IDAN BEN-BARAK: SCIENCE? WHY BOTHER?

DISCUSS: THE IMPORTANCE OF SCIENCE

As a group, discuss why science is important in your everyday lives. How does science help you move around in the world, cook your food, or get healthy again when you are sick?

What do you think is the biggest scientific discovery of all time? What do you think we still need to know more about? (For example: No one *really* knows how the brain works!)

FACT FINDER

Head online or to a library and do some research to find out three interesting facts about the human brain. Try to discover a few things you've never heard of before! What did you learn? Share your facts with your classmates.

In *Your Brain is a Lump of Goo*, Idan Ben-Barak compares the human brain to a pineapple. Based on your investigation, why do you think they are similar? (The answer is in the book!)

IF YOUR BRAIN COULD TALK...

If your brain could talk to you, what do you think it would say? Always wear a helmet, do lots of crosswords, and please stop having such weird dreams? Write an imaginary conversation between you and your brain, and make it as fun and silly as possible!
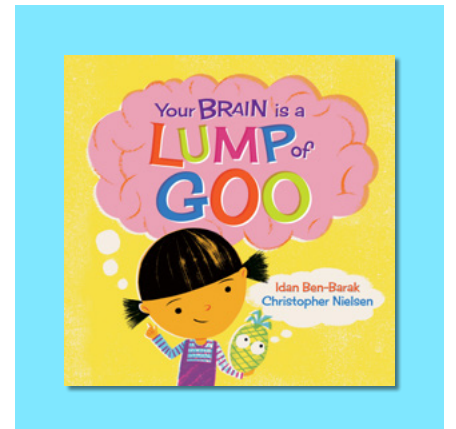
RESEARCH: ANIMAL BRAINS

Different species have different types of brains. Think of your favourite animal and see if you can find out what their brain looks like. How is it different from the human brain? Can you draw a picture of it?

As an extra task, see if you can learn which animal has the largest brain and exactly how big it is!

Idan Ben-Barak

KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

Learning areas: Science, English

Capabilities: Critical and creative thinking

RELEVANT BOOKS

Your Brain is a Lump of Goo

Do Not Lick This Book

About the Author

Idan Ben-Barak writes science books, usually for children; they've been translated into over 20 languages and won several awards. Idan lives in Melbourne with his family. Sometimes, after they go to bed, he plays his guitar a bit. Idan holds degrees in microbiology and in the history and philosophy of science, a diploma in library studies, and a day job that has very little to do with any of the above.

Curriculum Links

Scientific understandings, discoveries and inventions are used to inform personal and community decisions and to solve problems that directly affect people's lives (VCSSU073)

Living things have structural features and adaptations that help them to survive in their environment (VCSSU074)

With guidance, pose questions to clarify practical problems or inform a scientific investigation, and predict what the findings of an investigation might be based on previous experiences or general rules (VCSIS082)

Science knowledge helps people to understand the effects of their actions (VCSSU056)

With guidance, identify questions in familiar contexts that can be investigated scientifically and predict what might happen based on prior knowledge (VCSIS065)

Investigate how vocabulary choices, including evaluative language can express shades of meaning, feeling and opinion (VCELA352)

Recognise how quotation marks are used in texts to signal dialogue, titles and quoted (direct) speech (VCELA291)

Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts containing key information and supporting details for a widening range of audiences, demonstrating increasing control over text structures and language features (VCELY299)

Examine how different kinds of questions can be used to identify and clarify information, ideas and possibilities (VCCCTQ021)

Identify and form links and patterns from multiple information sources to generate non-routine ideas and possibilities (VCCCTQ023)

Consider when analogies might be used in expressing a point of view and how they should be expressed and evaluated (VCCCTR026)

Explore reactions to a given situation or problem and consider the effect of pre-established preferences (VCCCTQ011)

Distinguish between main and peripheral ideas in own and others information and points of view (VCCCTR014)

Identify and use 'If, then...' and 'what if...' reasoning (VCCCTR016)

Investigate why and when the consequences of a point of view should be considered (VCCCTR015)