

AN EDUCATIONAL GUIDE

With  
Common Core  
State  
Standards

# Jimmy the Joey

The True Story of  
an Amazing Koala Rescue

by Deborah Lee Rose and Susan Kelly Photographs by Susan Kelly



**T**his is the true story of Jimmy, a koala joey.

It's hard to imagine a better guide than Jimmy to introduce children to koalas and to show them how important it is for us to care for our natural world and all of its inhabitants. Jimmy's story of survival and of the good people who looked after him and finally sent him back to his home in the wild Australia forest sets examples for ways we can participate in looking after our world and the animals who need our help.

With its up-close pictures and panoramas, the story introduces early childhood readers to Australia and follows the plight of a baby koala at the Koala Hospital in Port Macquarie, New South Wales, where Jimmy is cared for after his mother dies.

You'll find great storytelling in this nonfiction book as well as ties to nature, animals, visual literacy, geography, and career-education. Many of the Common Core State Standards are covered and noted with each activity or discussion in the guide. The standards themselves are enumerated at the end of the guide.



## Quick Questions

- How big is a newborn joey koala?
- Where does the baby stay for the first part of his life? Why?
- What time of the day are koalas most active?
- Why does Jimmy end up as a patient in the Koala Hospital?
- Who is the koala's worst enemy?
- Who is the koala's best friend?
- What kind of joey-sized "home" does Barb create for Jimmy?
- How does Jimmy learn to climb trees?
- What do big koalas eat?
- When does Jimmy stop drinking baby koala formula? Why?

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RL2.1, RL3.1, RI 2.1, RI3.1

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## Discussion Questions & Activities

1. Kids will discover lots of facts about koalas by visiting the following websites:

<http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/sciencefacts/animals/koala.html>

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/animals/creaturefeature/koala/>

<http://www.koalahospital.org/au/>

Ask the children to tell you which of the facts they learned from the videos were:

- the most surprising,
- the most interesting,
- or just what they expected?

Each child should pick two facts they like best to tell to their parents.

Then they should report back on their family's responses.

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RI 2.5, RI 2.7, W 2.2, W 2.8, SL 2.2, SL2.4, RI 3.5, RI 3.7, W 3.8, SL 3.2, SL 3.4

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2. Is the koala a bear? To answer that question, enjoy a video that compares koalas to pandas and grizzlies and also supplies some facts about koalas:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oRY1teZrrbQ>

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RI 2.5, RI 3.5

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3. Talk about the kind of mammal the koala is. How does it differ from other mammals? How is it the same?

These sites offer helpful information about koalas, mammals and marsupials:

<http://kids.sandiegozoo.org/animals/mammals/koala>

[http://www.ngkids.co.uk/inside\\_scoop/757/australia\\_s\\_amazing\\_marsupials](http://www.ngkids.co.uk/inside_scoop/757/australia_s_amazing_marsupials)

<http://www.sandiegozoo.org/animalbytes/t-marsupial.html>

Have children fill in a chart like this to show differences between kinds of mammals.

**Marsupial Mammals**

**Placenta Mammals**

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

RI 2.1, RI 2.7, RI 2.9, RI 3.1, RI 3.7, RI 3.9

4. The koala is an endangered species—only about 80,000 koalas are left in all of Australia. Every day their eucalyptus habitat shrinks. Eventually there will be nowhere the koala can survive in the wild.

Go to the *Huffington Post* site and read the article about Jimmy. Scroll down the page to view a video from the *International Business Times*, “Is the Iconic Koala Bear an Endangered Species?”

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/12/baby-koala-photos-orphan-wins-internet-return-to-wild\\_n\\_1668305.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/12/baby-koala-photos-orphan-wins-internet-return-to-wild_n_1668305.html)

There is a nationwide effort in Australia to save the koala. Have fun celebrating “Save the Koala month” (September—or make it any month you choose!) with the creative activities, entertaining songs, and more at:

<http://www.wildlifefun4kids.com/2012/08/29/8-activities-for-save-the-koala-month/>

Children throughout Australia and the world are participating in save-the-koala efforts by making posters, campaigning, and writing letters to the government to designate the koala as a protected species. Your students should be part of this effort. They can make posters about the plight of the koala, write letters to the Australian government that you can forward to the Australian Embassy in Washington, D.C., and enlist students from other classes to do the same.

