

Follow Zelly the Jelly as she searches for her forever family.

An underwater story of friends, family and collective nouns.

TITLE	A Smack of Jellyfish
AUTHOR	Paul Worsley
ILLUSTRATOR	Hannah Taufan
PUBLISHER	Redback Publishing (Also online at REDeBOOKS.com.au)
PUBLICATION DATE	August 2025
ISBN	9781761402043
PRICE	\$26.99
FORMAT	Hardback
EXTENT	32 pages
GENRE	Picture Book
AGE SUITABILITY	Interest age 3-12 years
READING AGE	8-12 years
BIC/CBMC	YBC/B3M69
INCLUSIONS	English Collective Nouns

THE STORY

The ocean is a fascinating, expansive world of colour and otherworldly animals. Meet Zelly the jellyfish who finds herself alone and searching for others just like her. She goes on a search for family and belonging. Zelly encounters an astounding group of animal friends and learns what they're named whilst seeking their advice. An adventurous underwater story of family, friends and collective nouns.

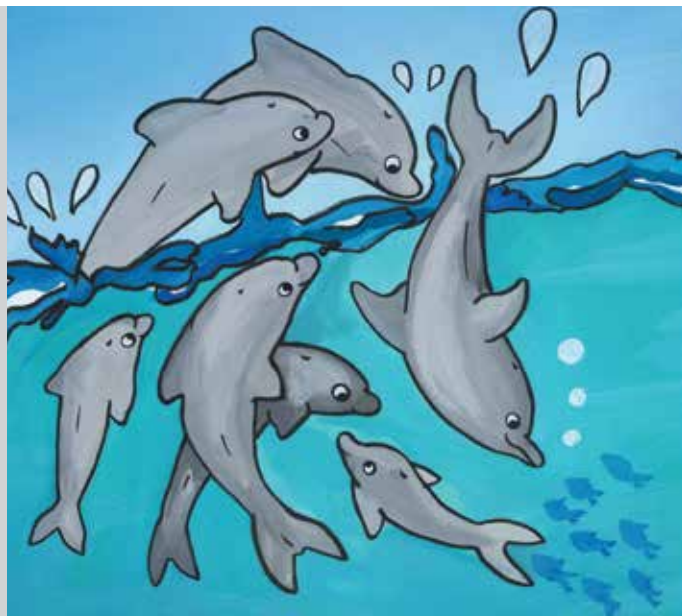


THE ILLUSTRATIONS

The illustrations in this book are all hand-drawn and then painted! They are drawn using a special paint called gouache. It produces vibrant colours that can also be watered down like a watercolour paint to produce translucent layers.

Real photos of animals were used as references in this book and then turned into cartoons.

This book took a long time to paint and had to be painted many times before it was just right. Most picture books now use computers to create images because it is a lot faster!



THE WRITING

Intended to be read aloud, since it is written for a target audience of children who do not know or are learning how to read. This translates perfectly for both new and accomplished young readers.

At just over 800 words long, this book is written with a rhythmic rhyming style featuring repetitive verse. The rhythm of the text is broken at key points in the story when the exclamatory collective nouns are introduced and then repeated for full effect.

THEMES IN THE STORY

COURAGE AND BRAVERY

Whilst the jellyfish is small, alone and seemingly vulnerable, she confronts groups of various sea creatures much larger than herself. There is no courage and bravery without fear, and the protagonist manages her fear and continually pushes past it in her pursuit of family.

RESILIENCE

The jellyfish's ability to overcome her fears are incredibly significant. She has the capacity to both withstand and recover quickly from extreme difficulties, even when faced with what seem like a barrage of insurmountable challenges.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY

Whilst never actually experiencing a family of her own, the protagonist deeply craves one nonetheless. A visceral sense that finding her family will, without doubt, provide her with love, safety, nurturing and a true sense of belonging.

IDENTITY AND BELONGING

From the very beginning of the story, the jellyfish has an existential dilemma.

'Who am I?' 'Where do I belong?' 'Do I have a family?'

