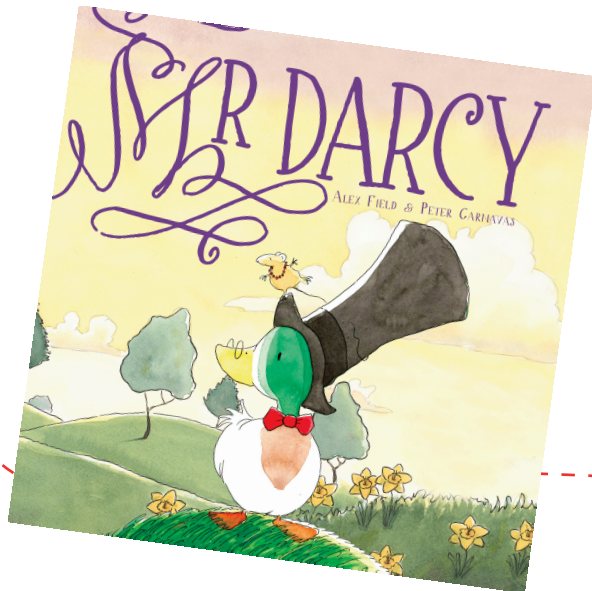


Teaching Notes:

Mr Darcy

Written by Alex Field
Illustrated by Peter Carnavas
Published by New Frontier Publishing



SYNOPSIS

Mr Darcy is a rather reserved and gentle duck. He lives in the best park and feels very important – too important to accept an invitation to tea. Sadly, this makes him lonely. Fortunately, he soon discovers that he loves and needs his friends.

AUTHOR BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Alex grew up in London, but frequently visited Hampshire, Jane Austen's home, and also home to her grandparents. As a teenager, she read all of Jane Austen's novels and still goes back to them. Alex has lived all over Australia, but is now settled back in London with her husband and children. She works in publishing and has written for numerous newspapers and magazines. Alex was inspired to write the story after one of her friends named their family duck, Mr Darcy.

ILLUSTRATOR BACKGROUND INFORMATION

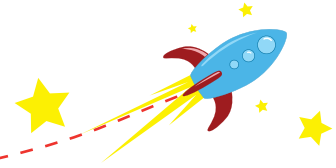
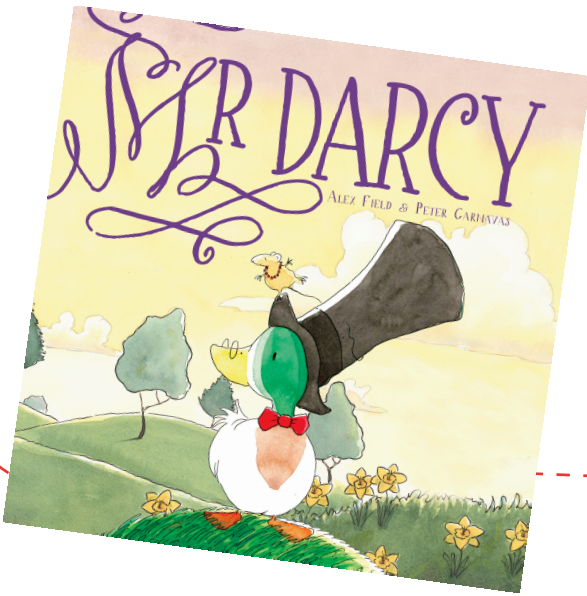
Peter creates picture books for children and grown-ups to enjoy. He writes simple yet poignant tales, accompanied by whimsical illustrations, which combine to create layers of meaning for the reader. His books include *Jessica's Box*, *Last Tree in the City*, *The* ~~<g>VI: neZYMd</g>~~ and his latest picture book with New Frontier Publishing, *The Children Who Loved Books*, a warm and moving celebration of books and the ways in which they bring us together. Peter's work has been nominated for many awards, including the Queensland Premier's Literary Award, The Children's Book Council of Australia Crichton Award, Speech Pathology Australia's Book of the Year Award, and he has been a finalist in the SCBWI Crystal Kite Award for three years running. His books have been translated into many languages, including German, Italian, Portuguese and Dutch. Peter was honoured to be a National Year of Reading Ambassador in 2012 and continues his role as a Love2Read National Ambassador in 2013. Peter lives on the Sunshine Coast with his wife, two daughters and a scruffy dog that occasionally escapes.

EDUCATIONAL APPLICABILITY

Mr Darcy is a book which encourages compassion and empathy. The book explores themes of family life and tolerance about different lifestyles, persistence in achieving creative goals, having an unlimited imagination and being able to solve problems. Mr Darcy learns to accept the help of his friends and to be kind to everyone, regardless of their situation. It is a great tool for introducing children to the works of Jane Austen in an accessible manner.

Teaching Notes: *Mr Darcy*

Written by Alex Field
Illustrated by Peter Carnavas
Published by New Frontier Publishing



DISCUSSION TOPICS

Before reading the book

1. Share with the children a time when you needed help, but didn't ask for help. Ask the children to share examples from school and from home.
2. Have the children heard of the words 'pride' and 'prejudice'. What does each mean to them?
3. Discuss the hats worn by the characters Mr Darcy, Bingley, Lizzy and her sisters. What are they called? How did people dress 200 years ago when Jane Austen was writing?
4. Why would you decline a birthday invitation?

After reading the book

1. Mr Darcy could have asked for help a number of times. Can you remember what he was doing when he said 'no' to offers of help?
2. Do you think Mr Darcy was proud at the end of the story?
3. What do you think the different animals and their clothing tell you about their character?
4. Why do you think Mr Darcy decides to accept Lizzy's invitation to tea?

ACTIVITIES

Language

Mr Darcy uses polite language. Write a list of words that you can use that are polite, for example: please and thank you.

Emotions

Mr Darcy goes through a range of emotions in the story. How can you tell when he is sad? Note the colour used by the illustrator. See if you can find Mr Darcy when he is happy or perhaps when he is embarrassed. How does the text and the pictures show these emotions? Does the text say something different to what you think Mr Darcy is feeling?

Creative Writing

Do you have a pet at home or a favourite animal? Make up a story about an animal using the emotions discussed above. Or try and re-write a famous story, but have all the characters as animals.



CREATE A HAT FOR MR DARCY



PLAY A GAME

STUCK IN THE MUD

Stuck in the mud is a classic game and is a great pulse raiser for any age.

Rules

Two people are the catchers in a group of fifteen.

They have to chase the other game participants and 'tag' them.

When the catcher tags another student, they are now 'stuck in the mud'.

They stand with legs and arms out and they cannot move.

The only way to release them is if another person who is not stuck goes under the student that is stuck to free them.

They can go through the person's legs, or under their arms.

This continues for about 5-10 minutes or until everybody is stuck.

To increase the difficulty level, use more catchers.

