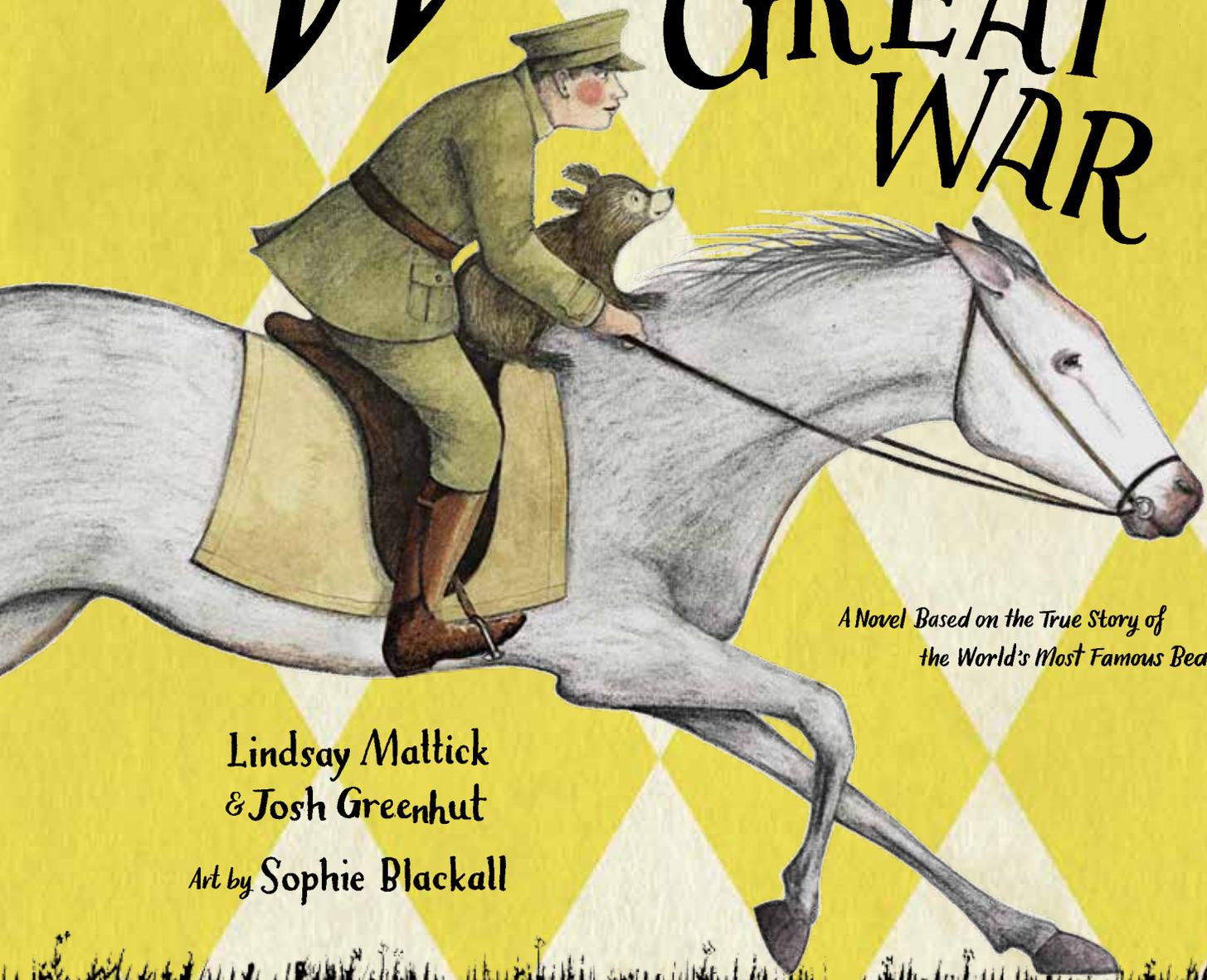


Winnie's GREAT WAR



*A Novel Based on the True Story of
the World's Most Famous Bear*

Lindsay Maltick
& Josh Greenhut

Art by Sophie Blackall

This guide is designed primarily with the languages curriculum in mind. However, there are additional connections to social sciences (including history and geography), science, and math throughout.

About the Novel

Winnie's Great War is a heartwarming imagining of the real journey undertaken by the extraordinary bear who inspired Winnie-the-Pooh, from her early days with her mama in the Canadian forest, to her remarkable travels with the Veterinary Corps across the country and overseas, and all the way to the London Zoo, where she met Christopher Robin Milne.

Told in beautifully crafted language and infused with Sophie Blackall's irresistible renderings of an endearing bear, the book is also woven through with entries from Captain Harry Colebourn's real wartime diaries and contains a selection of artifacts from the Colebourn Family Archive. The result is a one-of-a-kind exploration of the realities of war, the meaning of courage, and the indelible power of friendship, all brought to life through the historic adventures of one extraordinary bear.

About the Authors

Lindsay Mattick is the great-granddaughter of Captain Harry Colebourn, and she is proud to share Winnie's story through radio, film, books, and museum exhibitions. She lives with her family in Toronto, Ontario.

Josh Greenhut is a writer and researcher. He is the author of over fifteen children's books, including those in Flat Stanley's Worldwide Adventures. He lives with his family in Toronto, Ontario.

