

## These notes are for:

- Ages 6+
- Primary
- Years 1 & 2

## Key Learning Areas:

- English
- Science & Technology
- History
- ICT

## Example of:

- Chapter Book
- Junior Fiction / Illustrated Fiction
- *Walker Stories*

## Experience of:

- Reflecting on text
- Shared reading/viewing
- Reading & Writing
- Speaking & Listening
- Groupwork
- Research

## Values:

- Care & compassion\*
- Responsibility\*
- Doing your best\*
- Acceptance

\* From the National Values in Australian Schools document

## Themes:

- Riddles & jokes
- Safety
- Transport
- School life

\*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

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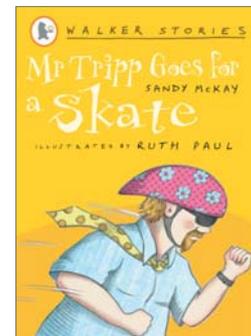
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## Mr Tripp Goes for a Skate

### *Mr Tripp Goes for a Skate* (Walker Stories)

Author: Sandy McKay  
 Illustrator: Ruth Paul  
 ISBN: 9781921529733  
 ARRP: \$11.95  
 NZRRP: \$13.99  
 Feb 2012



## Outline:

Mr Tripp is teaching Room Five about the wheel. On Friday, Wheels Day, everyone is allowed to bring something with wheels. Ted rides a bicycle, Tania wears rollerblades, Jingjing brings her scooter and Lily borrows her brother's BMX. When Miss Filipo suggests Mr Tripp give a skateboard demonstration, it becomes a very exciting day indeed.

Walker Stories support beginner readers making the transition from picture books in an engaging, entertaining and accessible way. Each title features three highly illustrated, individual short stories linked by one character, so readers can build familiarity and confidence.

## Author/Illustrator Information:

**Sandy McKay** is a New Zealand born author who began writing stories when her children were little to encourage them to read. Her first novel *Recycled* (Longacre Press) won the New Zealand Post Children's Book Award for Junior Fiction in 2002. She has since had three other titles appear on the Notable list for the same award. *Mr Tripp Smells a Rat*, the first book in the Mr Tripp series, was Sandy's first title with Walker Books. Sandy lives in Dunedin with her husband and her three children.

**Ruth Paul** is an award-winning author and illustrator from New Zealand. Ruth calls herself an "old-fashioned" illustrator, working in hands-on media such as acrylic, pastels and pencils, using Photoshop to do last-minute work on scans where required. In 2008 her title *The King's Bubbles* won the Children's Choice Award at the New Zealand Post Children's Book Awards and the Children's Book Design Award at the Book Publishers Association of New Zealand Design Awards. Ruth lives in the country in a straw-bale house powered by its own remote electricity system, with her husband and two young sons.

## How to use these notes:

These notes are to be used in conjunction with the text *Mr Tripp Goes for a Skate*. Multiple copies of the text are recommended for shared reading. This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

## SANDY MCKAY ON *MR TRIPP GOES FOR A SKATE*:

This is the first book I have ever written about skateboarding. That's probably because I'm not very good at it. (Our boys are though. They are good at snowboarding too.) Mr Tripp says everyone has something they are good at. Like balancing on one leg, singing the first verse of "Waltzing Matilda" backwards or juggling oranges. Mr Tripp is good at telling jokes but he's not so good at skateboarding. In this story he gets himself in trouble when he accidentally pretends that he IS good at skateboarding. (Secretly, I think he only does this to impress Miss Filippo. What do you think?)

The idea for the story came from watching my eldest son, Keri, and his good friend Blake Wilson. When they were younger they loved to skateboard. They used to build all their own jumps and once Keri made a gigantic "half-pipe" that took up the whole of our front garden. The boys would spend hours trying to get better at tricks and took their skateboards everywhere. They don't skate so much these days, which is a real shame. Personally, I think if you're good at something you should keep doing it. I wonder if my boys should give Mr Tripp a skateboard lesson one day?

