

# URSULA'S WRITING IDEAS



NOVEMBER  
NODS

## URSULA DUBOSARSKY

AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN'S LAUREATE 2020-2021

Usually in Australia when somebody nods at you, you know they are saying something like, "Yes, I agree, okay, you can have another chocolate biscuit". You know this without the person having to say a single word. Getting your meaning across like this, without words and language, is called gesture.

Nodding and shaking the head are well-known gestures, as are things like thumbs up or down, or waving hello or goodbye, or pretending to talk to someone on the telephone to show them you are going to ring them up. In mime, the actors use gestures to show what is happening in the play, without words. They will act out things like eating an ice-cream, or bowling a ball or rowing a boat.

Thinking about all that made me wonder – what if you had a story that was partly words and partly gestures? Sounds strange? I'll show you what I mean.

Here's the start of a story about a puppy and a cat. You'll see that when I get to an action word in the story, instead of the word I put a row of capital letters **GGGGGGGG** (for gesture). So when you read the story to someone else, you have to act out (silently!) what you think is happening. Try it out!

A little puppy was happily **GGGGGGGG** water from his bowl. Suddenly he **GGGGGGGGG** his head and began to **GGGGGGGG** his tail in the air. It was his friend, the cat next door, who had **GGGGGGGGGG** down from the fence and was **GGGGGGGGGG** over to the puppy.

"Let's **GGGGGGGG** away from home," said the cat.

Over to you. You can either continue this story about the puppy and the cat, or you can start a whole other new story of your own. Just remember, every time you come to an action, don't write the word, write **GGGGGGGGGGGGGGGG**. When you've finished, have fun reading and miming your story to your friends and family.

