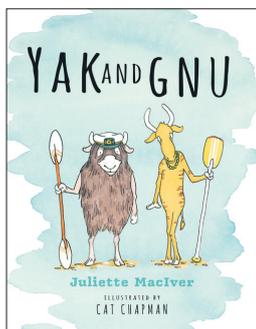


Walker Books Classroom Ideas



Yak and Gnu
 Author: Juliette MacIver
 Illustrated by: Cat Chapman
 ISBN: 9781922077684
 ARRP: \$24.95
 NZRRP: \$27.99
 March 2015

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

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Outline:

Meet Yak and Gnu. Two best friends who love to row and sing. But who will they meet on their journey down the river? From the team behind the hilarious *The Frog Who Lost His Underpants*.

Author/Illustrator Information:

Juliette MacIver lives north of Wellington City with her husband and four children. She majored in linguistics at university, took a detour and became a bicycle courier for a year, then went back to university to complete a diploma in teaching English. She taught for five years before quitting and starting a government job, which she left once her first child was born. Juliette has always written little pieces, frequently in rhyme, and has had "write a children's story" on her List Of Things I Want To Do In My Life for a very long time. *Little Witch* was her first title with Walker Books.



Cat Chapman grew up in rural Waikato and moved to Auckland as a teenager. She gained a Bachelor of Design majoring in Photography and after a brief stint as a wedding photographer and an English teacher in Japan, she worked for a number of years at a design company. In 2010 she attended a night course in children's illustration which was shortly followed by a contract for her first book from Walker Books Australia. She currently works full-time chasing after her young son and illustrating books. Cat enjoys working quickly with ink, pen and water colour, and enjoys creating characters that are full of movement, humour and personality. She is often caught with a strangely contorted face as she unwittingly mimics the characters expression she is drawing. Cat and her family currently live in Auckland.



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-2
- Ages 3+

Key Learning Areas:

- English
- Art

Example of:

- Picture Book

Themes/ Ideas:

- Friendship
- Travel
- Rhyme/ Rhythm

National Curriculum Focus:*

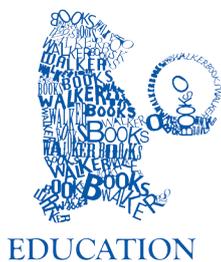
English content descriptions:

Foundation
 ACELA1429
 ACELA1432
 ACELA1786
 ACELA1440
 ACELT1575
 ACELT1577
 ACELT1783
 ACELT1578
 ACELT1580
 ACELY1645
 ACELY1646
 ACELY1647
 ACELY1648
 ACELY1651

Year 1
 ACELA1444
 ACELA1787
 ACELA1448
 ACELA1449
 ACELA1453
 ACELT1581
 ACELT1582
 ACELT1583
 ACELT1584
 ACELT1586
 ACELY1788
 ACELY1658
 ACELY1661

Year 2
 ACELA1462
 ACELA1465
 ACELT1589
 ACELT1590
 ACELT1591
 ACELT1593
 ACELY1665
 ACELY1668
 ACELY1671

*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

What do you think this book might be about just from hearing the title? How do your ideas change when you see the cover? After reading the book, compare your initial thoughts to what the book is actually about. Discuss the phrase “you can’t judge a book by its cover.”

What is a yak? What is a gnu? Where would you find them in the wild? Find pictures of yaks and gnus on the internet or in your library and create a collage of images surrounded by facts about the animals (such as where they live, what they eat, what size they are, etc.).

After Reading

Is *Yak and Gnu* an imaginative, informative or persuasive text? How can you tell?

Who do you think the audience for this book is? Why?

What do sentences begin and end with? Find examples of these in the book.

Why do some of the words start with a capital letter even when they’re not at the beginning of a sentence? (e.g. Snail, Goat, etc.)

How can the reader tell when a character is speaking? (i.e. punctuation)

What does this story tell us about:

- friendship?
- jealousy?
- individuality?

Why is Yak upset towards the end of the book? How does Gnu help Yak feel better about this?

Make a list of all the boats mentioned in *Yak and Gnu*, then think of any other kinds of boats that you could add to the list. Have a class discussion about the differences between the boats.

The “snazzy snail”, the “nasty stingy” and the “rat and her clan” have flags on their boats. What do these flags represent?

Draw a map of the river that Yak and Gnu sail down. On the map, mark the places where Yak and Gnu meet the other sailing animals.

Use the illustrations as a reference for what landmarks or features could be included in your map (such as windmills, a bridge, a lighthouse, etc.).

Visit your school library and find any other picture books about two friends on an adventure. Compare these books to *Yak and Gnu* and discuss how the authors and illustrators deal with the topic differently.

Write a book review on *Yak and Gnu*. Include what you liked about the book, who you think would enjoy it the most and mention any other books you think are similar to *Yak and Gnu*.

Imagine you were going sailing with Yak and Gnu. Design your own boat that you could sail down the river. What colour will your boat be? Will it be big or small? Will it have a flag? Draw your design on a large sheet of paper and attach it to the classroom wall along with your classmates designs to create a sailing mural.

On the whiteboard or on a large sheet of paper, place an image of the *Yak and Gnu* cover and surround it with words that describe the book. Include words that describe what you liked and what you disliked about the book.

Examine several of the spreads and have a class discussion about the following:

- What is the main colour or colours used? What mood/feeling do these colours create?
- What objects are in the foreground (front), the midground and background of the picture? Why do you think the illustrator chose to do that?
- What are the characters on this page doing and where are they looking? Why are they doing this? What effect does this have?

Who is your favourite character in the story? Why is that character your favourite? Write and illustrate a short story about that character.

Visit your school library or research online to find out what other books Juliette MacLver and Cat Chapman have created. Read some of these books and discuss with a partner how they are similar or different to *Yak and Gnu*.

Other great books from Walker Books Australia



The Frog Who Lost His Underpants
by Juliette MacLver
illustrated by Cat Chapman
9781921977893
AU\$24.95/NZ\$27.99
Classroom ideas available



A is for Australia
Frané Lessac
9781922179760
AU\$24.95/NZ\$27.99
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