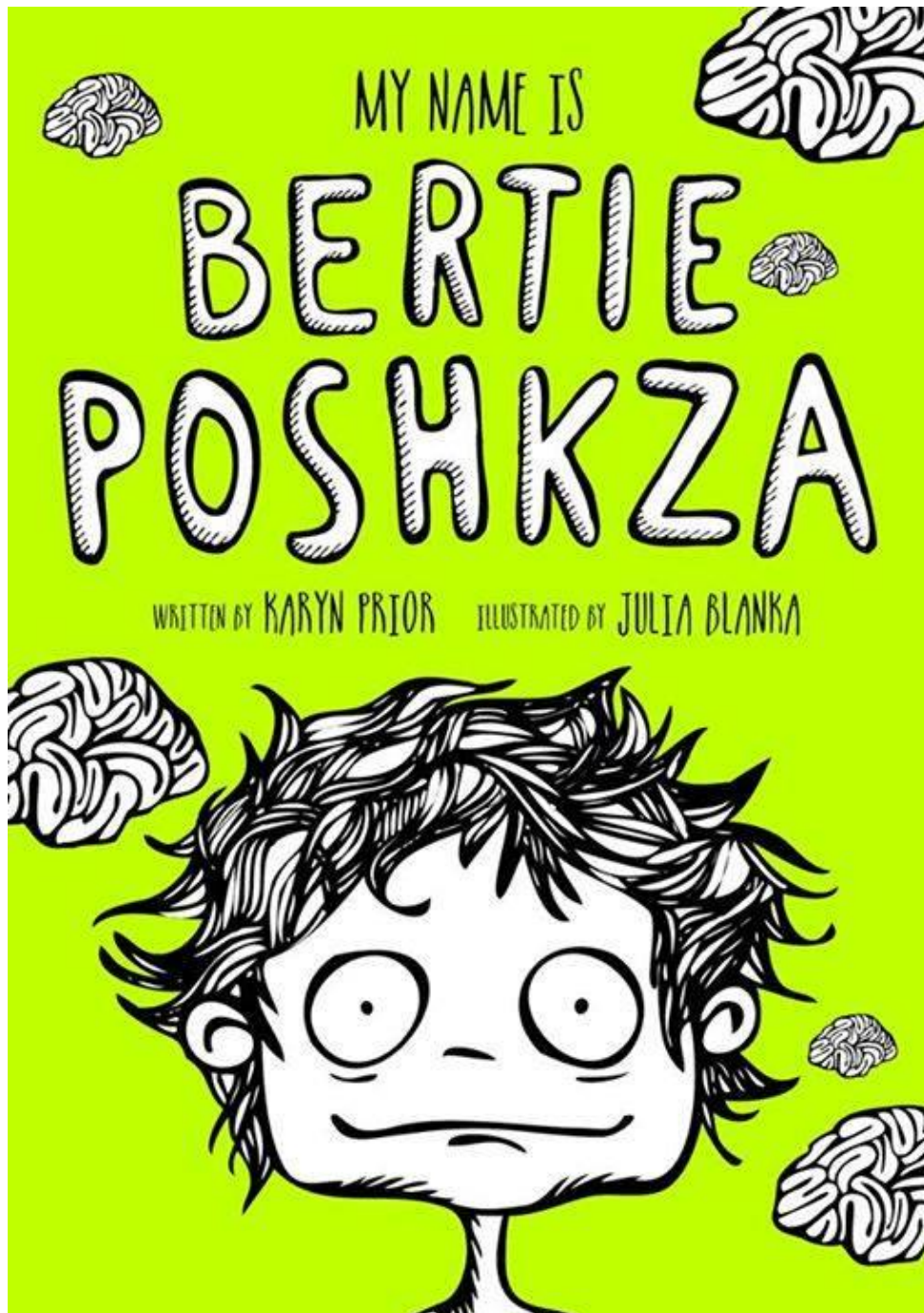


LEARNING RESOURCES



My Name is Bertie Poshkza

Bertie Poshkza is a child growing up in Adelaide who loves his family, his name and his dog; but he hates his brain.

"My name is Bertie Poshkza - that's Bertie as in dirty, Posh as in Josh and Kza as in car - Poshkza!"

He sees himself as being a sports star one day and he loves using new words, but he's noticed he is a little different from the rest of his classmates'.

Bertie feels some of his challenging behaviours prevent him from making friends and learning, so he sets off on a journey to swap his brain for a new, more intelligent brain.

What he doesn't realize, though, is that his brain is not the enemy, in fact it's his greatest ally.

Written by Adelaide author, Karyn Prior, and illustrated by Julia Blanka, *My Name is Bertie Poshkza* is a delightful novel for children aged 7-12 which, through an engaging narrative, teaches empathy, inclusivity and the importance of acceptance.

Karyn has been writing fiction for both children and adults for over 10 years, and won Outstanding Entry for Fiction in 2002 and Runner Up in 2003 at the Victorian National Daffodil Day Arts Awards.

