

A Teacher's Guide to



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This guide is intended for children in Reception through Year 2.
(Or children in Kindergarten through Second Grade.)

Beatrix and Her Bunnies

Published in collaboration with the National Trust, this is a moving and inspiring picture book based on the life of Beatrix Potter. Beatrix loves the countryside, but lives in a big, lonely house in London - if only she had a friend. Then she meets Benjamin Bunny and everything changes! They spend every day together playing chase and follow the leader. But when Benjamin dies, Beatrix is heartbroken. She decides to write about Benjamin's adventures and about her new bunny, Peter, who plays the tambourine and jumps through hoops. If she can publish her stories, she knows children will fall in love with Benjamin and Peter, and her bunnies will live forever.

This is the perfect gift for fans of Peter Rabbit, for young environmentalists and for animal lovers everywhere. Rebecca Colby effortlessly entwines the fascinating threads of Beatrix Potter's life: her deep connection with animals, her development as a writer and artist, her determination to be published and her role as a pioneering conservationist. A biography of Beatrix Potter's life is included, and the book is written in consultation with experts from the National Trust.



About Rebecca Colby

Rebecca started "writing" before she learned the alphabet--creating songs from her imagination and memorizing the lyrics. Then at age 12, she won an essay contest and received a plane trip as her prize. This fuelled her dreams of becoming an author. When not writing, Rebecca loves to dance, walk and avoid housework. She lives in North Yorkshire with her two daughters, three snails and multiple bunnies---dust bunnies, that is. Visit her online at www.rebeccacolbybooks.com

About Caroline Bonne-Müller

Caroline is a Dutch artist living in Switzerland. She was born in France, bred in the Netherlands, and has previously lived in both Spain and Malaysia. Prior to becoming a professional illustrator, she worked as a fashion designer. Caroline lives with her husband, three kids and four stray cats from Malaysia. She lives overlooking a lake by the Swiss mountains near Lucerne. To see more of Caroline's work, visit <https://www.carolinebonnemuller.com/>



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English Language Arts (ELA)

Bunnies and Other Pets (pre-reading activity)

Children will sit in a circle. Ask them to answer the following questions as a group:

- Do you like bunnies? Why or why not?
- Do you think bunnies make good pets?
- Do you have a pet?
- If so, what is it?
- If not, what pet would you get if you could have one?
- Do you consider your pet a friend?
- Why or why not?

Book Walk

Explore the book's cover.

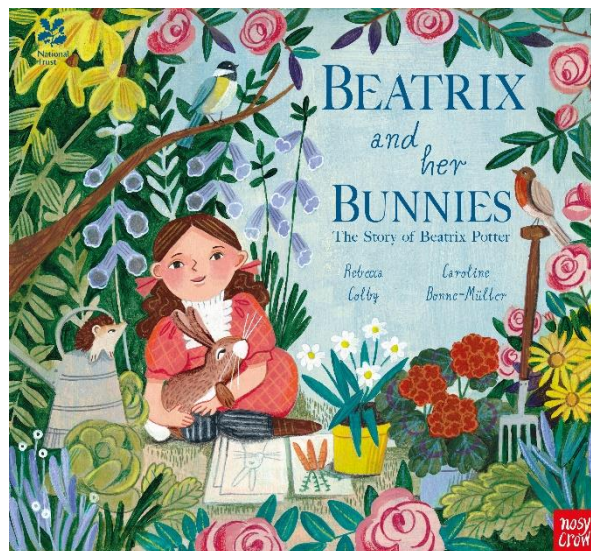
- What is the title of this book?
- Who wrote the book? What is this person called?
- Who drew the pictures? What is this person called?
- Tell me more about the illustrations. Are they photographs? What do you think the illustrator used? Crayons? Coloured pencils? Paint?
- Who or what is the main character?

Read the back cover of the book.

- What is on the back cover?
- Why do you think the bunny in the picture is outside?
- What were the names of Beatrix' bunnies?
- Have you heard of Beatrix Potter?
- What do you know about her?

Now read the book and answer the following questions.

- Where did Beatrix live as a child?
- What were some of the different types of animals that Beatrix had?
- What are some of the things that Beatrix enjoyed drawing?
- What was the title of the first book that she wrote?
- Where did Beatrix live as an adult?
- Why did Beatrix give away her land?