About the Illustrator

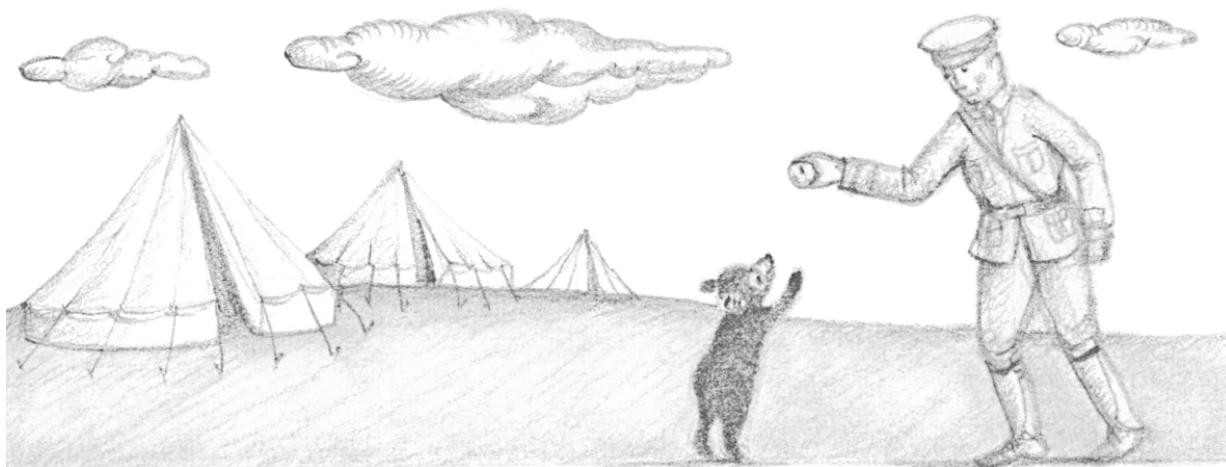
Sophie Blackall is a bestselling, Caldecott Medal-winning artist whose books include *Finding Winnie* and *Hello Lighthouse*. She lives with her family in Brooklyn, New York.

Overview of Educator's Guide

This educator's guide will address areas of the languages curriculum for Grades 4 to 6. Aimed at helping students continue to develop independent reading skills, this resource will provide you with prompts to address reading strategies and literacy skills. The suggestions will be flexible so that they can be applied to independent, small-group, and whole-class scenarios.

The guide's content has been categorized using headings so that you can select the exercises that address the strengths and needs of your class. Please note that you may need to implement some differentiation and scaffolding depending on the skill set and learning styles of individual students.

The goal of this guide is to support you in fostering the enjoyment of reading by providing your students with skills and strategies to navigate more challenging texts as their reading level increases.



Some Notes about the Content of the Novel

It will be important for you to know students' backgrounds and ensure your students are comfortable with expressing discomfort, as the novel touches on some sensitive material, including death and war. Establishing a safe and trusting environment will be important to ensure that your students know they are supported. Additionally, some students may need some guidance as to appropriate ways to address their experiences and to respond when others share their struggles. You will need to be aware of what content might trigger your students from an emotional and mental health stance. The following is a list of potentially triggering events in the book:

- » Pages 22–23: The mother bear gets shot by a hunter and dies.
- » Page 37: Maggie the mare gives birth to her foal.
- » Page 102: A soldier gets drunk and causes the horses to start stampeding.
- » Page 105–106: Four horses die in a stampede.
- » Page 157: Cigarettes are used as rewards for the troops.
- » Page 196: Injured soldiers, some amputees, visit the zoo.
- » Pages 197–199: Harry writes brief diary entries about conflicts, casualty counts included.
- » Page 205–206: Winnie experiences a bombing attack at the zoo.
- » Page 220: The narrator informs Cole of Dixon's heart attack.

Additionally, you should be aware of the reading proficiency (e.g., Lexile level using an online reading assessment tool such as Scholastic's "SOAR") of your students to determine where instruction and expectations may need to be differentiated so that students can move effectively along the reading continuum.

Finally, because you will be asking students to share their personal experiences with the class or within their writing, it is important that you discuss boundaries when it comes to what they disclose, as you may be obligated to report the information to the appropriate protection services. For example, in many jurisdictions, teachers are required to report instances of children disclosing that they have been physically harmed by a parent or guardian.



Reading Strategies

Reading strategies are the tools that educators use to help students master their independent reading skills. You can select a variety of activities from the options below to help build comprehension of the text.

Activating Prior Knowledge

- Create a “KWHLWW” chart (or some variation) to record students’ learning at any point in the study of the novel. (Tip: Do one together as a class to start.)
 - » What do I **know**?
 - » **What** do I want to learn?
 - » **How** will I find out?
 - » What have I **learned**?
 - » **What** do I still want to know?
 - » **What** was real in the novel vs. what was imagined?

- Ask students what they already know about Winnie-the-Pooh.

- Do an anticipation exercise:
 - » Anticipation exercises will give your students opportunities to connect to the novel before reading occurs. For example, you could show the class a variety of quotations from the book and have the students discuss their meaning. This exercise could be done before the novel is studied or before a chapter or segment begins to generate discussion or connections with your students.

Predicting

- Before reading, ask, “What will this novel be about?”
 - » The rats and horses are fiercely entrenched in a conflict, and Winnie brings both parties together on page 146 to make a proposal. Discuss with your students what idea Winnie might come up with to resolve the conflict

between the two groups. After reading to page 149, debrief with your students about how their predictions compared to the resolution formed in the novel.

- Ask students what it is that Captain Colebourn won’t change his mind about on page 178.

Summarizing

(Tip: Be sure to discuss the difference between retelling and summarizing the main idea.)

- Summarizing can occur at any time throughout the study of the novel.
- Consider using the “Cornell Note-Taking System” to help students build their skills in summarizing either the content of the novel or the research they conduct.

Making Connections

- In general, you can encourage making connections at any point in the novel by using some of the following prompts:
 - » How did you feel when you read this passage?
 - » What would you have done the same as or differently from one of the characters?
 - » What is your favourite part of the book so far? Why?
 - » What does this portion of the novel remind you of?
 - » What statement are the authors making about human nature in this passage?

