

TEACHERS' NOTES

The Accidental Penguin Hotel




wild dog

by Andrew Kelly
illustrated by Dean A. Jones



THE ACCIDENTAL PENGUIN HOTEL

Synopsis

The penguins come to the Port Phillip Bay to hunt, and return to their Phillip Island rookeries at the end of the day. But one day, something changes. A brave little penguin decides to build a burrow among the big stones of the St Kilda breakwater. When a young female inspects his burrow, she decides to stay and their chicks are the beginning of a new colony.

Writing style

The *Accidental Penguin Hotel* uses simple language to engage students with the fascinating world of the little penguin. The text, suitable for both establishing and established readers, introduces students to the adaptability and resilience of the species.

Illustrative style

The *Accidental Penguin Hotel* is illustrated by Dean Jones. Dean creates his original sketches on an iPad and renders final art in Photoshop. His bold colour palette and realistic art style bring to life this true tale of little penguins on the edge of a big city.

Specifications

Author:	Andrew Kelly
Illustrator:	Dean Jones
ISBN:	9781742036281
Format:	297mm x 210mm
Extent:	32pp
Binding:	Hardback
Age Suitability:	Foundation to Year 4
Category:	Picture Book

Key Learning Areas

English
Humanities & Social Sciences
Science
Art

Themes

LITTLE PENGUINS WILDLIFE
CONSERVATION RESILIENCE
PROGRESS FAMILY OCEAN
ADAPTABILITY COMMUNITY
PREDATORS SEA LIFE





About the Author

Andrew Kelly is the Yarra Riverkeeper and spokesperson for one of Melbourne’s most defining natural icons, The Yarra River. He was born in Melbourne, grew up in Melbourne, and has spent most of his life in Melbourne. Andrew is passionate about the city, its history and, of course, its river. He has spent countless holidays in Western Port, not too far from Port Phillip. Andrew – who’s always liked penguins – has occasionally (very occasionally) spotted one on the Somers beach.

Andrew has written numerous awarding-winning books for children. His most recent book is Little Lon, illustrated by Mark Jackson and Heather Potter.



About the Illustrator

Dean Jones is based in Melbourne but loves to travel the world through drawing and painting. He is an illustrator, painter, and passionate art teacher, and is obsessed with how pictures tell stories and communicate emotion through shapes, colour and light.

Dean has been shortlisted and received notable mentions in the Australian Children’s Book Council’s Picture Book of the Year awards.

Dean used to live in St Kilda and often visited the penguin colony.

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM STANDARDS

ENGLISH: LITERATURE AND LITERACY

- Foundation: • ACELA1430 • ACELA1434
• ACELT1575 • ACELT1577
• ACELT1578 • ACELY1646
• ACELY1650
- Year 1: • ACELA1447 • ACELA1453
• ACELT1581 • ACELT1582
• ACELT1584 • ACELT1586
• ACELY1656 • ACELY1658
• ACELY1660 • ACELY1661
- Year 2: • ACELA1463 • ACELA1466
• ACELA1470 • ACELT1589
• ACELT1590 • ACELT1593
• ACELY1666 • ACELY1667
• ACELY1668 • ACELY1670
• ACELY1671
- Year 3: • ACELT1594 • ACELT1596
• ACELT1599 • ACELT1600
• ACELT1601 • ACELY1675
• ACELY1676 • ACELY1677
• ACELY1678 • ACELY1682
- Year 4: • ACELT1602 • ACELT1603
• ACELT1605 • ACELT1607
• ACELT1794 • ACELY1688
• ACELY1689 • ACELY1690
• ACELY1694

HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

- Foundation: • ACHASSI001 • ACHASSI006
- Year 1: • ACHASSI018 • ACHASSI019
• ACHASSI023 • ACHASSI0125
• ACHASSI026 • ACHHK029
• ACHHK030
- Year 2: • ACHASSI034 • ACHASSI036
• ACHASSI038 • ACHASSI042
• ACHASSI043 • ACHHK044
• ACHHK045
- Year 3: • ACHASSI052 • ACHASSI053
• ACHASSI056 • ACHASSI059
• ACHASSI072 • ACHHS061
• ACHASSI063 • ACHHS215
- Year 4: • ACHASSI073 • ACHASSI077
• ACHASSI079 • ACHASSI080
• ACHASSI082

SCIENCE

- Foundation: • ACSSU002
- Year 1: • ACSSU211
- Year 2: • ACSSU030
- Year 3: • ACSSU044
- Year 4: • ACSSU072 • ACSSU073



Before Reading

Discuss children's own experiences with little penguins.