Pet Poem

Explain that some poems are lists of items. They are called list poems. Create a class list poem by asking the children to name as many different types of pets as they can. Write their answers on the whiteboard. If there are any duplicate answers, then delete them.

An extension of this lesson could be to teach alliteration. Ask the children to come up with a word that describes each pet and begins with the same letter as the pet. For example, if “dog” is on the list, the children must find a word beginning with the letter “D.” An example list poem with alliterative adjectives follows:

Dark Dog
Crazy Cat
Brown Bunny
Blue Bird
Smooth Snake
Happy Hamster

For a further challenge, ask the children to alphabetize the lines of the poem.



What Happened When?

Every person’s life is a story, and every story has a sequence or order in which it is told. Or in the case of a person, like Beatrix, the order in which the events of her life happened.

Teach or review sequence words: first, next, then, after that, finally, etc.

Ask children to recall what happened in the book. As a class, retell Beatrix’ story using sequence words.

Then give each child the “What Happened When?” resource sheet (page 15) and instruct them to cut out the sentences and glue them to a new sheet of paper in the correct sequential order. The sentences and correct sequence follow:

- At the start, Beatrix lived in a large house in London.
- First Beatrix had a snail and a hedgehog.
- Then she brought Benjamin home.
- Next she brought Peter home.
- After that she wrote a book about Peter.
- Finally she moved to a cottage in the country.
- In the end, she gave away her land.

Mathematics

Bunny Word Problems

1. Beatrix drew 1 picture of Benjamin. Then she drew 5 more pictures. How many pictures did she draw in total?
2. Beatrix drew 5 pictures of Peter. Then she drew 4 more pictures. How many pictures did she draw all together?
3. Beatrix found 10 wild bunnies in a bush but 4 bunnies hopped away. How many bunnies were still in the bush?
4. There were 7 bunnies hopping in the field but 2 bunnies hopped away. How many bunnies were left?

Favourite Animal Friend Block Graph

Using the resource sheet on page 16, poll the children to find out which animal friend in the graph is their favourite. Ask the children to mark the block graph in turn with everyone's answers. Once all the children have recorded the answers, ask questions about the results. Which animal friend did the largest number of children say was their favourite? Which animal friend did the smallest number of children say was their favourite? etc.

Compare and Order Bunnies



- Demonstrate to children how to compare and order objects according to size.
- Give each child a "Compare and Order the Bunnies" resource sheet (page 17)
- Instruct the children to cut out the bunnies and order them by size from smallest to largest
- Children will then glue the bunnies to a separate sheet of paper

Science

Remarkable Rabbits

Review the five senses with the children. After they have identified the five senses, ask them what part of the body each sense corresponds to.

Show the children a picture of a rabbit. Ask them to identify the senses that a rabbit has, and then identify which part of the rabbit's body that each sense corresponds to.



Finally, ask the children about each sense in turn.

- Do rabbits have a stronger or weaker sense of sight than humans? Why?
- Do rabbits have a stronger or weaker sense of hearing than humans? Why?
- Do rabbits have a stronger or weaker sense of smell than humans? Why?
- Do rabbits have a stronger or weaker sense of taste than humans? Why?
- Do rabbits have a stronger or weaker sense of touch than humans? Why?

As the children are answering the questions above, share the following facts with them about rabbits so they may discuss their answers in relation to these facts.

Sight: Rabbits' eyes are on the sides of their heads. This allows them to see in almost a full circle around them, without turning their heads. Their only blind spot is in front of their nose. They can even see some things above them.

Hearing: Rabbits can move their ears independently of each other, in order to hear better. They hear sounds in a range much that is much higher than that of humans. Their range of hearing is 360 hertz to 42,000 hertz, whereas people only have a range of 64 hertz to 23,000 hertz.

Smell: Rabbits have an excellent sense of smell as they possess over 100 million scent cells.

Taste: Rabbits can tell when something tastes sweet, sour, salty or bitter, just like humans. They have over 17,000 taste buds, while humans have only 10,000 taste buds.

Touch: Rabbits don't use their paws to touch things. Instead, they use their whiskers and the hair on their bodies to feel the world around them. Their hair is sensitive to touch and their whiskers allow them to sense things in front of them. This is particularly important when they are underground in their burrows.

