

## These notes are for:

- 5+yrs
- Primary

## Key Learning Areas:

- English
- Health/ PDH/PE

## Example of:

- Chapter Book
- Junior Fiction / Illustrated Fiction
- Walker Stories

## Experience of:

- Reflecting on text
- Shared reading/viewing
- Reading & Writing
- Speaking & Listening
- Viewing & Creating
- Research

## Values addressed:

- Fears & Worries
- Health & Hygiene
- Fairness & Appreciation

## Themes:

- School
- Friendship
- Pets
- Jokes & Riddles
- Bravery

\*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

Walker Books Australia      Ph +61 2 9517 9577  
 Locked Bag 22                      Fax +61 2 9517 9997  
 Newtown, N.S.W., 2042

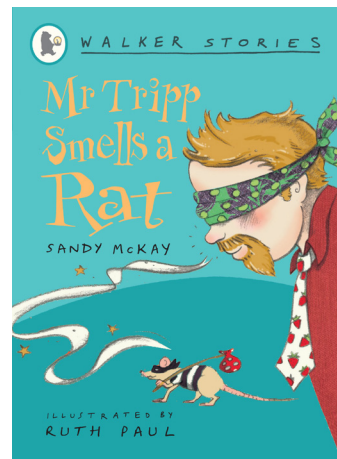
For enquiries please contact Education:  
[educationwba@walkerbooks.com.au](mailto:educationwba@walkerbooks.com.au)

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## Mr Tripp Smells a Rat

### Mr Tripp Smells a Rat (Walker Stories)

Written by: Sandy McKay  
 Illus. by: Ruth Paul  
 ISBN: 9781921529061  
 ARRP: \$11.95  
 NZRRP: \$13.99  
 Pages: 64  
 January 2011



## Outline:

Join Mr Tripp and Room Five for three great stories about an escaped rat, a surprise birthday party and an itchy insect invasion.

Room Five's teacher, Mr Tripp, is good at telling jokes, loves riddles and is great at using his nose. When a student's pet rat escapes from its cage, it's up to Mr Tripp to be brave, and to smell it out! Three fun and engaging stories which will have early readers eagerly turning the page for more adventures.

## Author Information:

Sandy McKay is a New Zealand born author who began writing stories when her children were little to encourage them to read. Her first novel *Recycled* (Longacre Press) won the New Zealand Post Children's Book Award for Junior Fiction in 2002. She has since had three other titles appear on the Notable list for the same award: *My Dad, the All Black*, 2002; *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?*, 2005; *Losing It*, 2008. *Mr Tripp Smells a Rat* is Sandy's first title with Walker Books. Sandy lives in Dunedin with her husband and her three children.

## Illustrator Information:

Ruth Paul is an award-winning author and illustrator from New Zealand. She draws on everyday life for inspiration and ideas, and is particularly interested in how people get on together. Ruth calls herself an "old-fashioned" illustrator, working in hands-on media such as acrylic, pastels and pencils; using Photoshop to do last-minute work on scans where required. Her title *The King's Bubbles* won the Children's Choice Award, New Zealand Post Children's Book Awards, 2008; and the Children's Book Design Award, Book Publishers Association of New Zealand Design Awards, 2008. Ruth lives in the country in a straw-bale house powered by its own remote electricity system, with her husband and two young sons.

## How to use these notes:

These notes are to be used in conjunction with the text *Mr Tripp Smells a Rat*. Multiple copies of the text are recommended for shared reading. This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.



## Classroom Ideas for *Mr Tripp Smells a Rat*:

### BEFORE READING *MR TRIPP SMELLS A RAT*:

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- Ask students to view the cover and title. Identify the following:
  - The title of the book
  - The author
  - The illustrator
  - The publisher
- Discuss the following with students: What is the role of the author?; What is the role of the illustrator?; What is the role of the publisher?
- What is the purpose of a blurb? What information does the blurb of this book provide/not provide?
- Ask students: From the front and back cover, what information can you learn about the book?; What do you think this book is about?; How do you think the book will begin/end?; What type of book is this and where would you expect to find it in your library?
- Ask students to select a book from the library that they have not read before. Then have students present this book to the class only using information from the front and back cover.