- Show the class a variety of quotations from the novel. Have students pick one of the quotations that they feel strongly about to connect to either in writing or in discussion.
- The bear climbed up a tree to get “The Highest Any Bear Had Ever Gone” on page 8. How does this act demonstrate “growth mindset”? Ask students to talk about a time when they used growth mindset to overcome a challenge.
- On page 38, the boy tries to persuade the trapper to let him keep the bear cub. Ask students to describe a time when they wanted to do or keep something that adults didn’t approve of. What persuasive skills did they use to convince the adult(s) to take their position?
- Ask your class: Why is it powerful to have Miss Saunders sing “Keep the Home Fires Burning” to Winnie on page 197 and then to read Harry’s experiences from pages 197–199?

Visualizing

- Before the novel begins, discuss the five senses with your students and how they are used to help draw the reader into a story. Create a visual organizer such as a “placemat” or a chart with five sections for the students to record information on. Each area should correspond to one of the five senses. As they read the book, students can record examples of sense-related content and discuss how it helps with the comprehension of the narrative.
- The opening pages of the novel focus on the visual aspects of the story. Have students add other descriptive elements, including ones related to the other senses, that could help heighten readers’ understanding of the scene. Consider taking students on a walk through a nearby green space to inspire them.

- Students can also do the following activities:
 - » Create a map that illustrates the “spots” of the ship as described on page 126.
 - » Sketch the description of the scene on page 175.
 - » Create a map of the zoo based on the description given starting on page 190.

Inferring

- Making inferences involves students taking clues from the text and combining these with their prior knowledge to make an educated “guess.” Unlike predicting, in which the student will discover the answer later on, when inferring, a student will not learn whether their inference was correct. To help students through this process, have them make a chart with three rows:

I infer that . . .	
Clues from text . . .	
My prior knowledge . . .	

- Use the following prompts to encourage your students to make inferences:
 - » The trapper says that it’s his “job” (page 38) to trap bears. Why might he say such a thing?
 - » Why might the horses’ eyes “brighten” (page 80) whenever Harry whispers in their ears?
 - » Why do people need to “salute” (page 85) in the army?
 - » Why would the horse stampede have “felt like war that night” (page 106)?
 - » While Winnie loved the rain on page 159, the troops hated it. Why did Winnie love it so much? Why did the troops hate it so much?
 - » What is body language? Why might Winnie feel uncomfortable and know something was up when no one would look at her on page 179?
 - » What does Sam mean when he says that Winnie is trying to “steal his thunder” (page 207)?

Developing Vocabulary and Understanding Jargon

- *Mount* and *masters* are terms used with horse management (pages 80–81).
- Students may need some support with the military terms and rankings.
- Students can work on an ongoing vocabulary list. Each time they come across a word they do not know, they can find out its definition and use it on their own in a sentence. You can use a number of vocabulary-building exercises from the languages curriculum to help expand your class's word recognition skills.

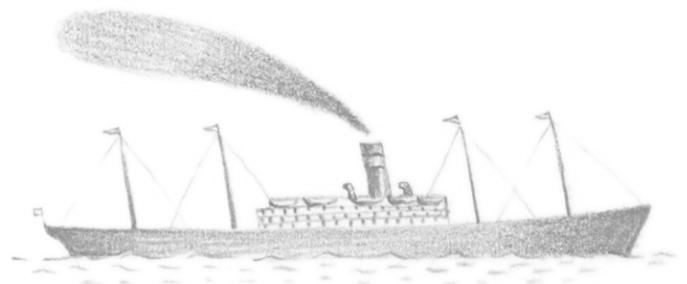
Questioning

- Besides posing questions to your students, you can encourage students to question the text themselves:
 - » Give the students sticky notes to write down questions while reading a passage.
 - » Challenge students to develop questions that go beyond generating a “yes” or “no” response.
 - » Add the questions to the “Wonder Wall” and invite students to answer each other's questions.
 - » Create a trivia game using the questions posed in these sessions.
- On page 130, there is a discussion about “good” animals and “bad” animals. Have the students read the classic fable “The Monkey and the Crocodile,” in which the two can't help what is in their nature, and make connections between it and the novel. On page 131, Winnie recalls that her mother said that “animals kill animals.” How might these teaching moments help Winnie to prepare for what is to come?

- Consider using some of the following prompts to spark further thought:
 - » “There's nothing like a mascot to rally the troops” (page 101). Prove that this statement is true using examples from the text.
 - » Why were the people so happy to see the Canadian troops on page 156?
 - » Why did Harry leave Winnie at the London Zoo?
 - » Why might Winnie only see soldiers with bandages or missing limbs at the London Zoo?
 - » What does Miss Saunders mean when she says that Mrs. Mappin is a “patron saint” (page 201)?
 - » Why was John Mappin able to support the zoo?
 - » How does Mrs. Mappin's visit on page 204 renew Winnie?
 - » Why was it against the law to sell fresh bread (page 216)?

Reflecting on Reading Strategies

- Give your students opportunities to reflect on how using these strategies helped them with their comprehension of the text.
- You can also ask students along the way to share what strategy worked best for them.
- Students can identify which strategies they are comfortable using and which ones pose a challenge for them.



Discussion Circles/Journaling/ Empathy Skill-Building

This novel provides opportunities for students to share their life experiences and prior knowledge, to explore their thoughts and feelings, to build empathy skills, and to address issues of social justice, fairness, and equity.

When students are able to share their perspectives, their understanding and thinking skills are expanded. You can use the following prompts for discussion circles or journaling so that students can learn about themselves and others.

If you elect to use discussion circles in class, you may wish to refer to some resources on how to build a culture of community and respect so that the circles are supportive and positive. Discussion circles are a powerful way for students to develop speaking and listening skills, as well as to have an opportunity to use and read body language.

You can assign the prompts below as a journal exercise. Alternatively, students can write their entries as blogs or record them as voice notes or videos.

