

Wild children and a wild classroom

Locating the literacy/literary curriculum: Betwixt and between the system and the child.

There is a necessity for teachers to negotiate the demands of the system and the needs of the student when designing a literacy/literary curriculum. The following tensions need to be considered. **Note that these tensions are not either/or oppositions.**

ORIENTATION TO STRUCTURE ACCOUNTABILITY EXERCISE OF POWER

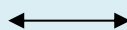
ORIENTATION TO ANTI-STRUCTURE FREEDOM WILL TO POWER

Official goals	↔	Unofficial needs
The didactic	↔	The negotiated
The stated/overt	↔	The silent/internal
The managed/observable	↔	The messy/emotive
The serious	↔	The comic
The class/group	↔	The individual
Being subject to	↔	Having agency
The contrived	↔	The authentic
The ideal child	↔	The actual child

From a pedagogic perspective, this involves a tension between:

Positivist teaching methods

(e.g. worksheets
instructional learning
textbooks)



Constructivist teaching methods

(e.g. inquiry-based learning
collaborative learning
experiential learning)



Emphasis on the product ,
performance and accountability



Emphasis on the process:
self-direction and critical reflection

Necessity of an Instructor



Facilitator (but not necessary)

Scripted behaviours



Creative behaviours.

Structural analysis has the potential to enhance these qualities

Modern Learning Environments: Wild children in wild classrooms?

Some of the positives:

- Children have more agency, self-responsibility and potentially more engagement in their learning
- Greater diversity in terms of learning focus/processes is possible compared to a WALT/whole class approach
- Effective streaming (groups across ages) can be done that is more efficient of teacher time
- Particular strengths of teachers can be better utilised and shared across a range of children
- Environmental design may better suit the use of technology and learning
- Potentially enhanced socio-emotional (SEL) skills being integrated into learning through peer tutoring
- For older pupils the teacher-student relationship becomes more collaborative than didactic
- More economic use of resources in terms of resource/pupil ratio (high)
- Teachers feel less isolated when confronted by challenging situations
- Potentially better use of curriculum integration through the use of better managed stations and individual projects

Some of the potential negatives:

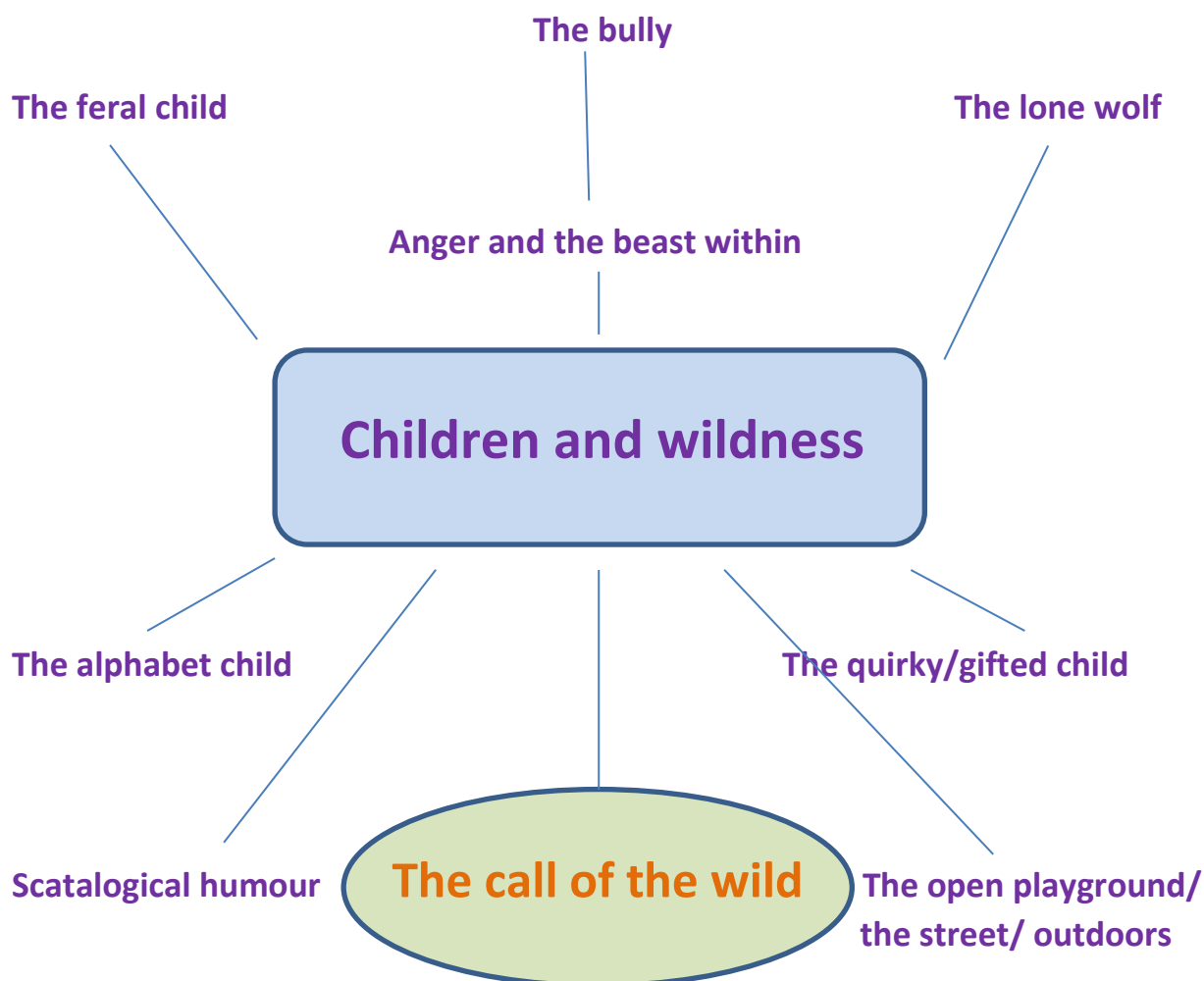
- Some children have little sense of place (my desk, my space)
- Some children want/need structure and certainties and may find openness confusing and troubling
- Some children could slip through the cracks as they potentially are less focused on, because of the teacher-pupil ratio. Freedom versus accountability tension.
- Potentially more demanding for teachers to closely observe and plan at an individual level given teacher/pupil ratio
- Potentially more demanding for teachers to plan effective learning in that WALTs are minimised as IEPs become the norm
- There is the potential for more arguments amongst teachers to take place where dominant voices take ownership rather than a truly collegial environment
- Possible parental concerns if there is little in the way of negotiation
- Teachers who are thrust into this project without adequate professional development, consultation and empowerment may result in negative inter-staff and parental tensions
- More teacher anxiety as they become a more public person
- Potential workload issues when it comes to managing the range of learning events, resources, formative and summative assessments and reporting to parents and the system
- Potentially challenging for a relief teacher to walk into a new situation and make good professional judgments in-the-moment

Read the following debates on MLE by local practitioners:

<http://www.vln.school.nz/discussion/view/859552>

<http://openlearningspaces.blogspot.co.nz/2011/09/collaborative-teaching-advantages-and.html>

wild¹ untamed disorderly rowdy intense
stormy barbarian desert **free** lush native natural overrun primitive
 savage waste **agrarian** desolate **feral** **ferocious** **fierce** indigenous
neglected overgrown **rude** undomesticated uninhabited **vicious**

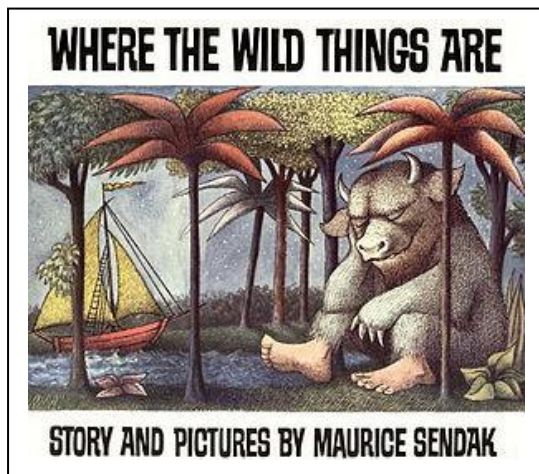


civilized cultured kind nice refined sophisticated behaved
 calm controllable **controlled** delicate gentle tame
manageable mild moderate **orderly**

CHALLENGE: Design a literacy-based unit that explores “Wild children in wild classrooms” as a unit focus! What could be the value of such a unit?

