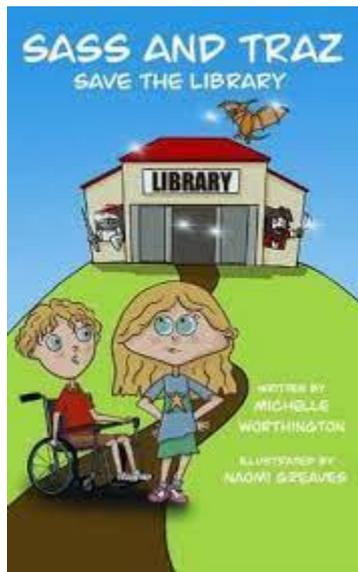


## Teacher Notes



### *Sass and Traz Save the Library*

by Michelle Worthington

with illustrations by Naomi Greaves

Publisher: Daisy Lane Publishing

ISBN:978-0-6488193-5-6

Recommended for 5 – 8-year-olds

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## ***About Sass and Traz Save the Library***

*Sass and Traz Save the Library* is a celebration of libraries, books and story and their ability to inspire lifelong learning through a love of books.

The book shows a library to be a community hub where people can meet, feel welcome and accepted, and be safe,

It demonstrates the power of books to take us to different worlds, both real and imaginary, and to discover the history of the natural as well as the human world.

Libraries mean different things to different people, but at their heart, they are storehouses of human treasure. As Ms Burns, the librarian tells the pirates who seek treasure of a different kind:

‘A pirate may be richer in silver, gold and jewels than any king or queen alive, but unless you discover how wonderful books are, you will never know what real treasure is.’ (p25)

## **The blurb**

Sassafras and Alcatraz are twins who couldn't be more different, except for the fact that they love their local library.

The librarian, Ms Burns, tells them the library is going to be demolished and there is nothing she can do about it.

That is, until the library itself finds a way to help.

Can they work together to find a way to stop the council and save the library before it is too late?

## **Synopsis**

Sass and Traz are twins who are different in almost every way except for their pointed faces, green eyes and yellow hair; and most importantly — their love of books and their local library.

While their mother is coaching their big brother's football team on the weekend, they spend time in the library, which overlooks the oval. Ms Burns, the librarian and their mother's best friend, keeps an eye on them.

One Saturday when they arrive at the library, they find a very distressed Ms Burns. She explains that Mayor Carter plans to demolish the library to make way for a carpark and that there is nothing they can do to prevent it.

However, it seems the library itself has different ideas.

When Sass goes to the basement to gather packing boxes, she accidentally releases some Dewey Decimal Cards from the old filing cabinets, also stored there. And that's where the

magic begins as book characters come to life and Ms Burns and the children try to enlist their help to save the library.

First come the pirates looking for treasure. They are not the least bit interested in stories until Ms Burns convinces them that stories are treasure and that reading might even help them spell the words on their tattoos correctly.

Next to arrive is King Arthur and his knights. Ms Burns is especially taken with Sir Lancelot.

In a stroke of genius, Einstein is summoned to solve the problem.

Each is determined to overturn the mayor's decision in their own way but find that they have no power once they attempt to leave the library.

Finally, it is a whole bunch of tiny dinosaurs, summoned by the mayor himself, who torment him and help him make a better decision for the library's future.

### **About the author**

Michelle Worthington is an international award-winning author having published 20 children's books. Two-time winner of the International Book Award and finalist in the USA Best Book Awards. Michelle also received a Gellett Burgess Award and a Silver Moonbeam Award for her contributions to celebrating diversity in literature. She is also an award-winning Screen Writer, loves coffee and camping and is a real-life book fairy.

Find out more about Michelle from her website: <https://www.michelleworthington.com/>.

### **Relevance to the Australian Curriculum**

*Sass and Traz Save the Library* is a useful resource for teaching in the Literature and Literacy strands of the English Curriculum Years 2 and 3. It is great for reading aloud or used as a set class text.

It can be used as a springboard for developing skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing and creating as children listen to and engage with the text for enjoyment.

Extension suggestions provide ways of linking the story with other curriculum areas including maths and technology.

