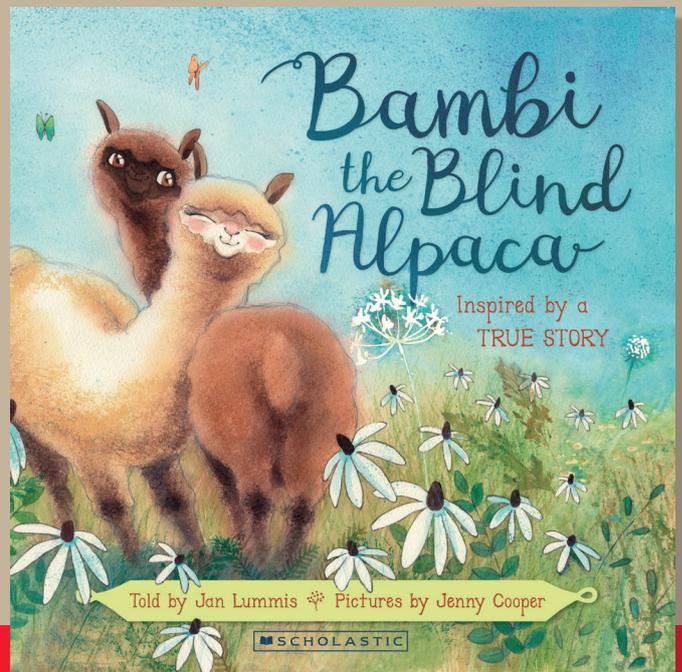


Bambi the Blind Alpaca

Told by Jan Lummis
Illustrated by Jenny Cooper

- Reading • Writing •
- Social Studies • Art •



Synopsis

A true story about a missing alpaca, Charisma, and his blind brother Bambi. The two alpacas enjoy each other's company, and look after each other. Bambi is blind and if he strays too far away from his brother he bumps into fences and gates. One day, Charisma disappears and Bambi is all on his own. He frets for his brother and refuses to eat. His owners bring in sheep to keep him company but he is missing his own kind. One day, another alpaca arrives in the paddock and before long they are munching, humming and cuddling together. They are best friends.

About the Author

Jan Lummis enjoys country life on a lifestyle block in Dairy Flat, where she and her husband share the land with 10 sheep, a goat and two alpacas. After media took an interest in the story of her fretting alpaca, Jan thought children would also like to hear the story. She was approached by Scholastic staff, who were keen to publish the story.

About the Illustrator

Jenny Cooper has been illustrating children's books for 20 years. Jenny lives in Amberley, near Christchurch. After gaining a qualification in graphic design, Jenny and her family lived in Samoa for a few years, where she taught art. Jenny has also tutored at Christchurch Polytechnic and participated in several exhibitions of New Zealand illustrators. With many children's books to her name, Jenny is perhaps best known for her hilarious illustrations for the Topp Twins' sing-along books, as well as her war stories with Glyn Harper.

Writing Style

Bambi the Blind Alpaca is a true story about friendship and survival. The story is set on a farm. The author has used onomatopoeic words to describe the sounds that alpaca make, and used super-charged verbs and directional words such as above, up, under, etc. The text is in the third person past tense. The author uses a range of short and long sentences, including dialogue. The book includes backmatter with photos and alpaca facts. *Bambi the Blind Alpaca* is written for the 3-7-year-old age group, and is a heart-warming animal story that will appeal to boys and girls.

Shared Learning and Discussion Points

ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

- Look at the cover. Who or what do you think this story is about? Why do you think that?
- Who is Bambi's best friend? And what do they like to do together? (pp.2-3)
- Where do the two alpacas like to go on the farm? (pp.4-5)
- What do you think might be beyond the wooden gate? What do alpacas like to eat? (pp.6-7)
- How did Bambi's blindness affect his movements? (pp.8-9)
- In the story, Charisma goes to visit another alpaca. Do you think this is true? If not, where do you think he might have gone? (pp.10-11)
- Why does Bambi miss his brother so much? (pp.12-13)
- Who keeps Bambi company and what does she do to help? (pp.14-15)
- What expression has the illustrator given the animals? How can you tell Bambi is still sad? (pp.16-17)
- Who helps Bambi overcome his sadness? How does he help? (pp.18-19)
- What sounds do alpaca make? (pp.20-21)
- Alpacas are part of the *Camelidae* family. What other animals do you think might belong to this family? (pp.22-23)
- What do herd animals need? What special thing do alpacas do that other herd animals don't do? (pp.22-23)
- Where did alpacas originally come from and how many types are there? (pp.22-23)
- What do people make out of alpaca wool? (pp.22-23)
- What type of food do alpacas like to eat? What is an animal called that eats that type of food? (pp.22-23)

Activities

ACTIVITY 1: TRUE TALES

Discuss with your students about what parts of this story they think are true and what could have been made-up? (For example, the author wouldn't have known what the alpacas were thinking or what they are saying/humming to each other.) Talk about how authors sometimes have to change stories a bit to suit their audience.

Then read aloud the newspaper version of Bambi's story:

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/auckland/local-news/rodney-times/104690938/a-happy-ending-for-bambi-the-blind-alpaca>.

Ask the students what is different to the picture book story? Why did they keep out of the picture book story that the alpaca had been stolen? What else did they leave out of the story?

In pairs, ask the students to compare the two stories. How are they same, how are they different? Older students could compare and contrast the picture book story with the newspaper story. They could show their information in a Venn diagram.

ACTIVITY 2: ANIMAL TALES

Ask the students to THINK about other true tales they have heard about animals that might have been on the news or radio or newspapers or online. Then instruct the students to PAIR up with a partner and discuss the story they have remembered. Lastly, ask the students to SHARE some of their stories with the class. Ask if any of them have been made into books. What is their favourite one? Why do animal stories appeal to young people?

For older students/experienced writers: In pairs, students find a true newspaper/online story about an animal. In pairs, students decide who is going to write and who is going to illustrate their story. One partner then writes a draft of the story, while the other draws the rough pictures. Students then discuss their progress and what they can do to improve the pictures and where the story needs editing. Lastly, students create a good copy to share with the class.

ACTIVITY 3: I SEE ... I THINK ... I WONDER ...

Hold open one of the page spreads in the book and show your students. Ask 'What do you see?'; 'What do you think about that?' (What are your thoughts?), and 'What does it make you wonder?' Students record their responses on a whiteboard/chart/post-it-notes and add it to the class chart of observations. Discuss how there were many same/different responses.



teacher toolkit

 SCHOLASTIC

SEE	THINK	WONDER
What do you see in this image?	What are you thinking about as you look at this image?	What wonderings (questions) do you have about this image?

After observing and making their responses, encourage the students to draw an alpaca. For a twist, you could ask them to first draw with their opposite hand they would normally draw with and then with their writing hand. What is the difference?

Students can then put thought clouds around their alpaca and write down new things they have learnt about alpacas after reading the book.

Written by Maria Gill