¹ Roget's 21st Century Thesaurus, Third Edition Copyright © 2013 by the Philip Lief Group

Maurice Sendak (1963) *Where the Wild Things Are* USA: Harper Rowe



A young lad is sent to his room by his mother after being a mischief-maker (including chasing the pet dog with a fork) and there he explodes. He is not allowed any supper. That night a forest grows in his room/imagination and he travels through it until he comes to the sea. He takes a private boat and heads off, taking much time until he arrives at a coastal/island space where the wild things are. Max asserts his power (through eye contact) and they accept him as the wildest things of all. And so the rumpus starts until Max reiterates his mother's commands. He begins to feel lonely and desires to return where there are good things to eat. The wild things are dismayed at his imminent departure. But Max asserts his needs/desire and leaves, returning home where the supper was waiting for him and still hot.

Key critical / theoretical perspectives.

- The story takes up a psycho-analytic perspective on how children cope with anger with a mother and absent father whereby the mother is both nurturer and disciplinarian. Max is asserting his masculinity/control/agency in the face of a seemingly controlling mother but he realises he still needs the nurturing mother. The issue of attachment styles and venting as "therapy" may be pertinent.
- The plot structure fits the "call to adventure" archetype or "coming of age" structure whereby the normative peace of home is disturbed by a crisis, the youngster leaves home to have an adventure whereby through survival and the overcoming of challenges, he/she returns home with a boon of deeper self-awareness/understanding.
- An eco-critic might want to deconstruct the negative stereotype associated with the wolf as predator/the demonic (Max in his wolf-suit being the king of all wild things) and explore how negative stereotypes impact on humanity's use/abuse of the real animal.
- A cultural critic might want to deconstruct the normalisation of the island as a savage space, a persistent archetype in the Western imagination (eg. as in the TV series *Lost*) and invite readers to explore the marginalisation and negativity associated with some environmental spaces (eg. island, swamp, cave, forest) as opposed to the valorisation of other spaces like the garden. This critique is very important in sharing this story in island communities.
- The image of Max chasing a dog with a visually-explicit intent to do harm could invoke the theme of animal abuse as a learned behaviour (often children imitating family violence). To what extent is Max asserting imaginatively his need to bully because of his experience of powerlessness and being bullied? Why is the father absent?
- Context: The story was supposed to be that of a child who, after a tantrum, is punished in his room and decides to escape to the place that gives the book its title, the "land of wild horses". Shortly before starting the illustrations, Sendak realized he did not know how to draw horses and, at the suggestion of his editor, changed the wild horses to the more ambiguous "Wild Things", a term inspired by the Yiddish expression "vilde chaya" ("wild animals"), used to indicate boisterous children...
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Where_the_Wild_Things_Are

A Structural Analysis Template.

Dualism: Domestic and/within/ versus the wild	P	What was it about home that Max found unsettling?
	U	Do you have a "wild" space which you frequent and where you feel in control?
	C	To what extent are islands and their inhabitants misrepresented by the idea of the wild and the savage?
	P	What is the best way to help a friend cope with wildness (for example, being a bully or being bullied)? Find out.

Dualism: Mother (father) and/within/versus the son	P	To what extent in the book are the wild things male as opposed to female? Is Max compensating for the lack of a father figure?
	U	Do (some) boys get confused when mothers (female teachers) are both the law and the nurturer?
	C	Does the book suggest that dominance is an essential part of masculinity? To what extent do schools support or undermine what it is to be a boy?
	P	What community supports are there to help children (especially boys in terms of this story) who are troubled about their lives? Find out.

Dualism: Attachment and/within versus Detachment	P	What signs are there that Max lacks empathy and Max is instead driven by his ego?
	U	Does Max's story reflect typical behaviour of children who do not have good attachments to a significant care-giver? Could this book be used to open discussions about attachment?
	C	To what extent does the last part of the text/illustrations signal detachment and a relationship breakdown? Would it have made a difference if the mother was visually shown?
	P	Can you design a poster that is designed to encourage positive relationships with mothers/fathers?

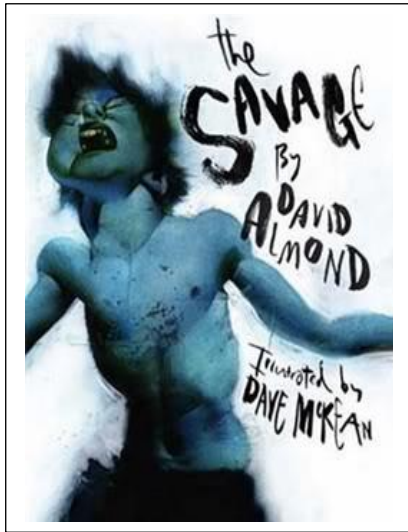
Dualism: Home and/within/versus away	P	Is home a good place for Max?
	U	How important is it to be separate from time-to-time from home and family? What are the benefits and what are the dangers?
	C	Can you think of other heroic journey stories? Is this archetype essential in coming-of-age stories?
	P	Would you want to go to a boarding school? Find out the (dis) advantages as found in children's stories. Compare this with a friend's real experience.

Dualism: Imagination and/within/versus the real	P	How much of the story is real and how much is "imagined"?
	U	Share with a friend your favourite day dream. Do dreams make a difference to our realities?
	C	Does this text encourage exploitation of the wild animal as "Other" even though they are imaginary beings? If it is fantasy, does it matter?
	P	Are nightmare stories unique or the similar to others? Share with a friend your best/worst dreams and see if they are different or shared.

Dualism: Constraint and/within/versus freedom	P	Is Max really happy to be the king of unruliness? To what extent is Max a bully?
	U	When are rules/laws suffocating and unreasonable and it is good to challenge them?
	C	Does this book give permission for unrestrained venting, taking out one's anger on the Other?
	P	How would you like to be the teacher for a period? Plan a lesson and persuade your teacher to let you be the king. What did you learn from this experience?

Dualism: Reward and/within/versus punishment	P	Should Max have been rewarded for his "bad behaviour" by still getting his supper?
	U	What makes effective rewards and punishments?
	C	To what extent does time out as a behavioural modification technique good for recovery or does it result in increased detachment?
	P	What do you think really works in changing your behaviour when you are too wild at home or at school? Share with others. Persuade your parents/teachers to adopt these strategies.