The idea for *Bertie* was born from Karyn Prior's experiences working with children who have specific learning needs, and her realisation that many of the children she encountered have experienced the frustration of feeling isolated when their behaviour became a challenge.

"Words are like precious jewels. You place them delicately in your sentences and every now and then you use a diamond word and your conversation will sparkle."

Karyn wanted to create a story that all children, especially the Berties of the world, could identify with.

My Name is Bertie Poshkza has been embraced all over the world, with class sets being ordered by schools in Australia and overseas.

"A useful resource as a class text; an excellent entry point and springboard to discuss, empathy, bullying and how we are all unique. - Cate O'Leary, Teacher

"This book made me want to keep reading. I think it is a really inspirational book that could bring out the true personality in some people." - Bridie S, aged 12

Copies of *Bertie* can be ordered from www.bertieposhkza.com and you can check out Bertie's travels on [Facebook](#), where his fans have snapped photos of themselves with him all across the world.

The following resources have been designed to cover text production, text response and text analysis. There are creative activities, critical thinking tasks and writing assignments.

Name:
Class:



My Name is Bertie Poshkza Workbook

Answers must be written in complete sentences.

1. Look at the front cover. What do you think this book is going to be about?
2. Do you think it is fiction or non-fiction? Why?
3. Who is the author of *My Name is Bertie Poshkza*?
4. Who is the illustrator of *My Name is Bertie Poshkza*?
5. Who does Karyn Prior thank in her acknowledgments, and why?
6. Read the précis. In your own words, give a brief summary of the plot of *My Name is Bertie Poshkza*.
7. What year was *My Name is Bertie Poshkza* first published?
8. Read about the author. Why did she create Bertie Poshkza?
9. Read about the illustrator. Write 3 facts about her.
10. In chapter 1, Bertie introduces himself. What are 3 things we learn about him.
11. In chapter 1, Bertie wants to go into town. What is he looking for and why?

12. At the very end of chapter 1, something happens. What is it, and what do you think will happen next?
13. In chapter 2, what does Bertie scream to try to get help and why?
14. In chapter 2, Bertie talks about *getting attention* and *attention to detail*. What is the difference between *getting attention* and *attention to detail*, and how does Bertie discover the meaning of the two?
15. In chapter 2, what did Bertie lie to Tim about and why?
16. In chapter 2, Bertie says his dad told him, 'Let your conscience be your guide, Bertie.' What does this mean?
17. In chapter 3, we meet a new character. Who is it, and what do you think of this character?
18. In chapter 3, Bertie tells Emily all about himself. List 3 things he tells her.
19. Emily has a hearing impairment and she tells Bertie how she communicates with people. What does she tell him?
20. What is the name of the store Emily and Bertie go into in chapter 4?
21. Bertie mentions Uncle Stan in chapter 4. What does he tell the reader about him?

22. In chapter 5, how does Tim, the police officer, communicate with Emily?
23. In chapter 5, why is Bertie surprised Tim and Emily say he is smart?
24. In chapter 5, Emily is confused between the words *incarcerate* and *incinerate*. What are the definitions of the two words?
25. In chapter 5, Bertie reveals why he lied to his parents about going into the city. In your own words, summarise why he lied.
26. In chapter 6, Tim tells the pair that there's nothing wrong with either of them. In your own words, summarise what he says.
27. In chapter 6, on Tim's advice, Bertie and Emily decide to make a documentary. What is it about?
28. In chapter 6, Bertie heads back home again. What are his final thoughts at the end of the book?
29. What are the *themes* in *My Name is Bertie Poshkza*?
30. What are 3 important lessons for Bertie and the reader in the novel?
31. Why is it important to accept people for who they are?

Glossary

Look up the meanings of the words from *My Name is Bertie Poshkza* and write the definitions beside them.

Digress

Euphemism

Proboscis

Deceitful

Cacophony

Indignant

Bane

Hearing impaired

Hygienic

Regale

Tangent

Conscience





Writing a book review on *My Name is Bertie Poshkza*

Reviews give you the chance to express your opinion about a book by using language techniques to give your opinion authority.

Here are some tips to remember when writing a review:

- Include the book's title, author and illustrator.
- Give a brief summary of the plot without giving too much away.
- Comment on the book's strengths and weaknesses, using examples from the book to give your opinions some authority.
- Give your personal response and recommendations whether people should read it or not.
- Do some research on the author and use relevant facts in the review.
- State what genre the book fits into (mystery, genre, romance) and why you think that.
- State the target audience (children, teenagers, adults).
- Talk about where and when the action takes place and whether the author makes you feel as if you are there. How do they do it?
- Assess whether the characters are believable and why.
- Say what you like or dislike about the author's writing style.

Now it's your turn! Write a book review for *My Name is Bertie Poshkza*

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Essay Questions

A great essay demonstrates an *informed* opinion about something. It is a piece of writing that presents a perspective on a topic and supports it with evidence.

