

Fuzzball (Paw Prints)

AUTHOR

NATHAN LUFF

ILLUSTRATOR

JAMES FOLEY

SCIS: 5558913

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower Primary



SYNOPSIS

When Luca's mum and dad give him a special present for his birthday, he hopes it's the pet dog he's been waiting for. Instead, he gets Fuzzball. But a guinea pig can't play fetch, go for walks or learn fun tricks like a dog can. Just when Luca is ready to give up on Fuzzball, he finds something that Fuzzball CAN do...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nathan Luff grew up on a farm in rural NSW as one of five boys. His colourful upbringing is often the inspiration for the stories he tells. Nathan is the author of *The Nerd Herd* and *Family Holidays Disasters* series and the middle grade novels *Chicken Stu*, *Bad Grammar* and *Jungle Escape*. In addition to writing children's books and plays, Nathan can be found programming children's and YA events for writers' festivals and teaching in primary schools.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

James Foley started his illustration career in primary school, drawing cartoons for the school newspaper. The paper only lasted one issue - probably because his class used smoke machines to fake a fire in the school hall (though it did make the front page). James is in high demand as a speaker in schools and libraries across Australia. He is also an ambassador for literacy charities Room To Read and Books In Homes. He lives in Perth with his wife, son and labrador.

STUDY NOTES

BEFORE READING

- Before reading, view the cover and title of the book. Identify the following:
 - The title of the book
 - The author/illustrator
 - The publisher
 - The blurb
- What do you think the story might be about from looking at the title only? Do your ideas change after seeing the cover?
- Activity: Write your own story using the title of the book.
- Based on the cover, what do you think this story is about? How do you think it will begin/end? Revisit your answer after reading the story to see if your predictions were correct.
- Discuss the title of the book. Do you think this is a good title? Why or why not? If you were asked to choose an alternative title for the book, what would it be? Remember, a good title should capture the audience's attentions and

give them some idea of what the book is about.

EXPLORING THE TEXT

- Discussion:
 - Who do you think the audience for this book is? Why?
 - Is the book an imaginative, informative or persuasive text? How can you tell?
- Literary techniques allow a writer to convey a deeper meaning in their text.
 - What techniques can you find in this text? e.g. metaphor, imagery, alliteration, personification.
 - What deeper meaning can you draw from the text?

EXPLORING THE TEXT IN DEPTH

- Before reading, look at the front cover and read the blurb on the back to gather clues and predict some events that might happen in this story.
- Does anyone have a pet? Who has the most uncommon pet? Who has the most pampered pet, like Fuzzball is pampered in the story?
- In the back of the book, the illustrator James Foley has drawn himself and the author Nathan Luff as guinea pigs. Google some pictures of James Foley and Nathan Luff – do you think their guinea-pig pictures are a good match? Now, pair up and draw your partner as a guinea pig!
- Write an action plan for getting your very own pet – a real pet or a fantastical one! Write about how you would look after the pet, why the pet is the right fit for your home, and why you want that pet.
- This book, like lots of illustrated fiction, has one author and one illustrator. Put your students in pairs. One of them will write a short story, while the other illustrates it.