- What do they know about penguins in general?
- Have they seen them?
- Where?
- Ask children what they would like to know about the species.

Examine the cover

Write student questions or wonderings on the whiteboard to revisit after reading.

- What type of book is this?
- How do you feel when you look at the cover?
- What might the story be about?
- Discuss the title. What clues might it give about the story?
- Where might it be set?
- Where would you expect to find this book in your library?
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- Examine the back cover and read the blurb. What clues does it give the reader about the story?
- Does the blurb change your opinion of what the story may be about?

Examine the endpapers

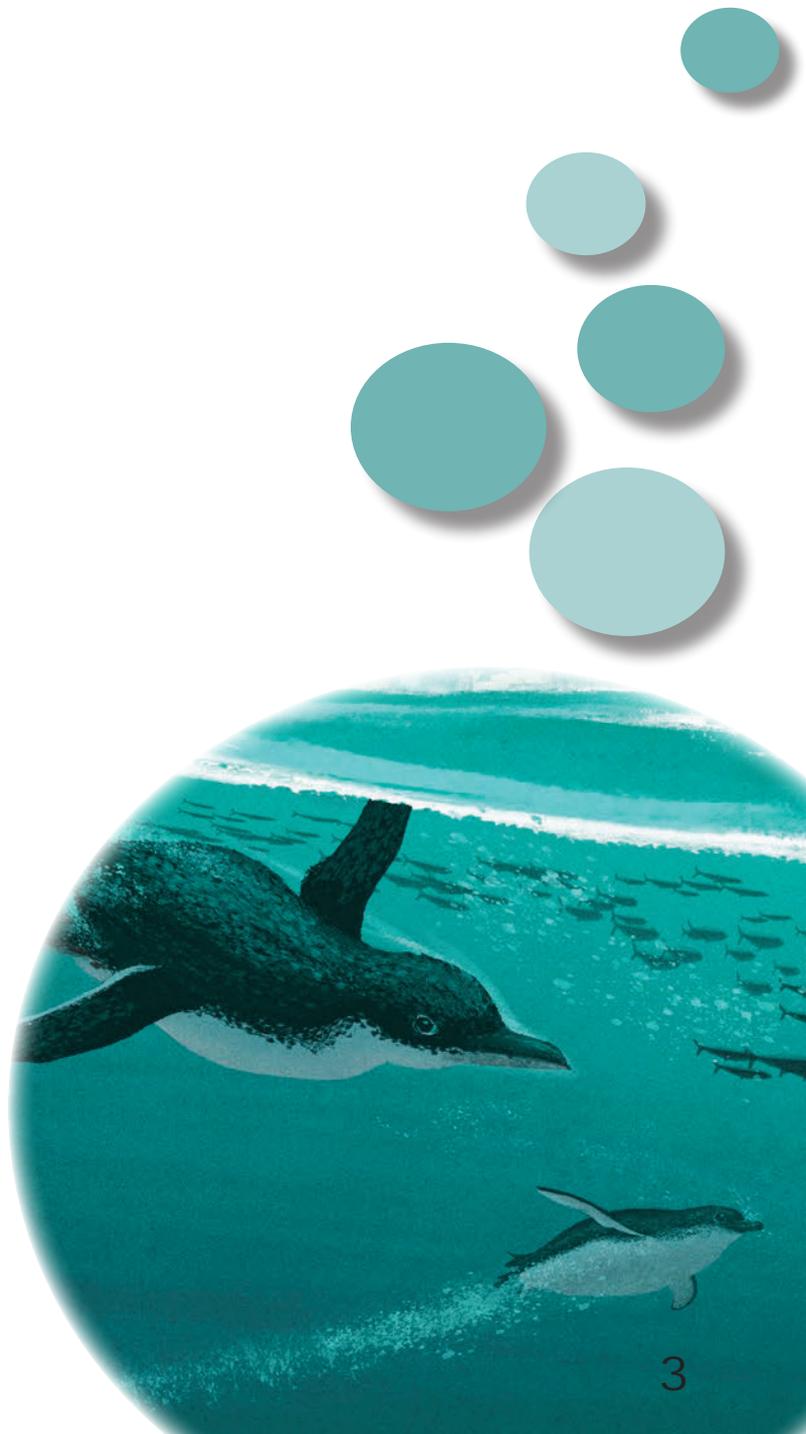
- What clues do the endpapers give about the story?
- What do you notice about the penguins on the endpapers?
- Do you have questions or wonderings after looking at the endpapers?
 - List any 'wonderings' for discussion after reading.

