



The Longest Breakfast

By Jenny Bornholdt
Illustrated by Sarah Wilkins

The baby wants breakfast so Malcolm gets out of bed to get started. Then in comes Toby. And Una and Toto, then Alice—they're hungry too. And Conrad from next door and his sister Ruby! Everyone has a request for breakfast. But who is taking notice of the baby?

The Author

Jenny Bornholdt is an acclaimed poet. In 2005–06 she was the NZ Poet Laureate and she received the 2003 Arts Foundation of New Zealand Laureate Award. She lives in Wellington, New Zealand.

Sarah Wilkins has worked as an illustrator in Australia, New Zealand and France. She won the LIANZA Russell Clark Award for Illustration in 2003. She sometimes lives in Wellington and sometimes in Paris, France.

Themes

Family—A clever and intriguing aspect of this story is that it isn't made clear how the characters are related or know each other, but together they create a wonderful, chaotic family event of breakfast. The home in the story has an open-door policy with children who don't live in the house dropping in for breakfast.

Food and Nutrition—The story centres around breakfast. Different characters have different requests for breakfast, some more unusual – and unsuitable – than others. There are opportunities in reading this story to discuss what food is best or most fun for breakfast.

Level One Activities—Text (before and while reading)

1. Before you read the book, look at the cover (front and back) of the book. What can you tell about the story from the title, font, illustrations, and blurb? Think about the colours and style of illustrations and what they might tell you about what sort of story this is.
2. Either on your own or in pairs find the definition (meaning) of the following words that appear in the story and then use them in a new sentence:
 - Tempt
 - Waffles
 - Chance
3. What is another name for knives, forks, and spoons? Clue: It begins with “C”, ends with “Y”, and has seven letters.

Level Two Activities—Responding to the text (while reading)

1. What do you think the baby means when he says “Toot”? What does Malcolm think the baby means?
2. What clues are there in the illustration at the beginning of the story that Malcolm has just woken up?
4. What are Una and Toto (the twins) wearing?
5. Would you eat maple syrup with eggs? Why do you think that Malcolm doesn't think this is a very good idea?
6. Why do you think the baby makes the “Bzzzzzzz” noise?
7. What do you think the book that Alice is reading is about? What clues are there on the cover?
8. There are two characters named Ruby. One is a girl. What is the other?
9. Jack asks for gooseberry jam. Can you name three other different types of jam?
10. This book is called *The Longest Breakfast*. Does that give you any clues about on what day of the week they might be having breakfast? Are there days during the week when you can take a longer time to have breakfast than others? Do you have a special or different breakfast on these days?

Level Three Activities—Creating based on the text

1. Egg recipes. Find a recipe for scrambled eggs, boiled eggs, or poached eggs. Make your own recipe card that explains how you make the type of eggs you have chosen. Illustrate and use colour!
2. Decorate egg shells and use these to make hanging mobiles. Ask an adult to hollow some eggs for you (keep the yolks to make scrambled eggs or for another recipe). Then decorate with paint, dye, and/or glitter before making your mobile.
3. In pairs make a poster that shows the best pancake toppings. Try and come up with at least three different types of toppings. Make sure you include illustrations and colour so that it's eye-catching.
4. Hold a breakfast party. In small groups plan a menu with 3-4 different types of breakfast food. You could look to other countries and cultures for inspiration (see Level Four activity 3 below). You could serve different groups so that it's a real surprise and treat!

Level Four Activities—Beyond the text

1. Eggs are very good (eggs-ellent!) breakfast food. In pairs find 2-3 reasons why and report back to your class.
2. Some people believe that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Why is this? Do you agree? Do you like to have breakfast? How do you feel if you forget or don't have time to have breakfast? Discuss in groups of 3-4.
3. Different countries and cultures have different foods for breakfast. In pairs, research what is a typical breakfast in three countries or cultures different from your own. Countries you could consider include: Japan, France, Cuba, Russia, South Africa, Turkey, or Egypt.

