

# Land of Britannica Teachers' Notes

Written by Jenny Woolsey

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## About the Story

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Twelve-year-old Brittney is upset her parents have split up and she wants them back together. After Dad introduces his girlfriend to Brittney and her brothers, she is plunged into a strange world... the Land of Britannica. This kingdom is ruled by the evil Storm Queen and it is Brittney's mission, as stated in the Book of the Kingdom, to defeat the queen and restore the cracked green heart that hangs in the sky. She must face many perils and dangers to fulfil her destiny.

The story has a talking cat and animals, a special suit of armour, dragons, royalty, strange food, girl power and good versus evil. It is a fast-moving adventure.

**Land of Britannica** is an allegory. Brittney must work through stages of grief as she goes on her mission to save the people. In the end, she finds acceptance of her situation.

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## About the Author

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Jenny Woolsey is a writer and blogger, teacher, youth worker and advocate for people with facial differences, mental illness and disabilities. She has a Master of Education (Honours), a Certificate IV in Youth Work and a Certificate in Creative Writing.

Home is in the north of Brisbane, in Queensland, Australia, with her husband, three magnificent children, three spirited cats and her cute fluffy dog.

Jenny started writing stories when she was little. As a teenager, poetry was her favourite genre. In 2013 Jenny left the classroom and started writing children's novels. Her theme is *Difference and Diversity*.

Jenny writes to help children and teens who feel different, shy, anxious, or don't fit in. She understands as she was all of those growing up!

Jenny's message is:

*You are good enough – in fact you are more than that – you are perfect just the way you are!*

*Remember, no matter what you look like or feel like,  
you are valuable and can achieve great things in life!*

*It's okay to be different!*

You can find Jenny in many places:

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Facebook:- <https://www.facebook.com/JennyWoolseyAuthor/>

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### *Why Jenny Wrote Land of Britannica:*

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Jenny was born in the 1960s in Brisbane. When she entered the world, everyone knew instantly that there was something wrong with her. Her eyes were bulgy, like froggy eyes, and her skull was small. There was a flurry of movement and doctors were called. The baby – Jenny, was diagnosed as having a rare craniofacial syndrome, known as Crouzon syndrome. It meant that her life, and the life of her family, would not be like other people's.

Being different in a world where difference wasn't tolerated very well was hard for Jenny. She was stared at, comments were made about her and she was shunned. At school, she was verbally and physically bullied. Her brothers would get into scraps trying to protect her from other mean children. It was difficult for the whole family.

Jenny needed life-saving surgeries and reconstructive plastic surgeries. She became visually impaired due to complications in one of these operations, and would never be able to drive.

Jenny had an inner determination to succeed. She went to university and studied to be a primary teacher. It was during her career that Jenny helped many children cope with the separation of parents, custody battles, new partners and changes to their family situations. She noticed that some children coped well with the changes they experienced, whereas others did not. Some children were angry and wanted their parents to get back together, though it wasn't going to happen.

Whilst on a ladies' camp in 2016, Jenny was asked if she could write a book on this theme of family separation and divorce. Jenny remembered the children she'd taught, and focussed in on those memories. Land of Britannica was born from this.

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## *Study Notes for Teachers*

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### Discussion Questions:

1. From reading the blurb on the back cover, what do you think the story is about?
2. Do the pictures on the front and back cover give you any more clues?
3. This book is a special type of fantasy story called an allegory. What is an allegory?
4. Describe or draw what you think the Land of Britannica would be like.
5. How do you think Brittney will enter the Land of Britannica?
6. Discuss types of families. If it can be done in a sensitive manner, discuss family breakups.
7. The title page has the words 'Faith, Hope, Love – the greatest of these is love.' Discuss what these words mean. Ask the children how they think this verse which is from the Bible, fits with the story?

### CHAPTER ONE - THREE:

- Describe Brittney.
- Take note of her love of dragons.
- Describe the family situation.
- Where is the RSPCA nearest you and what do they do (or your local animal shelter)?
- Why do you think Lawson reacts in a different way to Rachel, then Hunter and Brittney did?
- What do we know about Brittney's mum and dad by the end of Chapter Two?
- Do you have a favourite football team?
- What does Brittney like to draw? These drawings hold a special significance for later in the story, so don't forget what they are.
- On page 17, Brittney talks about how her life has changed. What does she miss and not miss?
- Did you expect what happened to Brittney at the end of Chapter Three?

### CHAPTER FOUR - SIX

- Where do you think she has landed?
- Is it the same as Earth? How do you know?
- Why do you think it's called the Land of Britannica?
- Marmalade tells Brittney he is a clone. What is a clone?
- Why do you think Marmalade is in the new land?
- How would you react, landing in a strange place like this? Why?
- A new character, Carly-Anna is introduced. Describe her.
- Carly-Anna is a representation of someone from Earth. Who do you think and why?
- Why do you think there are dragons in the new land?