Her innate desire to explore these questions further, and to ultimately have them answered, all come from a deep-seated desire to belong to something much larger than herself.

DETERMINATION AND PERSEVERANCE

With firm resolve and commitment to do something about her current circumstance, the jellyfish shows continual perseverance in her course of action, despite the obstacles. Determination sets her goal, while perseverance displays the effort and persistence required to achieve it.



CLASSROOM DISCUSSION IDEAS

AIMS OF THESE DISCUSSIONS

To continue to develop knowledge and interest in sea animals, their groups, and fascinating facts about them.

Included below are even more animal groups and the collective nouns they represent, alongside some truly intriguing insights and fascinating facts:

A ROMP OF SEA OTTERS

Sea otters are known for their incredibly dense fur, keystone role in kelp forests and very unique behaviours. They often sleep in groups called 'rafts', holding hands... well flippers actually, to prevent drifting away from each other. They are carnivores and can even go their entire lives without ever leaving the ocean. From a very young age, sea otters will find rocks and often keep their 'favourite rock' for years, even tucking it under their little armpits or sleeping with them, much like a favourite toy. Their rocks may also encourage skill development and tool use.

A GALAXY OF STARFISH

While starfish are commonly known for having five arms, the number of arms can vary between species. Most starfish have five arms, but some species have six, seven, or even more. For example, the Antarctic sun starfish can have over 50 arms!

A COLONY OF SEA LIONS

Sea lions are semi-aquatic mammals known for their agility and unique adaptations. They are not seals, but rather belong to the eared seal family, distinguished by their visible ear flaps. Sea lions are strong swimmers and can even walk on land using their front flippers. Some sea lions can dive to depths of up to 270 metres!

A CONSORTIUM OF OCTOPUSES

Octopuses are eight armed invertebrates known for their intelligence and camouflage abilities to manipulate their colour and texture! They have three hearts, blue blood, and can regenerate lost limbs. They can solve puzzles, recognise faces, and even use tools!



CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

NAME AS MANY COLLECTIVE NOUNS AS YOU CAN

Aims of This Activity

To name as many collective nouns as possible.
They can be sea or land animals from Australia to Africa and anywhere in between.

Procedure

1. Write down a list of all the animal groups, then share and discuss with the class.

PROTECTING OUR OCEANS

Aims of This Activity

To learn how to protect our oceans and reduce plastic pollution.

Procedure

1. Discuss in class what some of the solutions might be to reducing ocean pollution, including things that we can all do in our everyday lives.
 2. Name some organisations that dedicate themselves to protecting the ocean from pollution.
- 5 Examples of these organisations are:
- 1) Greenpeace
 - 2) The Ocean Conservancy
 - 3) Take 3 for the Sea
 - 4) The Surfrider Foundation
 - 5) Oceana

**REAL PHOTOS OF ANIMALS WERE
USED AS REFERENCES IN THIS BOOK
AND THEN TURNED INTO CARTOONS.
IS THIS SOMETHING THAT YOU
WOULD LIKE TO TRY?**

Kindergarten

Activity:

- Think of your favourite sea animal. What does it look like?
- Use your favourite colour to colour in the animal. It doesn't have to be realistic
- Now, draw a big expression on your animal's face. You can make them sad, happy or angry
- See how your sea character can tell a story! Share your story with your friends in your class
- For example: add a smiling face to your animal with some cartoon eyes
- Use shading and bright colours to illustrate your drawing

Years 2-3

Activity

- Find a book that uses computers to draw illustrations
- Find a book that has used hand-drawn illustrations
- Can you tell the difference?
- Which do you like the most?
- Would you choose painting by hand or a computer if you were illustrating your own book and why?