- Tell us about your favourite (childhood) toy:
 - » Describe it using your five senses.
 - » What might this toy say if it came to life?
 - » Why is it your favourite?
- Have you had any conversations with your relatives about your family history? What have you learned? How did knowing more about your family's background make you feel?
- When was a time that you needed to be brave?
- Be like Harry: Write a diary entry that expands on one of the entries throughout the book.
- On page 137, Cole pauses the story to ask some questions about Winnie.
 - » Do you have an "open heart"?
 - » Do you think you can "talk" to animals?
- Think of a time when you were finding it difficult to trust someone (pages 145–146). What happened? (Tip: Talk about privacy and disclosure with students first.)
- As the ship is getting closer to land and the war (page 151), what advice would you give to the troops? (Tip: Some of your students may have seen war first-hand and had some troubling experiences.)
- Describe the most miserable weather you have ever experienced (page 159).
- On page 163, Harry is miserable and frightened:
 - » What would you say to him?
 - » What do you do to comfort yourself or someone else when they're miserable or frightened?
 - » How did Winnie help to keep the spirits of the soldiers up during this difficult time?
- Have you ever visited a zoo? Describe your experiences.
- On page 204, Winnie realizes that she is here to "make people feel better." What strengths or comforts do you give people?
- How has war affected your life or the life of someone you know?
- You have been given a copy of this book to give to someone as a gift:
 - » Who would you give it to?
 - » If you were writing a dedication to that person, what would you say?

Writing Skills

The novel provides many starting points for students to build their writing skills from. Below are some examples of writing prompts that you could use.

Organizing Effective Paragraphs

- Guide students to follow the writing process—plan, draft, get feedback, revise, etc. Consider having them use a text-to-voice tool so that they can “hear” their work being read to them.
- Ask students:
 - » What is your answer to the question “Do you think there will ever be a time when there’s no more war?” (page 149)? Develop your opinion using evidence from the text and your own experiences. Follow the writing process from plan to draft to feedback to revision.
 - » Do you think that animals should be hunted? Pick one side and fully develop your opinion using evidence from the text and your own experiences. Follow the writing process from plan to draft to feedback to revision.
 - » Should zoos exist? Pick one side and fully develop your opinion using evidence from the text and your own experiences. Follow the writing process from plan to draft to feedback to revision.
 - » General Alderson tells Harry that “Where we are going, the bear will not have a choice” (page 175), which triggers Harry’s decision to take Winnie to the London Zoo. Analyze Harry’s choice to leave Winnie at the zoo using a pro and con chart. Pick one side and develop an argument in which you support or challenge his decision.

Using Persuasive Skills

- Ask students: How would you negotiate a “truce” between the horses and the rats on the ship?

- When Winnie shows off her “nose” talents on page 174 by finding the sock, the General sees an opportunity to use Winnie to hunt German spies and find explosives. First, brainstorm some emotion words as a class that would help win others to one’s side and encourage students to incorporate these into the following role-playing exercise. Then break students into groups of four and invite them to assume the roles of the General, the Colonel, Harry, and Winnie and then try to persuade someone in one of the other roles that using Winnie’s nose this way is a good or bad idea. Afterwards, debrief with the students as a class to discuss the strategies and skills they used when convincing each other of their positions.

Writing a Letter

- You can assign letter writing at any time during the study of the novel. The letters could take on a more personal tone (e.g., a letter home to a loved one) or a more official one (e.g., a report to an officer). Consider talking to students about censorship during the war and ways in which information was communicated to the families of the troops through news reports and letters home.
- Once the class has read to page 93, present the following exercise: Pretend you are a Canadian soldier and you write a letter home talking about life in the training camp at Valcartier and this fascinating bear, Winnie.
- On page 177, we learn that Dixon hasn’t written to Louise. Write a letter from Dixon’s point of view in which he describes what has been happening since they last communicated.

Creating a Book Review

- Book reviews provide an opportunity for students to use both facts and opinions. Students could craft the review as a written report or they could create a video. Be sure to show students samples of the style and structure of a book review.

Developing a News Article

- Opportunities to write a news article can exist throughout the reading of the novel. Students should plan their articles first to ensure that the “who, what, where, when, why, and how” components are thoroughly covered. The articles can be written or performed orally through a video or as a voice recording (in the manner of a radio broadcast). Consider presenting students with news articles as well as video and audio versions of news relevant to the time period of the novel.
- News article topics could include the following:
 - » Horse stampede (page 101–102)
 - » Winnie at the London Zoo (page 208)
 - » Specific battles (pages 197–199)
 - » Armistice (page 219)

Generating Personal Writing (Narratives and Journalling)

- Assign your students the following writing activities:
 - » First, as a class or in groups, generate a list of the lessons or the morals that were found in the novel. Then create your own adventure story in which the main character is an animal. Use one or more of the morals listed to include in your story.
 - » Harry experiences war first-hand on pages 197–199, but his journal entries are brief. Pick one of these days and write a more detailed account about what might have happened.

- » Write a journal entry for Harry, or imagine a series of social media posts that Harry might have created had social media existed one hundred years ago.

Descriptive Writing

- Have students work on developing descriptive word lists:
 - » On page 42, Winnie gets into the blueberry pie. Brainstorm what words she could use to describe how her senses are affected. Then take those words to create a descriptive paragraph of her experiences. (Consider having the students sample a blueberry pie, if food allergies allow.)
 - » Refer to page 107, where Harry gets promoted to Captain. Create a word web to use in the reflection of events (see related prompt below).
- Students can work on using descriptive words to enhance their writing:
 - » On page 78, the army uniforms are described. What are you wearing today? Describe your wardrobe by using as many of the senses as possible.
 - » Use the descriptive words generated in the word web above to create poetry.

Literary Analysis

Through the activities below, students will be able to learn more about the complexities of literature. They will develop a better understanding of how a narrative is constructed using language and devices to convey a message to its readers.