## **Activities and discussions**

### **How important is the local or school library to you?**

The Australian Children's Laureate 2020-2021, Ursula Dubosarsky, wrote a letter to all Australian children. You can read it [here](#). In the letter, Ursula urges children to join their local library and 'Read for your life'.

How often do you visit the library?

How many books do you borrow each visit?

Are libraries just for books?

What other activities do you engage in at the library?

What do you like best about your library?

How could your library be improved?

The Mayor of Greensville had a different idea about the value of libraries. What were his thoughts? (p 72)

### **Become a library warrior**

What do you think of libraries? Are they important? Why or why not? (What does Einstein say about libraries? p75)

What things can you do in your library? (What does Ms Burns say? p 69-70)

How would you feel if your library was closing?

Write a letter to your town council telling them why libraries are important.

Celebrate [Library Lovers Day](#).

Write a letter to a librarian telling them how much you appreciate what they do.

Interview a librarian to find out what their job entails.

### **Design your dream library**

What facilities would your dream library have?

How would it be furnished and decorated?

When would it be open?

Who could use it?

## **Stocking your dream library**

What books would you buy first to stock the shelves?

Have each child list ten of their favourite books.

Compare the lists to see which books are most popular by tallying how many times each book is selected.

## **The magic of books**

In *Sass and Traz Save the Library*, story characters come to life through magic. Magic is a feature of many stories. List stories in which magic either creates or helps to solve a problem.

How is magic important to saving the library in *Sass and Traz Save the Library*?

## **Nicknames**

Sass and Traz are nicknames. They are shortened version of longer names.

Discuss the children's names. How many of them are shortened (or lengthened) to create nicknames?

Discuss reasons for using nicknames.

## **Word families**

twins, two, twice, twenty, twelve

## **The Dewey Decimal System**

Investigate the Dewey Decimal System.

What is it for?

How does it work?

Find out the numbers that relate to things you are interested in. Write a list of three to five things you would like to know more about. Find out what numbers are used to catalogue them in the library. Then look in the library at those numbers for books.

Write down the topics you are learning about in class. Find out what numbers are used to catalogue books on those topics to make research easier.

In which numbers would you look to find information (non-fiction) about pirates, knights, Albert Einstein, dinosaurs?

How would you find stories about pirates and knights and scientists? Discuss the different ways fiction books are arranged compared to non-fiction books.

### **Accessing books in the library**

In modern libraries, most tasks are computerised. Compare this with how Ms Burns completed her tasks.

Discuss with parents and grandparents, teachers and librarians how they found books they wanted to read when they were young. Find out how they borrowed books and compare it with what happens now.

### **Character descriptions**

Write character descriptions for each of the main characters:

Sass

Traz

Ms Burns

Mother

Brother Max

Mayor Carter

Captain Blackbeard

King Arthur

Sir Lancelot

Einstein

Compare Sass and Traz. They are twins. How are they alike? How are they different?

What twins do you know? How are they alike? How are they different?

### **Creative thinking and writing**

What other characters might have come out of the drawers?

Who would you like to have seen come out of the drawers? Write that episode or chapter for the book.

### **One man's trash is another man's treasure.**

Discuss the idiom as it relates to children's likes and dislikes.

'The library is full of treasure,' shouted Ms Burns. (p22)

Compare how Ms Burns feels about the library with how the mayor feels.

### **Story within a story**

Ms Burns read the pirates a story about The Pink Pirate. Captain Blackbeard said that girls can't be captains. Do you agree? Why or why not? (busting stereotypes)

Ms Burns read King Arthur and the knights a story about Dane the Knight. Dane wasn't like other knights. How was he different? How did he save the day? What lesson can we learn from Dane?

Einstein tells a story to the mayor. What is his story? How does he hope the story will influence the mayor? Did his story have the desired effect?

### **Pirates**

What other pirate stories do you know? (Michelle's book *The World's Worst Pirate*)

Who is Blackbeard?

What do you know about pirates?

What are the points on a compass and what are they used for? The pirates misspelled them. Draw a picture of a compass and write on the directions, spelling them correctly.

What are some words the pirates may have tattooed on their arms? Find out how to spell the words correctly.

How do you look up the spelling of a word if you don't know how to spell it correctly?

### **Knights**

Who is King Arthur?

Who is Sir Lancelot?