Year 5-6

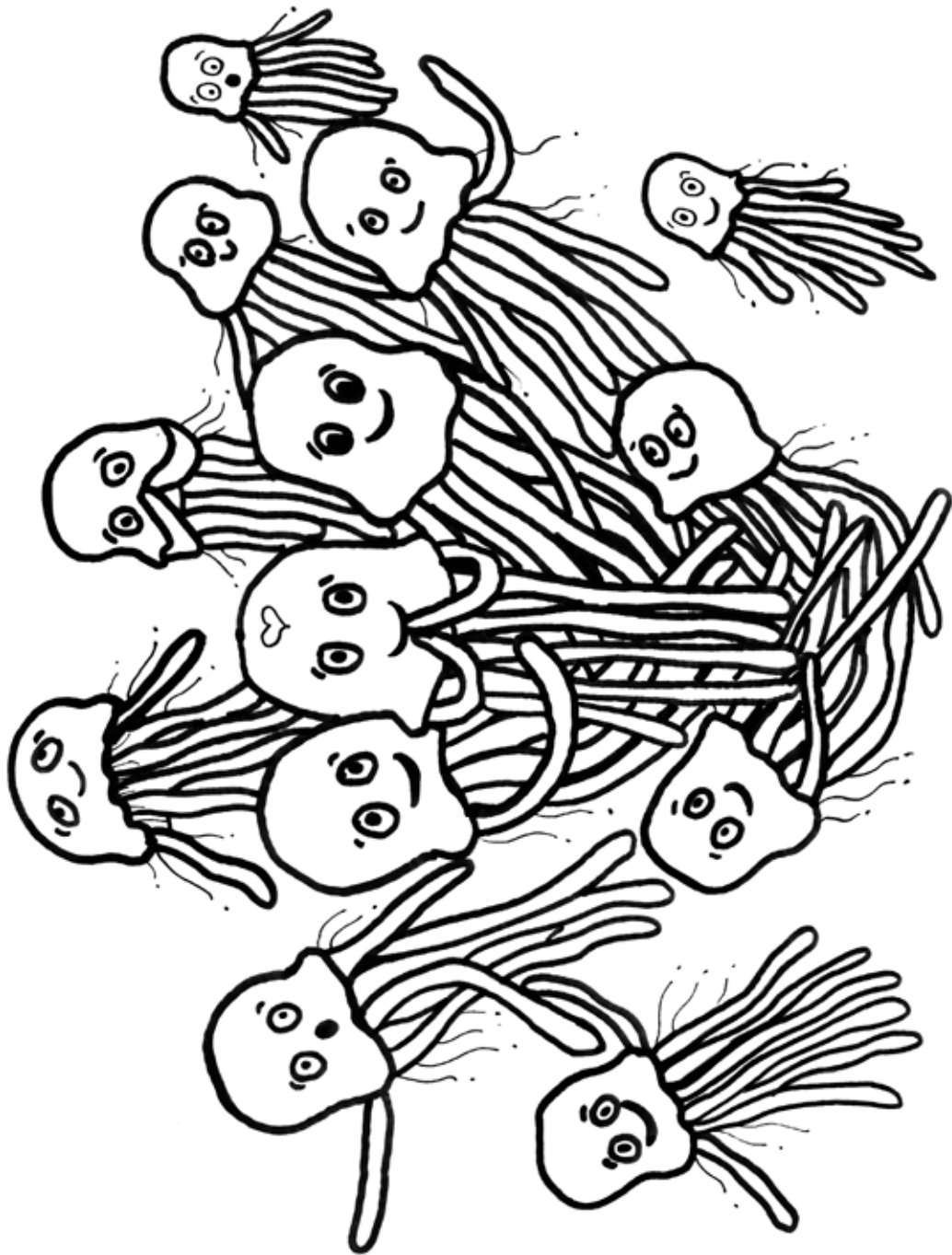
Activity:

- Choose a real life photo of your favourite animal
- Look at the shape of the animal when you draw it, using clean and simple lines
- Think of the emotions that you want to convey through your character
- For example: add a smiling face to your animal with some cartoon eyes
- Use shading and bright colours to illustrate your drawing



