

These notes are for:

- Preschool
- Kindergarten – Year 3

Key Learning Areas:

- English
- Art
- PDHPE

Example of:

- Picture book/visual text
- Third-person narrative
- Cautionary tale
- Imaginative text

Experience of:

- Visual literacy
- Reading
- Writing
- Representing

Values addressed:

- Responsibility
- Care & compassion

Themes:

- Grooming & personal hygiene
- Rebellion
- Cooperation
- Gardens

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

Walker Books Australia Ph +61 2 9517 9577
 Locked Bag 22 Fax +61 2 9517 9997
 Newtown, N.S.W., 2042

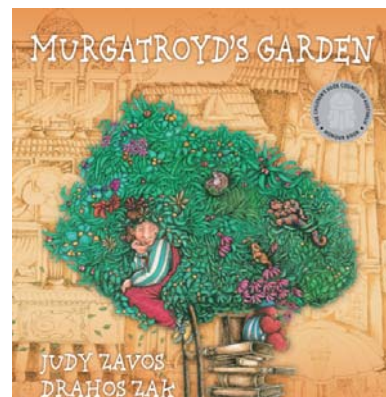
These notes were created by Leonie Jordan.
 For enquiries please contact Leonie Jordan:
leonie.jordan@walkerbooks.com.au

Notes © 2011 Walker Books Australia Pty. Ltd.
 All Rights Reserved

Murgatroyd's Garden

Murgatroyd's Garden

Author: Judy Zavos
 Illustrator: Drahos Zak
 ISBN: 9781921720529
 ARRP: \$16.95
 NZRRP: \$18.99
 No. of Pages: 40
 Sept 2011



Synopsis

Murgatroyd hated, hated, hated having his hair washed. When his parents tried, his screams were so loud they could be heard everywhere! So they stopped washing his hair, and a magnificent garden began to grow on his head ...

This humorous cautionary tale conveys an important lesson about personal hygiene, teaching children the value of curbing their rebellious instincts and conforming to convention, when appropriate. The intricately rendered illustrations combine sepia, black-and-white line drawings and rich, full colour spreads, drawing readers into this wonderfully imaginative picture book.

First published in 1986 and reissued as part of the Walker Classics series, *Murgatroyd's Garden* was an Honour Book in the 1987 CBCA awards in the Picture Book of the Year category.

Author/illustrator information

Judy Zavos: Originally from New Zealand, Judy's father was working in India when she was born. His work took the family to a number of countries, and books became both solace and refuge for Judy during this time.

Judy now lives in Sydney, where she teaches ESOL to adult migrants at a TAFE college. Judy has two sons, Zolton and Zachary, who were the inspiration for *Murgatroyd's Garden*.

Drahos Zak arrived in Australia from the Czech Republic in 1980. He has worked as an illustrator for various newspapers and magazines, but it is his illustrations for children's books that have gained him international recognition. His titles include *The Pied Piper of Hamelin* retold by Robert Holden, which won best design at the APA awards and was a Notable Book in the 1998 CBCA awards, *The Brothers Gruesome* written by Susan Elgar, which was a Notable Book in the 2000 CBCA awards, and *The True Story of Mary Who Wanted to Stand on Her Head*, written by Jane Godwin, which was short-listed in the Younger Readers Book of the Year category in the 2006 CBCA awards and was winner of the White Raven UNESCO International Youth Library Award and the Aurealis Award, Children's Short Stories category.

How to use these notes

This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

Judy Zavos on *Murgatroyd's Garden*

“Our two sons, Zolton and Zac were cherubic ... except on hair-wash night, when cherubs became ferals. I had to do something! So I thought up a cautionary tale to shock them into letting me wash their hair. I'm happy to say it worked.

Years later on a whim, I wrote this story down, just as I'd told it to my sons.”

Drahos Zak on *Murgatroyd's Garden*

“I read the text of *Murgatroyd's Garden* and started drawing and sketching. I didn't meet the author until the book was finished and I was trusted to use my vision for the book. I had free reign of the drawings and visual ideas, which is how I prefer to work. I like to create a lot of fine detail and capture stories in an alternative way, which makes my style unique to children's book illustrations.”

From *Murgatroyd's Garden*

In the classroom

- Judy Zavos describes *Murgatroyd's Garden* as a “cautionary tale”. This is a story with a main message warning against the consequences of doing the wrong thing. How does the protagonist do the wrong thing in *Murgatroyd's Garden*? What are the consequences for him? Do you think these consequences are realistic, or is the author using exaggeration? If so, what parts of the story are exaggerated? Why do you think they have used this device?
- Can you think of any other cautionary tales? What do they warn against? What are the consequences for the protagonists when they break the rules? Are these stories realistic, or do they also use exaggeration? Some stories to look at could include *The Boy Who Cried Wolf*, *Struwwelpeter* by Heinrich Hoffman and *Cautionary Tales for Children* by Hilaire Belloc.
- In small groups, make a list of rules or expectations you have to follow. These could be things relating to health or hygiene (e.g. brushing your teeth), good manners (e.g. not talking with your mouth full), school rules (e.g. wearing a uniform) or laws of the country (e.g. wearing a seatbelt in the car). For each of these, write the possible consequences of doing the wrong thing (try to consider both the short and long-term effects). Present this information as a poster with a picture – or possibly warning sign – to illustrate each point!
- Choose one of these rules or expectations and use it as the inspiration for your own cautionary tale. Make sure you decide who the protagonist (main character) is, where the story is set, what the protagonist does wrong, what the consequences are and what the moral of the story is. Edit and illustrate your story then read it to a younger class at school. What did they think the main message was? Was this what you intended?
- The book states that Murgatroyd, “lives happily with his mummy and daddy in a nice house in a city not far from here”. Where and when do you think *Murgatroyd's Garden* is set? In the past? In another country? In a fairytale kingdom or fantasy world? What gives you this impression?
- The illustrator uses a variety of artistic styles in the book, combining sepia, black-and-white line drawings and full colour illustrations. Find examples of each style. Choose one page and examine which parts of the picture the illustrator has used full colour for. Why do you think they have decided to emphasise these particular elements?
- Examine the illustrations on the page which begins, “Murgatroyd just sat there day after day getting more and more miserable.” Where is Murgatroyd? How many different animals and birds can you spot in the picture? Which do you recognise? Are any of them unusual in any way? What different plants can you identify?
- Imagine you were Murgatroyd with the magnificent garden growing on his head. Write a diary entry about what he might be thinking and feeling. Would he be frightened? Embarrassed? Lonely? Regretful? Would he be tired from the weight of the garden? What sights, sounds and smells would he be surrounded by?
- Create your own Murgatroyd's garden from an eggshell using the worksheet provided on the Walker website.

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