Australian Embassy, Washington D.C.  
1601 Massachusetts Ave NW  
Washington DC, 20036-2273

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W 2.1, W 2.2 W 2.7, W 3.1 W 3.2 W 3.8

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**5.** After reading *Jimmy the Joey*, your children will have a good idea of the kinds of efforts people can make to save an endangered animal. Many animals other than the koala are threatened. Children can discover these animals through the lists at:

[http://worldwildlife.org/species/directory?sort=extinction\\_status&direction=desc](http://worldwildlife.org/species/directory?sort=extinction_status&direction=desc)

When they click on the animal names, they can begin a research project about other endangered animals.

One by one, in pairs, or in small groups, have children research one critically endangered animal or more and fill out the following form. When children present their work, they should be prepared to answer questions from others. After the children present their work, gather the forms and have the large group publish their findings complete with either their own artwork or photographs.

See page 8 of this guide for worksheet template.

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RI 2.7, W 2.6, W2.7, W 2.8, SL 2.3, RI 3.7, W. 3.6, W 3.7, W 3.8, SL 3.3

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6. Have a discussion with the children about heroes. Brainstorm with them a list of traits that heroes have. Who are the heroes in *Jimmy the Joey*? Is the workman who found Jimmy at the side of the road a hero? How about Barbara and the workers and volunteers at the Koala Hospital? As a group, watch Susan Kelly's video about the work of the Koala Hospital so that children can understand what the people there do. Each child should write a short essay on heroes they know.

<http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/wild/videos/koala-hospital/>

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SL 2.1, SL 2.2, SL 3.1, SL 3.2, W2.2, W 3.2

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7. Koala Hospital supervisor Cheyne Flanagan is a wildlife biologist who specializes in the health and management of wild and captive koalas. Discuss what a biologist does and specifically what a wildlife biologist does. Find information at:

<http://matadornetwork.com/notebook/how-to-become-a-wildlife-biologist>

“Visit” Australia’s Koala Hospital at:

<http://www.kolahospital.org.au/>

Are any of your students interested in becoming a wildlife biologist when they grow up? What qualities will they need for this work? Make a list together and display it.

8. Invite a person who works at a local zoo or in an animal hospital/clinic in your area to visit the class and talk about their work. If possible take children to the zoo or animal clinic. Have the children prepare questions in advance. To begin your list:

- Why did you decide to work with animals?
- Do animals say thank you?
- What’s the most exotic or unusual animal you’ve ever worked with?

9. A picture is worth a thousand words, they say. We think children can do this in many fewer words. Ask them to select one photograph in the book and write a poem or short essay describing it.

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W 2.3, W 3.3

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**10.** Helping others can be a very rewarding experience. Much of the success of the Koala Hospital's work is due to volunteers like Barb, who took Jimmy home with her and raised him after his mother was killed on the road.

Talk with your children about what volunteers do and how they help the community.

Then ask them how a group can do something to make the school or the broader community a better place.

Is there an animal rescue organization nearby? Is there a community garden that they can help plant or clean up? Can they go into a younger class and read stories to the children? Maybe there's a senior citizen center they can visit.

Take photographs of your group at work. They should write captions for each picture. Together they can write about their activity, making sure to say how it felt to volunteer. Send the article to your local newspaper or local online newsletter.

The rewards will be immeasurable.

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SL 2.4, SL 3.4, W 2.2, W 2.3, W 2.4, W 2.7, W 2.8, W 3.3, W 3.4, W3.8

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This worksheet  
is for use with  
Question 5  
(found on page 5).