David Almond (illus. Dave McKean) (2008) *The Savage*
London: Walker Books



A synopsis. Something of a hybrid text (a blend of graphic novel, short story depicting seemingly multiple voices), this is a story of young lad Blue who is struggling with the death of his father as well as being subject to being bullied by a nasty lad Hopper. Blue is the “nerdy” type who loves writing and begins to write a story about an imaginary savage or feral child whilst undergoing counselling. The graphic images/dyslexic writing (the Savage) is contrasted with the normative narrator voice of Blue (normal font type and spelling). In a surreal way the Savage seemingly enters into this world such that the reader is invited to contemplate “the beast/shadow within” as a real character. In his story the Savage, through the sense of smell, is attracted to the goodness of Blue and his sister Jess, and is equally revolted by foul smell of Hopper. Late at night, he breaks into Hopper’s home and intends to kill him. At the last moment, the Savage hesitates, lowers his axe, and instead punches him and screams. The next day, curiously, Hopper is bruised and has a black eye. Blue, as the writer/narrator pleads to the reader to believe him

and recounts how Hopper now avoids him. Blue, having been caught uttering grunts and growls as he writes in his class, flees school and decides to find the Savage’s place “near the ruined chapel” deep in the woods. Through a hole in a rock face, he enters into the Savage’s world and is astounded to find cave-type paintings of him and his family from a very young age. The “beast” has always been with him, indeed part of him. They join in a dance of celebration. “We grunted as we stamped and I knew how it felt to be the savage, to be truly wild.” (p. 75). He knew then his wounds would heal and his sadness would begin to fade. He hears his father’s reassuring voice. Much later, we are told that he gifts his story to his Mam and his sister Jess.

Key critical / theoretical perspectives.

- The Jungian archetype of the Shadow that we all must confront and accept is developed in this surreal story. To quote http://changingminds.org/explanations/identity/jung_archetypes.htm:

The Shadow is a very common archetype that reflects deeper elements of our psyche, where 'latent dispositions' which are common to us all arise. It also reflects something that was once **split** from us in early management of the **objects** in our lives. It is, by its name, dark, shadowy, unknown and potentially troubling. It embodies chaos and wildness of character. The shadow thus tends not to obey rules, and in doing so may discover new lands or plunge things into chaos and battle. It has a sense of the exotic and can be disturbingly fascinating. In myth, it appears as the wild man, spider-people, mysterious fighters and dark enemies. We may see the shadow in others and, if we dare, know it in ourselves. Mostly, however, we **deny** it in ourselves and **project** it onto others. It can also have a life of its own, as *the Other*. A powerful goal that some undertake is to re-integrate the shadow, the dark side, and the light of the 'real' self. If this can be done effectively, then we can become 'whole' once again, bringing together that which was once **split** from us. Our shadow may appear in dreams, hallucinations and musings, often as something or someone who is bad, fearsome or despicable in some way. It may seduce through false friendship or threaten with callous disregard. Encounters with it, as an aspect of the subconscious, may reveal deeper thoughts and fears. It may also take over direct physical action when the person is confused, dazed or drugged.

- Nevertheless, the appeal to reader to believe the “reality” of the story invites us to consider the possibility of a dream enactment/sleepwalking disorder if indeed there was no intention of breaking in and assaulting the bully. Certainly, the story goes beyond wish-fulfillment and the power of the imagination and invites us to consider what the nature of reality is.
- Writing as therapy is suggested in that much of Blue’s angst is released through the process of writing, especially journal writing. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/sideways-view/201308/writing-therapy> https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Writing_therapy
- What could be explored however is the extent to which Blue is sampling venting his anger and that the validity of “getting your own back” is both ethically and psychologically problematic. Indeed, Blue as narrator seems to be subject to ruminations as a basis for his writing and the validity of rumination could be explored with older students: Bushman, B. (2002) “Does venting anger feed or extinguish the flame? Catharsis, rumination, distraction, anger, and aggressive responding.” *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* <http://psp.sagepub.com/content/28/6/724.short>

A structural analysis template.

Dualism:	P	Why do you think Blue started writing this story of “The Savage” after the death of his father?
loss	U	Do you know other books/films where a child has to negotiate the loss of a parent (though death or divorce)? Is there a pattern behind these stories?
and/within/ versus	C	Are there any differences between girls/boys and children/adults in terms of coping with loss? Or, is it true that it depends on the individual? Talk to a counsellor about this.
grief	P	How important is it to share a sense of loss/grief (as opposed to hold it within)? Discuss with others.

Dualism:	P	What has made Blue a very angry young boy? Do you think writing is a good way to “release the beast” of anger?
anger	U	How do you cope with anger? Do a web map/brainstorm of ways that your peers cope with being angry. Be honest: do they immediately bring calm?
and/within/ versus	C	Is venting (the forceful expression or release of pent-up thoughts or feelings) good or bad?
calm	P	Find out about mindfulness practices. Summarise the key stages in coping with strong emotions and be prepared to give a talk to your class.

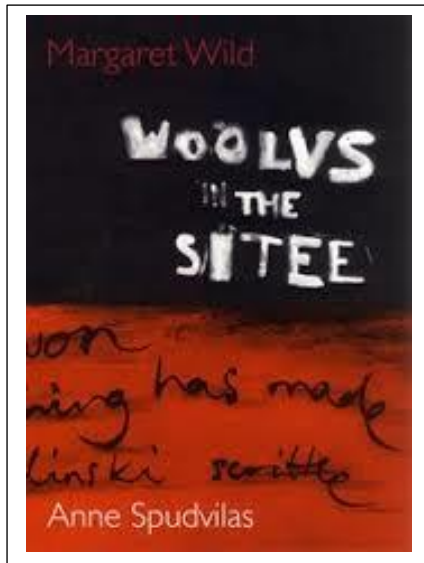
Dualism:	P	Is Hooper simply a bad kid that should be locked up or do you think he is capable of changing? If so, how?
bully	U	Have you got a dark side (the beast within)? Find out if others have/have not. Is it true that all of us have to fight our demons? Read R. Zunde’s book (2014) <i>Release the Beast</i> .
and/within/ versus	C	How important is it that a bully’s behaviour/circumstance is changed for the good? What happens to bullies when they get older and are still bullies? Do they live happy lives? How could you find out about this?
bullied	P	Rewrite Blue’s story of coping with anger when he is being bullied. Find out about the best way to change a bully’s behaviour and see if you can embed this into your story.

Dualism:	P	Where does the Savage live? What religious/literary images are suggested by the idea of caves, ruined chapels, and the woods?
wild	U	Find out about the uncanny in story. What makes the paranormal a popular type of story?
and/within/ versus	C	Is a wildness only to be found in nature? Can living in a city be a wild place? Read M. Wild’s <i>Woolvs in the Sittee</i> and L. Haythorn’s <i>Way Home</i> . Which book is the scariest? Also watch the following filmic version https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0A-dG7rublY
safe	P	How important is it to experience the wild? Can there be too much wildness? How can your class/school be made a safer place?

Dualism:	P	Do you think Blue actually took revenge on Hooper?
forgiveness	U	Can you remember taking revenge when you were hurt? How did this make you feel at the time? How do you see yourself as a person now? Good or bad?
and/within/ versus	C	Does this book extol the “virtue” of revenge? Is revenge (tit for tat) a good or a bad thing?
revenge	P	Is forgiveness a better/worse alternative to revenge? How easy is it to forgive people you know/don’t know?