Reading Activities

To show students the different role pictures and illustrations play in picture books, read the story without sharing illustrations, then reread it showing illustrations.

Ask students:

- Which they preferred – words alone, only illustrations, or both.
- In what ways did the illustrations change or improve the story?
- Were the illustrations as you expected? What parts surprised you?
- Do you have a favourite page or illustration? What draws you to it?



After Reading Discussion

- Return to the title. Ask children if their understanding of the title has changed.
- What have children learned or discovered after listening to the story?
- Discuss the setting – what do children know about St Kilda? How does that impact on their understanding of the story?
- Why do you think St Kilda penguin colony is special?
- Should it be protected? Why?
- Revisit the questions and wonderings collected before reading the story.
 - Was the story as expected?
 - Return to wonderings about the endpages.
 - Are there areas that need to be investigated further?
- What new questions do children have after reading the book?

Examine and discuss the following pages:

Pages 4/5

Ask children if they can identify the species depicted.

- Have they ever encountered these? Where?
- Ask children how they could identify and find out more about the creatures?

Pages 6/7 and 28/29

Examine both pages.

- Ask children what potential dangers the penguins face.
- Which of the two environments could be the most dangerous for penguins? Close to shore or the Rip?
- Where might it be easier influence or change these dangers?

Setting - Examine pages 8/9

- What clues are there about the era? (clothes, radio, beach rather than Phillip Island viewing platform we are now used to.)
- St Kilda breakwater details here for era reference. <https://earthcarestkilda.org.au/get-involved/st-kilda-breakwater/>
- Compare how the people are viewing the penguins in the illustrations to the children's experiences today.
- Show children an image of the current St Kilda viewing platform.



<https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/places-to-see/parks/st-kilda-pier-and-breakwater/attractions/little-penguins>

<https://www.besttime2travel.com/st-kilda> (A number of different angles are available on this site.)

- Discuss why the platform may have been built.

Compare pages 2/3 and 30/31

- How are the pages similar and different?
- What do the differences suggest?
- Create a Venn diagram noting the differences, similarities and what hasn't changed.

Blurb

Revisit the blurb.

“The little penguins come to the rich waters of the bay to hunt, but they don't stay. There is no place to build a home. So they travel far, back to their island. What will it take for one little penguin to make the bay his home?”

- Ask children to speculate about what might have happened to that first male penguin if the breakwater hadn't been built.

Extended Activities

English

Penguin Language Poster

- Ask children to note any words, phrases and expressions they might not understand. Collate these words on the whiteboard. Allocate these to either groups or individuals, depending on class size and number of words. Ask students to research the meaning of their allocated word /phrases and write it's meaning on a strip of paper. Add strips to a Penguin Language Poster.

Creative Writing

- Imagine you are the male penguin who builds the first burrow at St Kilda. Rewrite the story as though you are the penguin.
- Imagine you are a volunteer protecting the penguins. Write about your evening watching the penguins.
- Imagine you are a rakali. Write about your life with your neighbours, the little penguins.
- For all these prompts, remind children to consider how the creatures might feel about the constant visitors.

Persuasive Writing

Wild animals have no place in the city!

- Write a persuasive piece of writing agreeing or disagreeing with this statement.

Humanities & Social Science

Humans caring for endangered species

There are many examples across Australia of communities creating habitat for endangered wildlife. Investigate your region.

- Do any of these habitats exist locally? (If there aren't any in your region, choose one that is relevant to students.)

