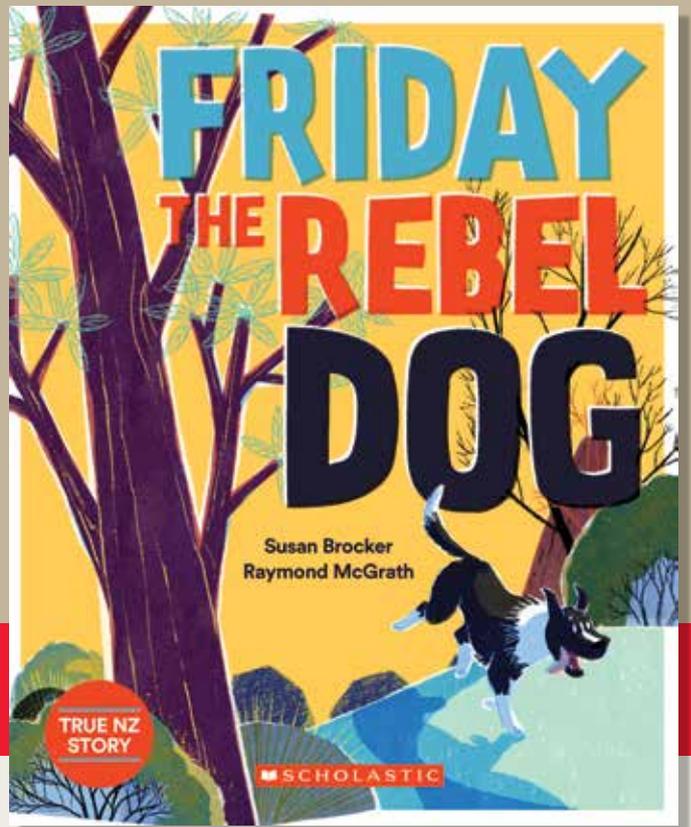


Friday The Rebel Dog

By Susan Brocker and
Raymond McGrath

- Reading • Writing • Social Studies •
- Thinking Skills • History •



Synopsis

More than 160 years ago, James Mackenzie and his black and white collie, Friday, steal a thousand sheep while two shepherds talk on a starlit night. Friday secretly herds the stolen sheep through rugged, unmapped mountain passes. They get a fright when a monstrous shape comes towards them, but it's just their bullock, which has broken free and come to join them. Mackenzie is caught, but manages to escape, leaving his faithful dog behind. Mackenzie is later caught near Lyttelton and stands trial. Dog and master are reunited in the courtroom, and when Mackenzie is sentenced to jail, Friday is sent to the stolen sheep owner's farm. Mackenzie shouts that Friday won't work for anyone else but him, and he's right, but the family is kind and allows the dog to see out his days relaxing in the sun. Meanwhile, Mackenzie escapes and is caught several times, but the two never meet up again.

About the Author

Susan Brocker has written over 50 fiction and nonfiction books for older children and teens, which have been published worldwide. She has a history degree and a great love of social history that is reflected in her books. Susan also has a close affinity with and love for animals that shines through in her writing. Susan lives with her husband and many pets in an old villa on a small farm near Tauranga.

About the Illustrator

Raymond McGrath is an award-winning animation director, illustrator, designer and writer who has been working in children's television and advertising for around 20 years. As well as illustrating books for other authors, such as the award-winning *The Little Ghost Who Lost Her Boo*, he has written and illustrated several books himself, published by Penguin NZ. Raymond lives in rural South Auckland with his wife and four children – plus some cats and a Schnauzer!



Writing and Illustration Style

Friday the Rebel Dog is a creative nonfiction story, bringing history alive with a dramatic imagined account of a particular event. The story is set in the Mackenzie Country, named after James Mackenzie. The two main characters are shepherd Mackenzie and Friday, his black and white collie sheep dog. The back of the book includes useful historical notes and a photograph of the statue of Mackenzie that stands today in Fairlie.

The story is written in third-party past tense. Susan Brocker uses poetic techniques such as alliteration, similes and active verbs. She hooks the reader in with action and raising a question – what is the dog up to in the valley? Brocker keeps the tension up throughout the story: Will they get caught? What is the monstrous figure coming towards them? Will they get away? The text is placed in white spaces beside the illustrations. The characters are based on real people and the events in the story have been embellished with details about the environment, and imagined dialogue and thoughts. *Friday the Rebel Dog* has been written for the 4- to 8-year-old age group. Themes include animal-human friendship and loyalty, outlaws, and New Zealand history.

