

# The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch

SECTION

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## About the book

*The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch*, first published over 30 years ago in 1977, has become a modern-day children's classic picture book. Every day, Mr Grinling, the lighthouse keeper, clambers down the steep, rocky cliffs and rows across the choppy sea to his lighthouse to clean and polish his light and make sure it shines brightly at night. At lunchtime he munches on his delicious lunch, lovingly and thoughtfully prepared by his wife, who sends the lunch in a basket, down a wire to the lighthouse. Mr Grinling, however, is not the only one who looks forward to the tasty food. Greedy seagulls intercept the perfect picnics on their journey down the wire. Mrs Grinling has to think of a way to stop the greedy seagulls from stealing the lighthouse keeper's lunch.

Aside from the tasty ingredients in Mrs Grinling's picnic basket, the story contains the ingredients for a superb cocktail of cross-curricular opportunities (as well as its obvious literacy links). It is an ideal stimulus for at least a half-term's creative curriculum scheme of work: the history of lighthouses; the story of Grace Darling; geographical locations of lighthouses around the British Isles; planning healthy eating in PSHE; design and technology ideas for solving Mr Grinling's lunch problem and designing healthy meals; science opportunities with circuits; art opportunities with seascapes; maths data collection and presentation; drama and home-corner role play; as well as endless opportunities for learning in ICT.

The story has a classically simple structure: a distinct beginning (where we are introduced to the setting and the main characters); a clearly identifiable middle (where the plot takes place in a sequenced series of events, using the days of the week to separate each event); and a pleasing ending that brings the story neatly to

a close. This makes this book an ideal example for teaching story structure.

## About the author

Ronda Armitage was born in New Zealand. She was a primary school teacher for a number of years and also trained as a counsellor, working in family therapy. She has written many children's books, the majority of which are illustrated by her husband, David, who is an artist. As well as children's fiction, she writes non-fiction family therapy books. Ronda has written a number of other books featuring Mr and Mrs Grinling and their marmalade cat, Hamish. These include *The Lighthouse Keeper's Catastrophe*, *The Lighthouse Keeper's Cat*, *The Lighthouse Keeper's Christmas* and *The Lighthouse Keeper's Picnic*, to name but a few.



## About the illustrator

David Armitage has been an exhibitions officer for a city gallery and an art editor. His working life is divided between illustration, graphic design and painting. His artwork is exhibited in this country and abroad. *The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch* was inspired by a visit with the children to Beachy Head. Since then Ronda and David have jointly published many picture books. David has also illustrated stories for other authors and written his own books.

### Facts and figures

*The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch*

**Author:** Ronda Armitage

**Illustrator:** David Armitage

**First published:** 1977 by Andre Deutsch Ltd.

It was Ronda Armitage's first book, and won the 1978 Esther Glen Award (New Zealand).

*The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch* has been adapted for the stage by The Pied Piper Theatre Company, who specialise in presenting adaptations of well-known children's stories.

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