

# Lion: A Long Way Home



By

Saroo Brierley

A Novel Study  
by Nat Reed

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**About the author:** Nat Reed was a member of the teaching profession for more than 35 years. He was a full-time instructor at Trent University in the Teacher Education Program for nine years. For more information on his work and literature, visit [novelstudies.org](http://novelstudies.org).

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## Suggestions and Expectations

This curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the curriculum guide focuses on one or two chapters of *Lion: A Long Way Home* and is comprised of these activities:

1. Before You Read
2. Vocabulary Building
3. Comprehension Questions
4. Language and Extension Activities

A **portfolio cover** (p.7) as well as a **Checklist** (p.6) are included so that students may track of their completed work.

**Every activity need not be completed by all students.**

### Links with the Common Core Standards (U.S.)

Many of the activities included in this curriculum unit are supported by the Common Core Standards. For instance the *Reading Standards for Literature, Grade 5*, makes reference to

- a) determining the meaning of words and phrases. . . including figurative language;
- b) explaining how a series of chapters fits together to provide the overall structure;
- c) compare and contrast two characters;
- d) determine how characters ... respond to challenges;
- e) drawing inferences from the text;
- f) determining a theme of a story . . . **and many others.**

**Themes** which may be taught in conjunction with the book include family and friendship, loyalty, personal growth, perseverance, adjusting to difficulties, survival, coping with loss.

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### List of Skills

#### Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words/phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homophones
3. Identifying/creating *alliteration*
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identifying syllables
6. Identify *personification*.
7. Identify *anagrams*
8. Listing compound words
9. Identifying parts of speech
10. Identify/create *similes*
11. Identification of root words

#### Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

#### Plot Activities

1. Complete a *time line* of events
2. Identify conflict in the story
3. Complete Five W's Chart
4. Identify *cliffhangers*
5. Identify the climax of the story.
6. Complete a Story Pyramid

#### Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Identify the protagonist
3. Relating personal experiences
4. Compare characters

#### Creative and Critical Thinking

1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Conduct an interview
5. Create a poem
6. Write a description of personal feelings
7. Write a book review
8. Complete an Observation Chart
9. Complete a KWS Chart
10. Create a friendly letter.

#### Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Design a cover for the book
4. Create a comic strip

# Lion: A Long Way Home

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## Synopsis

Can you imagine being lost and not finding your way home again? Saroo Brierley got lost on a train in India at the age of five. Not knowing the name of his family or where he was from, he survived for weeks on the streets of Kolkata, before being taken into an orphanage and adopted by a family in Australia.

Despite being happy in his new home, Saroo always wondered about his origins. He spent hours staring at the map of India on his bedroom wall. He pored over satellite images on Google Earth seeking out landmarks he recognized. And one day, after years of searching, he miraculously found what he was looking for.

Then he set off on a journey back to India to see if he could find his mother.  
[Courtesy of the publisher]

## Author Biography Saroo Brierley

Saroo Brierley was born in an Indian town called Khandwa. In 1986, aged only 5, he lost all contact with his family when he was at a train station waiting for his brother who never returned. After living on the streets of Calcutta for 3 weeks by himself, he then got placed into a local orphanage where an Australian family adopted Saroo. He then grew up with his newly adopted parents in Hobart, Tasmania where he spent the next 25 years. After years trying to track down his old town through the labyrinth of railways lines on Google Earth and an image etched into his brain as a 5 year old, he finally found his town Khandwa on the map and traveled to India to try and find members of his family. In early 2012, after 25 years of separation, he reunited with his mother. [Courtesy of [saroobrierley.com](http://saroobrierley.com)]





# Lion: A Long Way Home



*By Saroo Brierley*

Name:

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# Lion: A Long Way Home

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## Chapters 1-2



### Before you read the chapters:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The main character of *Lion: A Long Way Home* is Saroo, who begins his story as a five-year old boy living in a small village in India. Think back on some of your favorite characters from past novels you have read or movies you’ve seen. What do you think makes for an interesting **protagonist**? (One that is difficult to forget.)




### Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence. Careful – each word fits best in only one sentence.

affectionate	refined	illogical	forage
ravenous	affluent	subsist	malnourished

1. It seemed completely \_\_\_\_\_ to think that he could open the door without a key.
2. After being lost for three days in the woods, Kevin was \_\_\_\_\_ with hunger.
3. Saroo was soon forced to \_\_\_\_\_ for his food.
4. The ore from the mine must be \_\_\_\_\_ before being made into gold.
5. Saroo was able to \_\_\_\_\_ on less than three solid meals a day.
6. That poor little girl looks extremely \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Our puppy is quite outgoing and \_\_\_\_\_.
8. I think that my millionaire uncle was quite \_\_\_\_\_ even as a young man.

## Questions



1. What is the **setting** of the story at the beginning of Chapter One?


2. Why were memories of his past so important to Saroo?


3. Do you think it was a good idea for Saroo's Australian parents to keep his past alive and to understand and share his culture with him? Why or why not?


4. Making a map with Mum triggered a flood of memories of his life in India.

True or False

5. **Investigate:** Saroo remembers his family gathering around and listening to the **harmonium**. What is an harmonium?


6. Saroo's mother belonged to the \_\_\_\_\_ religion, whereas his father was a \_\_\_\_\_ . Saroo's brothers were named \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ . His sister's name was \_\_\_\_\_ .

7. What did Guddu and Saroo's mother do to earn money?


8. Describe one event in Saroo's life from the first two chapters which impressed you the most.


## Language Activities



### A. India

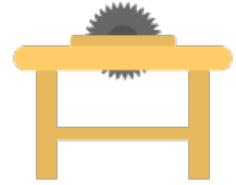
India is one of the world's more intriguing countries. Home to more than 1.2 billion people, it is the second most populous country on earth. Research four facts about this fascinating nation and record these facts below.



1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

## B. Anagrams

An **anagram** is a word that is formed by changing the order of the letters of another word. For example, the letters in the word **WAS** can also form the word **SAW**. Follow these directions to form the anagrams:



a) read the clue in the right-hand column.

b) Using the word in the left-hand column move the letters around in any order, but you must use all the letters. All of the words in the left-hand column can be found in the first chapter of *Lion: A Long Way Home*.

Word	Anagram	Clue
share		Perceives.
sleep		Removes the outer covering or skin from fruit.
times		Minute arachnids.
goats		Loose flowing outer garments.
waste		Perspire.
plate		Part of a flower.
parent		Snare.

Now find two additional words from the first two chapters which have interesting anagrams to see if you can stump a classmate.

Word	Anagram	Clue

### Good to Know ~ The Monsoon

The weather of the area of India in which Saroo lived was generally hot and dry except during the heavy rains of the monsoon, which started in May or June and finished in September or October. These rains were brought into India by the big seasonal winds blowing in from the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. The Indian Monsoon turns large parts of India from a kind of semi-desert into green lands. The Indian Monsoon affects the Indian subcontinent and surrounding regions including Nepal, whereas the East Asian Monsoon affects southern China, Taiwan, Korea and parts of Japan.



## C. A Quatrain Poem About a Train.

The **quatrain** is a popular form of rhymed verse. It is a poem of four lines, is usually light and can be humorous. In honor of Saroo's love of trains, the famous poet, Atrocious Halitosis wrote the following quatrain. It is called, ***Why I Love Trains***.

*A freight train is an awesome deal,  
I'd rather watch than eat a meal.  
It thunders by and rounds the bend,  
And heaven knows when it will end.*



Various rhyming schemes make up a quatrain poem. As you can see, the above four lines have a rhyming scheme of **A - A - B - B**. Other rhyming schemes include: ABAB, AAAA, AABA, ABBA, ABBA, and AAAB.

