

# Taking the Long Way Home

Ideas to discuss with the book



## The Long and Short of It

In **Taking the Long Way Home**, the walk that Uncle Jerome and the two children take is a long walk. Can you remember a long walk you've taken, where did you go and what did you see? *Did you know*, distance is how far apart things are?

Small distances are measured using millimetres and centimetres. Can you walk around the room taking tiny tip-toes? How many tip-toes does it take? Can you think of any small animals that take tiny tip-toes?

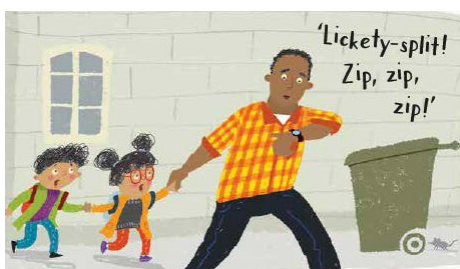
Bigger distances are measured in metres and kilometres. Now walk around the room taking giant strides, how many does it take? Can you think of any big animals that take giant strides?

## Fast or Slow, how will you go?

In the story daddy likes to hurry home taking shortcuts. Uncle Jerome always likes to walk slowly taking the long way home. Can you think of some good and bad things about going somewhere fast or going there slowly? Would you prefer to hurry like daddy or to walk slowly like Uncle Jerome?

You and your friends or classmates could have some races. You could try running, skipping, hopping and shuffling. Which is the fastest and which is the slowest?

One of the good things about going slowly is that it gives a chance to see more of the world around us. When we take notice of everything around us, it is sometimes called being mindful. Why not take a mindful walk in the garden or park and see what you can see, smell, hear, feel and taste? These are called the senses, and we have five senses that help us engage in the world around us. Can you spot each of the senses in the story?



### **More about the Senses**

We feel things using our skin. Can you spot things in the story that might feel hard or soft? Do you think Uncle Jerome's hat would be hard or soft? What about the metal school gates?

We see things with our eyes. It is dark in the woods where the children walk. How does being in the dark make you feel? There are lots of bright colours in the story too. What can you spot that is brightly coloured and what different colours are they?

We smell things with our nose. The story has a field of poppies and hyssop which the children waded through. Can you find any flowers and see what they smell like? What words would you use to describe the way they smell?

We hear with our ears. There are crows in the book which make a loud caww-craawww sound. How loudly can you make a sound like the crows. Can you make the same sound really quietly too? What are some of the loudest noises you've heard and some of the quietest ones?

We taste things with our tongues. There are five main flavours, sweet, sour, bitter, salty and savoury. Uncle Jerome and the children have ice-cream, what flavour do you think that would be? Maybe you could find some different foods to try which match each of the five flavours.



### **Put your best foot forward and get crafty!**

On the walk, the family discover some footprints. Why not create your own footprints by drawing around your feet? Some animals have big footprints, others have small footprints.

Which of these creatures do you think would have the biggest and which the smallest footprints?

Elephant, mouse, dog, ant, person, caterpillar



### **Making Maps is where it's at!**

Maps are special pictures which help people find way they are and the places they want to get to when they go on walks or long journeys. You could go for a walk and create a map using some of the things that you see around you. You could even create a map using the things you can see in your bedroom!



### **Start a Story of Your Own!**

**Taking the Long Way Home** is all about imagination. Imagine that you are on a night walk and you see a pair of big eyes gleaming at you out of the dark. Who or what do you think the eyes might belong to? Draw or paint a picture of what you decided! Can you think of a story to go with your picture?

### **Things to talk about**

Uncle Jerome comes to walk the children home. Do you think they like Uncle Jerome? Think about your friends and family. Who would you most like to go on a walk with and why?

Can you remember the different creatures the children meet on their walk? How would you feel if you met some of these?

What does Zarah think about walking home, why do you think she feels this way?



**Put your best foot forward and try these other brilliant stories**

If you've enjoyed **Taking the Long Way Home** you might like to take a trip through some other tales about walking. You could try

**A Walk in the Park** written and illustrated by Anthony Browne

**We're Going on a Bear Hunt** by Michael Rosen, illustrated by Helen Oxenbury

**Beneath** written and illustrated by Cori Doerrfeld

Jake Hope has also written another book about walks called **Lola Loves Walkies**, it has a surprise at the end. Brian Fitzgerald has written and illustrated **Bunny's Most Fabulous Holiday Ever** about a very different sort of trip!



*Notes © by Jake Hope, 2024*  
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