Raymond McGrath's colourful, quirky illustrations have been drawn using traditional drawing and digital colouring techniques with Adobe Photoshop. The unnatural colours McGrath uses lends a nod to Fauvist style.

Shared Learning and Discussion Points

During the shared sessions encourage students to ask questions to clarify their understanding of characters and events. Have them make predictions, inferences and relate to their own experiences. Also encourage students to identify themes and explain how they are developed in the novel. Read the passages aloud and students read alongside or by themselves.

ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

Look at the cover and read the blurb.

- When and where is this story set? How can you tell?
- Who is the main character in the story? Or is there two?
- What do you think this story is about? Why do you think that?
- The story is told in creative nonfiction format. What can you expect from a creative nonfiction book?
- What do you already know about shepherding?

Comprehension questions

- Can you see alliteration in the first paragraph? Give an example. P.2
- How does the author hook in the reader with the first paragraph? P.2
- What is a sod wall? P.3
- Why did Friday pick out the sheep leaders? P.4
- How do you think the shepherds knew the sheep were being stolen? P.5
- When and where is the story set? P.6
- What do you think Mackenzie means when he says Mt Misery is 'tapu'? P.8
- How does the author show that the dog is nervous? P.9
- Give an example of simile on P.9
- Name some of the active verbs the author has used on P.10
- How did they cross the river? How did the author show it was dangerous? P.12
- What are pāraerae and how will they help Friday? P.14
- Define 'summit' and 'plain' as used on P.16. What is the difference?
- What is a 'kaumatua' and what would the significance of the place be? P.16
- Who or what do you think the hunters are chasing? P.18
- How does Friday wake up his master? P. 19
- Who are the men that attack Mackenzie? P.20
- What is a stampede and how is it dangerous? P.21
- Why does Friday not do as the men ask? P.22
- How do you think Friday and Mackenzie are feeling? P.24
- How does Mackenzie escape and why does he run away? P.25
- Why does Friday not run with him? P.26
- How do the policeman and the children of the town look after Friday? What do you think they are feeling? P.27
- What does Mackenzie do for Friday in the courtroom? P.28
- What is the dog's penalty? Do you think this is fair? P.28
- Find out what 'irony' means. What is the irony of the story, do you think? P.31
- Why do people say you can still see Mackenzie and Friday on a starlit night? P.32
- How would you describe the colour palette of the artist?
- How have the pair been recognised?
- How did they try to stop Mackenzie from escaping?
- Why was Mackenzie pardoned in 1856?



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Activities

ACTIVITY 1: FRIDAY THE REBEL DOG POEM

Talk to the students about what alliteration is and why authors sometimes use it in a story. Ask the students to find examples of alliteration in the story. Then talk about similes, where one object is compared to another object. Look at an example of simile in the story.

Suggest to the students that they use these techniques in a poem about Friday and Mackenzie. Talk about the different styles of poetry and suggest they choose one and write their poem in that style.

ACTIVITY 2: WHAT IF?

What if Mackenzie hadn't been captured? Would he have been so famous?

- a. Write a Wanted Poster for Mackenzie and Friday.
- b. Then rewrite the ending of the story.

ACTIVITY 3: ROLE PLAY

Role-play the court scene with a judge, jury, policeman, Mackenzie and witnesses. Put Mackenzie on trial again. Think about what evidence you have, and what questions you'll ask the witnesses. Will you penalise the dog as well?

ACTIVITY 4: TEXT TO SELF

Based upon the book you've just read, ask students to turn to a partner and share a story about themselves that is related to an event or character that was in the book.

ACTIVITY 5: BUBBLES AND CLOUDS

Ask the students to draw pictures of two of the characters in the story and have a conversation between them. Draw a cloud for a thought and a bubble for a spoken statement.

ACTIVITY 6: FAUVISM

Look up the artistic style called 'Fauvism'. What do you think is the main characteristic of this style? Choose a character or scene from the story to draw or paint in this style.

By Maria Gill



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