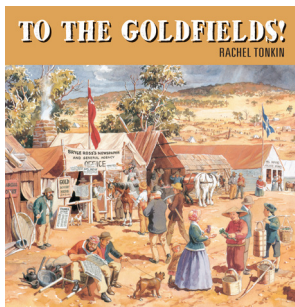




Walker Books Classroom Ideas



Walker Classics: To the Goldfields!

Rachel Tonkin
ISBN: 9781922179883
ARRP: \$16.95
NZRRP: \$18.99
April 2014

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

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Outline:

We moved to the goldfields to seek our fortune when I was nine. Arriving at Forest Creek, the noise of the valley could be heard from miles away – there were sixty thousand people digging and shouting and singing all at once. My school was a leaking tent and we slept on mattresses stuffed with leaves, but it was an exciting place to live. After all, at any moment you might dig up a huge nugget of gold!

Author/Illustrator Information:

Rachel Tonkin is an award-winning author-illustrator who has contributed to more than 100 fiction, non-fiction and picture book titles. She has been published within Australia and overseas. Her work *Papa and the Olden Days*, written by Ian Edwards, was Honour Book in the Book of the Year: Younger Readers category of the 1990 Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA) Awards. *When I Was A Kid* was short-listed for the 1998 Children's History Prize, part of the NSW Premier's History Awards. In addition to this, several of her books have been short-listed for the CBCA Eve Pownall Award for Information Books: *What Was the War Like, Grandma?* in 1996, *Grandpa's Stories* in 1997 and *Leaf Litter* in 2007. Rachel currently lives in rural Victoria with her husband.



These notes are for:

- Primary years 1-3
- Ages 7+

Key Learning Areas:

- English
- History

Example of:

- Picture book

Themes/ Ideas:

- Australian History
- Goldfields
- Mining
- Australian Life

National Curriculum Focus:*

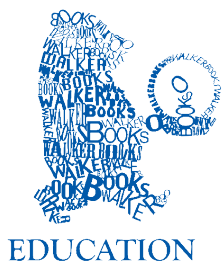
English content descriptions include:

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
ACELA1447	ACELA1465	ACELT1590
ACELA1453	ACELA1468	ACELT1591
ACELT1581	ACELA1469	ACELY1667
ACELT1582	ACELT1587	ACELY1668
ACELT1586	ACELY1664	ACELY1671
ACELY1656	ACELT1589	

History content descriptions include:

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
ACHHK028	ACHHK046	ACHHK061
ACHHK029	ACHHS048	ACHHS066
ACHHK030	ACHHS049	ACHHS067
ACHHS032	ACHHS051	ACHHS068
ACHHS033	ACHHS053	ACHHS070
ACHHS035		
ACHHS037		

*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 *To the Goldfields!* view the cover 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?

Research the author/illustrator on the internet. Has she written any other books? Make a PowerPoint presentation about them and show it to the class.

What is the purpose of this text (tell a story, give information, persuade, etc.)? Does it have more than one purpose? How can you tell? Who is the intended audience for this book?

What is the purpose of a glossary? Why does this book have one? How is a glossary set out? How does this help you when using it? Are there any extra words from the book that you think should be in the glossary? Find out their meaning and share it with the class.

Why do some words have a capital letter when they aren't at the beginning of a sentence?

Most of the illustrations have groups of people in them. Why do you think the illustrator chose to show large groups rather than focus on James?

What is gold? What is it used for? Why did the prospect of finding gold bring so many people from all over the world to Australia?

Create a timeline of James's experience in the book starting with leaving Melbourne and finishing with returning to Melbourne for his father to open the shop.

Make a guide for an emigrant who has just arrived in Australia to be a gold digger. Make sure to cover what the emigrant should expect with regards to weather, food, living conditions and the basics of gold digging. Design your guide in a desktop publishing program or by hand.

Research any local goldfield activity in your area. If there was none, find out what was the closest goldfield. When did it begin? How did it affect the development of that area?

As a class, have a discussion on the reliability of information found online. Are all websites reliable? Discuss how addresses ending in .gov or .edu are generally reliable, but other addresses ending in .com need to be used with caution. Why can some websites feature unreliable information?

Write a short story based on one of the illustrations in *To the Goldfields!* Pick something that isn't already described in the text, or choose a character other than James and base your story on their perspective of what's happening in that illustration. Look for visual clues in the image for an idea of who these people are, what they are doing and whether they are successful or not.

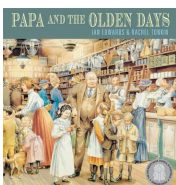
Why would people travel from their homes to the goldfields given the dangers of living there? Prepare a list of advantages and disadvantages for a potential digger to move to the goldfields.

How is gold mined today? Research and explain how gold-mining techniques have evolved since the gold rush of the mid-1800s.

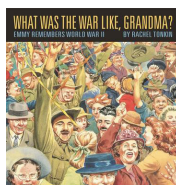
Look at the clothes that the characters are wearing. In what ways have fashions changed since then? How have they stayed the same?

Identify the slang or colloquial words the narrator uses in the book and use the glossary or contextual clues to discover what they mean. What are some colloquial words that people use today that did not exist in the 1850s?

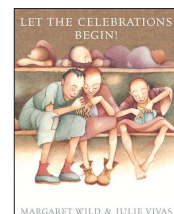
Have you read these Walker Classics?



Walker Classics:
Papa and the Olden Days
Author: Ian Edwards
Illustrator: Rachel Tonkin
9781922179272
AU\$16.95/NZ\$18.99
[Classroom Ideas available](#)



Walker Classics:
What Was the War Like, Grandpa?
Rachel Tonkin
9781922179265
AU\$16.95/NZ\$18.99
[Classroom Ideas available](#)



Walker Classics:
Let the Celebrations Begin!
Author: Margaret Wild
Illustrator: Julie Vivas
9781922179104
AU\$16.95/NZ\$18.99
[Classroom Ideas available](#)