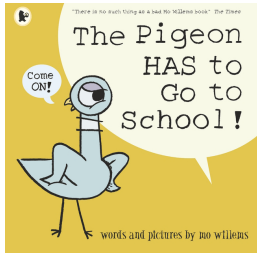




# Walker Books Classroom Ideas



## The Pigeon HAS to Go to School

Mo Willems  
ISBN: 9781406389012  
August 2019

\*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

Walker Books Australia  
Locked Bag 22  
Newtown, N.S.W., 2042

Ph +61 2 9517 9577  
Fax +61 2 9517 9997

These notes were created by Steve Spargo.  
For enquiries please contact:  
educationwba@walkerbooks.com.au

Notes © 2019 Walker Books Australia Pty. Ltd.  
All Rights Reserved

## Outline:

“There is no such thing as a bad Mo Willems book” *The Times*

The Pigeon is about to get SCHOOLED. Do YOU think he should go?

Why does the Pigeon have to go to school? He already knows everything! Well ... almost everything. And what if he doesn't like it? What if the teacher doesn't like him? I mean, what if he learns TOO MUCH!?!”

## Author/Illustrator Information:

Mo Willems is a three-time Caldecott Honor winner for *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*, *Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale* and *Knuffle Bunny Too: A Case of Mistaken Identity*. His books have been translated into over 25 languages, and his celebrated *Elephant & Piggie* early-reader series has been awarded the Theodor Seuss Geisel Medal on two occasions as well as five Honors. Other favourites include *That Is Not a Good Idea!* and *Goldilocks and the Three Dinosaurs*. Before he turned to children's books, Mo was a writer and animator on *Sesame Street*, where he won six Emmy Awards. Mo lives with his family in Massachusetts, USA. Find him online at [mowillems.com](http://mowillems.com) and on Twitter as @The\_Pigeon.

## How to Use These Notes:

This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

### These notes are for:

- Ages 4-7
- Years F-1

### Key Learning Areas:

- English

### Example of:

- Picture Book

### Themes/Ideas:

- Fears
- School
- New experiences



# Walker Books Classroom Ideas

## Discussion Questions and Activities:

### Before Reading

View the cover and title of the book. Identify the following:

- The title
- 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? Write your own story using the title *The Pigeon HAS to go to School!*.

### Exploring the story

Act out the book – have students up on their feet reading the text and emulating Pigeon’s movement and delivery. Ask students how the illustrations and text show how Pigeon is feeling. Encourage them to base their conclusions on punctuation, the size and position of text, facial expression, body language, and size of the pigeon on the page.

Read the book as a class and allow students to respond to the Pigeon on each page. Do the students side with the Pigeon, or with the authority figure (narrator) by telling the Pigeon he has to go to school?

With your group, compile a list of words that describe each of Pigeon’s emotions. Next, list words that describe Pigeon’s personality. They can draw a picture of the pigeon to go along with one or more of those words. Examine the illustrations and describe how the pigeon’s face was drawn to express each emotion.

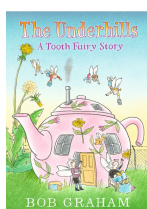
Ask your group what happens when their parents tell them they have to go somewhere they don’t want to go. Is their response similar or different to Pigeon’s? What are some other arguments they have used? Did they work?

How does Pigeon react when he sees the bus? Why does he react this way? What changes when he sees the bus?

What are the reasons Pigeon is scared of going to school? What did you feel like before starting school? What advice would you give to kids starting school next year?

Visit your school library and find other books by Mo Willems. Read several as a class or individually and discuss how they are similar or different. Which is your favourite? Why?

## Other Great Titles From Walker Books:



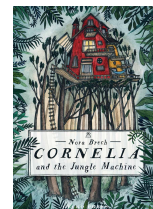
**The Underhills**  
Bob Graham  
9781406387612 HB



**Just Because**  
Mac Barnett  
Isabelle Arsenault  
9781406388763 HB  
Classroom ideas available



**Small in the City**  
Sydney Smith  
9781406388404 HB  
Classroom ideas available



**Cornelia and the Jungle Machine**  
Nora Brech  
9781776572595 HB  
Classroom ideas available