Literary Devices

- Below are a number of examples of literary devices which students can use to both analyze the impact of the device on the audience and experiment with creating literary devices of their own. For example, on page 57, when the bear cub first sees a train, she hides under a bench, “rustling like a leaf.” What kind of literary device is this? Why is it effective? What other device could you use to show fear?
- Similes:
 - » “Rustling like a leaf” (page 57)
 - » “Scurried around like squirrels” (page 93)
 - » “Like the legs of a centipede” (page 107)
 - » “Looked like moving mountains” (page 108)
- Metaphors:
 - » “Look at all the busy bees” (page 78)
 - » “Walking on piles of wet sandwiches” (pages 159–160)

Narrative Elements

- The narrative elements (plot, setting, character, theme, etc.) can be addressed throughout the study of the novel through general questions and activities that will allow students to analyze and understand the elements’ importance in constructing the narrative.
- Create a chart of the narrative elements. Have the students fill in details as they study the novel.

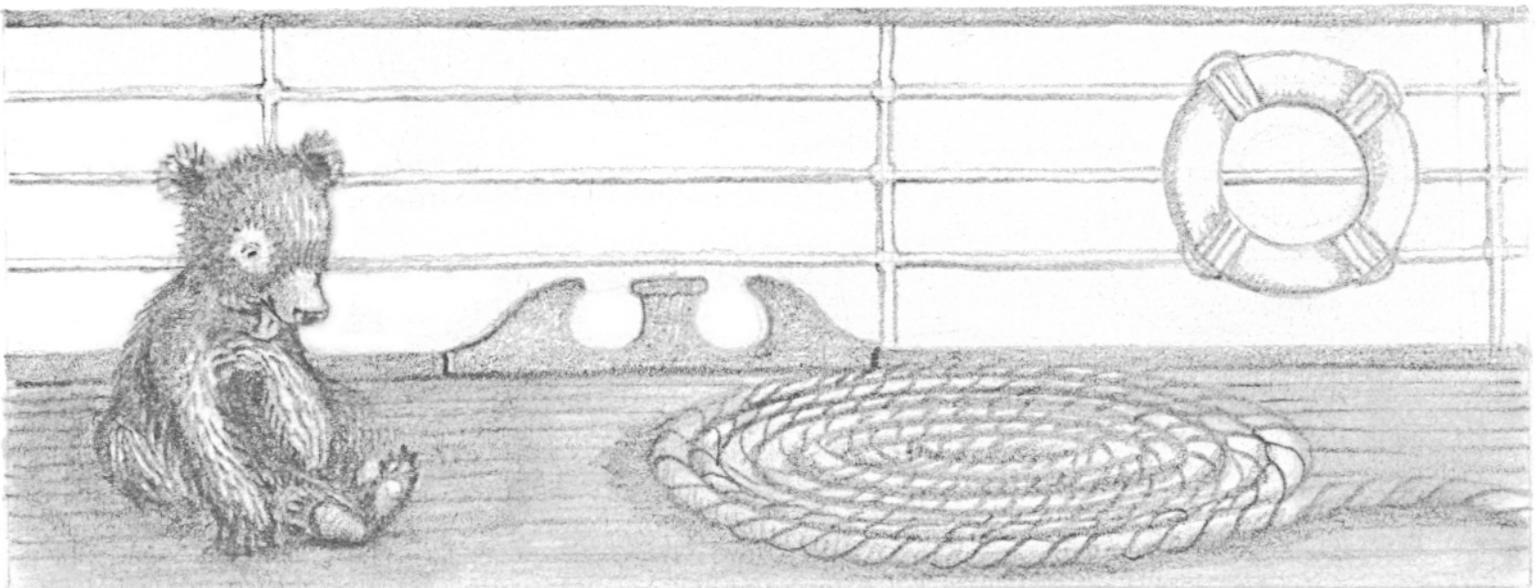
- Students can delve into character analysis with the following prompts:
 - » What adjectives could you use to describe one of the characters of the novel?
 - » Does a character of a novel have to be human? Explain.
- Determine the point of view and narrator of the story.

Literary Genre

- Because the novel uses elements of both fiction and non-fiction, you will have opportunities to provide your students with information about the use of history and imagination in the creation of this text. You can also explore the anthropomorphic style of storytelling and how it reveals the complexities of human nature.

Novel Layout

- Finally, the layout of the novel itself can be examined to determine how the use of authentic journal entries and photos contributes to the realism of this semi-fictional piece.
- Additionally, the purpose of italics and words written in all capital letters can be addressed throughout. Ask your students these questions:
 - » On pages 10–11, for what purposes do the authors use italics as well as words in all caps?
 - » What do the grey-shaded boxes represent on pages 48, 61, 77, etc.?
 - » On page 174, the statement “It’s Higher Than Any Sock Has Ever Gone!” is in italics.
 - * Why is the text in italics?
 - * What is this statement echoing?
 - * By echoing Winnie’s earlier experiences on page 8, when she had climbed “The Highest Any Bear Had Ever Gone!”, and on page 155, when she had gone “As Far As Any Bear Had Ever Gone!”, how do the authors give readers a chance to reflect on Winnie’s accomplishments here?



Media Analysis

You can use this novel to address curriculum expectations regarding media analysis with the following activities.

Viewing and Representing Photos

- Discuss how the use of photography from the family archives helps to reinforce the messages of the novel.

Interpreting the Cover Art of the Novel

- Discuss the cover artwork of the novel and the effect it has on the audience.
- Compare the covers of *Winnie's Great War* and *Finding Winnie*.

Analyzing the Artwork within the Book

- Discuss how the artwork helps the audience to better understand the story.
- Ask students: Why is it effective to have the artwork placed where it is in the story?
- Have the students examine the storybook *Finding Winnie*. How does the artwork and layout of the book help to support the storyline?

Creating Media Texts

- Students can:
 - » Convert a portion of the book to a graphic novel using Bitmoji.
 - » Create an advertisement (print, digital, or video) for the book.
 - » Promote the novel by creating a website outline or webpage.