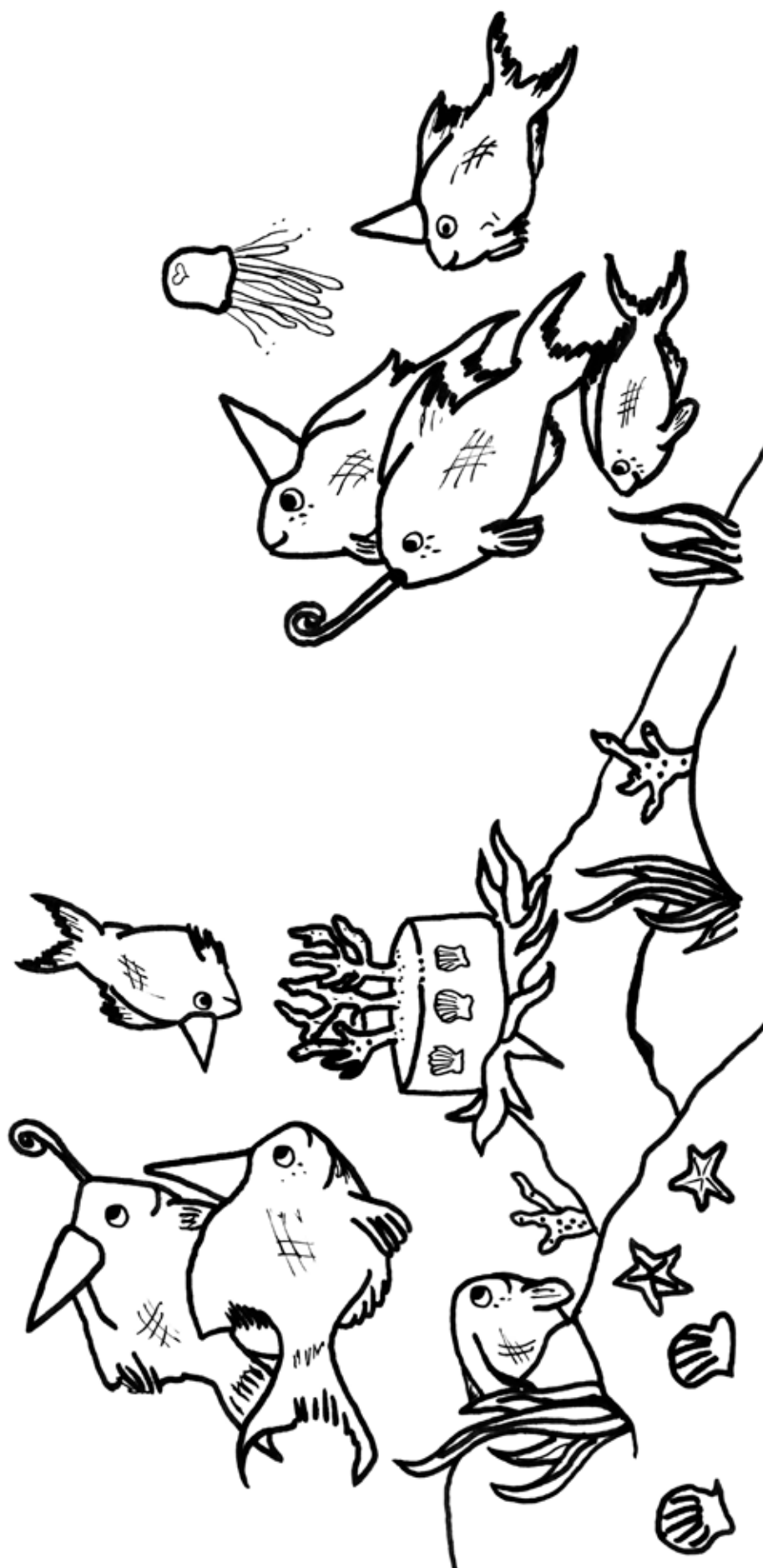
ART ACTIVITIES

Colour in Zelly with her family



ART ACTIVITIES

Colour in the party of rainbow fish





BOOK ORDERS

A SMACK OF JELLYFISH

by Paul Worsley and Hannah Taufan

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