the past.

Elephants in the news. Explore famous elephants and why they are well known.

Elephants in the news. Explore elephants in the news for the wrong reasons.

## Extra resources

Inspiration behind the story: [www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org/orphans/lualeni](http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org/orphans/lualeni)

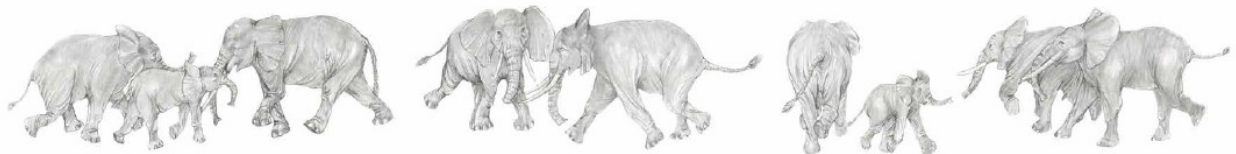
Georgie Donaghey's website and blog post about the story behind the story:  
[www.georgiedonaghey.com.au/component/easyblog/authors/the-story-behind-the-story-in-the-shadow-of-an-elephant-by-georgie-donaghey](http://www.georgiedonaghey.com.au/component/easyblog/authors/the-story-behind-the-story-in-the-shadow-of-an-elephant-by-georgie-donaghey)

Sandra Severgnini's website: [www.severgnini.com.au](http://www.severgnini.com.au)

Trailer for the book: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=u\\_OqecGiGjM&t=4s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u_OqecGiGjM&t=4s)

The real Lualani: [www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org](http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org)

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