



Teachers' notes

Written and illustrated by Matt Zurbo
Published by Windy Hollow Books

I Love Footy! is a wild, fun romp that shows kids that a world of fantasy and adventure can be real, if they just want to get involved. And that world is as close as their back yard! I Love Footy! shows that sport is not just about winning, it's about enjoyment, friendship and having a go!

About the author:

Matt Zurbo loves footy. He has spent his whole life working in the bush, playing Aussie Rules, city and country, in three separate States, and writing stories. He coached mostly juniors for nine years and is, at time of printing, about to play his 31st year of Senior and Reserve football. His children's and Young Adult books have won awards and his footy work includes writing for the Footy Almanac and numerous short stories and books for his self-published Zurbo Inc. He loves a good, solid grab, but is a terrible kick. He blames his hamstrings!

Author/Illustrator's note

I love footy! My aim with this book was to show, simply, how much fun it is. Not just to win, but to play. To try, to do, to have FUN! No matter how good or how hopeless

a boy or girl is, they can still enjoy it, because it's about participation. And the tackles and bumps and mud are a part of the enjoyment.

I firmly believe in sport as a form of communication, participation and personal challenge. These are great lessons for kids as they grow — physical lessons only the effort of trying can reward you with — and moral lessons as well. Footy and sport in general, is the biggest, most enjoyable, most beneficial, readily accessible activity for kids there is! And all the computer screens and comic books in the world won't change that.

I Love Footy! joins the dots between dreaming of adventure and doing; it aims to capture the fun of being young and the freedom that sport provides you!

Before reading:

How does the cover of this book make you feel?

Footy or football means different type of ball sports depending where you live. How do you know what type of footy this book is about?





After reading

What is your favourite sport?

How do you feel when you are playing that sport?

Why do you think the narrator feels like a giant when he touches the footy?

When was a time that you felt like a giant?

The narrator says that when he plays he is safe from all of his problems. What do you think he means by 'safe from problems'? When do you feel safe from your problems?

The artwork in this book is as important to the story as the text. Look at the illustrations and think about why Matt has illustrated them that way. For example why has he drawn one of the opponents as a brick wall?

In the scene where he gives away a free kick, he is illustrated as a clown. When did you do something that made you feel like a clown?

Why are there emus on the page about how it feels to lose?

On the page where he scores a goal, why do you think there is an illustration of a mountain? How do you feel when you kick a goal?

Creative writing/illustrating

Write your own version of I Love Footy for your favourite sport.

Write about a time that you felt as fast as a mountain lion or as big as a giant.

Draw a picture of a time when you felt like you had climbed a mountain.

