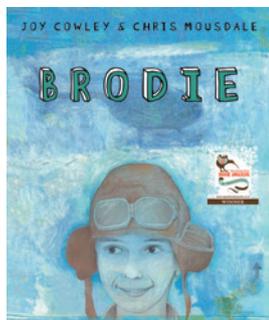




# Walker Books Classroom Ideas



## Walker Classics: Brodie

Author: Joy Cowley  
Illustrator: Chris Mousdale  
ISBN: 9781922077752  
ARRP: \$16.95  
NZRRP: \$18.99  
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\*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

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## Outline:

Brodie always made us laugh. He'd wiggle his ears and yodel like a country singer. He was an awesome artist and drew heaps of planes and helicopters because he wanted to be a chopper pilot. We all knew Brodie was sick, but we never thought he'd die.

## Author/Illustrator Information:

Joy Cowley is one of New Zealand's most celebrated authors. In 1992, she was awarded an OBE for services to children's literature; and the following year she was granted an honorary doctorate from Massey University, as well as being awarded the Margaret Mahy Medal and a DCNZM (A Damehood in the old honour system). In 2002, the Joy Cowley Award was established in her honour. Most recently, Joy received the 2010 New Zealand Prime Minister's Award for Literary Achievement in Fiction.

Chris Mousdale was born in Liverpool, England, and has been living in New Zealand since 1990. He studied Fine Art at Canterbury College of Art in Kent and has worked as a freelance illustrator since 1986. Chris has illustrated over two thousand editorial graphics, as well as book covers, posters and CD covers. Chris is also a designer and artist and has had a number of solo exhibitions of his paintings and constructions. *Brodie* is his first picture book. In 2002 it was a Storylines Notable Picture Book and won the New Zealand Post Children's Picture Book Award. Chris was awarded Best First Book for his illustrations.

## 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.

### These notes are for:

- Primary years F+
- Ages 5+

### Key Learning Areas:

- English
- Art

### Example of:

- Picture book
- Fiction

### Themes/Ideas:

- Death
- Loss
- Friendship
- Hope

### National Curriculum Focus:\*

English content descriptions include:

Foundation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
ACELA1429	ACELA1787	ACELA1462	ACELT1594
ACELA1433	ACELA1447	ACELA1469	ACELT1596
ACELA1786	ACELA1454	ACELT1587	ACELY1599
ACELT1575	ACELT1581	ACELT1589	ACELY1675
ACELT1783	ACELT1582	ACELT1590	ACELY1676
ACELY1646	ACELT1584	ACELT1591	ACELY1792
ACELY1650	ACELY1655		
	ACELY1656		
	ACELY1788		

\*Key content descriptions have been identified from the Australian National Curriculum. However, this is not an exhaustive list of National Curriculum content able to be addressed through studying this text.



# Walker Books Classroom Ideas

## Discussion Questions and Activities

- Before reading *Brodie*, view the cover and title of the book. Identify the following:
  - » The title of the book
  - » The author
  - » The illustrator
  - » The publisher
  - » The blurb.
- Based on the cover, what do you think this story is about? How do you think it will begin/end?
- What are the themes in this novel? As a class or in small groups identify and list the themes. Individually write a statement of belief about each theme.
- After reading the book through for the first time, have a class discussion on what the book is about. Ask students how the story made them feel. Also discuss why students think the author would write a book about this subject.
- Brodie's friend narrates the story, though we don't know much about him. What do we know about him from the book? Use hints from the book and your imagination to write a description of the narrator.
- What is the significance of Brodie's love of flying and dreams of becoming a pilot?
- Mrs Patawai gives Brodie her grandfather's flying helmet as a birthday present. What is the significance of Mrs Patawai giving Brodie a present that would have sentimental value to her?
- Brodie's classmates are all optimistic that he will recover from his illness. Is it important to stay optimistic and hopeful during difficult times? Why do you think that?
- Why do you think the class members all reacted differently to the news of Brodie's death? Is there a right or wrong way to react to the death of a loved one? What factors may change the way you would react to the news of someone's death?
- There are a number of different ideas about the afterlife among Brodie's classmates. Ask the class to share stories about what they think happens after death. Investigate the beliefs of other cultures regarding the afterlife.
- Why does Mrs Patawai think it would be a nice idea to send Brodie's family cards after he passes? What are some other things you can do to help grieving friends or loved ones?
- Grief is a major theme in *Brodie*. What does grief mean? When do people feel grief?
- What is the significance of Brodie's mum returning the flying helmet and the drawing book to Mrs Patawai and the narrator?
- Brodie is always seen smiling in the illustrations even though he is sick. Also, when the narrator visits Brodie in hospital, Brodie is quite upbeat even though he is talking about the possibility of dying. Why do you think Brodie is shown this way? Why do you think he is not shown being sad or scared?
- Why has the illustrator chosen to illustrate *Brodie* like a scrapbook?
- Read through the book again as a class and discuss how the illustrator has interpreted the author's words on each page.
- How do you think this book would have been different if the illustrator had interpreted the text more literally (i.e. illustrations showing exactly what is happening in the text)?
- Many of the illustrations have more than one meaning. Focussing on several key spreads, ask students to explain their interpretation of the illustrations. Then discuss how people can interpret the words or pictures in different ways.
- Explore the use of colour in the text to represent emotion. What emotions are traditionally associated with blue, yellow, orange and brown?
- In small groups, explore one spread closely and list the materials the illustrator has used. Why do you think he chose those materials? What does it add to the story?
- Imagine you are one of Brodie's classmates. Write a card for his family telling them about how you think Brodie was special and what you'll remember about him.
- Do you know of any other books where the illustrator uses mixed media to create the illustrations? Find books by Jeannie Baker (such as *Mirror, Window, Where the Forest Meets the Sea*) in your library and compare the illustrations with *Brodie*. How are they similar or different?