

Play
School

Story Time

PlayWorld



Ideas for parents and carers

In this episode of Play School Story Time, Ellie Cole shares 'The Beach Wombat' by Susannah Chambers & Mark Jackson.

This story is about a young wombat and his mother who live at the beach and is full of rich descriptions. They love to explore, until the rain comes.

STEM learning

How animals adapt to their environments.

This PlayWorld supports:

Connection to the natural world and a curiosity about science. It also fosters empathy and working together as a team.



STEP 1: View/read and reflect

As you read, notice different things at the beach, and relate it to your own experiences of the outdoors. Ask lots of questions: *What do you think it smells like? What does it sound like?*

Talk about when you are most likely to see wombats outdoors. Daytime or nighttime?

STEP 2: Plan your play

- Make some simple nocturnal animal puppets or masks (owl, bat, possum, wombat) using paper plates and craft items.
- Find a tunnel to crawl through e.g. a blanket over a chair.
- Choose a space for the nighttime beach and place the animal puppets here.
- Adult records a message from Baby Wombat and then hides this character puppet somewhere as a secret.



Can you please help me? I left our burrow to explore on my own for the first time and now I am lost. I need to hurry back before my Mummy finds out. Please send my nocturnal friends to help me find my way home before sunrise. They will know how to find their way in the dark.

Love from Baby Wombat



STEP 3: Go on your adventure

- Wear a mask and pretend to be a wombat crawling through a tunnel.
- It's dusk, so the wombats are waking up and getting ready to go exploring.
- What do they see, smell and hear?
- Have them meet some of the other nocturnal animals on the beach.
- Pretend to do things that those animals do at night: eat, burrow, fly, hunt etc
- Talk about different routines wombats and people have. What routines do you have in your home?

STEP 5: Learn through play

Investigate the special adaptations the animals have to help them at night. Pretend to be these animals and use these skills to help Baby Wombat.



STEP 4: Encounter a problem

Hear the voice recording of Baby Wombat.

What will we do? Gather your nocturnal friends to go looking for Baby Wombat.

Which nocturnal animals can help them?

- Can Owl and Possum use their big eyes to see in the dark?
- Can Bat use her special hearing called echolocation?
- Are there any animals that can glow in the dark?
- Which animals have a strong sense of smell?



Why this learning matters

This PlayWorld fosters your child's curiosity and learning about nocturnal animals.

It also helps your child's well being because predictable day and nighttime routines help them feel secure.



A partnership between



Images: Oleksii Perebyinis and Alisa Muravitskaya, with thanks to Elisey Perebeinos. 'The Beach Wombat' Written by by Susannah Chambers & Mark Jackson is published by Allen and Unwin Children's, 2019. Images provided by the Monash Conceptual PlayLab.