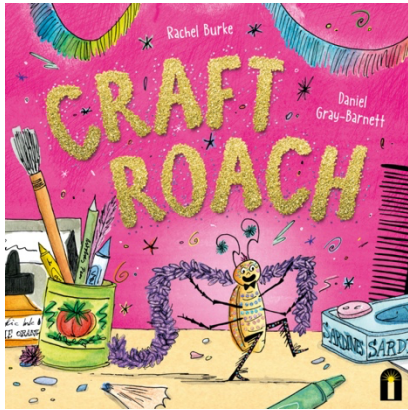


Teacher's Notes



CRAFT ROACH

Written by Rachel Burke

Illustrated by Daniel Gray-Barnett

Teacher's Notes by Bec Kavanagh

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

RECOMMENDED FOR

3+ aged readers (grades F-2)

KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- Learning areas: English
- General capabilities:
 - AC9EFLA07
 - AC9EFLE02
 - AC9E1LE04
 - AC9E1A08
 - AC9E2LE04

THEMES

- Art
- Self-expression
- Fear
- Individuality
- Celebration
- Acceptance
- Joy

SYNOPSIS

While all the other bugs and roaches try to stay *out* of sight, Craft Roach is busy collecting pom poms, sequins and other arts supplies from beneath the artist's desk to adorn his body with fancy decorations.

The other bugs are worried – they've seen what happens to the bugs that make themselves visible – they get squished, sprayed, stomped on! It's enough to make any bug want to run and hide. But not Craft Roach – and one day, when the artist is out, Craft Roach dresses up in a spectacular outfit, and starts to dance. The scene is so spectacular that *all* the other bugs want to join in.

And so, when the young artist returns home, she is shocked to discover a parade of bugs in fancy dress. The bugs tremble in fear at the thought of being discovered, but the artist doesn't want to squish them, she wants to paint them!

Craft Roach is a hectic celebration of joy and wonder, and a gentle reminder that acceptance comes in all shapes and sizes.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ ILLUSTRATOR

Rachel Burke is a practising multidisciplinary artist, designer and author based in Brisbane, Australia. Known for her vibrant, tactile wearable artworks and iconic tinsel creations, Rachel's work is inspired by a love for naive craft materials and transforming the mundane into the magical. She has worked on many creative collaborations with global brands, such as Disney, LEGO, Barbie, Airbnb, Nikon, Visa, West Elm, Pottery Barn, Frankie Magazine, Sephora, Mecca and My Little Pony. Rachel has exhibited her artwork in gallery spaces across Australia, including the Museum of Brisbane, Saint Cloche Gallery, Hamer Hall, the Australian Centre of the Moving Image, Enough Space, GAFFA and the Redlands Art Gallery. Craft Roach is her first picture book.

Daniel Gray-Barnett is an illustrator and author from the Huon Valley in lutruwita/Tasmania. He likes to think of himself as someone who was put on this planet to tell a few stories before he turns into a grumpy old man. He's worked with clients including Disney, Kiehl's, Sydney Opera House and The New York Times and his first picture book, *Grandma Z*, won a Children's Book Council of Australia award for Best New Illustrator. When he's not in the studio, he can be found daydreaming in the garden with his husband, German pointers and chickens.

THEMES

Creativity

At the beginning of the book, Craft Roach is introduced in a full colour, glamorous outfit –

he adorned his shoes with pompoms, stuck sequins to his wings. His tum was painted rainbow bright, his legs were packed with rings!

In this case, the writer and illustrator of the book are using art as a form of creativity, but Craft Roach is also creative in the way that he expresses himself differently to the other bugs. What are some other ways to be creative? What gets in the way of creativity?

Fear

What do you think the bugs are afraid of? Look at the picture of Jim's funeral, followed by scenes of all the things bugs have to be afraid of – shoes, fly swatters, bug sprays. Are they right to be afraid? What might help them to feel less afraid?

Share a time when you've felt afraid to draw attention to yourself. What did you think would happen? What actually happened? Discuss ways to overcome fear.

Celebration

The book ends with a celebration, in which all of the bugs feel free to dress up and make themselves seen. Why is it so important to accept and celebrate difference? What are some celebrations of difference that you've experienced or participated in?



WRITING STYLE

Rhyme:

The book is written in rhyme using an **unbounded** or **ballad quatrain** – this means that each stanza of the poem has four lines, and the second and fourth line rhyme (an ABCB structure). Write out some of the verses and invite students to underline the rhyming parts to help them understand the structure.

What other familiar rhyming structures are there? Compare the ABCB structure used in the book with the rhyme in some of their favourite songs or nursery rhymes, other books, or familiar poems.

Describing words:

Explain to students the difference between a verb and an adjective – ask them to find three examples for each from the story. We often use adjectives to describe who we are. Which adjectives would you use to describe Craft Roach? Come up with three adjectives to describe yourself.

COMPREHENSION

- What does Craft Roach like to do every day?
- What are some of the materials that Craft Roach uses for his costumes? Where does he get them from?
- Why do the other bugs feel 'tense' and 'stressed' at the thought of being seen? Are they right to feel this way?
- What do the other bugs want Craft Roach to do? How do you think he would feel if he hid himself away the way that they want?
- What ends up changing their minds about dressing up?
- Describe the artist's reaction when she comes home to find the bugs all dressed up. Why is her reaction a surprise?
- How does the ending of the book make you feel? What do you think the book is about?

WRITING EXERCISE

Choose your favourite bug from the book and write a short verse describing them using the rhyming pattern in the story (ABCB). Give your bug a name and choose three adjectives that describe them – use at least one in your verse.

ILLUSTRATION STYLE

The illustrations are busy and brightly coloured – there are many many bugs on the pages! The illustrations speak to the themes of the book by encouraging creativity. Look at the last page, where all the bugs are celebrating and bathed in bright yellow and pink light. Compare this page to the scenes from earlier in the book – how are the colours different, and the expression on the bugs' faces? What does this suggest to you about how they're feeling?



CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

- Using the instructions at the back of the book, make your own craft bug and put on a classroom exhibition – invite others in the school to come and look at your glamorous bugs!
- Come to school dressed as your favourite bug from the book and have special morning tea and fancy-dress parade.
- Who would you recommend this book to? Give a short oral presentation to your class describing your response to the book – what would you say it is about? Why did you like it?
- Does this story make you think differently about some of the bugs you share *your* house with? Write a short story from the point of view of a bug that lives in your home – what do you think they'd say to you if you had a conversation?

RELATED READING

Katerina Cruickshanks

By Daniel Gray-Barnett

Rainbow is my Favourite Colour

By Penny Harrison

The Dot

By Peter H Reynolds

The Kindness Club

By Kate Bullen-Casanova

The Underwater Fancy-Dress Parade

By Davina Bell

