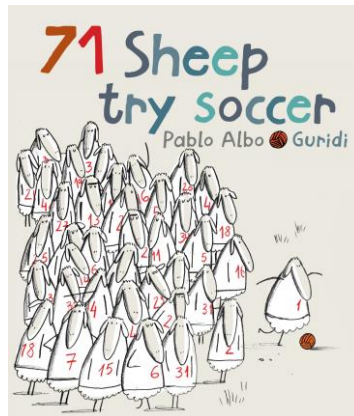


## Teacher notes for *71 Sheep try soccer*



### SYNOPSIS

*71 Sheep try soccer* written by Pablo Albo and illustrated by Guridi

Sheep aren't exactly renowned for their organisation skills, so when 71 sheep arrange a game of soccer, things are always going to get interesting. When their ball gets stuck in a tree, how will all the sheep cooperate to retrieve it? And when an unexpected danger presents itself, how will the sheep organise themselves to stay safe....and finish their game of soccer?

*71 Sheep try soccer* is a quirky and humorous book, showing young readers how unexpected challenges can be triumphed by imagination and cooperation.

### THEMES

- Challenges and overcoming adversity
- Imagination and creativity
- Problem solving
- Stereotypes
- Team effort
- Humour

### AUTHOR

#### **Pablo Albo**

Pablo Albo is from Alicante, Spain and has written over 40 children's picture books. A celebrated and acclaimed author in Spain he has also been nominated for the White Raven Award in 2010 and short listed for the Bologna Ragazzi award in 2010 and 2012.

Pablo Albo has also collaborated with Guridi on two other picture books.

## **ILLUSTRATOR**

### **Guridi**

Guridi is a graduate from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Seville, and has worked for many years in advertising and multimedia.

Since 2010, Guridi is one of Spain's most recognised children's book illustrators and has currently published more than twenty picture books..

## **STUDY NOTES**

- Ask the children which sports they play. Make a list of the sports.
  - Create a graph or pictograph that represents how many children participate in each sport.
  - What are the most popular sports?
  - How many are team sports?
- Why are team sports fun? What does it teach us to do? Themes to discuss include: cooperation; trust; individuals with different skills contributing to a common objective.
- The sheep show resilience and ingenuity when faced with adversity. Ask the children to give some examples of challenges they faced. How did they overcome them?
- Ask the children how they have solved some of the problems that have occurred when they have played a sport as a lunch time game. Does it require co-operation and teamwork?
- Can you remember a time in playing a team sport where a funny situation has occurred?
- The author plays on the stereotyped notions we sometimes have in children's literature; sheep are often represented as animals without wit or intelligence but in this book the sheep are able to find creative and unusual solutions to their problems. The wolf on the other hand does not seem to show the same cunning usually associated with wolves. This is an opportunity to discuss how we are not bound by stereotypes or preconceptions.
- A group may seem homogenous (like a flock of sheep), but if we look closer, we can see small differences and individuality.

- Discuss this using real-life examples (e.g. spotting differences amongst a bunch of flowers; or a box a box of matches; or a photo of a crowd of people or animals).
- Celebrate this with a craft exercise, whereby children each use cotton wool to make a sheep, but have a chance to individualise it. Put the classroom's sheep together on display to show case this diversity within a seemingly homogenous group.
- Humour and absurdity are employed by the author and illustrator. Can you give examples of the device being used? For example, the soccer ball is a yarn of wool.
- Ask the class to list which parts of the book they found funny, and why.
- Play a game of soccer!