## BEFORE READING *MR TRIPP GOES FOR A SKATE*

- View the cover of the book and identify the following:
  - the series title
  - the author
  - the book title
  - the publisher
  - the illustrator
  - the logo
  - the blurb
  - the ISBN
- The three chapters in the book are called "Mr Tripp Draws a Circle", "Mr Tripp Changes Colour" and "Mr Tripp Goes for a Skate". From the titles only, discuss what each of these stories might be about. How do your predictions change after looking at the cover? What about after reading the blurb?

What is the function of each of these elements?

## ACTIVITIES & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### Mr Tripp Draws a Circle

- On pages 7-8, Mr Tripp draws a circle on the board and asks the class what it might represent. What are some of the ideas Lily's class comes up with? What else could it represent?
- Draw a circle in your book and follow Mr Tripp's instructions to turn it into a wheel. Draw a number of other circles in your book and see what you can transform these into. Try to be as creative as possible! Choose your best drawing and copy it onto the whiteboard for the rest of the class to see.
- As a class, brainstorm a list of machines which use wheels. (Try to think about things other than forms of transport.) Draw a large wheel on the board. In the centre circle write "machines which use wheels" and in the outer circle write all the examples the class contributes.
- On page 8, Mr Tripp describes the wheel as "one of humankind's greatest inventions". What do you think is humankind's greatest invention of all? Write a 1-minute persuasive speech and deliver it to the class, convincing them of why your chosen invention is the best.
- Why is the phrase "wheely wheely excited" (p. 14) humorous? Discuss the meaning of the term "pun". Do you know any other jokes where the punch line involves a pun? Find a joke and tell it to the class.
- "On Friday not one person walked to school. Instead, everyone scooted or skated or pushed or pedaled." (p. 15). What is the literary term for these "doing" words? (Verbs). Can you think of any other verbs that could describe the way the students came to school on Wheels Day?
- Find a picture of a penny-farthing on the internet. Can you discover how it got its name?
- What are some of the machines that Lily's classmates bring to school? If you had a Wheels Day at your school, what would you ride?
- On page 22 Miss Filippo says, "I think a teacher could look very dashing on a skateboard." What do you think the word "dashing" means, based on how it is used in the story? Look it up in a dictionary. Was the meaning what you thought? Why do you think Miss Filippo makes this comment?

### Mr Tripp Changes Colour

- Find the three times Mr Tripp's face changes colour in this chapter. What might he be thinking on each occasion?
- On page 29 Mr Tripp talks about the safety issues involved in riding a skateboard. What are some of the things he does to increase his safety? Make a pamphlet promoting the safe use of bicycles, skateboards or rollerblades. Some ideas to consider include protective clothing, maintaining equipment, visibility and safe places to ride. Use subheadings, bullet points, pictures and diagrams in your brochure to make your information easier for readers to understand.
- Look at the illustration in the bottom corner of page 33. Why do you think Ruth Paul has included this picture? How does it relate to the written text?
- How do we know that Mr Tripp clearly doesn't want to ride the skateboard? What would you do in his position? Do you think Miss Filippo and the other students are pressuring him unfairly?
- Discuss what you think might happen in the next chapter.



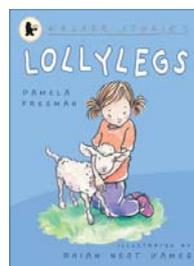
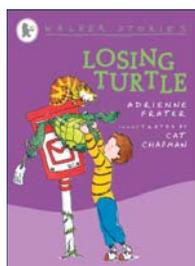
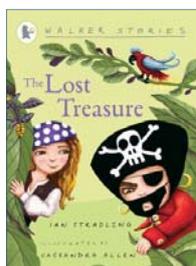
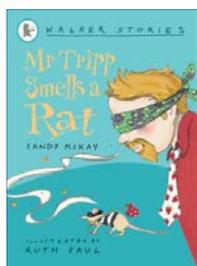
### Mr Tripp Goes for A Skate

