



***Gracie and Josh*, written by Susanne Gervay, illustrated by Serena Geddes**

Teaching Notes

Synopsis

'Gracie and Josh' invites kids to play, relate, explore and live each day to the full. It recognises the great challenges of illness, special needs, illness and loss on those children and their siblings and community. Children get sad, but have great resilience and when they feel well, the world is bright and exciting. When they feel sick, they are confused and vulnerable. Children have all the complexity of adult emotions with love, hope, fear, guilt, happiness, powerlessness, courage. However they don't have the experience and skills to deal with it. Siblings develop special relationships which are exacerbated when one of the children faces illness. The story journey and drama through Gracie and Josh breaks the silence and opens discussion and understanding. (1)

Gracie and Josh is one of those rare books which takes a hard and gut wrenching topic and approaches it in such a delightful way that both adult and child reader will thoroughly enjoy and learn from it. The story is about a brother and sister relationship and the effect of battling cancer. Brilliantly created, with story and illustrations intricately blended, this book does not even mention the word cancer, but delicately assumes some knowledge of child illnesses. This illness does not become the focus of the book, but the means by which Gracie and Josh take every moment of life as a precious gift. A sweet telling of siblings loving each other, enjoying each other, and rising above what life throws at them. (2)

Background to *Gracie and Josh*

Susanne was approached by Variety to write a story advocating hope for kids. Her inspiration for *Gracie and Josh*:

- o "Tory, my daughter. She is dressed as a spider (above) – secretly she wanted to be a princess. Tory climbed that spout when the sun dried up all the rain. She is the sun! Like so many kids, who meet challenges, they find the gifts of everyday life. I wrote Gracie and Josh because my son and daughter played, supported each other, teased and loved when life was difficult. Kids have an enormous capacity of hope." (1)
- o Incy Wincy Spider & the message of try, try, try again.
- o Hope and inclusion of all kids and families.

Teaching Notes for *Gracie and Josh*, written by Susanne Gervay www.sgervey.com illustrated by Serena Geddes <http://www.serenageddes.com.au/>

- Personal experience as a mother where her son faced frequent medical procedures, hospitalisation and the management of his special needs.
- Her professional experience as an educational consultant with children.
- Interviews with parents, children, hospital staff and community.
- Variety, which supports kids and families, especially those facing challenges. Variety helps so many schools providing wheelchairs, special equipment, bringing entertainment and joy to kids.

Creating *Gracie and Josh* - Core Issues

- Special need kids face tough challenges of treatment, disability, times in hospitals, missing school time, broken friendships due to absences, social stigma, the family under stress, families often breaking up.
- Siblings face tough challenges with feelings of marginalisation, increased responsibilities, family under stress and the impact on their social groups.
- Parents face tough challenges with grief, guilt, exhaustion, anger, concerns for the future.
- Communities are challenged to include special need kids and their families within their everyday lives.
- The lack of communication on many levels.

These are hard realities but there's also:

- Parental love and pride in their children and the joys of each little step forward
- Siblings developing greater maturity and empathy and pride in their special needs sibling
- The strength of family relationships
- Schools and community groups embracing these families
- Kids imagining, celebrating the day, playing and pursuing their dreams.

Creating *Gracie and Josh* – Goal

- To use the warm and wonderful characters, engaged in daily life, to create a book where both special needs and non-special needs children and adults can identify with the characters and play, laugh, have hopes and meet challenges.
- To open real communication through story where children and parents and adults can question, share their feelings, relate, connect and have a voice.
- To provide deep sub themes which children and adults can explore if they want and/or need to:
 - Impact on the family of a child with special needs
 - Sibling relationship with emotional highs and lows
 - Tough times physically and emotionally
 - Good times physically and emotionally
 - Inclusion in community
 - Recognition that special needs kids and their siblings are not defined by a special need
 - Special need kids and their families are like all of us with hopes and dreams, play and love.

Creative Issues

- A key is the creation of accessible, identifiable, 'everyman', wonderful characters that resonate with young readers and parents and adults.

Gracie and Josh are wonderful characters.

- Create a structure that engages all kids, parents and teachers at multiple levels.