History

Victorian Games and Toys

Ask the children what toys and games Beatrix played with in the book? If need be, flip through the first half of the book again with the children to refresh their memories. Ask them if they play with any of the same toys or games? Do they know what other toys and games children might have played with in Victorian times?

Visit the following website to show the children examples of Victorian toys and games. <https://victorianchildren.org/victorian-toys-and-victorian-games/>

Were they correct? Ask them again if they play with some of the same games and toys? If so, which ones? If not, how do today's toys and games differ?

If possible, visit a Museum of Childhood or Toy Museum.

Geography

Treasured Friends Treasure Hunt

Draw a map of your classroom or schoolyard on the whiteboard. Mark it off in a 5 by 5 grid with letters going down the left side and numbers going across the top. Explain to your children how to locate items on the grid. Ask children to give you the grid location of various items on your customized map.

Once the children understand how to read a map giving grid references, they may independently complete the "Treasured Friends Treasure Hunt" resource sheet on page 18.



Physical Education

Hopscotch

Hopscotch is one of the games that Victorian children, like Beatrix, played.

If you don't have a Hopscotch pattern painted on your playground already, create one with chalk outside for the children. Alternatively, you can create one inside using masking tape. Each child will be given a bean bag to play with, but explain that Victorian children would have used stones to throw instead.

The children will take it in turn playing the game in small groups, while the rest of the class plays other Victorian games, like Skipping Ropes or Tag.

Ask the first child to toss his or her bean bag into the first square of the hopscotch design. If it touches a line or falls outside of the first square, then they miss a turn. If it lands inside that first square, then they must hop through all the squares except the one with the bean bag. This one must be skipped over. The child should hop on one foot into all the single squares, but if there are two squares together, then they may land on two feet—one foot inside each square. If at any point the child hops a foot out of the square or onto the wrong square, then they lose a turn.

Once the child has hopped to the last number, they should turn around on the one foot and hop back to the beginning in reverse order. On the square before the one where their bean bag rests, they should stop while still on one foot, and pick it up. Then, hop over that square and finish. If they lose their balance and rest the other foot down, then they lose a turn.

If they complete the course without losing a turn, then they should throw the bean bag onto the second square and repeat this sequence. If they have lost a turn, then the next child goes. The first child to get through tossing their bean bag on all the squares in turn and completing the course for each toss is the winner.

ICT

Pet Poster

For this activity, the children will create their own posters.

- Look at the cover of Beatrix and Her Bunnies again.
- Ask the children what they notice about the text and colour.
- Using a word processing program, model to the children how to change font size and colour.
- Demonstrate how to add clip art to a page.
- Ask children to type out the title of a book that they would like to write about their pet or a favourite animal. For example, *A Tale of Fido the Dog* or *Chloe and Her Cats*.
- Then ask them to add appropriate clip art to accompany the title.
- Print and laminate the children's work.

Music

The Rabbit on the Hill Goes Hop, Hop, Hop

Review the song, *The Wheels on the Bus*. After the children remember the tune (or learn it for the first time), create new lyrics as a class about a rabbit on a hill. Ask the children to make up gestures to accompany the lyrics. Example lyrics are below:

The rabbit on the hill goes hop, hop, hop,
Hop, hop, hop,
Hop, hop, hop.
The rabbit on the hill goes hop, hop, hop,
All day long.

The rabbit's pink nose goes twitch, twitch, twitch,
Twitch, twitch, twitch,
Twitch, twitch, twitch.
The rabbit's pink nose goes twitch, twitch, twitch,
All day long.

The rabbit's fluffy tail goes shake, shake, shake,
Shake, shake, shake,
Shake, shake, shake.
The rabbit's fluffy tail goes shake, shake, shake,
All day long.

The rabbit's sharp teeth go crunch, crunch, crunch,
Crunch, crunch, crunch,
Crunch, crunch, crunch.
The rabbit's sharp teeth to crunch, crunch, crunch,
All day long.

The rabbit on the hill goes hop, hop, hop,
Hop, hop, hop,
Hop, hop, hop.
The rabbit on the hill goes, hop, hop, hop,
All day long.



