

Goldilocks and the Three Bears

Interview with set creator Emily Jenkins, photographer Polly Borland and author Lauren Child

Who came up with the idea for the book?

EJ: Polly had a book she loved as a child called *The Lonely Doll*. This was the inspiration for us to make a story book using photographs of toys for the illustrations.

PB: I came up with the idea of using a doll and teddy bears, and Mandy Shur, an editor at Puffin, came up with the idea of Goldilocks and the three Bears!

The book must have involved lots of teamwork – how did you all get on together and who did what job?

EJ: We all got on well and had lots of meetings to discuss everyone's ideas. I collected a lot of images at the start of the project, which inspired the style and colouring of everything. We were very keen to use a felt doll similar to the one in Polly's book, and it took a long time to find the right doll. We had to postpone taking the photographs for a year while we waited for Goldilocks and the bears to be made in America!

PB: Lauren Child wrote the story, I photographed it and Emily Jenkins designed the sets and for the most part built the set. Goldy Broad, a designer, and Mandy Shur at Puffin, helped a lot with the overall look of the book. Goldy was with us all through the shooting of the book.

LC: I was lucky because I just wrote the story – Polly and Emily



had all the hard work of creating the pictures. We did all meet to discuss how the story would flow and I tried to incorporate as many interesting details as possible, such as Goldilocks snagging her striped stockings, the little red shoes, the little blue bird, and the snow white feather. These images were then worked into the illustrations.

Did you have any disagreements?

PB: A few!

EJ: We had a lot of disagreements about the doll and about the final colours of everything in the house. I wanted to make patchwork quilts for the bears' beds, which caused a lot of arguments! Polly and I had a row about crab apples as well, which seems funny now.

The sets are very detailed. Who designed them and how long did they take to make?

EJ: I designed the sets; it's difficult to say how long they took to make overall. First I made a tiny scale model of the house about the size of a shoe box, then a carpenter copied it exactly but bigger for the final sets. But it took a long time – for example it took about a week just to make the kitchen cooker! All the furniture made from sticks took a long time. It's difficult to stick sticks! They break easily and the glue won't hold on the dusty surface of the bark.

PB: Emily Jenkins designed the sets. Overall, it took three years to decide on the idea of building the sets and photographing the pictures to the book being published.

How did the photograph direction work when you were dealing with puppets not people?

EJ: The art direction of the photos was very fiddly – to get all the toys standing up in the right pose at the same time. Also, I was pregnant so the bump was in the way a bit when I had to reach into the small rooms! We all helped with the art direction. We had to stick a skewer up Goldilocks' skirt to prop her up when we were outside in the woods!

PB: Emily was good at getting the animals in the right poses.



How long did the story take to photograph?

EJ: A couple of months.

Was the book storyboarded before being photographed?

EJ: The book was very carefully storyboarded. We made sure that each picture would fit on the page with the text beside it or under it and nothing important was happening where the pages fold.

What came first: the text or the pictures?

EJ: Lauren had the text roughly finished when we took the photos, and she finalised it when she saw the finished photos.

PB: Both came at the same time, but the photos were finished before the text.

LC: I had to write the story first – it would not have been possible to shoot without the story. It's a bit like making a film.

The text has a very strong voice. Why was this important when retelling the story?

PB: You need to put a different slant on a text that is so old and well known.

What tips can you give to anyone who might want to make a similar book?

PB: Just let your imagination run wild!