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Incy Wincy Spider is a loved nursery rhyme and a natural structure to carry the strong theme of meeting challenges – try, try, try again – and is driven by hope and achieving your dreams.


- Although a ‘hard and gut wrenching topic’, create a joyful space for play and imagination.

Gracie and Josh is joyful and real.


- Partner with an illustrator who can create delightful characters, multiple layers of meaning, with a strong sense of movement and colour.

Serena Geddes combined her experience as a Disney animator with her strong sense of character and engagement with the theme. She spent a lot of time in the children’s hospital researching and talking to kids to ensure integrity in her illustrations. (1)

About the Author

	<p>The daughter of Hungarian refugees and the sole parent of 2 children, Susanne Gervay is a teacher, educational consultant, national and international speaker, writer, children’s and young adult author committed to social justice through literature, Susanne is also committed to the arts and heritage with the restoration of The Hughenden Boutique Hotel at 14 Queen St Woollahra, and the creation of a meeting place for writers and artists, a home to creative societies.</p> <p>Awarded an Order of Australia for services to children’s literature and other organisations, and as an author and specialist in child growth & development, Susanne is committed to empowering children to be all they can be through story. There is more about Susanne, her books, awards and roles in organisations on page 10 of these Teaching Notes.</p>
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About the Illustrator

	<p>Serena Geddes studied Visual Arts at The University of Western Sydney as well as attending (part time) the Billy Blue College of Design. In 1996 she was accepted as a Trainee in-betweener for Walt Disney Animation Australia, undertaking their intensive 3-month training program. After working for eight years designing greeting cards, stationery, spot illustrations for magazines as well as commissioned work for advertising and design agencies, in March 2009 she decided to follow in the footsteps of her fellow Disney colleague, Tina Burke, into the book world. She has been working for 3 years in the publishing industry with 16 books completed and 4 lined up to welcome in the new year!</p> <p>Asked where her inspiration comes from. Serena replied, “It can vary from people watching in a café to looking through books at the local library or bookstores. I find meeting with the author can give me a better insight into the style or characters for their books and it’s also a good excuse to meet up for a coffee :)”</p>
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Study Notes - Education Applicability – The Australian National Curriculum – English, The Arts – Visual Art & Drama

“The Australian Curriculum: English aims to ensure that students:

- learn to listen to, read, view, speak, write, create and reflect on increasingly complex and sophisticated spoken, written and multimodal texts across a growing range of contexts with accuracy, fluency and purpose
- develop interest and skills in inquiring into the aesthetic aspects of texts, and develop an informed appreciation of literature.”

Gracie and Josh is a multimodal text that combines language with visual images, providing “important opportunities for learning about aspects of human experience”. (3)

The Australian Curriculum - English Scope and Sequence						
The English curriculum is built around the three interrelated strands of Language, Literature and Literacy.						
Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Suggested Activities
Literature: Sub Strand - Literature and context - How texts reflect the context of culture and situation in which they are created						
Discuss how authors create characters using language and images	Discuss how depictions of characters in print, sound and images reflect the contexts in which they were created	Discuss texts in which characters, events and settings are portrayed in different ways, and speculate on the authors' reasons		Identify aspects of literary texts that convey details or information about particular social, cultural and historical contexts	Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events represented in texts drawn from different historical, social & cultural contexts	During a visit/virtual visit to your school Susanne Gervay might discuss her inspiration for Gracie and Josh . Students might question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - why Susanne wrote this story - what Josh's special needs were - why the artist chose to depict Gracie and Josh in the way she has - whether Susanne had an image in mind when she created Gracie and Josh, or are they are the artist's concept Students might share their experiences (such a special needs sibling).
Literature: Sub Strand - Responding to literature - Personal responses to the ideas, characters and viewpoints in texts						
Discuss characters and events in a range of literary texts and share personal responses to these texts, making connections with students' own experiences	Compare opinions about characters, events and settings in and between texts	Draw connections between personal experiences and the worlds of texts, and share responses with others	Discuss literary experiences with others, sharing responses and expressing a point of view	Identify and explain how choices in language, for example modality, emphasis, repetition and metaphor, influence personal response to different texts	Analyse and evaluate similarities and differences in texts on similar topics, themes or plots	Following a visit/ virtual visit by Susanne students might: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - discuss their opinion of each character in Gracie and Josh - find a spider story for Josh (P.9) - discuss the repetition of the Incy Wincey Spider rhyme and how it is used in the story - search for a story with a similar theme.
Literature: Sub Strand – Features of literary texts - The key features of literary texts and how they work to construct a literary work, such as plot, setting, characterisa-						