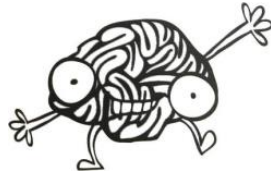
Here are some handy hints for essay writing:

- Determine what the question is asking. Pick out the key words and make sure you plan how you are going to use evidence to answer the question.
- Use the formula: **Introduction, Body, Conclusion.**
- The **Introduction** states your response to the question and summarises the points you will make in the **Body.**
- In the **Body**, you will expand on the points you stated in the **Introduction** and use quotes and ideas from the text to back them up. You should only have one idea per paragraph.
- Your **Conclusion** summarises the points you discussed in the **Body** and rounds off the essay. Don't bring up any new points in the **Conclusion** and don't use any quotes in the **Introduction** or the **Conclusion.**

Now it's your turn!

Choose one of the following questions and write an essay using evidence and ideas from *My Name is Bertie Poshkza* to support your points.

1. What are the themes that run throughout *My Name is Bertie Poshkza* and how are they presented?
2. The three main characters all learn something in *My Name is Bertie Poshkza*. What is the main lesson they all learn and what do they teach each other?
3. The story is set in Adelaide, Australia. How did the time and place affect you as a reader and why?
4. How does the title of *My Name is Bertie Poshkza* reflect the ideas and themes in the novel?
5. What does *My Name is Bertie Poshkza* teach an audience about acceptance and identity?



Bertie the Narrative

Orientation

An orientation is the beginning of the story. It sets the scene so you know the who, what, when, where, why and how. The orientation introduces characters and draws the reader in. It anchors the narrative and gives you the time and place. It also gives a hint about the problems (complication) the characters might face.

Complication

The complication is exactly what it sounds like! It's a problem or an incident that occurs, which takes the story in a particular direction. It can be conflict, a surprise, a romance; anything that gets the story moving. This is the middle of the story.

Climax

The climax is the middle of the story, but heading towards the end, or the 'resolution' (but we'll get to that!) A climax is the series of events that builds the story to a critical point. It's the exciting, edge of your seat stuff.

Resolution

The resolution is the end of the story. It's where the characters' problems are solved, events are sorted, people are punished or rewarded and order is restored.



Now it's your turn!

Fill in the blanks to show the narrative structure of *My Name is Bertie Poskza*:

Orientation:

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Complication:

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Climax:

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Resolution:

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Activities

1. Write a letter from Bertie to his parents saying why he has taken himself off to the city to find a new brain.
2. Write a diary entry from the perspective of Tim, Emily or Bertie about the day in Rundle Mall.
3. Draw a map of the places Bertie goes on his journey from home, to Rundle Mall and back again.
4. Write an alternate ending to *My Name is Bertie Poshkza*.
5. Choose a section of the book and act it out as a play.
6. Write a short story about Emily and Bertie 10 years from now.
7. Write and film part of the documentary Emily and Bertie planned to make.



8. Make a movie poster for a blockbuster feature film of *My Name is Bertie Poshkza*.

9. Write a poem or song about Bertie and Emily.

10. Pretend you are Bertie's mum or dad. Write a script of what you will say to Bertie when he comes home.

11. Bertie talks about being different. Write about a time when you treated someone, who was a bit different, with kindness.

12. Write about why you think acceptance is important.

13. Make a book trailer for *My Name is Bertie Poshkza*.

14. Make a pictorial presentation on the computer of Bertie's journey.

15. Research a disability and make a poster, powerpoint presentation or report to show your findings.

Bertie's Diamond Words

Find Bertie's diamond words in the wordsearch below.

C	S	S	E	R	G	I	D	Q	M	S	J	F	J	F
T	E	K	C	I	R	C	L	S	I	R	C	B	Q	O
S	K	O	X	T	Z	C	I	G	A	U	L	P	X	X
T	I	J	R	G	I	M	Y	C	E	N	Y	E	Z	N
Y	D	G	X	J	E	M	M	A	P	D	I	C	T	D
N	I	F	N	H	Y	Q	A	S	O	L	F	A	M	Z
O	V	E	P	L	Z	S	I	W	L	E	R	R	R	B
H	G	U	D	I	A	C	S	W	I	M	E	R	I	B
P	E	N	T	I	S	N	N	Z	C	A	C	E	C	A
O	E	W	I	O	A	Y	G	A	E	L	K	T	Z	S
C	I	E	B	Z	R	L	L	U	U	L	L	H	M	Q
A	T	O	P	E	A	Y	E	A	A	X	E	T	I	H
C	R	B	N	G	P	M	R	D	X	G	S	R	Z	G
P	E	A	R	H	I	B	A	X	A	Q	E	O	V	G
F	B	Q	O	A	Z	K	H	S	O	P	P	N	U	E



BERTIE
 POSHKZA
 DIGRESS
 EUPHEMISM
 BRAIN
 PROBOSCIS
 FRECKLES
 ADELAIDE

BANE
 AMAZING
 TIM
 CRICKET
 RUNDLE MALL
 NORTH TERRACE
 POLICE
 CACOPHONY
 SIGN LANGUAGE





Can you help Bertie find his way through the crazy maze to his new brain?