Dualism:	P	Are you convinced by Blue’s assertion as a narrator that his version of events is “true”? Why/why not?
belief	U	Have you had an uncanny event happen to you and you still wonder if it is true? Share with a friend.
and/within/ versus	C	How important is it to always/sometimes/never be doubtful? When and why not?
doubt	P	Write a list and share/discuss with a friend entitled “I believe.../Don’t believe...”

Margaret Wild (illus. Anne Spudvilas) (2006) *Woolvs in the Sitee*
Australia: Penguin Group



A synopsis.

This is a sophisticated writerly text (Barthes) that invites readers to construct their own sense of what is actually happening and what the story means. The narrator Ben huddles in his own basement place, his family no longer around, frightened of “woolvs in the sitee”. The writing style suggests that Ben may be dyslexic in that pictorially he looks like a middle school child but clearly his spelling seems developmentally younger. He receives help from a neighbour Mrs Radinski who seemingly is unaware of these evil forces (and tells him he needs to go back to school). Ben leaves his enclosure suddenly when he seems to see a blue sky (but it is blue paint). Mrs Radinski holds him tight and takes him back to his space, believing that things will get better. However, when Ben goes to visit her again she is not there. He hunts for her and she is not found. He is bereft, struggling to cope and decides to search for her. He leaves the building, refusing to be victimised. He looks out to the reader and asks him/her to join him in his journey of redemption.

Key critical / theoretical perspectives.

- One reading could be that Ben is suffering from a psychological disorder like paranoid schizophrenia. Older readers could list the symptoms of this disorder and then try to find evidence in the text to support this reading. http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/192621.php#signs_and_symptoms. This website for example has (among other symptoms) the following: auditory hallucinations - hearing voices that are not there (they don't exist). Visual hallucinations are possible, but rare. Delusions - beliefs that are not real; false personal beliefs that are not subject to reason or contradictory evidence. The patient may firmly believe something, even though there is incontrovertible evidence that it is false. An example may be a belief that a neighbour is plotting to kill or poison the patient. Anxiety - a patient with paranoid schizophrenia will usually suffer from periods of high anxiety. Detachment - the patient may sometimes be physically or emotionally; reserved and remote (aloofness). Condescension - sometimes the patient may seem patronizing; perhaps they may feel they know stuff other people don't and subsequently assume such a manner. To what extent is there evidence of these character features in the story?
- Another reading could be that Ben is suffering post-traumatic stress disorder given that he is living in a post-holocaust/dystopian world where the idea of woolvs is a metaphor for the enemy. The image of the cityscape when he is leaving his safe space at the end is suggestive of desolation and the “dark satanic mills” of industrialisation/camps. To quote <http://www.helpguide.org/articles/ptsd-trauma/post-traumatic-stress-disorder.htm> “After a traumatic experience, it's normal to feel frightened, sad, anxious, and disconnected. But if the upset doesn't fade and you feel stuck with a constant sense of danger and painful memories, you may be suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It can seem like you'll never get over what happened or feel normal again. But by seeking treatment, reaching out for support, and developing new coping skills, you can overcome PTSD and move on with your life.” This web page identifies three of the key PTSD disorder symptoms as:
Re-experiencing the traumatic event. Intrusive, upsetting memories of the event. Flashbacks (acting or feeling like the event is happening again). Nightmares (either of the event or other frightening things). Feelings of intense distress when reminded of the trauma. Intense physical reactions to reminders of the event (e.g. pounding heart, rapid breathing, nausea, muscle tension, sweating)
Avoidance and numbing. Avoiding activities, places, thoughts, or feelings that remind you of the trauma. Inability to remember important aspects of the trauma. Loss of interest in activities and life in general. Feeling detached from others and emotionally numb. Sense of a limited future (you don't expect to live a normal life span, get married, have a career)
Increased anxiety and emotional arousal. Difficulty falling or staying asleep. Irritability or outbursts of anger. Difficulty concentrating. Hypervigilance (on constant “red alert”). Feeling jumpy and easily startled.
 Children could again search for evidence that Ben has had a traumatic event, potentially at an individual and collective level. Does he show evidence, in terms of character features, of PTSD?
- One could take up an eco-critical perspective and deconstruct the representation of the wolf and the wilderness in children's literature. A good picture book (faction) to support a positive representation of the wolf is Janni Howker's *Walk with a Wolf* <https://vimeo.com/58570463>. Jack London's book *Call of the Wild* also comes to mind. Also the representation of the inner city as a wild space equivalent to the woods/forest could also be examined. Watch the film *Time of the Wolf* which reveals a boy bonding with a wolf.

A structural analysis template.

Dualism:	P	How is the country/rural/wilderness space used to express what it is to live in the city from Ben's perspective?
rural	U	What are the joys and the dangers of living in a city and/or living in the country for you? Share stories of the positives and the negatives.
and/within/ versus	C	Is it true that there are predators in the city as much as the country? List the dangers of living in your environment.
city	P	Design a poster "The joys of the (wilderness, rural farm, cityscape, the beach)."

Dualism:	P	Why is Ben living alone? List some of the possibilities of what might have happened to his parents.
belonging	U	Why do some younger children/teenagers live alone on the streets in some cities? How do they create a sense of belonging?
and/within/ versus	C	If children don't have a sense of belonging, what impact could this have on their well-being?
otherness	P	Is loneliness a hidden story in our schools? List some ideas of how we could make our schools more inclusive.

Dualism:	P	Where is Ben's safe space? Is he brave at the end when he leaves his safe space? Can a safe space be finally dangerous?
safety	U	Where is your safe space where you have a sense of being able to be you and belong? Share with a friend you can trust
and/within/ versus	C	To what extent do we mislead ourselves when we talk about "mother nature" with the implied idea of nature being caring and sustaining?
danger	P	Have a debate in your class. Here is the topic. "There's too much red tape in our schools. We need to be free to play bullrush and climb trees."

Dualism:	P	In what ways is Missus Radinski a good person?
helper	U	Who are the helpers and who are the wolves (adversaries) in your life?
and/within/ versus	C	Is it a good thing to experience an adversary (like a bully) when you are young/older? Can it build resilience or can it permanently damage a person? Find out by talking to a counsellor.
adversary	P	How could you become a helper in your school like Missus Radinski?

Dualism:	P	What is Ben frightened of? What motivates Ben to develop courage and leave his safe space?
fear	U	Find out about other stories where ordinary people overcame their fear and showed courage.
and/within/ versus	C	List the ways (both positive and negative) that children respond to a bad event. Is it a question of choice, personality or belonging?
courage	P	Find out about PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). What are some good ways that children who have suffered too much stress/fear can be helped to recover? Is it simply something that takes time or does it need something more?

Dualism:	P	Do you think Ben is delusional or do you think his experiences could have actually happened?
imagination	U	Find out about other dystopian stories where the narrator has to battle against evil forces. Share with the class your favourite.
and/within/ versus	C	What is good about reading about the bad? Can imaginative books like <i>Woolvs in the Sitee</i> cause nightmares?
real	P	Tell your story of a book that was too scary for you when you were younger and you put it away and stopped reading it. Has everybody got a story to share?

Romy Zunde (illus. Cinzah Merkens) (2014) Release the Beast
Auckland: Beatnik Publishing



A synopsis.