- » Promote the book using (mock) social media posts.
- » Create a digital or print storyboard trailer for the book.
- » Create a TV advertisement (digital or print storyboard) to promote the book.

Comparing Disney's *Winnie the Pooh* (2011) to *Winnie's Great War*

- Ask students:
 - » How do the morals and messages compare between the two?
 - » How and why has Winnie been transformed both physically and personally?
 - » What is real and what is imagined in each version?

Viewing Propaganda Posters

- On pages 70–72, the horses speak of fighting for “King and Country” to defeat the “Horrible Hun” because it is their “duty”; they say “the only thing worse than an enemy is a coward,” and so on. Discuss the use of language and bias as part of propaganda. (Note that one horse reminds the others that “Our mother was German” on page 71.) Find some propaganda posters from World War I and have the students discuss their diction, images, colour, etc., and how they come together to provide the message to the audience.

Research and Presentation Skills

Remembrance Day Ceremonies

- The study of this novel provides an excellent opportunity to incorporate its messages and content into annual Remembrance Day ceremonies. Consider having the students participate in the school-wide assembly by doing one of the following:
 - » Have students read an excerpt from the novel.
 - » Showcase the learning of the class by assigning two slides to each student in a Google slide presentation to share with the whole school.
 - » Invite a veteran to speak at the assembly and have students make comparisons between the experiences of the veteran and their study of the novel as follow-up.
 - » Have students present the influence of Winnie on both the past and the present.
 - » Collaborate with the art and music teachers to create, as a class, a multimedia presentation based on the artwork, photos, and music from the novel.

Experts in the Classroom

- Before reading the novel, students can pick one of the topics below to research and present to the class—they would become the “experts” on that topic and be required to connect to it as it comes up in the novel. Here is a list of possible topics to consider:
 - » Horses in WWI
 - » Animal mascots in WWI
 - » Canada’s role in WWI
 - » The fur trade in Canada
 - » The London Zoo
 - » Armistice Day
 - » A. A. Milne and Christopher Robin Milne

- » Transportation in WWI (how trains, ships, horses, etc., were used in war efforts)
- » Sir Robert Borden
- » The Royal Canadian Army Veterinary Corps (RCAVC)
- » 48th Highlanders of Canada
- » General Edwin Alderson
- » Colonel Arthur Currie
- » 2nd Canadian Infantry Brigade
- » *SS Manitou*
- » Trench foot
- » Rationing during WWI
- » Stonehenge
- » Zeppelins
- » Vimy Ridge

- To ensure that the class is engaged and retaining the information, you could ask students to create a “KWHLW chart” that addresses the following:
 - » What do I **know**?
 - » **What** do I want to learn?
 - » **How** will I find out?
 - » What have I **learned**?
 - » **What** do I still want to know?

Heroes Research

- On page 32, the text refers to the “British Grenadiers” song that includes ancient heroes such as Alexander, Hercules, Hector, and Lysander. Have the students research to find out more about one of these ancient heroes. Have them compare the person to a modern equivalent and/or have them compare their attributes to one of the characters of the novel. This research may line up with the history component of the curriculum as well.

Archived News Articles

- Divide students into groups. Ask them to find news articles relating to the events referenced in the novel on pages 197–199:
 - » April 19, 1915
 - » April 21, 1915
 - » April 22, 1915
 - » April 23, 1915
 - » April 24, 1915
 - » April 26, 1915
- Have students present their findings to the class.

Animals in World War I

- The General wants to use Winnie as more than just a mascot for the troops on page 174—he wants her to hunt for German spies or to find explosives. Many animals played important roles to help support the troops during World War I, including horses, donkeys, mules, camels, dogs, pigeons, and cats. Sergeant Bill, a goat, was awarded the Victory Medal on page 169. What other animals served during the war? Assign animals for students to research. The Internet can provide many resources on some of these amazing creatures, including photos and videos.

The Hudson's Bay Company

- The Hudson's Bay Company played an important role in the development of Canada. Ask students to do some research to determine its structure and influence over the years.

Sir Robert Borden

- Prime Minister Borden declared war on August 14, 1914, and excerpts of his speech to the House of Commons are included on page 43. Show the full speech to the students and discuss the main messages provided. In the end, how do Winnie and Harry uphold these messages? Teachers may also wish to discuss the War Measures Act, which deemed new Canadians the “enemy” and led to their imprisonment or internment in forced labour camps. Connections can be made between the War Measures Act and the conflict between the horses and the rats (e.g., Tatters’ claim that his cousin was deliberately killed by a horse; the horses’ claim that they are being poisoned by rats) on pages 130–149.

Timelines and Journeys

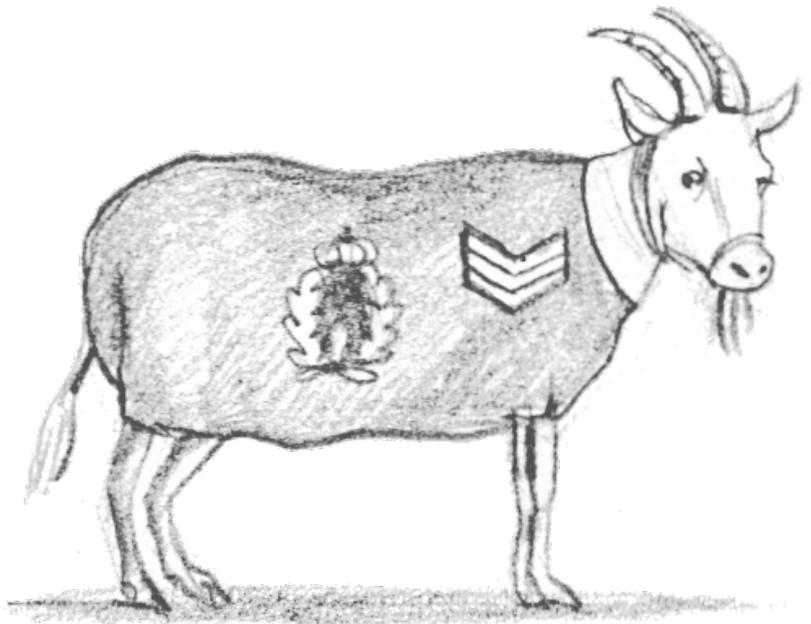
You can initiate some whole-class activities so that students can organize the information they’ve collected.