Suggestions:

- Eastern Barred Bandicoot <https://www.basscoastpost.com/environment/bandicoot-island>
 - Melbourne Zoo projects <https://www.zoo.org.au/fighting-extinction>
 - Taronga Zoo conservation <https://taronga.org.au/conservation-and-science/our-actions>
 - Have children investigate a species and human involvement in their survival.
 - Write a report about the project.
 - Encourage students to include details about the species (breeding, location, habitat, threats, diet etc) why they are endangered, why and how people became involved.
 - If you do have a local habitat, arrange an incursion for the class.
 - Invite a representative of the group to talk to children about the species/ habitat, how it is cared for and the threats faced.
 - Before the visit, allow time for children to prepare questions. Remind them of fat and skinny questions.
- (Fat and Skinny Questions is an activity which encourages students to ask questions that collect the most information. Fat questions gather information and start with Explain, why, how. Skinny questions can be answered with yes or no.)
- After the visit, place children in groups to create a PowerPoint presentation about the creature, habitat, and what they've learned.



Human Interaction

Watch The Penguin Connection



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rvDn8D75x9I>

- Compare the penguins' behaviour during COVID lockdown (3.26 in the movie) to when people are watching them.
- Do you think the penguins like having an audience?
- Ask students to identify the potential risks that so many people could pose to the penguins.

Revisit pages 28/29

Human activity poses an enormous threat to little penguins.

- Ask children to identify risks depicted in the illustration on pages 31/32
- Compare these to those identified in The Penguin Connection movie.
 - Brainstorms how penguins could be protected, yet still be viewed by humans.
 - In pairs, have children create a poster to raise awareness of and to protect little penguins

Viewing Platform

View images of the current St Kilda viewing platform.

- <https://www.besttime2travel.com/st-kilda> (This website has several different angles of the platform.)
- The Penguin Connection – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rvDn8D75x9I>
- Discuss why the viewing platform might have been built.
- Examine the sign listing dos and don'ts. Why might each be important?
- Have children create their own poster with directions for people viewing penguins.

View and compare the St Kilda and Phillip Island viewing platforms.

- Discuss each one's strengths and weaknesses,

particularly when it comes to keeping the penguins safe.

- In groups, have children design and create a model of their ideal viewing area.

Summerlands

At the beginning of the book, author Andrew Kelly thanks the Summerlands community.

"...Thank you to the people of Summerlands who gave up their holiday homes for the penguin sanctuary at Phillip Island."

Summerlands is a place on Phillip Island where people gave up their holiday homes to create a safe place for little penguin rookeries.

- As a class, investigate Summerlands.
 - <https://wongm.com/2020/04/summerlands-estate-phillip-island-penguin-reserve/>
 - <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-04-08/phillip-island-when-penguins-won-and-land-owners-lost/9464698>
 - <https://www.penguins.org.au/about/about-us/our-history/> (timeline of events)
- Discuss what it would have been like for the Summerlands' community to leave.
 - What might have happened to if the people had refused to leave?
 - What do you think of the state government's decision to take over Summerlands?
 - Ask children to imagine they are one of the families asked to leave to protect the little penguins. – Have children write a letter to the government explaining why they are or aren't willing to leave.



SCIENCE

Port Phillip Bay Species

Discuss pages 4/5 with students.

- Try to identify as many species as possible.
- In pairs, have children investigate sea life found in Port Phillip Bay.

Suggested resources:

https://www.scubadoctor.com.au/downloads/Port_Phillip_Heads_Marine_Narional_Park_Identification_Booklet.pdf

https://vfa.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/image/0007/338533/Cool-Water-Wonders.jpg

- List the creatures. In pairs or small groups, have children research one of the sea creatures.
 - Children can present their findings orally or as a mini project.

Suggested species to investigate

BANJO SHARK GARFISH

PILCHARDS SQUID

ANCHOVY SANDY SPRAT

STING RAY WHITING

Little Penguin Threats

Investigate threats to little penguins. Consider threats while they are on land and in the water, and threats to their burrows, eggs and chicks.

- Introduce children to Warrnambool's little penguin colony. (They may be familiar with the movie, Oddball)
<http://www.warrnamboolpenguins.com.au/>
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-10-17/middle-island-penguin-protector-odd-ball-maremma-retires/11607662>
Discuss the success of the Warrnambool Penguin program.
- What makes Maremma Dogs good guard dogs?
- As a class discuss what other creatures these dogs might be able to protect.
- Group children to investigate Maremma Dogs and the types of creatures they protect.
- Investigate the positives of using Maremmas

as guards and any potential problems.