A young lad (the narrator) from time-to-time is a naughty lad and Mum and Dad get really angry. He is confused because nobody tells adults what to do. In that space, the Beast comes into being. The Beast is an inner wild thing as it stomps in his feet and roars in his mouth. He even makes dreams happen and in that space the Beast never gets into trouble. When he is told to share his blocks with baby Noah, to hurry up as his Dad counts to three, to do what his Mum says and eat his vegetables, let alone told to go and have a bath when doesn't want one, the Beast comes alive. It shut Mummy in a box, shot his Dad to the moon and blew his Mother up into the pear tree. They calm down at night when they read a book together (the boy and his beast) and then he apologises to his mum for letting the Beast put her in a tree, shooting Dad into the moon and eating baby Noah. Mum just laughs and confesses that her Beast had put him

into a clam shell and rolled him into the sea. She tucks him into bed, gives him a cuddle and suggests that on the next day the beasts should play together.

Key critical / theoretical perspectives.

- This book takes up the Jungian idea of the shadow as an archetype. This archetypal image refers to (usually) the negative aspects of our personality that is part of the subconscious and that needs to be brought into the open and accommodated in order for wholeness ("individuation") to occur. The more it is hidden, the denser and blacker it may be. Indeed, this negativity may be projected onto another as a deficiency that they own. Jung also believed that "in spite of its function as a reservoir for human darkness—or perhaps because of this—the shadow is the seat of creativity" so that for some, it may be, 'the dark side of his being, his sinister shadow...represents the true spirit of life as against the arid scholar.' [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shadow_\(psychology\)#cite_note-8](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shadow_(psychology)#cite_note-8). It often appears in our dreams and is a source of creativity for the artist/writer. The beast is the shadow within all of us. This book deconstructs then the idea of naughtiness being a label that describes particular children being deficient and therefore, in all of us accepting our shadow archetype, the child can become more secure in terms of what it is to be human. Another picture book (for older readers) that deconstructs "the naughty child" as a label is Colin Thompson's *The Naughty Corner*. Everyone (for different reasons) ends up in the naughty corner except for Mum, who is a black and white thinker. Indeed, the naughty corner is the most fun space to be!
- The story aligns itself with mindfulness practices (as in ACT therapy) whereby we are encouraged to **A**ccept our dark side, contemplate our negative thoughts (think about our thinking) and then **C**ommit ourselves to our core values in terms of action. Children know that the wild thing is a fantasy and that there is a difference between dreaming and doing. It is okay to have wild and beastly thoughts but we do not need to impulsively act them out. Instead we commit ourselves to our core values: building relationships. "She tucked me in and gave me a big cuddle. 'That's one for you, and one for **Your Beast**.'"
- The book allows us to explore the idea of laughter as therapy and stress reduction. The surreal images (street art) and absurd storyline are not meant to be taken seriously and invite sympathetic laughter at/with the protagonist. Helpful hints include "Laugh at yourself. Share your embarrassing moments. The best way to take yourself less seriously is to talk about times when you took yourself too seriously. Attempt to laugh at situations rather than bemoan them. Look for the humour in a bad situation, and uncover the irony and absurdity of life. This will help improve your mood and the mood of those around you." <http://www.helpguide.org/articles/emotional-health/laughter-is-the-best-medicine.htm>. Children could be encouraged to take up the challenge of inventing absurdities when emotively challenged. This reinforces thinking about your thoughts and not acting on them.
- Children could also explore the beginnings of being a bully in this text by asking the question, "if the boy narrator did not release his beast, what type of person might he become?" given that his dreaming is to inflict harm on others. When is the "will to power" (Nietzsche) problematic?

A structural analysis template.

Dualism: anger <i>and/within/ versus</i> calm	P	What makes the boy in this story angry?
	U	What makes you angry? Share with your peers and make a list of the most/least things that make us angry.
	C	Do a web map/brainstorm of how different people cope with being angry in the moment. Discuss with a group the + and- of different reactions to anger triggers.
	P	Is there anyone who is never/not often angry? If so, get him/her to share how they cope with negative events.

Dualism: imagination <i>and/within/ versus</i> real	P	Is the Beast real or imagined? Or a bit of both?
	U	Can you share a story of when you were in a negative space, you imagined a story that helped you? How important then is imagination for our health and well-being?
	C	Explore some art works where the artist seems to be expressing anger/negativity. The find out something of the artist's life and "purpose" behind the artwork.
	P	What can you do in the real world when you are really upset and nothing seems to make a difference? Do share the "making a difference" strategies that you have tried.

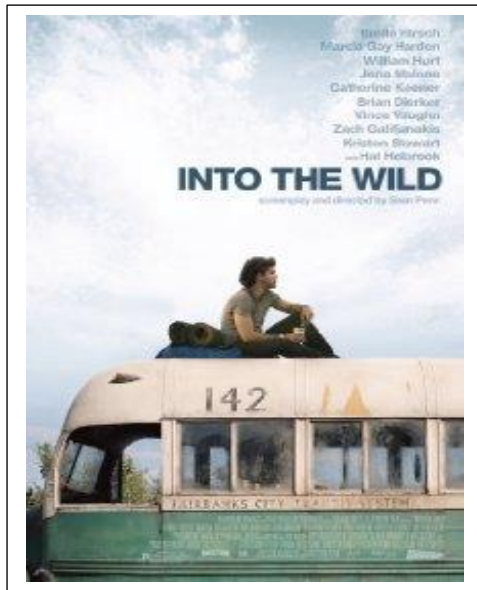
Dualism: inner <i>and/within/ versus</i> outer	P	Do you think the boy actually became the beast and behaved in a beastly way? What evidence is there in the book that the beast is an inner demon or an outer reality?
	U	Is there a part of the inner you that not many people know about? What is good/bad about having private spaces/private personalities? What can you do?
	C	Can people be seemingly lovely on the outside and possibly beastly within? Find out about some people manipulate others for their purposes.
	P	If you were to give two tips to an at-risk younger child who presents as being vulnerable, about keeping safe, what would they be?

Dualism: laughter <i>and/within/ versus</i> gloom	P	What were the naughty things that the boy in the story thought about that made you laugh?
	U	Do you like naughty books? What are the funniest books/films that you like?
	C	What happens to a person if he/she is always gloomy? How can we help them lighten the load?
	P	Try an experiment. Design a quiz that gives you the class' mood. Then everyone tells a really good joke. Then do the quiz again. Does laughter change our moods? How can we make school a funny place?

Dualism: release <i>and/within/ versus</i> bottle up	P	What happened to the boy in this story when his emotions became all pent up?
	U	How do you express anger in bad ways? How do cope with anger in good ways?
	C	Is it okay to simply vent our emotions by exploding outwardly? What are the short/long term consequences?
	P	Design a poster called "Release negative energy." Discuss amongst your friends the best ways you know to release the beast.

Dualism: child <i>and/within/ versus</i> adult	P	Is the boy in this story right when he says that "nobody tells adults what to do"? Explain your answer.
	U	Share with a friend a story when an adult made a mistake and you were angry. Did you try to resolve the problem or bottle it up?
	C	Create an anonymous "drop box of handy hints" for you classroom for everyone (adults and children) on how to make a happier class.
	P	Is it true that everyone (both adults and children) make mistakes and that forgiveness (cuddles in this story) is important? What could you do if an adult made a mistake and you were hurt?