tion, mood and theme						
Discuss features of plot, character and setting in different types of literature and explore some features of characters in different texts	Discuss the characters and settings of different texts and explore how language is used to present these features in different ways	Discuss how language is used to describe the settings in texts, and explore how the settings shape the events and influence the mood of the narrative	Discuss how authors and illustrators make stories exciting, moving and absorbing and hold readers' interest by using various techniques, for example character development and plot tension	Recognise that ideas in literary texts can be conveyed from different viewpoints, which can lead to different kinds of interpretations & responses	Identify, describe, and discuss similarities and differences between texts, including those by the same author or illustrator, and evaluate characteristics that define an author's individual style	Following a visit/virtual visit to the school by the author, students might read another of Susanne Gervay's picture books <i>Ships in the Field</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - discuss difference and similarities (if any) between her two picture books - compare the illustrations in <i>Ships in the Field</i> with those in <i>Gracie and Josh</i>, identifying reasons for the differences.
Literature – Creating Literature – Experimentation and adaptation Creating a variety of texts, including multimodal texts, adapting ideas and devices from literary texts						
		Create texts that adapt language features and patterns encountered in literary texts, for example characterisation	Create literary texts by developing storylines, characters and settings	Create literary texts that experiment with structures, ideas and stylistic features of selected authors	Experiment with text structures and language features and their effects in creating literary texts, e.g. using imagery, sentence variation ...	Following a visit/virtual visit to the school by the author and or artist, students might use <i>Gracie and Josh</i> as stimulus to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - plan and create their own storyline, characters, plot and settings for a story.
Literacy: Sub Strand - Interacting with others - Listening and speaking interactions						
Engage in conversations and discussions, using active listening behaviours showing interest, and contributing ideas, information and questions	Listen for specific purposes and information, including instructions, and extend students' own and others' ideas in discussions	Listen to and contribute to conversations and discussions to share information and ideas and negotiate in collaborative situations	Interpret ideas and information in spoken texts and listen for key points in order to carry out tasks and use information to share and extend ideas and information	Clarify understanding of content as it unfolds in formal and informal situations, connecting ideas to students' own experiences and present and justify a point of view	Participate in and contribute to discussions, clarifying and interrogating ideas, developing and supporting arguments, sharing and evaluating information, experiences and opinions	Prior to a visit/virtual visit to the school by the author and/or illustrator, students might: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - read <i>Gracie and Josh</i> - prepare a list of questions they wish to ask of author and/or illustrator - participate in a discussion about <i>Gracie and Josh</i>, clarifying their own ideas about the book.
Literacy: Sub Strand- Interpreting, analysing, evaluating – Analysing and evaluating texts						
					Analyse strategies authors use to influence readers	Students might list strategies which the author and the illustrator have used in <i>Gracie and Josh</i> to influence our feelings about the two children.

Study Notes - Education Applicability – The Australian National Curriculum – The Arts

“In **Visual Arts** students make and respond to diverse forms of art, craft and design. Through engagement with traditional and emerging visual arts-making and critical practices students explore and communicate meanings and messages relevant to their personal worlds and the worlds they encounter.

Visual Arts provides opportunities for students to investigate the field of visual arts in complex and rich ways. Opportunities to investigate practices in the visual arts contribute to students’ creative and interpretive achievements and the visual arts works they produce.” (4)

Investigating **Drama** through different perspectives supports students’ exploration of ways drama is informed by different contexts, develops their aesthetic knowledge and provides a structure that can be used when students apply the knowledge and skills acquired in Drama to support their learning in other Arts subjects and learning areas.