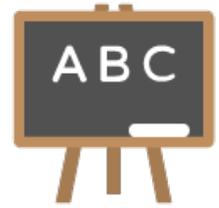
Your task is to write your own quatrain poem. You may choose a rhyming scheme that fits with your own personal creation. The theme should have something to do with the themes established in the first two chapters of our book.

### The Quatrain Poem

Now create your own Quatrain Poem. Your poem must follow the format of a quatrain poem described above (and must rhyme).

Title: \_\_\_\_\_


**D.** Many authors enjoy using **alliteration** – a literary device where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. Here's an example from Chapter 1: *I picked up the new language quite quickly.*



Using your imagination, create your own examples of **alliteration** from the following topics. Each example must contain a minimum of three words.

A monsoon.	
A speeding train.	
Your choice.	

**E.** Chapter One contains an example of an important literary device called **foreshadowing**. Foreshadowing is defined as *a warning or indication of a future event*. In Chapter One Saroo states, *It was only later, when I began to open up to people about my experiences, that I saw in their eyes it was extraordinary.*



1. Why do you think the author included this statement?

2. Find another example of foreshadowing from Chapter Two:

## F. 5 Ws and an H.

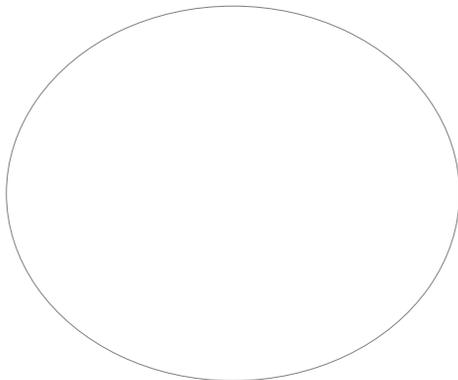
Choose an event from this section that you thought was really important and/or exciting. Using facts that you gleaned from reading about this event, fill in the balloons below, summarizing what you learned.



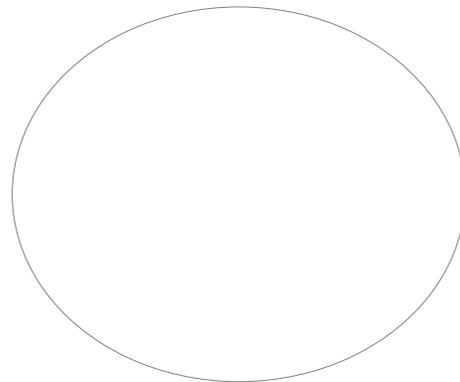
**WHO?**



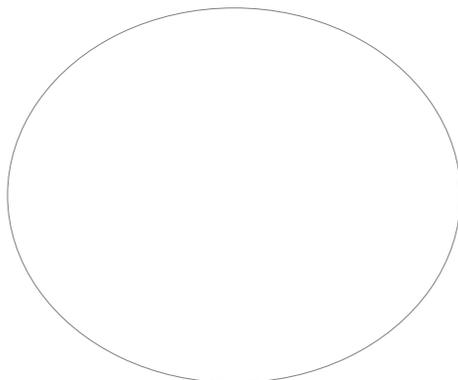
**WHAT?**



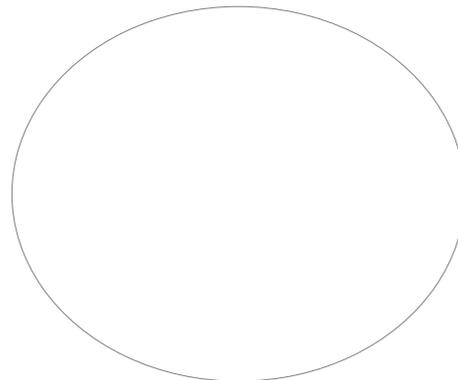
**WHEN?**



**WHERE?**



**WHY?**



**HOW?**

## Extension Activity



### Storyboard

A storyboard is a series of pictures that tell about an important event in a story. A storyboard can tell the story of only one scene - or the entire book. Complete the storyboard below illustrating the events described in the first two chapters of our book. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.



1	2
3	4
5	6