Film Text: Sean Penn (2007) *Into the Wild* (M rated)



A synopsis. Based on the book Jon Krakauer (1997) *Into the Wild* New York: Villard Books, (often a required reading text) this is a biography of an idealistic, newly graduated youth, Christopher McCandless, who changed his name to Alex SuperTramp and gave up all the “trappings” of modern life (including his family) by taking up the call of the wild. He lived the life of the marginalised for two years and finally went on a lonely expedition into the remote wilderness of Alaska. Unfortunately, enclosed by an impassable river, and with limited resources, he starved to death. The biographer admits to being emotionally connected to the story for his own personal reasons and indeed reflects on the universality of the call. Indeed, Chris’ story became an iconic story for many people who, to this day, replicate the journey of this troubled but inspired young man. One of the big questions that his story provokes is when is denial of self (name and family) and belonging (the relational) a negation of being human?

Key critical / theoretical perspectives.

- The idea of a calling to an adventure can be explored in Joseph Campbell ‘s monomyth *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* where there are some synergetic similarities (but McCandless would deny heroic intent). See http://www.thewritersjourney.com/hero's_journey.htm as follows. THE ORDINARY WORLD. The hero, uneasy, uncomfortable or unaware, is introduced sympathetically so the audience can identify with the situation or dilemma. The hero is shown against a background of environment, heredity, and personal history. Some kind of polarity in the hero’s life is pulling in different directions and causing stress. THE CALL TO ADVENTURE. Something shakes up the situation, either from external pressures or from something rising up from deep within, so the hero must face the beginnings of change. REFUSAL OF THE CALL. The hero feels the fear of the unknown and tries to turn away from the adventure, however briefly. Alternately, another character may express the uncertainty and danger ahead. MEETING WITH THE MENTOR. The hero comes across a seasoned traveller of the worlds who gives him or her training, equipment, or advice that will help on the journey. Or the hero reaches within to a source of courage and wisdom. CROSSING THE THRESHOLD. At the end of Act One, the hero commits to leaving the Ordinary World and entering a new region or condition with unfamiliar rules and values. TESTS, ALLIES AND ENEMIES. The hero is tested and sorts out allegiances in the Special World. APPROACH. The hero and newfound allies prepare for the major challenge in the Special world. THE ORDEAL. Near the middle of the story, the hero enters a central space in the Special World and confronts death or faces his or her greatest fear. Out of the moment of death comes a new life. The new life here may well be seen as the deep resonance that the story has with many young people, as found in the story of Brando Yelavich’s (2014) *WildBoy*
- The “Call of the wild” is now something of an archetype in modern media with reality TV shows like Bear Grylls’ *Island* series (beginning in 2014 and planned to continue to 2016. This archetype draws on a long history of “the man alone” motif in literature and in life. For example, Ben Fogle’s documentary series *Where the Wild Men Are* explores the stories of (generally) European folk/families who have left the modern world and travelled to the wilderness (variously defined) to live a life close to nature.
- **Resources:** Something of the circumstance of his death can be watched on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MYcP3brBJ3s>. There is a documentary *Back into the Wild* that retells his story (and the consequent controversy) by retracing his journey and is found on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eR98wPYYqhc> Here is a film trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2LAuzT_x8Ek. The following website shares something of the controversy: was Chris foolish or simply ignorant?: <http://www.outsideonline.com/1920626/chris-mccandless-obsession-problem>. Locate also the 1993 original Outside magazine article online.) The following is an extensive review of the film/book: <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/adventure/news/into-the-wild.html>. Finally, there is his sister’s new book that tells many years later something of the complexity of the story; Carine McCandless (2014) *The Wild Truth*. Here is an interview/doco: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l17oCmyRMno>.

A structural analysis template.

Dualism:	P	Why did Chris reject his home situation and give up on “normal” life? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l17oCmyRMno
reject	U	Is he typical of some teenagers who become cynical about adults and go in a search of a different world? What do you reject/accept about normal life?
and/within/ versus	C	How important is story (like fantasies and adventure stories), whatever the medium, for young people to take them mentally “elsewhere”? When can this be harmful?
accept	P	Have a conversation with a person you know who rejected the usual pathway in life (leave school, further study, get a job, have a family), did something unusual, but returned. Find out why and the good/bad consequences for this person.

Dualism:	P	To what extent was Chris’ home life fairly ordinary? From a study of available resources, was there anything extraordinary about his life?
ordinary	U	Do you think that living an ordinary life is meaningful or meaningless? Why? If the latter, what can/do you do to bring more meaningfulness into your life?
and/within/ versus	C	Read the picture book by Matt Ottley <i>Luke’s Way of Looking</i> . Do you (or a peer) closely relate the way that Luke looks at the world? Does your school encourage the ordinary or the extraordinary?
extraordinary	P	To what extent are the arts (poetry, story writing, music, drama, visual art) essential to living extraordinary and meaningful lives? Interview an “artist”.

Dualism:	P	When Chris left home, what was he searching for? Finally, did he find it? To what extent then is the story a tragedy? Was leaving necessary?
home	U	What other books do you know where the protagonist leaves a troubling home to go on an adventure? Think of Harry Potter and...
and/within/ versus	C	Is the idea of leaving home to find “yourself” largely a Western pre-occupation? Look at Libby Gleeson’s (2007) <i>I am Thomas</i> . Would this story be appreciated by Asian cultures?
away	P	At a point in time, all young people need to leave home to establish their own lives. List all the ways that young people can do to prepare for this adventure and strategically achieve their goals.

Dualism:	P	In what ways was Chris (un)prepared for living in the wilderness? What should he have taken that he didn’t?
indoor	U	Do you prefer to live indoors and/or the outdoors? Why is this? Does your answer tell you something about your character? Are you happy with your answer?
and/within/ versus	C	Is imagined adventure (e.g. computer games, books and/or films) as good as/not as good as, real adventure in the outdoors (e.g. tramping, kayaking)?
outdoor	P	List all the equipment you would need to carry with you in order to live a week in the outdoors with a friend. Do your maths. Can you carry this weight?

Dualism:	P	To what extent did Chris (knowingly or not) put himself in great danger? List all the possible ways that he could have been hurt/killed by travelling alone.
safety	U	Share with a neighbour a time when you know/felt is you were in great danger? What did you learn about life and living because of this experience?
and/within/ versus	C	How important is it to be safe in the outdoors? Is it possible that if there is no danger, then the outdoors is boring and you won’t learn anything?
danger	P	What builds resilience in the face of danger? Brainstorm, in different groups in your class, different scenarios for an outdoor adventure and what would be the most important/least important safety measures. Do you agree with each other?

Brando Yelavich (2015) *Wildboy. An epic trip around the coast of New Zealand*

Auckland: Penguin Books



A synopsis. This autobiography tells an amazing story of a troubled young lad who transforms himself into a man by choosing to undergo an arduous journey: to be the first person to walk around the NZ coastline. When he was young, he was diagnosed as having Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder showing three key behaviours-hyperactivity, inattention and impulsivity. He didn't fit into school (also having mild dyslexia), was rebellious at home, suffering being bullied, and got hooked into the drug culture. He was going off the rails. Inspired by the film *Into the Wild* and having done an outdoors pursuits programme in Cromwell, he began to imagine the possibilities of this epic journey and so, at 19 years old, he began with the support of his family. 600 days later, he became the first person to walk around the coast of New Zealand. One of the joys of social media is that his journey became a shared journey whereby people across the country opened their hearts, wallets and minds to this courageous lad (he started raising money for a children's charity, Ronald McDonald House). "Having grown up in Auckland, I hardly even knew my neighbours, so having strangers stop to talk to me took a bit of getting used to. Pretty

much everyone I spoke to wanted to know what I was doing. And then once I told them, they all wanted to help." (p.67). It was a tough journey, both physically and mentally. Despite the mother archetype which is often used to describe "Mother Nature," the possibility of harm and even death (through ignorance p. 88 or through dire circumstance p. 105) was a constant. The following webpages reveal something of Brando's experience: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JZGepzAiD-s> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbNi6yluc3U>

Key critical / theoretical perspectives.