The Arts - Visual Arts					
Foundation - Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Suggested Activities
	<p>Making 4.3 Develop art-making techniques using, media, visual arts practices and viewpoints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - exploring the ways that different art-making techniques can represent the lives of other people, their cultures and where they live 		<p>Making 6.6 Combine Arts subjects and other learning areas to communicate meaning in and through visual arts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - exploring aspects of visual language in different learning areas, for example, exploring line and dimension in mathematics 		<p>Serena Geddes’ illustrations are emotional and complex. Students might discuss the cover illustration for Gracie and Josh:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - what Gracie and Josh are doing? - what the cover illustration tells you about the story? - why Gracie and Josh are so happy? <p>Students might select one illustration and discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - what feelings are conveyed by that illustration - how that illustration makes you feel <p>After reading Gracie and Josh students might discuss how the illustrations represent Gracie and Josh’s lives.</p>
<p>Responding 2.8 Talk about visual arts works of others, considering different viewpoints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - comparing a range of visual arts works to talk about an effect or an idea 	<p>Responding 4.8 Recognise and describe how images, objects, forms and ideas in visual arts works can be considered from different viewpoints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identify possible motives, thoughts and skills artists have when they make visual arts works for an audience 		<p>Responding 6.7 Investigate values and meanings in their own and others’ visual arts works</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - comparing and contrasting how various representational forms evoke reactions, values and meanings that may differ from their own 		<p>During a visit/virtual visit to the school by the illustrator, Serena Geddes, students might ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - where her inspirations comes from - what medium she uses for her illustrations - her favourite illustration in Gracie and Josh

The Arts – Drama Elements of Drama - role and character identification and portrayal of a person's values and attitudes, intentions and actions as imagined relationships, situations and ideas in dramatic action

Foundation - Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Suggested Activities
<p>Making 2.1 Imagine and act out roles and situations participating in dramatic play and role play</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - exploring problems as the focus of dramatic play and role play ... <p>Making 2.6 Connect drama to other Arts subjects and learning areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - using role, movement, voice and space to express their learning in other learning areas ... 	<p>Making 4.6 Combine drama making with Dance, Media Arts, Music, Visual Arts and other learning areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - exploring and capturing their own and other's drama as still or moving images 		<p>Making 6.1 Imagine and create roles and relationships and convey character through vocal and facial expression, gesture and movement in improvised, devised and scripted drama</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - listening and reacting to others in role, expressing the character's thoughts, emotions and intentions to develop aspects of a character 		<p>Narrator to read story. Children from the class act it out: Characters: Gracie, Josh, Mother, Doctor, Genius Inventor, Students in the movie Group scenes – school, hospital, movie audience. The whole class at the end sings 'Incy Wincy Spider'. Students might explore improvising costume for their own drama performance. The photo of Susanne's daughter Tory dressed as Incy Wincy Spider was stuck next to Susanne's computer as she wrote Gracie and Josh. Tory was in a school drama performance as one of the 'Incy-Wincy' spiders. The costume design was home-made: Materials: a black leotard, black cap, the legs cut from 2 pairs of black tights, socks to stuff the legs. Method: Stuff the tight legs, sew 2 legs between the arms and legs on the leotard, creating the effect of 8 spider legs. Incy Wincy Spider is a simple, yet joyous story-poem-song showing that we can all meet challenge. Foundation students might perform might sing, act and discussed this poem/song.</p>

Australian Curriculum – The Arts – Drama - The Elements of Drama (3)

role and character: identification and portrayal of a person's values and attitudes, intentions and actions as imagined relationships, situations and ideas in dramatic action	Discuss and act out emotions as in very short segments: Anger, Sadness, Confusion, Friendship, Fear, Love
relationships the connections and interactions between people that affect the dramatic action	Students might extend the story of Gracie and Josh with further dramatic action and performance
situation the setting and circumstances of the characters/roles actions	Create role plays and stories inspired by 'Gracie and Josh': -brother and sister relationships, looking after a sick siblings, creating an invention like the monster inventor

New Zealand Curriculum

In **English**, students study, use, and enjoy language and literature communicated orally, visually, or in writing.

In **the arts**, students explore, refine, and communicate ideas as they connect thinking, imagination, senses, and feelings to create works and respond to the works of others.