## Critically Endangered Animals

Common Name of the Animal
Scientific Name
Kind of animal (bird, reptile, amphibian, fish, or mammal)
Habitat
Food and diet
Life cycle
Role of the animal in the ecosystem
Efforts being made to save the animal

Submitted by:





## Extra Credit

Koala means “little drink” in an Aboriginal language. Aborigines are the native people of Australia. Other Aboriginal animal names include *kangaroo*, *kookaburra*, *wallaby* and *wombat*.

- Use an Aboriginal animal name in a sentence or use several in a paragraph or story.

**Australia is a country, island, and continent.**

- Find Australia on a map or globe. Which hemisphere is it in? What other countries are as big? Where do koalas live in Australia?
- Visit <http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/places/find/australia/>.

**Photo borders in the book are from traditional Aboriginal art.**

- Make a piece of Aboriginal style art with a koala theme. Use dried peas, beans, and/or beads to decorate your artwork.
- Watch <http://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/kids/people-placeskids/australia-rockart-kids/>.

**Climate change affects eucalyptus leaves, which koalas eat.**

- Take a field trip to see eucalyptus trees near home or school.
- Watch <http://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/kids/animals-pets-kids/mammals-kids/koala-saved-kids/>

To invite Deborah Lee Rose or Susan Kelly to speak at your school, conference, or book event, contact Deborah Lee Rose at [deborahleerose@sbcglobal.net](mailto:deborahleerose@sbcglobal.net)



# Common Core State Standards

(Key: RL – Reading Literature, RI – Reading Information, W – Writing, SL – Speaking and Listening)

## **RL 2.1, RI 2.1**

Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.

## **RL 2.1, RI 3.1**

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

## **RI 2.5**

Know and use various text features (e.g., captions, bold print, subheadings, glossaries, indexes, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text efficiently.

## **RI 2.7**

Explain how specific images (e.g., a diagram showing how a machine works) contribute to and clarify a text.

## **RI 2.9**

Compare and contrast the most important points presented by two texts on the same topic.

## **RI 3.1**

Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

## **RI 3.2**

Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.

## **RI 3.7**

Use information gained from illustrations and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text.

## **RI 3.9**

Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.

## **W 2.2**

Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.

## **W 2.7**

Participate in shared research and writing projects.

## **W 2.8**

Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

## **W 3.2**

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

## **W 3.3**

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

## **W 3.6**

With guidance and support from adults, use technology to produce and publish writing (using keyboarding skills) as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

## **W 3.7**

Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

## **W 3.8**

Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.

## **SL 2.2**

Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

## **SL 2.4**

Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.

## **SL 3.2**

Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

## **SL 3.4**

Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace.



**Susan Kelly** is a video journalist and producer with a focus on the environment and natural heritage. She has produced media for such various organizations as Sky News, ABC, CNN, National Geographic, and the United Nations. Susan's first independent documentary film, *Koala*

*Hospital*, presents the poignant and surprising life of koalas, set at the world's first hospital dedicated to koalas. The film was an award nominee at the prestigious Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival and won Best Feature Film at the Wildlife Conservation Film Festival. Susan currently focuses on "urban front lines," where the intersection between people and wildlife is the most problematic. She is also working on a *Koala Hospital* television series. For more information on the film, go to [www.koalahospital.com](http://www.koalahospital.com).



**Deborah Lee Rose** is an internationally published author of children's books, including *Ocean Babies* from National Geographic and *Someone's Sleepy*. Her books are among the New York Public Library's 100 Titles for Reading and Sharing, and she has twice won the NAPPA Gold Award.

Deborah is a science writer for the University of California, Berkeley's Lawrence Hall of Science and helped create [howtosmile.org](http://howtosmile.org), the STEM activity collection named a Best Website for Teaching and Learning by the American Association of School Librarians. Visit her on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/DeborahLeeRose](http://www.facebook.com/DeborahLeeRose).

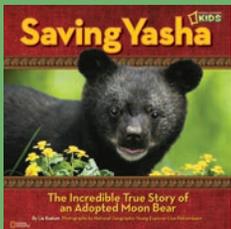
This guide was created by Clifford Wohl, Educational Consultant.

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