



OMNIBUS BOOKS

Teachers' Notes

Crikey!

Mates series

Written by Jane and Zannah
Carroll
Illustrated by Chris Edser

Teachers' notes by Anita Jonsberg

Category	Mates series
Title	Crikey!
Author	Jane and Zannah Carroll
Illustrator	Chris Edser
Extent	64pp
Age	6+
Australian RRP	\$11.99
Binding	Paperback
Printing	Colour
ISBN	978 1 86291 824 5
Format	198 x 128 mm

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Introduction

When the children of Yabby Creek discover that famous zoologist Davina Dabchick is coming to their school they are overjoyed. One child, Joe, is less happy than the others because he does not have a pet animal to show her. Patsy Toogood makes everyone angry with her constant assertions that her show dog is obviously better than everyone else's pet, but all does not go according to plan for her.

One day, Joe discovers a lost baby galah who he names Crikey. Crikey saves the day and makes a real impression on Davina Dabchick. In his delight, Joe shows how to be a real friend when he shares his galah with Patsy.

About the Authors

Jane Carroll writes:

'I grew up on a farm in southern New South Wales with my parents, two sisters and countless animals. I attended a one-teacher primary school which sat, surrounded by pepper trees and gum trees, in a flat paddock, and went to town once a week for music lessons. This early education, Warrembool (our farm) and my family were my life until I went to boarding school, and have greatly influenced the flavour of my novels for children. After university I worked as an advertising copywriter in Sydney and Melbourne, I travelled and worked in Europe, and helped to run the family farm before marrying Vic and moving back to Sydney. There I completed my Diploma of Education and became a primary school teacher while Vic, a farmer and Agriculture Science graduate, studied medicine. We had three children whom we took with us to London in 1985–86. I began writing for children while in London and published my first book, *Normie*, back in Australia in 1989. We lived in South Africa in 1994.'

Jane Carroll has written a number of novels for children, from newly independent readers to young adults. She also works in schools, encouraging children with their own writing. Her daughter **Zannah Carroll** teaches at the school at Tye Estate. This is the first book they have written together.

About the Illustrator

Chris Edser lives in Adelaide, South Australia and draws. He also designs t-shirts for Screamdance, does animation work for Quench Studios, carves things out of wood and was also once a member of the video department at Fabrica Creative Research Centre in Italy. Chris has completed a Bachelor of Visual Communications (Illustration) at UniSA where he now teaches an animation course.

Activities

NB: Please check all websites for suitability on the date of proposed use. If certain sites are blocked in your school, see your IT administrator to have them unblocked, or to get the address of a proxy server.

English

1. What are catchphrases? Think about real or fictitious people who have a saying associated with them. Many catchphrases are also clichés. Collate your ideas on the whiteboard.
2. Discuss why the book is called *Crikey!* How can titles help persuade potential readers to look at or buy particular novels? As a class, share the titles of novels you have read – vote on the most intriguing title.
3. The famous zoologist, Davina Dabchick has a surname that links with her profession. What is a ‘dabchick’? Does anyone in the class have a surname linked to a profession?

A useful website where you can research the meaning of your name is:

<http://www.searchforancestors.com/surnames/origin/>

4. Look at the character of Patsy Toogood throughout the book. What particular details do the authors include to make her initially unlikeable? How do the authors create sympathy for her later on?
5. In your own words, write down the message of the story. What can readers learn from it? Compare your ideas with a partner.

6. There are examples of alliteration (the grouping together of words that begin with the same sound) throughout the novel. In groups of three, hold a competition to see which group can find the most examples.
7. Design a poster that advertises Davina Dabchick's visit to Yabby Creek. Try to create excitement through images and copy. Remember to include details of exactly where and when she will appear.

Art

1. Look carefully at the illustrations. How do they contribute to telling the story?
2. What do we find out about the characters from the illustrations? How important is it that readers feel they know characters?
3. How does the position and framing of the illustrations help to create and maintain interest in the story?
4. What elements are included to show that the story is Australian?
5. Take one such illustration and change it so it reflects a different culture. What elements will you have to change, take out or add?
6. Create an extra illustration for the novel that communicates something about the story you think is important. Try to imitate Chris Edser's style.

Creative activities

1. Create a poster about your favourite Australian animal.
 - Make your title clear and to the point. Use a large and simple font – people should be able to see the writing clearly from a distance.
 - Use as few words as possible. A poster should communicate most of its message visually.
 - Use clear and simple language that will appeal to your target audience.
2. Write a story about a time in your life when a situation that seemed negative suddenly became positive.
3. Using others in your group, make a photo-story of the events in the novel. You will probably have to improvise the animals!

4. As a small group, imagine what Davina Dabchick's television program is like. What items could feature in it? Cast one of your small group as Davina Dabchick and make a short film of a part of her program. Remember, there can be guests on her show.
5. Create an imaginary Australian animal using plasticine or clay. Take a photograph of it and write a short report about what type of animal it is, where it can be found in Australia, its habitat and feeding habits. Be as inventive as possible and make a display of the resulting models.

Society & Environment

1. As a class, make a list of all the animals and birds found in *Crikey!* Make a chart like the one below and find out about each animal to fill it in. Add rows as necessary.

Animal/Bird	Location	Habitat	Food

2. How do children learn when there is no school at all within travelling distance?
3. Find out what the best course of action is if you find lost or abandoned young wildlife. What organisations can help you?
4. Joe used to have a Kelpie. What job do Kelpies often do on a farm? What other breeds of dogs can do the same job? A helpful website is:
<http://www.barkingbuddies.com/tailwork.html>

5. Patsy Toogood suggests that Crikey should have his wings clipped. Why do people do this to birds and what does it involve? What other animals are commonly altered by humans and why?
6. Davina Dabchick is a zoologist. What do zoologists study? How can you become one?

Geography

1. Is there a real Yabby Creek School? Use Google maps or school mapping software to find out.
2. Are there remote schools in your area? If so where are they and what are they called?
3. The picture on page 21 shows an aerial view of Joe's house. Go online and see if you can find aerial views of your own house and your school.
4. What are the GPS coordinates of your house and school?
5. Find out where Galahs like Crikey can be found in Australia – check out the websites below for help:

<http://galah.galahs.com.au/content/php/introduction.php>

<http://www.avianweb.com/galahcockatoos.html>