In **health and physical education**, students learn about their own well-being, and that of others and society, in health-related and movement contexts. “Students build resilience through strengthening their personal identity and sense of self-worth, through managing change and loss ...” (5)

ENGLISH			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Suggested Activities
English- Listening, Reading and Viewing			
<p>Processes and strategies <i>Students will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquire and begin to use sources of information, processes, and strategies to identify, form, and express ideas. <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> selects and reads texts for enjoyment and personal fulfilment; has an awareness of the connections between oral, written, and visual language; <p><i>By using these processes and strategies when listening, reading, or viewing, students will:</i></p> <p>Purposes and audiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise that texts are shaped for different purposes and audiences. <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies the purposes of simple texts; 	<p>Processes and strategies <i>Students will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select and use sources of information, processes, and strategies with some confidence to identify, form, and express ideas. <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> selects and reads texts for enjoyment and personal fulfilment; recognises connections between oral, written, and visual language; <p><i>By using these processes and strategies when listening, reading, or viewing, students will:</i></p> <p>Purposes and audiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show some understanding of how texts are shaped for different purposes and audiences. <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognises how texts are constructed for different purposes, audiences, and situations; 	<p>Processes and strategies <i>Students will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate sources of information, processes, and strategies with developing confidence to identify, form, and express ideas. <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> selects and reads texts for enjoyment and personal fulfilment; recognises and understands the connections between oral, written, and visual language; <p><i>By using these processes and strategies when listening, reading, or viewing, students will:</i></p> <p>Ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show a developing understanding of ideas within, across, and beyond texts. <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> starts to make connections by thinking about underlying ideas in and between texts; makes and supports inferences from texts with increasing independence. 	<p>Prior to a visit to the school by the author and/or illustrator students might read Gracie and Josh. They might work in pairs to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> discuss the connections between the text and the illustrations, make inferences about Josh why he has to go to hospital and why he wears a beanie discuss the purpose of the story. <p>During a visit/virtual visit to the school by the illustrator, Serena Geddes, students might ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> where her inspirations comes from what medium she uses for her illustrations her favourite illustration in Gracie and Josh
English- Speaking, Writing and Presenting			
<p>Processes and strategies <i>Students will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquire and begin to use sources of information, processes, & strategies to identify, form, and express ideas. <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has an awareness of the connections between oral, written, and visual lan- 	<p>Processes and strategies <i>Students will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select and use sources of information, processes, and strategies with some confidence to identify, form, and express ideas. <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows some understanding of the 	<p>Processes and strategies <i>Students will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate sources of information, processes, and strategies with developing confidence to identify, form, and express ideas. <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a developing understanding of 	<p>Having read and discussed Gracie and Josh, students might, individually or in pairs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop mind maps for their own story/stories plan illustrations for their story/stories

<p>guage when creating text; <i>By using these processes and strategies when speaking, writing, or presenting, students will:</i></p> <p>Language features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use language features, showing some recognition of their effects. <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – uses some oral, written, and visual language features to create meaning and effect; 	<p>connections between oral, written, and visual language when creating texts; <i>By using these processes and strategies when speaking, writing, or presenting, students will:</i></p> <p>Language features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use language features appropriately, showing some understanding of their effects. <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – uses oral, written, and visual language features to create meaning and effect; 	<p>the connections between oral, written, and visual language when creating texts; <i>By using these processes and strategies when speaking, writing, or presenting, students will:</i></p> <p>Language features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use language features appropriately, showing a developing understanding of their effects. <p>INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – uses oral, written, and visual language features to create meaning and effect and engage interest; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - write and review the opening paragraph for their story, or joint text construction - elaborate the ideas in their personal or joint story/stories - produce an illustrated individual, pair, group or class story - re-read the text and edit for meaning by adding, deleting or moving words or word groups to improve content and structure. - use a range of software including word processing programs to construct, edit and publish written text, and select, edit and place visual, print and audio elements - use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written, role play) and digital technologies to present their narrative.
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<p>The Arts - Visual Arts – Communication and Interpreting</p>		
<p>Share the ideas, feelings, and stories communicated by their own and others' objects and images.</p>	<p>Describe the ideas their own and others' objects and images communicate.</p>	<p>Serena Geddes' illustrations are emotional and complex. Students might discuss the cover illustration for Gracie and Josh:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - what Gracie and Josh are doing? - what the cover illustration tells you about the story? - why Gracie and Josh are so happy? <p>Students might select one illustration and discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - feelings are conveyed by the illustration - how that illustration makes you feel

Classroom discussion and activities

“The Australian Curriculum: English (also) helps students to engage imaginatively and critically with literature to expand the scope of their experience.” (2).