- Create a timeline of the novel based on the events that occur. Ask students: Which ones are historic events and which ones are personal events? Record the headlines of the news events.
- Trace Winnie’s journey on a world map to show where she goes as the novel study progresses. Note points of interest and important quotations from the book along the way. Locations can include the following:
 - » White River, Winnipeg, Port Arthur, Quebec City, Valcartier, the Atlantic Ocean, Gaspé Bay, etc.

Family History Research

(Tip: Be aware of the family dynamics that may exist in your class. You may wish to do some work with students ahead of time regarding the issues of adoption, divorce, blended families, LGBT parenting, etc., so that all students feel included in this activity.)

- Have the students do some research on their family and any animals that may have played a part in their history (e.g., “Molly was the grey mare that helped to clear the fields on my grandfather’s farm”; “Watch was my father’s first dog and he kept the foxes out of the henhouse”; “Kori was my aunt’s guide dog,” etc.).
- Honour those students who had family serve in the military in World War I but also point out that for those who didn’t, their family members still played an important role at home (e.g., farmers, factory workers, etc.). Some families may be new to Canada and will have narratives about their roles in conflicts abroad.
- Ask students to construct a family tree or archive, which should include photos or drawings if possible.



Reading Fluency

An important component of reading instruction includes reading fluency skills for which rate, expression, phrasing, and comprehension are monitored. Students can be given opportunities throughout the novel study to practise and improve their reading fluency skills. It will be important for you to model effective reading fluency skills as well.

Students can also develop their reading fluency skills when asked to do the following:

- Create and perform a radio or talk show that documents a portion of the novel. The show can have a “theme” such as animal heroes or the life of a soldier.
- Develop and perform an interview script (e.g., a talk show or radio show) involving aspects of the book.
- At the start of the novel, the squirrels Fancy and Tall tell Winnie that “We have never known a bear like you” (page 34). Write a script to deliver as a speech to the class that pays tribute to Winnie and her accomplishments.
- Script a conversation between two characters in the book. What would be asked? Shared? Perform the conversation to the class. For example, the following characters could have a dialogue:
 - » Mr. Milne and Harry
 - » Cole and Christopher Robin
 - » Miss Saunders and Mama Bear
 - » The trapper and Harry
 - » General Alderson and Colonel Currie
 - » Miss Saunders and Keeper Graves

Numeracy

There is an opportunity for you to use math in the study of this novel regarding the purchase of Winnie by Harry.

For example, what would Harry’s twenty-dollar purchase of Winnie cost in today’s prices? Use other prices from 1914 to compare and calculate the inflation.

Students can also create a budget to determine how much it would cost to house Winnie at the London Zoo annually.

Topic & Theme Exploration

You can either have students generate a topic/theme list along the way or provide one for them that may include the following options:

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| • Bravery | • Sacrifice |
| • Safety | • Friendship |
| • Loneliness | • Duty |
| • Trust | • Adventure |
| • Heroism | • Independence |
| • Loyalty | |

Exercises you can use to explore topic and theme include the following:

- Have students develop a theme relevant to the novel based on the topic provided.
- Form theme or topic groups for the novel. Students can collect evidence relevant to the theme or topic along the way to combine into a presentation or display at the end.
- Have students design a visual using Animoto or Google Drawings to capture the topic or theme of the novel.

Critical Thinking

You can construct a “Wonder Wall” for students to record critical thinking on by asking them to regularly respond to the prompt “I wonder . . .” throughout the novel study. Opportunities for students to answer those questions can be provided so that the whole class can engage with the novel on an ongoing basis.

How much did Winnie influence those around her? Create an ongoing chart to trace the lives she touched, and capture an important quotation from the novel for each contact. Once the class has finished reading the novel, have the students add to the chart to explore how Winnie’s story continues to influence people even today. They can even discuss how Winnie’s tale has affected them personally. Then ask students to use this chart to trace Winnie’s influence on the past, present, and future.

Culminating Questions

Ask students to respond to the following statements and questions:

