



# Walker Books Classroom Ideas



## To This Day

Author: Shane Koyczan  
 Illustrator: Various  
 ISBN: 9781925081510  
 ARRP: \$19.95  
 NZRRP: \$22.99  
 September 2014

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

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## Outline:

From acclaimed spoken-word poet Shane Koyczan, the rallying cry against bullying that became a viral video viewed over 13 million times.

*I'm not the only kid who grew up this way surrounded by people who used to say that rhyme about sticks and stones as if broken bones hurt more than the names we got called.* Now a dazzling illustrated book featuring the work of thirty artists from around the world, *To This Day* is a powerful expression of the lasting effects of bullying, and the inner strength that allows people to move beyond it. With a heartfelt personal preface by Shane, this extraordinary poem will resonate with anyone who has experienced bullying, whether as a victim, observer or participant.

## Author/Illustrator Information:

Shane Koyczan, 21st-century spoken-word artist extraordinaire, has brought audiences to their feet around the world. He has received numerous awards for his spoken-word albums, and his previous books of poetry were selected by both the Guardian and the Globe and Mail for their lists of best books of the year. Shane has been featured on BRAVO television as well as on NPR, BBC, CBC, and ABC (Australia) radio, and performed at the opening ceremony of the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. He has appeared at the Sydney, Brisbane and Auckland Writers Festivals, and received five-star reviews at the 2012 Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Today, Shane travels the globe performing to sold-out houses, sometimes solo and sometimes with his band: Shane Koyczan and the Short Story Long.

## 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.

<b>These notes are for:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary year 6</li> <li>• Secondary years 7+</li> <li>• Ages 11+</li> </ul>	<b>Key Learning Areas:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English</li> <li>• Art</li> </ul>	<b>Example of:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poetry</li> </ul>	<b>Themes/ Ideas:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bullying</li> <li>• Depression</li> <li>• Self-esteem</li> </ul>
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National Curriculum Focus:*						
<b>English</b>	<b>Year 7</b>	<b>Year 8</b>	<b>Year 9</b>	<b>Year 10</b>	<b>Health</b>	<b>Years 9-10</b>
Year 6					Years 5-6	
ACELA1518	ACELA1531	ACELA1548	ACELA1552	ACELA1564	ACPPS053	ACPPS089
ACELT1613	ACELT1619	ACELT1626	ACELT1771	ACELA1565	ACPPS054	ACPPS098
ACELT1615	ACELT1621	ACELT1627	ACELT1636	ACELA1571	ACPPS060	
ACELT1617	ACELT1803	ACELT1628	ACELT1637	ACELT1640		
ACELT1618	ACELT1623	ACELT1630	ACELY1742	ACELT1641	<b>Years 7-8</b>	
ACELT1800	ACELT1805	ACELY1734	ACELY1744	ACELT1812	ACPPS072	
ACELY1709	ACELY1804	ACELY1735		ACELT1643	ACPPS075	
ACELY1801	ACELY1721			ACELY1752	ACPPS079	

\*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

### Bullying

What is bullying? Write a definition of bullying in your own words. Read your definition aloud to the class. Hold a class discussion on the different interpretations of bullying.

Discuss the following questions:

- Where can bullying occur?
- When can bullying occur?
- What might cause someone to be a bully?
- Can someone be a bully without intending to be?
- Can a bullying victim also be a bully to others?

*Sticks and stones may break my bones  
but words can never hurt me*

What does this expression mean? Do you agree with it? Why?

What is your school's policy on bullies? Can you think of ways to improve this policy? Rewrite the policy in your own words to make it more effective.

List the ways a victim can respond to bullying. Discuss the positive and negative potential outcomes of each response.

Create anti-bullying posters to display around your school. Use persuasive language and techniques to discourage bullying behaviour and encourage witnesses to step in and assist a bullying victim. Also include information on what a bullying victim can do to see assistance (such as speak to a school counsellor or teacher, or contact an organisation listed on page 68 of *To This Day*.)

Victims of bullying can suffer from low self-esteem and low self-acceptance. Take a few moments to think only positive things about yourself. Fill in the blanks below:

- My greatest skill is \_\_\_\_\_
- My favourite part of myself is \_\_\_\_\_
- Three words to describe my personality are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- The class that I find most enjoyable/rewarding is \_\_\_\_\_.

### Exploring the Book

How did the poem make you feel? Write a short description of your emotions immediately after reading the poem.

Were there any words or expressions in the poem that you didn't know before? Look up their meaning.

"Realize that not all languages contain words, and that other people may have trouble translating what you've said." (Page 3)

What does Shane Koyczan mean by this? What methods of communication don't contain words? How can these methods be used for bullying?

Choose one of the illustrations from the book and write a short story about what is happening based on your interpretation of the images. What kind of bullying is occurring in the illustration? How will it affect the victim? Why do you think the bully is targeting this victim?

Each illustration in this book was done by a different illustrator based on their interpretation of a few lines of the poem. Choose one section of the poem and create your own illustration. This can be in any format/medium you choose.

Pages 64-67 feature speech bubbles with notes from the illustrators about times when they were bullied, bullies or when they witnessed bullying. Write your own speech bubble confession (you can choose to attach your name to it or remain anonymous). Create a wall display of everyone's completed speech bubbles.

Watch the video of *To This Day* (link on page 70). How does the video make you feel? How did it compare to your reaction to reading the book? Discuss how the different techniques used in the book and video result in a different experience for the reader/viewer.

What persuasive techniques has Shane Koyczan and the illustrators used in *To This Day*? What point of view is this book trying to persuade the reader to see?

Who is the intended audience of this book? How can you tell? What other audiences do you think would respond to this book?

Research Shane Koyczan and watch or read some of his other work. Write a letter to him telling him what you have learned from his work and if it has inspired you to make changes to yourself.