Post visit / virtual visit English Activities

Teachers might divide their class into groups, with the following questions shared between the groups, then have the group leader report back to the class:

- What do Gracie and Josh want to be?
- How does Gracie help Josh?
- How does Josh help Gracie?
- Why does Gracie hate Josh’s bad week?
- Why does Gracie love Josh’s good week?
- What does it mean when the spider tries and tries again?
- How do Gracie and Josh feel when Josh has to take off his cap?
- Why do you think the mother holds Gracie’s hand too tightly?
- When Josh lies in his bed with his eyes closed, how does Gracie feel?
- ‘He’s nowhere but everywhere.’ Where do you think Josh is?
- Why does everyone sing at the end?
- Describe the characters of Gracie and Josh
- In what way is the song-poem-story ‘Incy Wincy Spider’ similar to Gracie and Josh’s life?
- Discussion about what feelings children have when they are sick or when their sibling is sick?

Students might:

- develop mind maps for their own story/stories
- plan their illustrations for their story/stories
- write and review the opening paragraph for their story, or joint text construction
- elaborate the ideas in their personal or joint story/stories
- produce their own illustrated pair, group or class story
- re-read their own text and edit for meaning by adding, deleting or moving words or word groups to improve content and structure.
- use a range of software including word processing programs to construct, edit and publish written text, and select, edit and place visual, print and audio elements
- use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written, role play) and digital technologies to present their narrative.

Post visit / virtual visit Drama Activities

Gracie and Josh – emotionally and creatively engaging in Drama

“Drama is a basic form of expression where students can explore human experience, ideas and values. While Drama is a discipline in its own right, it can be a pathway to other areas, especially the Creative Arts, Music, English, Personal Development (PDPHE) and Human Society and its Environment (HSIE).

As a discipline, Drama incorporates a wide range of forms and styles ranging from mime, narrative drama, role play, improvisation, whole class work, group and solo works, varied interpretation of texts, incorporation of multimedia formats and more. Drama study includes knowledge of the dramatic conventions and techniques including speech production, gesture and movement and drama processes. It also includes the range of roles in drama production and performance including, playwrights, actors, directors, lighting and sound designers, multimedia designers, dramaturges, set designers, stage managers, costume designers. The drama process involves imagination, role playing, exploration, creating or interpreting story, sharing views in a collaborative process, practicing, rehearsing and performing.

‘Gracie and Josh’ offers an emotionally engaging and relevant entry into drama for younger students. In a teacher-led process, the whole class can participate in discussion, improvisation, devised fictional work, dramatic play and role-play through **Gracie and Josh**.” (1)

Log onto Susanne Gervay's website – www.sgervay.com and you can blog or twitter her and tell her what you think about *Gracie and Josh*.

References

- (1) Susanne Gervay
- (2) Rachel Greenwood Editor Children's Book Council 2013
- (3) Australian Curriculum – English http://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum_1/learning_areas/english.html
- (4) Australian Curriculum – The Arts (DRAFT) http://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum/learning_areas/arts.html
- (5) New Zealand Curriculum – English, The Arts <http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/>

Gracie and Josh by Susanne Gervay illustrated by Serena Geddes; Published by **Ford Street Publishing**

ISBN PB 978 1921 665 851; HC 978 1921 665 844

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Susanne Gervay OAM

Qualifications – M.Ed (UNSW), M.A (UTS), Dip Ed, B.A. (Sydney Uni)

Awards: OAM for literature and organisations, Lady Cutler Award for Distinguished Services to Children's Literature, UTS Award for Writing, literary awards.

Susanne is a specialist in child growth & development, national and international speaker, writer and children and young adult author.

