

Flood**French, Jackie**

The cattle dog looks out and sniffs the air. At first the rain is a welcome arrival after the dry spell and soon the land looks green again.

However, the rain continues to fall. The river bursts its banks and the water flows into town, causing a great flood.

Everyone is scared as they escape onto roofs and into boats. The flood causes terrible destruction to homes and buildings. But there are many brave heroes, like the strangers that wade into the water to rescue people. As the water finally recedes communities come together to help with the clean-up and to offer food and hope. Jackie French says: This

is a story of the 2011 Brisbane floods, but it could be a story of any of the disasters that strike our land, where every day Australians discover they are heroes.

Floods can come in a flash wave, as the rain falls too fast for water to soak into the ground.

They can roll down rivers from faraway storms, sweeping across land where it hasn't rained for years. Water gives us life, but it can kill us too. Always respect the power of water.'

TEACHER NOTES

Talk about the Queensland floods. Use the internet to research the cause of the floods and prepare a class poster about the weather patterns leading up to the floods. Define terms such as 'global warming', 'La Niña', 'tropical cyclone', 'flash flood', etc.

There are steps that can be taken to prepare for a flood or other natural disasters. You might like to look at the government website mentioned at the back of the book and discuss these steps.

Talk about how the floods affected people. Discuss housing, jobs, animals. How can we help people affected by the floods? Discuss why the author and illustrator of Flood decided to create a book about the events.

While the floods were a time of devastation and sadness, there were also stories about heroes and courage. Research some of these stories and have students write their own newspaper report about the event.

How have Jackie French and Bruce Whatley made this book feel uniquely Australian?

How did students hear about the Queensland floods (or other recent natural disasters)?

These days there are many ways to communicate news. Brainstorm these mediums, for example phone call, TV, online, newspaper, radio, social networking, text message, etc. Pick a recent event and create brief news messages describing this event using various mediums of communication.

Why do you think the illustrator chose a blue cattle dog as the main character in the story?

The final illustration (of the boy hugging the dog) does not have any words. What do you think they are feeling at this moment?

ISBN: 9781742830728

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