### ACTIVITIES & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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- What are each of the students in Room Five good at? Ask your students what each of them is good at. Discuss with students if they think it is important for each person to have something that they are good at and why.
- Ricky Rider has a pet rat. Do any of the students in the class have pets? Discuss what is involved in taking care of pets.
- What are the three things that Mr Tripp likes? What are the four things that Mr Tripp does not like? Ask students to write down things they like and do not like including things they are afraid of.
- On p. 22 Mr Tripp is called "brave" by Miss Filipo. What did Mr Tripp do to be called brave? What does the Room Five class think it means to be brave? What do your students think it means to call someone brave? Ask the students to share with the class any stories where they have been brave.
- Mr Tripp likes chocolate. Ask the student what their favourite foods are. How much of these foods should they eat each day?
- In the second story Mr Tripp goes on a diet that includes lots of fish, fruit and vegetables; and no chips, lollies or chocolate. Ask students what they know about the different food groups and how much of each food they should eat each day. Ask the students to bring in for lunch a meal that includes food from all the different food groups.
- What sort of cake do the students make for Mr Tripp? Ask students to draw their own picture of a cake that combines unusual ingredients.
- The students of Room Five throw Mr Tripp a surprise birthday party. Have your students plan a party. What things would each student need to bring to make the party successful?
- At Mr Tripp's party the students each show off their unique talents. Ask your students if they have ever done something to show off. What did it feel like? Why did they feel the need to show off?
- Ask the students to research head lice and nits. Ask them to draw a chart following the life cycle of a louse and have them discuss the best ways to treat them.

**ACTIVITIES & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS  
CONTINUED**

- On p. 48 Mr Tripp asks the students, “What’s got a head, a pair of antennae, two body segments, and six legs?” Ask your students to draw an animal that would fit that description. Ask your students to research insects: What makes an insect an insect? How many different varieties are there? Where do different insects like to live?
- Mr Tripp’s stories are about everyday things that happen in a classroom. Ask your students to write their own stories about something funny that happened in class. Suggest the students start by thinking about what everyone actually said and then include parts that are made up.
- Ask the students which of Mr Tripp’s jokes was their favourite. Do any of your students have their own favourite jokes? Ask them to share them with the class.

**AFTER READING MR TRIPP SMELLS A RAT:**

- Ask students to discuss and answer the following:
  - What was this story about?
  - Where was this story set?
  - Who are the characters in this book?
  - Is there something to learn from reading this book?

**Sandy McKay’s inspiration for writing *Mr Tripp Smells a Rat*:**

“The inspiration for this story came from my daughter Meg when she was around six or seven. She used to come home with great stories about what had been happening at school. It was always – Paige said this, and Courtney said that. Bella did this. And Ruby said that. And then the teacher said ... And guess what happened next?

I wanted to write a story just like that using a child’s voice. I wanted to write a simple story about the ordinary things that happen at school (with a few made-up bits thrown in!) I also wanted to write a story about a good-natured, good-hearted teacher who sometimes makes mistakes. I really like Mr Tripp. I like the way he always tries his best. And I especially like the ways he tries to show off in front of Miss Filipo. (It usually ends up being his downfall).

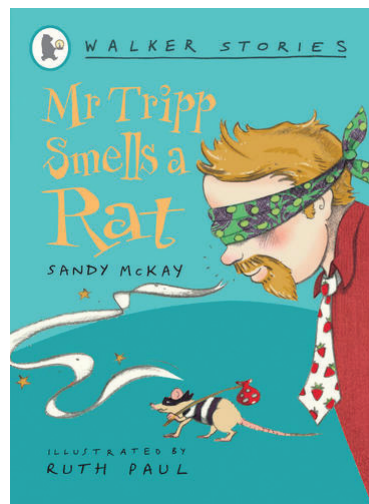
I think the relationship that children have with their teacher is something they remember for years to come. I would have liked a teacher like Mr Tripp when I was young.”



## Can you find the following words?

- balance
- birthday
- brave
- breath
- cartwheel
- chocolate
- class
- diet
- embarrassed
- eyelids
- fish
- five
- frogs
- hair
- itch
- jokes
- juggle
- lily
- lollipop
- louse
- matilda
- miss filipo
- mr tripp
- nit
- party
- rat
- red
- riddles
- room
- ruth paul
- sandy mckay
- seafood
- short story
- smell
- treat
- walker

p e t m i m a t o s i a s p s i o p r a  
 m s e h i s a a l c c l b l s h i y r t  
 t s y e c l f t f o l a a e c i m r a h  
 b r e a t h r e i o u p i s o i l d d o  
 h a y s o p o y s l d s e d h p e v e e  
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 o o p o l w t f o l c r l h h r i d n s  
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 t i o o a r s s t p w i s t d y s i b t  
 y r l h a b n s k d h m d r m l p i r d  
 s p k i t i t a f j e m g c e s o p l a  
 u b p p i r t r m i e r k s l v c o e m  
 t i a x o t d r e k l a w p g a a r t u  
 i o t h e h l a o a y i s h g l s r i y  
 t k s a o d r b r u t h p a u l e s b o  
 p m p l l a t m c c s e k o j u a i k r  
 s d i l e y e e h y s u i l s d y s i e



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Room Five's teacher, Mr Tripp, is good at telling jokes, loves riddles and is great at using his nose. When a student's pet rat escapes from its cage, it's up to Mr Tripp to be brave, and to smell it out!



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