ABC RADIO podcasts:

Conversations with Richard Fidler - www.abc.net.au/local/stories/2010/11/15/3066754.htm

Perspective: www.abc.net.au/rn/talks/perspective/stories/s1634484.htm

Life matters with Richard Aedy: www.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=169656376399261

Roles in Organisations:

Patron for Monkey Baa Theatre for Young People (with Jackie French & Morris Gleitzman) www.monkeybaa.com.au

Role Model Ambassador for Books in Homes – books for indigenous and disadvantaged children <http://www.booksinhomesaustralia.com.au/>

Author Ambassador for Room to Read – educating kids in developing countries www.roomtoread.org

Former Chair of the Board of the NSW Writers Centre – www.nswwc.org.au

Head of Society of Children's Book Writers & Illustrators Australia and New Zealand – www.scbwiaustralia.org

Director of the Children's and Young Adult Literature Festival at NSW Writers Centre – www.nswwc.org.au

Committee of the May Gibbs Trust Fellowship - <http://www.maygibbs.org.au/>

Australia Day Ambassador -<http://www.australiaday.com.au/ambassadors/ambassadors.aspx?AmbassadorID=382>

Books endorsed by:-

Cancer Council	Always Jack – making it safe for children, families and community to talk about cancer – www.cancercouncil.com.au
Life Education Australia	I Am Jack and Super Jack – anti-school bullying – www.lifeeducation.org.au
The Alannah & Madeline Foundation	I Am Jack – anti-school bullying www.amf.org.au
The National Breast & Ovarian Cancer Centre	Always Jack – breast cancer www.nbocc.org.au
The Children's Hospital Westmead	Butterflies - disability www.chw.edu.au/
I Am Jack	Anti-school bullying and literacy www.roomtoread.org
That's Why I Wrote This Song	Teen and young adult youth outreach - www.ways.org.au

Teaching Notes for *Gracie and Josh*, written by Susanne Gervay www.sgervay.com illustrated by Serena Geddes <http://www.serenageddes.com.au/>

Rite of Passage Books by Susanne Gervay

I Am Jack is widely used in school throughout schools in Australia in anti-bullying programmes.

Adaptation into the play 'I Am Jack' – by Monkey Baa Theatre for Young People, one of the premiere youth theatre companies and had toured the eastern States – Victoria, NSW, Queensland, Outback NSW, feature event at Somerset Celebration of Literature Festival and Ipswich Festival Queensland. Currently having its 4th season at the Seymour Centre Sydney and will be doing a major USA theatre tour in 2014.

In development as a feature film with Director Nadia Tass, actors Deborra-lee Furness, Dame Maggie Smith, scheduled release end of 2014.

Butterflies is recognised by IBBY (under the United Nations) as outstanding youth literature on disability. It is also a rite-of-passage novel read by teenagers/young adults and is now published in the US.

Gracie and Josh is a joyous accessible picture book recognising the special relationship between siblings when one has a special need, and the emotional journey on the family and community.

Ships in the Field, Susanne's first picture book is auto biographical. Illustrated by award winning artist/illustrator Anna Pignataro, it gives a voice to refugee children and families.

Always Jack was written as a response to Susanne's journey with breast cancer to give families and children a way to communicate and share the journey.

Outback Tour with *I Am Jack*, Monkey Baa Theatre and Susanne Gervay - Walgett Shire:-Monkey Baa Theatre for Young People performed in remote communities.

What a show (I Am Jack)... George McCormick, Youth Development Officer, Walgett Shire Council

Variety's involvement & endorsement

Variety provides practical equipment, programs and experiences. ***Gracie and Josh*** works with these goals providing through story, a platform of expressing feelings and open discussion, empowering children to live, laugh & learn.

- Initiated my response to their project
- Supported my direction in story – validation of kids and siblings, inclusion in the community and opening discussion
- Provided the illustrator Serena Geddes with access to children's hospitals and children with special needs so that she creates real-life scenarios.
- In the illustration of the film strip she has included 'secret' tiny illustrations of the hospital personal and Variety's David Small and Grace Proust as she was so appreciative of their support.
- Inclusion in **Variety** events.



Variety helps children in need to overcome whatever obstacles they face & live life to the fullest.

NOTE: Both Susanne and Serena are available for talks and workshops. They are represented by Creative Net Speakers' Agency: www.fordstreetpublishing.com/cnet