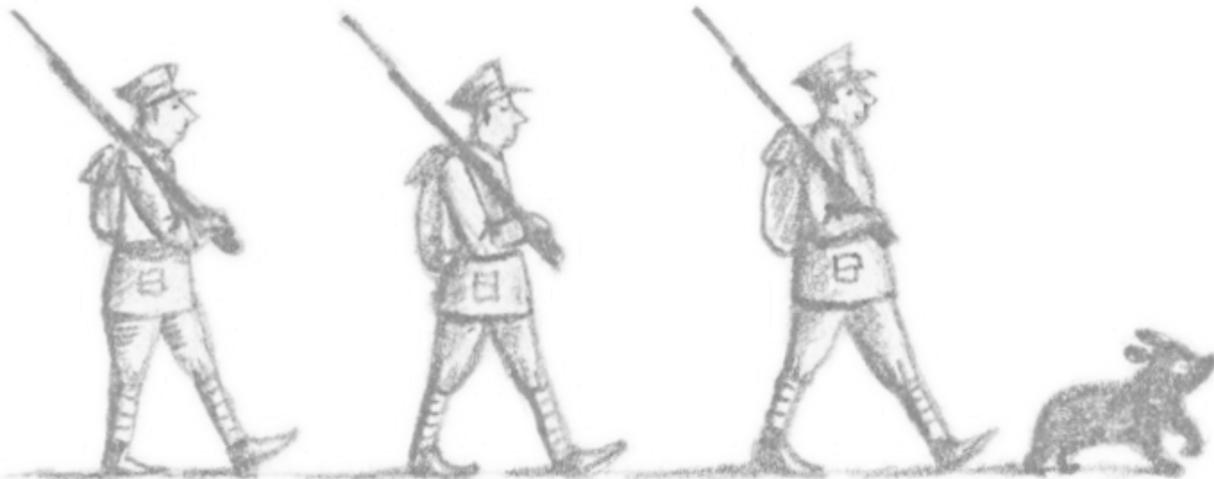
- “Just because animals don’t speak words . . . that doesn’t mean they can’t talk” (page 10). Prove this statement to be true using examples from the text and your life experiences.
- A little girl wants her mother to buy Winnie on page 56, but it ends up that Harry purchases the bear for twenty dollars. What might have happened to Winnie had the mother agreed to purchase her?
- Throughout the novel, Winnie learns that her role is to make others feel better. Provide three examples that show how she fulfills this role. Try to use quotations from the novel to support your examples.
- Harry and his friends make a few jokes. Determine what’s funny about each one. Why might joking help in their situation?
 - » “Unlike some of you sore spots, this bear can take a yolk.” (page 66)
 - » “Who are you calling funny-looking?” (page 78)
 - » “Turns out you’re not the only windbag in this army!” (page 79)
 - » “Are you calling the King of England an animal?” (page 120)
- What is a mascot? What is your school’s mascot? Why does it represent your school?
- How does Winnie become a mascot for the Canadian troops? What does she provide to the troops?
- What various roles did animals play in this novel to help humans? Provide specific examples from the text. How do animals play a role in supporting you in your life?
- “Because if you’re not listening, it’s impossible to hear. If you believe that somebody is so different from you that you can’t possibly have anything in common, you’ll never be able to hear them no matter what they say. That was the way with the rats and horses. And that’s how it is in war” (pages 137–138). What messages are being sent to the audience in this passage? How is the conflict between the rats and horses similar to World War I? How does this passage relate to your life?
- “There is no bravery on this earth without fear” (page 167). Do you agree with this statement? Provide an example from the text and from your experiences to support your position.

- Why is the title of the novel, *Winnie's Great War*, an effective one?
- How does this novel represent growth mindset?
- “What made your Bear special was that she could communicate with just about anyone” (page 10). Describe, using examples from the text, the ways in which Winnie could communicate with a variety of people and animals.
- When Harry purchases Winnie for twenty dollars, the trapper and Harry say, “God save the King!” And then Harry says to the bear, “And we will save each other” (page 60). In what ways do Harry and Winnie save each other throughout the novel?

Additional Critical Thinking Activities

Prompt students to exercise their critical thinking skills by asking them to do the following:

- Compare and contrast the following using a Venn diagram:
 - » Salisbury vs. Valcartier
 - » Living with Harry vs. Living with Mama
 - » The Woods vs. The London Zoo
- Record and reflect on what was real in the novel vs. what was imagined.
- Create a pro and con table about whether to leave Winnie at the London Zoo.
- Discuss the analogy of the horses vs. the rats to the Allies and enemies during the war.
- Compare and contrast the novel *Winnie's Great War* with the storybook *Finding Winnie*.



Creative Exercises

You can assign students the following culminating activities to help them demonstrate their understanding of the novel and/or extend the concepts established:

- Create poetry based on the novel.
- Construct a board game based on the novel.
- Create your own adventure story with a moral involving animals.
- Construct Harry’s journal based on the entries in the grey boxes in the novel. Expand on the entries to provide more depth and detail to his thoughts based on the events of the novel.
- Design welcome signs. The troops are welcomed on page 155 with a banner. Discuss the purpose and messages of welcome signs. Explore design elements for these signs—what makes one effective? (Note: You can co-construct the criteria with the students.) Design your own welcome sign to the school, classroom, etc.
- Explore the experiences of a young soldier in this war by writing a series of journal entries as Harry or Brodie or another character in the novel.
- Design your own mascot that represents yourself, the classroom, or your family.
- Write a screenplay for one scene with a focus on developing the dialogue between characters.
- Write a short children’s book based on a story in your family history.

You can also ask students to create a “RAFTS” chart in which they can choose Role, Audience, Format, Topic, and Strong Words. See below for an example:

Role	Audience	Format	Topic	Strong Words (Tone)
Harry Colebourn	Parents	Letter	Promotion to Captain	Grateful, Humble
Colonel Currie	Troops	Speech	Harry’s Promotion to Captain	Congratulatory, Proud
News reporter	Canada	News article	Winnie in London Zoo	Amazing, Uplifting
Miss Saunders	Zookeeper Graves	Conversation	Winnie in London Zoo	Concern, Love
Promoter	People of London	Poster	Winnie in London Zoo	Unique, Entertaining

Cultural Awareness

As the novel was set a century ago, it serves as a great jumping-off point for students to learn more about life during the Great War. For example, you (perhaps in collaboration with the music teacher) can create a song list including “God Save the King,” “It’s a Long Way to Tipperary,” and “Keep the Home Fires Burning” to let students hear the music that was described in the story. You can provide the lyrics to students and ask them to analyze and interpret them, and connect them to the novel. Also, you could throw an “era” party and include Winnie’s favourite foods as ingredients, such as serving a custard made with condensed milk and honey.

(Tip: Be careful to check on dietary restrictions and anaphylaxis protocols first.)

Indigenous Studies Connections

Trapping and hunting are part of the traditions of the Indigenous peoples of Canada. Animals are revered as sacred and feature in many creation stories. You can contact your Indigenous Education leads in your district to get connected with a Traditional Knowledge Keeper or Elder who could speak to your class if you wish to incorporate Indigenous education into this novel study.