- Groups present their findings to the class.

Rakali

Pages 12/13

- Discuss the illustration.
- Allocate 10 minutes for children to research the rakali.
- As a class, share discoveries.
- Has the discussion raised questions about the rakali? Allow children time to research these and again share their findings.

ART

Cover

- Discuss the cover. Why do you think this image was chosen? What other images could have been a good cover?
- Imagine you're an illustrator. Create a different cover for The Accidental Penguin Hotel. Remember it has to attract readers and hint at what the story is about.

Useful Liinks

St Kilda Penguin Guide FAQ

- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1X5GuKsFg-FPq58zdZvDXFWBCcvUFHOzHW/view>
- St Kilda Penguin Booklet
- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BxI2FtB-zNhoUNEI3NnFFTzBUYOE/edit?resourcekey=0-0SiQYqYTWGlj1N7Paew6dg>
St Kilda Penguin Training for Guides
- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pKyRHu9r-QqunyisfnPDtHVvxTTiJCOW3/view> (pdf version available)
- <https://www.facebook.com/stkildapenguins/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rvD-n8D75x9I>
- General Little Penguin Resources:
- https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0023/91391/Little-Penguin.pdf
- Little Penguin Burrow Camera Footage – Phillip Island Nature Parks
- https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLU-rO8yc-UexcZ5YWlLer_Ybd0pRzYGMDo



INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR ANDREW KELLY

1. What inspired you to write this story?

I was fascinated by the story of these fragile-looking little birds not just existing, but building a breeding colony pretty much in the heart of the city, among something we people had built. They were colonising us. They were colonising the city.

2. What surprised you most about the Little Penguins?

For birds about a ruler length in height and weighing something over a kilo, they are really gutsy. Not only gutsy to nest in the big rocks of a breakwater but they are tough. They will fight you if you pick them up and their beaks are sharp as a butcher's knife. If that doesn't work they will give you a good flipper slapping.

3. While it's a Melbourne-based story like Little Lon, how did the writing and research differ?

Enormously! Little Lon was a story on platter. The words were there I had to arrange them and connect them. With the penguin book, I had to do lots of research, lots, and lots of research, about little penguins, how they mated, how they built their burrows, when they first came to St Kilda and in particular about how a new colony might form - and there was not much information to be found. The write was then about being imaginative and telling a tale but also not departing from what science knows.

4. What was your biggest challenge while writing?

The biggest challenge was figuring out how to tell the story of how the colony started off and reading the scientific literature.

5. How closely did you and Dean work together?

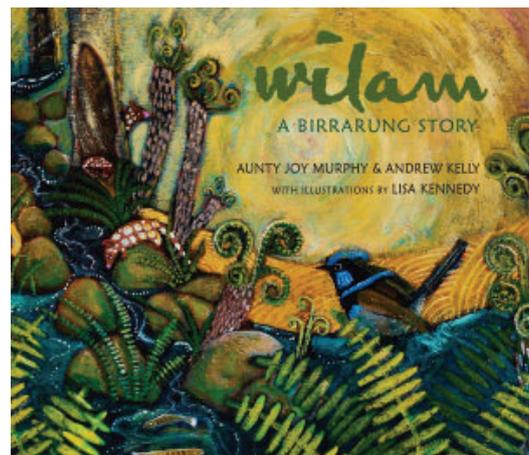
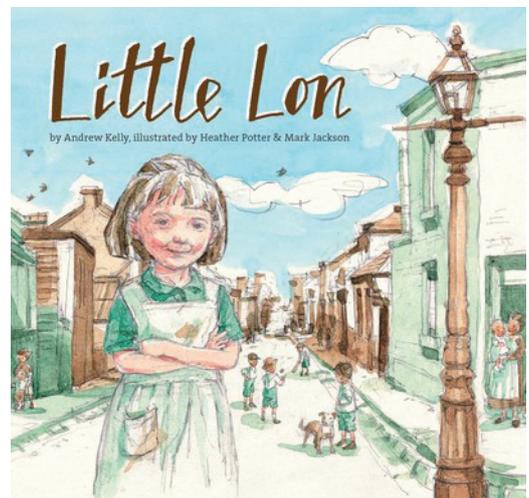
We are friends. We talked. I wrote and then as the drawings evolved, I rewrote. Trimmed words here, trimmed them there. Sometimes we

changed the order a bit. I cannot imagine any other way of making a picture book. The words and the pictures need to work together.