What other books about knights do you know?

What is a knight? What do they do? What do they wear?

Why does Sir Lancelot speak differently?

How do they want to solve the problem of the library?

What was Ms Burns's reaction to Sir Lancelot? How did the author let you know about her feelings without actually telling you?

## **Einstein**

Who is Einstein?

Why do Ms Burns and the children think Einstein will be able to help?

What other famous scientists do you know?

What are some of Einstein's theories that are mentioned?

Which theory does he think will save the library?

Did Einstein's plan work?

## **Ms Burns wisdom**

Children may enjoy discussing the meaning and lessons from some quotes in the book, for example:

'A pirate may be richer in silver, gold and jewels than any king or queen alive, but unless you discover how wonderful books are, you will never know what real treasure is.' (p25)

'Georgia, the pink pirate, sailed away into the sunset, knowing that you can be anything you want to be, as long as you believe in yourself.' (p31)

'Sometimes the best way to win is to be kind and share the love from your heart. That is the best kind of hero there is.' (p49-50)

'No man is too good or too old to learn and if you will study what ought to be studied, you will become better men. Stories teach us to better know our rights as well as our duties.' (King Arthur p 51)

'What you do is the most important job ever! said Sass. 'You made me fall in love with books. You helped me learn how to dream.' (Sass talking to Ms Burns p 68)

## **Library Rules**

Ms Burns explained some rules of the library to each of the characters that turned up.

What rules did she explain?

- Sit quietly
- Use inside voices
- Make good choices and be quiet

What are some of the rules of your library?

What is the purpose of the rules? Do you agree with them?

## **Saving the library**

How was the library saved?

Write a list of the dinosaurs that appeared in the library. Research to find out about them and what they looked like. What is the Dewey Decimal number for dinosaurs?

## **Figurative language**

The author has used many similes and metaphors throughout the book. Discuss some of them and how they are used to enhance meaning. Write some of your own.

Examples:

‘She fluttered her fake eyelashes until Sass thought they might fly off like big black butterflies.’ (p8-9)

‘a wave of anger spread through her like a bushfire’ (p17)

‘The far away sound of popping carried down the stairs as if the library was slowly filling with popcorn.’ (p19)

‘Sass bobbed in a half-hearted attempt at a curtsy but changed her mind at the last minute to bow and ended up looking like a fish dangling from a line.’ (p43)

## Links to the Australian Curriculum

### English

#### Literature Strand

##### Responding to literature

<b>Year 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compare opinions about characters, events and settings in and between texts (ACELT1589)</li></ul>
<b>Year 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Draw connections between personal experiences and the worlds of texts, and share responses with others (ACELT1596)</li><li>• Develop criteria for establishing personal preferences for literature (ACELT1598)</li></ul>

##### Examining literature

<b>Year 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discuss the characters and settings of different texts and explore how language is used to present these features in different ways (ACELT1591)</li></ul>
<b>Year 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discuss how language is used to describe the settings in texts, and explore how the settings shape the events and influence the mood of the narrative (ACELT1599)</li></ul>

##### Creating literature

<b>Year 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create events and characters using different media that develop key events and characters from literary texts (ACELT1593)</li></ul>
<b>Year 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create imaginative texts based on characters, settings and events from students' own and other cultures using visual features, for example perspective, distance and angle (ACELT1601)</li></ul>

#### Literacy Strand

##### Texts in context

<b>Year 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify the point of view in a text and suggest alternative points of view (ACELY1675)</li></ul>
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##### Interacting with others

<b>Year 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Listen to and contribute to conversations and discussions to share information and ideas and negotiate in collaborative situations (ACELY1676)</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use interaction skills, including active listening behaviours and communicate in a clear, coherent manner using a variety of everyday and learned vocabulary and appropriate tone, pace, pitch and volume (ACELY1792)</li></ul>
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### **Interpreting, analysing, evaluating**

<b>Year 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning and begin to evaluate texts by drawing on a growing knowledge of context, text structures and language features (ACELY1680)</li></ul>
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### **Creating texts**

<b>Year 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts demonstrating increasing control over text structures and language features and selecting print, and multimodal elements appropriate to the audience and purpose (ACELY1682)</li></ul>
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