- The hero's journey (Joseph Campbell *et al*). Whilst in dreams and myths, the archetypal journey of speaks of the heroic individual undergoing a rite of passage whereby, though both help and hinder, the individual must confront his Shadow, the dark side, and return with a boon, in this autobiography, the personal narrative shows that the archetype can be made real. Though inspired by a filmic version of the man alone figure (a NZ historical type), Brando takes up agency in the real rather than simply performativity within discourse (like computer gaming) and truly battles with his demons. This was achieved through the power of the collective imagination (engaging with family, friends and strangers) and collective action (reciprocity in that he gave as well as he took).
- He learns the power of mindfulness in the moment rather than rumination as a means to overcome despair. Early in his journey, he decided to stop taking his prescribed drug Ritalin as there was no longer need to conform to society, but it took a month to overcome depression and anxiety having had something of a meltdown (pp. 61-66). Later, a free-spirited friend Tash challenges him to live in the moment, not to get caught up in negative thinking, and have faith in a bigger picture/ "the universe" (p. 203). To quote from an article, "One person I learnt a lot from was this girl called Tash. She had an amazing outlook on life, and taught me about relaxing and living in the "now"-rather than worrying about tomorrow. Yesterday's problems were not today's She opened my eyes to the power of thought-that when you put positive energy out there, it comes back." Cooney, M. (2015) "Wild Boy. An epic journey of transformation" *Grapevine* Issue 3 p. 15. This reinforces current research; namely, Pahnke, J. *et al* (2014) Outcomes of ACT skills training group for students with high-functioning autism spectrum disorder... *Autism* 18 (8) 953-964
- Dreams are necessary but not sufficient. This story reinforces Hope Theory (Snyder 2002) that postulates that there are three elements of hope that goes beyond wishful thinking: having goals, finding different pathways to achieve these goals, and agency/self-efficacy where you believe that you can instigate change and make these goals happen. <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/snyder-hope-theory.htm>. To a large extent, this autobiography, through narrative, enacts these core elements of goal-orientated hope theory.
- A useful website: <http://tvnz.co.nz/seven-sharp/walking-around-new-zealand-video-5381606>

A structural analysis template.

Dualism: overcoming <i>and/within/ versus</i> living labels	P	The author indicates at the beginning of his story that he had ADHD, mild dyslexia and drug issues. Write down what you think these “labels” mean. Check out how accurate you are about describing these.
	U	Do you know any friends/peers that have defined mental/physical issues? If so, are they happy to share their stories? What would make them (un)happy to share their stories?
	C	To what extent is your peer group/class/school inclusive or exclusive to people who are different (living labels)? Give an example of inclusion/exclusion. Are labels always permanent?
	P	Design a poster. “I am not an alphabet. I am a real person.” In this poster try and show that people are more than the labels we give them.

Dualism: dreams <i>and/within/ versus</i> actions	P	Read the prologue. What started Brando on his journey from despair to hopefulness?
	U	Have you ever been inspired by another person’s story (be it in a book, film or real life)? Share this inspiration with a friend. Is that inspiration still a dream (in your mind) or has it challenged you to do something (in the world ‘out there’)?
	C	What would make the biggest difference in your life: buying lotto tickets and hoping for a winning ticket, or planning, strategizing and doing what your dreams inspire you to be?
	P	Organise a Class Challenge. Each student has to plan a goal to do something good that he/she has not done before, write it down on a list, and do it. Be a doer and not a gonna. Each one shares his/her story and the winner gets...a reward! (What could this be?)

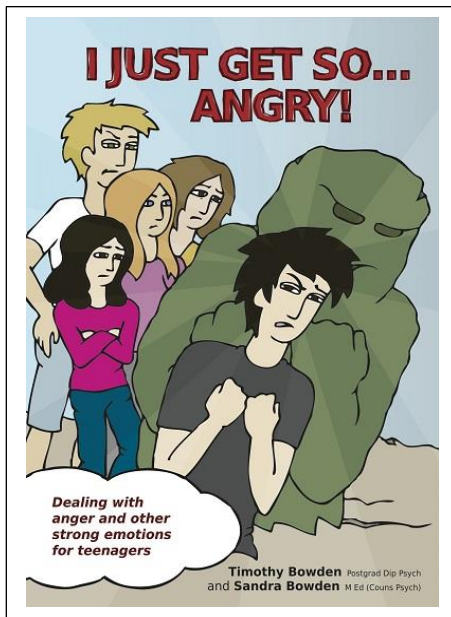
Dualism: giving up <i>and/within/ versus</i> perseverance	P	Each person reads a different chapter and describes what obstacles Brando had to face in this part of his journey and how he overcame them. What makes success/ failure more likely to happen?
	U	Describe one of the challenges you face at school and share with a friend how you have/could overcome this challenge.
	C	When is it critically important and right to give up rather than persevere? Think about the good/bad relationships that Brando faced in his journey. Make a list of “It’s okay to give up when...” and share with a friend.
	P	Find out an amazing story of how someone persevered against great odds (e.g. overcoming a disability/illness) in order to bring joy to him/herself and inspiration for others.

Dualism: benevolent <i>and/within/ versus</i> malevolent nature	P	How did Brando perceive nature? Did he see nature as “just what it is” or did he see nature as good/bad (ascribing nature with intentions).
	U	What does nature mean to you? List your favourite places and your frightening places. Share with a neighbour.
	C	Do you think it is fair to mothers to talk about “Mother Nature”? Explore how we use the terms of “mother” and “father” to describe places.
	P	Read the following blog site. Argue for or against the article. http://blog.crawfordandcompany.com/2012/10/10/the-christchurch-earthquakes-and-the-power-of-mother-nature/

Dualism: self-belief <i>and/within/ versus</i> self-doubt	P	Read page 62 “Although I was happy...” to page 64 “I just wanted a hug.” Clearly he has had a meltdown where he no longer believes in himself and his ability to cope. What do you think will help him get out of his pit of despair? Now read and see.
	U	Think back to when you were faced with failure and no longer believed in yourself. Share with a friend. Is it true that everyone experiences failure?
	C	Identify the bad sayings that our inner voices can keep on telling us that don’t have to be true but if we keep listening to them can cause us to believe them.
	P	Brainstorm all the support groups/strategies that can help people overcome a sense of permanent failure.

Dualism: home <i>and/within/ versus</i> away	P	Why did Brando wanted to/needed to leave home?
	U	What other stories do you know where the main character left home, was challenged to rethink his/her life and returned home a better person?
	C	What are the dangers of running away from home when you are young? Discuss with a friend the alternatives to running away from home.
	P	What are some good “away” spaces where we can develop to become better people?

Timothy & Sarah Bowden (2013) *I just get so...ANGRY!*
Australia: Exisle Publishing Ltd.