- Can you balance on a skateboard? What other sports require good balance? How long can you balance on one leg for?
- Look at the word “crash” on page 50. Why is it written in a different font to the rest of the text? Choose some other words in the book and type them into a Word document on a computer. Use the “font” tab to choose lettering which visually reinforces the meaning of each word.
- How does Mr Tripp respond when he falls off the skateboard? How else could he have reacted?
- What new significance does Mr Tripp’s name gain after his accident? Could this be considered a type of pun? Do you think the author intended this? Explain your answer.
- Were you surprised by the way the story ended? Why or why not? Did you expect Mr Tripp to be a good skateboarder? What does Mr Tripp end up riding around the playground instead of on a skateboard?

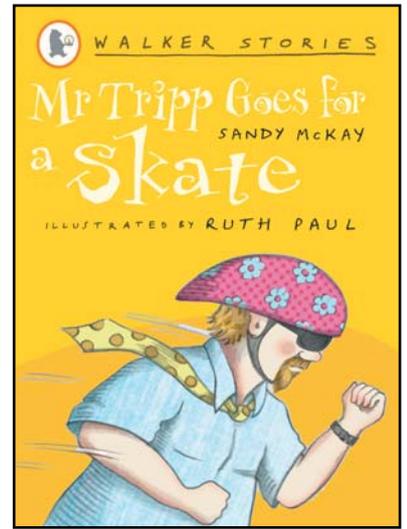
### AFTER READING MR TRIPP GOES FOR A SKATE:

- Throughout the book, the reader is kept in suspense about what will happen when Mr Tripp eventually rides the skateboard. What are some of the things the author does to generate this suspense? How does the use of suspense help involve the reader in the story?
- Write out all the facts you learn about wheels from the book. Research wheels on the internet or in the library and find three more interesting facts to add to your list. The following websites and books might be useful in your research:
  - [www.pitara.com/magazine/features/online.asp?story=10](http://www.pitara.com/magazine/features/online.asp?story=10)
  - <http://library.thinkquest.org/C004203/science/science02.htm>
  - *How Machines Work* by Nick Arnold and Allan Sanders (illustrator)
- Pretend that you are one of the students in Lily’s class and write an article about Wheels Day for the school newsletter.
- Retell a section of the story from Mr Tripp’s perspective. Focus on his thoughts and feelings rather than simply recounting events.
- Create a table showing how your school is similar and different to Lily’s.
- Ruth Paul includes a picture of a rabbit in many of the illustrations. Try to locate this rabbit. Why do you think she includes it? In what other ways do the illustrations add to or enhance the story?
- Overall, do you think that Mr Tripp is a good teacher? Why or why not? Would you like Mr Tripp to teach your class?
- Did you learn anything from the book? Think about facts as well as messages the author might be trying to send. What do you think is the moral or main message of the book?
- As a class, write a procedure for building a go-kart and compile a list of materials you will need. Working in small groups, build and decorate your own go-kart, then have a mini Wheels Day where each group demonstrates their go-kart to the rest of the class.
- Compare and contrast *Mr Tripp Goes for a Skate* with the first Mr Tripp story, *Mr Tripp Smells a Rat*.
- Come up with some ideas for what the next Mr Tripp story might be about. Choose one idea then create the front and back cover for this book. (You might like to do this on the computer with a Design program.) Make sure you include the title, author, illustrator and logo on the front cover and use colour, font, borders and pictures in a creative way. Write a blurb for the back cover which gives the reader some idea of what the story will be about and makes them want to read the book. (Hint: use a mixture of descriptive and persuasive language!) Get inspiration by reading some blurbs in the school library first.

### Other Australian/New Zealand Walker Stories



For information about new releases, the latest awards news and links to a range of Teacher resources, sign up to our education newsletter at [www.walkerbooks.com.au/Teachers](http://www.walkerbooks.com.au/Teachers)



Create your own skateboard design on the stencil opposite.