6. What are you hoping readers will take from the story?

That there is hope. So many species are being driven extinct by humans, but these gutsy little guys set up a breeding colony in our midst, right at the heart of the city. We need to celebrate that, celebrate the penguins, learn from them and really importantly look after them.

Other titles by Andrew Kelly



INTERVIEW WITH ILLUSTRATOR DEAN JONES

1. How familiar were you with St Kilda's little penguin population before you were asked to do the project?

I used to live walking distance from the St Kilda pier so I knew about the penguins since the 90s and had seen them on a number of occasions on walks as the sun was setting. I always thought it was quite magical to have them so close to home. I did always wonder how and when they got there....now I know! In recent years I have been more familiar with their relatives on Phillip Island where our family have a house and I spend part of my summer each year. In fact my initial sketches were done down at Phillip island over the summer.

2. Writers do lots of reading when they research. What research did you do before illustrating?

Illustrators need to do lots of research also to make things look just right, especially for a book like this which is about an important subject based in fact. Every page requires research. For example, some pages are set in specific time periods (we wanted to page 3 to reflect St Kilda in the 1970s and page 8-9 to evoke Phillip island in the 1950s). Also pages with animals and plant life need to accurately reflect species present in that place, like the scene of underwater Port Phillip Bay on pages 4 and 5.

Andrew provided me with an excellent Illustration brief which document his extensive research. This included the draft text and lots of reference images and links as well as his initial thoughts about what might be worth including or focusing on here and there - it was a valuable starting point. I went on to search the internet for many photos of everything from what penguins look like in different scenarios, like land versus in and on the water, as well as many small details like what cranes looked like in the 1950s and what a break wall looks like when it is being constructed (see pages 10-11). I found many useful videos YouTube and libraries that filmed life under water in Port Phillip Bay and Phillip island and even what it looks like when a motor boat propeller is spinning under the water. I even visited the break water to take some photos and get a fresh feel for the place.

3. Some illustrators work with the writer, others work independently then share their work. How do you work?

Since Andrew and I had our first conversation about his idea for this book, in a bar in Brunswick, it has been a collaborative process. We worked back and forth to make sure we were all happy along the way. After fully digesting Andrew's excellent illustration brief, I worked on ideas and rough sketches and then presented them to Andrew and Maryann Ballantyne (Wild Dog Books Publisher). We collaborated to find the best solutions if we hadn't already arrived at them. After these discussions I went back to the studio to address any outstanding drawing or composition issues and worked up the colour roughs which are rough versions of the sketches with the addition of colour. Once again I presented these and when we were all happy with the pages to that level of finish, I set to work on the final art. In the last phase Maryann and Andrew trusted me to work independently and present the work in its final form.

4. What medium did you choose to illustrate the book? Why?

I chose to draw the sketches on my iPad and then painted them in Photoshop on my iMac. This is a handy way to do things in case there are any changes required. Although I did do colour roughs and showed them to Andrew and Maryann, I always knew that some of the images would evolve a little and it was difficult to predict this. Given we had somewhat of a short timeframe to make the work, there wasn't too much room to completely repaint something if anything went wrong, so going digital was a good choice. While it is not easier to draw or paint an image on the computer, it is much easier to make changes on the computer if required.

5. What was your biggest challenge in illustrating the story?

My job is to both communicate the story and to bring the author's vision to life in a cohesive and effective way that adds value to the text. I think making sure all of the pages have a consistent style is always a challenge. This comes down to decisions about how things are drawn and how to use colour and texture.

6. Do you have a favourite illustration?

It is really tough to pick one! I love them all for different reasons. I am fond of page 16-17 where the penguin decides to make a nest. I think it is elegant in the way that it uses negative space and the colour of the negative space is very useful for describing the mood and the time of day.