Art, Food, and Design

Fluffy Bunny Faces

Supplies:

- Two small paper plates
- Pink paper
- Cotton Balls
- One Pink Pom Pom
- Three pink pipe cleaners
- Two googly eyes
- Glue
- Scissors
- Stapler (ask an adult helper to use the stapler on your behalf)



Instructions:

- Cut ears out of one of the paper plates
- Cut the pink paper in the shape of ears, but make it slightly smaller than the paper plate ears
- Glue the pink paper to the ears
- Ask an adult helper to staple the ears to the paper plate
- Cover all but the pink paper in glue
- Cover the glue with cotton balls
- Glue on the googly eyes and a pink pom pom nose
- Ask an adult helper to cut the pipe cleaners into thirds
- Bend two of them into small curves like the letter 'J'
- Glue 3 whiskers on either side of the nose
- Glue the two curved pieces of pipe cleaner under the whiskers

NOTE: There will be one small piece of pipe cleaner left over. This could be used to help hang the fluffy bunny face to a hook.

Bunny Breakfast

Note: Be aware of food allergies and ensure children wash their hands before and after preparing food.

Ingredients:

- Two pancakes (pre-made)
- Whipped cream
- Strawberries
- Banana
- Blueberries
- Strawberry laces (or pretzels)

Instructions:

- Have an adult helper cut ears out of one of the pancakes.
- Arrange the pancakes on a plate to look like a bunny's face
- Cover the pancake face and ears with whipped cream
- Add blueberries for eyes
- Add part of a strawberry for a nose
- Place two slices of banana beneath the nose.
- Lay the strawberry laces (or pretzels) under the nose and across the bananas, to look like whiskers
- Add extra fruit as desired, for healthier eating



An Interview with Rebecca Colby

What was the inspiration for *Beatrix and Her Bunnies*?

I love reading biographies and learning about people's lives and the psychology behind their development as a person, as well as their achievements in life. Beatrix' story appealed to me primarily because she is such a well-loved children's author and because I wanted to know the inspiration for her own books. Once I discovered that inspiration, I wondered why no one else had ever written about her rabbits. She had many rabbits over the years, but I kept the focus on the two that provided the most inspiration for her writing.

What makes this book different from the other books you've written so far?

It's the first biography I've written. People's lives are fascinating, and usually more interesting than anything writers can make up. As a children's author, this story was near and dear to my heart, as it gave me the opportunity to write about another children's author—one that people all over the world know and love.

Did you have to do much research for this book?

Yes, I did, and it was such a pleasure. I both researched Beatrix Potter and reread many of her children's stories. At one point, I visited Beatrix' home in The Lake District, Hill Top Farm. It's been wonderful to work with Nosy Crow and The National Trust as they've fact-checked my work to ensure accuracy.



What advice would you give an aspiring author?

Read, read, read everything you can get your hands on! Then write, write, write! Don't wait until the mood strikes you because it might never happen. Write anyway. I've been sharing this same advice for years, and it never changes. Just put pen to paper—or fingers to a keyboard--and start writing.

An Interview with Caroline Bonne-Müller

When did you decide to become an illustrator?

After my two oldest girls were born, I changed my business from being a fashion designer to a greeting card designer. This was the first step towards my career as an illustrator of picture books.

What other illustration projects have you worked on?

Many projects: fabric design, illustration for a puzzle, magazine illustration and greeting cards.

Which media do you prefer to work in and why?

Always and always acrylic paint with coloured pencils and crayons. I never get bored of them.

What advice would you give an aspiring young illustrator?

Keep drawing and keep learning. When you have time, take courses online. Learn more and get to know other illustrators out there, and then: Find an agent!



What Happened When?

Next she brought Peter home.



In the end, she gave away her land.



After that she wrote a book about Peter.



First Beatrix had a snail and a hedgehog.



Finally she moved to a cottage in the country.









At the start, Beatrix lived in a large house in London.



Then she brought Benjamin home.





Favourite Animal Friend Block Graph

10						
9						
8						
7						
6						
5						
4						
3						
2						
1						
						

Compare and Order the Bunnies



Treasured Friends Treasure Hunt

	1	2	3	4	5
A					
B					
C					
D					
E					

List the location of each animal on the map.

1. Rabbit_____
2. Dog_____
3. Cat_____
4. Beatrix_____
5. Sheep_____
6. Duck_____
7. Salamander_____
8. Hedgehog_____