A synopsis. This is more of an expository text (faction) using the graphic novel as format, designed for teenagers who need to cope with stress and anger management. Andy wakes up remembering that it is birthday and that everything sucks (Dad has left with an implication of being in another relationship). When Mum offers him a gift, he physically shoves it and her away. He goes to school and is argumentative with his teacher and also, having misread his girlfriend's behaviour, causes her to break up, not liking his jealousy. He ruminates and he seems to be overwhelmed by a fog (cloud of anger, stress and depression). He awakes in a different space: he is literally confronted by his Beast. In a total state of confusion, he spies a sea eagle who communicates with him. He believes that he is hallucinating but the wise bird tells him that he must deal with his demons before he can return. When the beast attacks, he tries to put on a suit of armour to defend himself, but it is only a temporary solution. He is told that he must deal with the underlying issues and is invited to begin the journey...In this journey he is taken through ACT therapy (accept and commit) or mindfulness training. He comes

to realise that it is not just about positive thinking but rather accepting negative thoughts but not necessarily believing them and impulsively acting on them. He comes to understand that his "selfhood" is independent of his thoughts. He is invited to slow down bodily, speak his thoughts rather than act on them, and then contemplate what his core values are to which he is committed, based on the need for relational belonging, before he acts. The "him versus the other" relationships (Mum, sister, girlfriend) which are currently frozen are then narratively explored so that he learns to trust (take risks). Firstly, he has to confront his Beast and recognise/deal with all the negative emotions that the Beast is burdened with. It is about forgiveness of oneself as much as others. When he forgives himself, the beast evaporates.

Key critical / theoretical perspectives.

- This book takes up the Jungian idea of the shadow as an archetype. This archetypal image refers to (usually) the negative aspects of our personality that is part of the subconscious and that needs to be brought into the open and accommodated in order for wholeness ("individuation") to occur. The more it is hidden, the denser and blacker it may be. Indeed, this negativity may be projected onto another as a deficiency that they own. Jung also believed that "in spite of its function as a reservoir for human darkness—or perhaps because of this—the shadow is the seat of creativity" so that for some, it may be, 'the dark side of his being, his sinister shadow...represents the true spirit of life as against the arid scholar.'" [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shadow_\(psychology\)#cite_note-8](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shadow_(psychology)#cite_note-8). It often appears in our dreams and is a source of creativity for the artist/writer. The beast is the shadow within all of us.
- Overcoming the Beast/shadow is explored in depth by explicitly using mindfulness/ACT therapy. There are notes at the back of the book and a website <http://actonpurpose.com.au/www/books/i-just-get-so-angry> that gives a workbook for teachers to take students through a mindfulness process. This is defined as "Mindfulness is a state of active, open attention on the present. When you're mindful, you observe your thoughts and feelings from a distance, without judging them good or bad. Instead of letting your life pass you by, mindfulness means living in the moment and awakening to experience." <https://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/mindfulness>. Having its origins in religious beliefs (both East as in Buddhism and West (Christian mysticism), it has become secularised in the West and is now an empirically supported process.
- The issue of marriage breakdown and the impact that this has on children and young people is a topical issue that is a constant for teachers, for example, to manage. Read the following evidence-based report: <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/11165/1/DCSF-RR113.pdf> which concludes that "Developing flexible and varied sources of support for children experiencing family breakdown, perhaps through raising awareness of the impact of family breakdown via whole-school approaches to improving children's health and well-being [is needed]." The reading class might be a safe space to talk about the issues in the context of the story "out there."

A structural analysis template.

Dualism: powerless <i>and/within/ versus</i> powerful	P	To what extent is Andy powerless (on the receiving end of others' actions)? Is his desire to fight an expression of his desire to become powerful (having agency)?
	U	Do you like to be a leader or follower? When you are a follower (for example in a sports team) and people do bad things, what do you think/do?
	C	How important is it that teenagers have a sense of personal ownership of their lives? When is this positive and when is this possibly negative?
	P	To what extent are bullies angry because of being powerless in other parts of their lives? Could empathy for a bully (without excusing the behaviour) be the basis for forgiveness?

Dualism: miscue <i>and/within/ versus</i> accurate perception	P	In what ways did Andy misread his girlfriend Natalie's behaviour? Do you think Andy had a right to be angry? Share with a neighbour and see if he/she agrees.
	U	Can you remember a time when you misread a situation? Can you remember a time when somebody misread you and blamed you for something? Share with a neighbour and find out if this is quite common.
	C	If miscuing is common and causes distress and possibly conflict, how can we improve our reading of other people's behaviour?
	P	In a drama situation, try to act out a scenario based on part of Andy's story. Get feedback on how good you were at giving clues as to what Andy's feelings were.

Dualism: inner <i>and/within/ versus</i> outer	P	How would you describe what the Beast is in this story?
	U	If you were to draw a picture of your Beast (the angry part of the inner you), what would be some of its qualities? When does the Beast usually "come out" for you?
	C	What does this book tell us about "releasing the beast"? Do you find it easy to forgive others and to forgive yourself?
	P	Draw a 3D image of the outer and inner you (we are not talking about body parts here). Keep this confidential. Do this again in 2 months' time. Any changes?

Dualism: depression <i>and/within/ versus</i> hopefulness	P	Why is Andy feeling overwhelmingly sad, lonely and dark?
	U	Have you ever felt like a dark cloud was above you and suffocating you? Read Shaun Tan's <i>The Red Tree</i> . Is it simply weird or has the book got something important to say?
	C	When is it good to have negative thoughts about yourself and when is it harmful?
	P	Find out about online/mobile phone organisations that are designed to help teenagers feeling really bad. (For example, <i>What Now</i>). Design a poster to spread the word about these organisations.

Dualism: impulsive <i>and/within/ versus</i> reflection	P	In what way are Andy's responses to bad events typical of/different to other teenagers?
	U	Would you describe yourself as impulsive or reflective when you are suddenly provoked? Write down three memories of when you were impulsive and regretted it.
	C	What are the key messages that this book is telling us about how to cope with bad stuff?
	P	For each message, write down your own personal reflection on them and share with a neighbour. Decide if you are both going to give them a go or not.

Dualism: core values <i>and/within/ versus</i> amorality	P	What did Andy decide to be the most important values/beliefs/needs he was going to live by?
	U	What are the most important values/goals have you got in your life?
	C	What are the key critical behaviours/activities that we can do to slow down when we are full of angst and give ourselves time to contemplate what to do next?
	P	How important do you think it is to accept your bad feelings, not label yourself as bad because we all have bad feelings, and commit instead to your values?

Conclusion

Story is like a virus: its magic infiltrates the mind and spirit and can easily be passed forward.

Pass on the *Gift of Story*!

Watch this space: Currently I am involved in a collaborative project that links SEL (core competencies) with multi-cultural picture books. Keep in touch if you want access to emerging teaching resources.

SEL (socio-emotional learning) involves the following domains:

Self Awareness	Social Awareness	Self Management	Relationship Management –	Responsible Decision Making –	Portrayal of Special Needs in Picture Books
Identifying and recognising emotions Accurate self-perception Recognising strengths, needs and values Self-efficacy Spirituality	Perspective taking Empathy Appreciating diversity Respect for others	- Impulse control and stress management Self-motivation and discipline Goal setting and organisational skills	Communication, social engagement and building relationships Working cooperatively Negotiation, refusal and conflict management Seeking and providing help	Problem identification and situation analysis Problem solving Evaluation and reflection Personal, moral and ethical responsibility, SOCIAL JUSTICE	