- At the end of Chapter Four we hear about Storm Queen? What do you think she might be like just from what you've heard and her name?
- Carly-Anna possesses a special power – what is it?
- Describe or draw the outfit Brittney chose for her journey through the land.
- If you were given a sharp sword, how would you react?
- Draw yourself as a superhero or Chosen One.
- Is the food the same as on Earth?
- What is the problem with the cracked green heart that is hanging in the sky?
- What do we know about the Book of the Kingdom?
- How does Marmalade know she was the one from the Book of the Kingdom?
- What is Storm Queen doing to the people in the land?
- What are the Odinarrians?
- When the cracked green heart splits more, what does that mean?
- What are the things in the display cabinet? How do they relate to Brittney's life on Earth?
- What does Brittney need to follow to fulfil her destiny?
- Draw a picture of Storm Queen from the description on page 39.
- Storm Queen is a representation of someone and a problem from Earth. Who do you think and what is the problem?
- How is Brittney feeling at this point in the story?
- There is no Home or Earth on the map. How do you think Brittney will get home?
- Can you find where she starts on the map at the beginning of the book?
- What shape is the map?

#### CHAPTER SEVEN - NINE

- Describe and draw Fairy Glory.
- Fairy Glory is a representation of someone from Earth. Who do you think and why?
- What information about how to get home, does Brittney find out? How does this affect her? How would it affect you? Why?
- Why do you think Brittney chooses to go on her journey?
- Write a rhyme that mirrors Fairy Glory's letters.
- What do you think the third line, 'Time heals a broken heart. Yes, it will' means?
- What is the first problem that Brittney encounters?
- What else do we learn about Storm Queen?
- Describe the Land of Britannica. Can you find these landmarks on the map?
- Why is the wolf saying it was his fault he was captured?
- What is going to happen to him?
- There are trolls at the Gluggy Gluggy Mud hole – how does that relate to Brittney's life on Earth?
- Where is the key that unlocks the wolf's cage?

- What gift does Mr Wolf give Brittney? What will it protect?
- What weapons does Brittney now have? What is the purpose for each of them?
- Why do you think Fairy Glory vanishes so quickly?

## CHAPTER TEN - TWELVE

- Fairy Glory's note says, 'Trust for the best. That will save your soul.' What do you think this means?
- What animals is she coming up against and how is she beating them? What would you do in these situations?
- Is there a time you've needed to be strong and courageous?
- How would you get a man out of a well?
- How did Brittney problem solve the situation?
- What are the names of the foods and what would they be on Earth?
- Have you cooked anything?
- What is happening to the heart?
- What do you think the key is for?
- What weapon/gift does Terry give Britney? What is it for?
- Fairy Glory's next note says, 'Sadness and anger you have met.' What do you think that means?
- How are the villagers dressed?
- How do the villagers react to Brittney?
- Do the statues of Storm Queen in the shop window give you any more clues about her?
- What is a mapple?
- Do you think Brittney will beat the crows? Why/why not?

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN – FIFTEEN

- What other animals attack Brittney? How does she deal with them?
- What does Carly-Anna do to help Brittney?
- Why does she do this?
- How does Carly-Anna make things happen?
- What is the next person/animal to be rescued? Where are they?
- How would you get the goat out of the tree?
- What do you think Brittney finds in the shed?
- Would you climb up the ladder if the rungs were weak?
- What does Billy Gruff give Brittney before she leaves him?
- How does the crown work?
- What do you think an acceptance parcel is?

- Whose castle do you think the acceptance parcel will be in? Why?
- Where in the castle do you think the acceptance parcel would be hidden? Why?
- Marmalade is frightened of heights. Do you think that is unusual for a cat? Do you have any fears? How do you cope with your fears?
- Draw a dragon you would like to ride.

#### CHAPTER SIXTEEN - EIGHTEEN

- Draw what you think Storm Queen's castle looks like.
- Draw the castle you would like to live in.
- What jobs or chores do you have to do at home?
- What do you think the wall is around?
- How is Brittney's character changing?
- Who do you think the gardener is?
- Hunterill is a representation of someone from Earth. Who do you think and why?
- What does Hunterill give Brittney? What is it for? How does it work?
- A girl comes into the garden to speak to Hunterill. Who do you think that might be?
- Who is Mrs Dennings on Earth and in the Land of Britannica?
- Someone knocks on the door. Who do you think it is?
- Lady Katherine is a representation of someone from Earth. Who do you think and why?

#### CHAPTER NINETEEN – TWENTY-ONE

- Have you had nightmares? How do you feel after you've woken up?
- Mrs Dennings shows the Book of the Kingdom to Brittney. Why do you think there are parts missing from the story? Why doesn't it have an ending?
- In the story, where do the snow globes come from?
- What do you think the green velvet fabric is at the end of Chapter Nineteen?
- What is the green velvet fabric? Were you correct with your prediction?
- Queen Taratha is a representation of someone from Earth. Who do you think and why?
- What type of power does the cloak give? How should Brittney use it?
- Draw and describe all of Brittney's powers.
- Why do you think Brittney has butterflies as she climbs over the rock wall? When have you had butterflies in your stomach? What were you doing at the time?
- What does Storm Queen do to Brittney?
- Do you think the queen's dragon is a friend or foe to Brittney?
- Who do you think the footsteps belong to? Why?
- Who do the footsteps belong to?
- Do you think Brittney will be found by Storm Queen in the castle? Why/why not?

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO – TWENTY-FOUR

- Storm Queen captures Brittney. Do you think Brittney will escape? Why/why not?
- Who is down in the dungeon? What is treason?
- How does Brittney trick the guards?
- What does Brittney use to free Hunterill?
- Who is with Brittney when she finds the acceptance parcel? How might this relate to their life on Earth?
- Where do they find the acceptance parcel?
- What do you think is in the acceptance parcel?
- What do you think the acceptance parcel might represent?
- Lawrence and Brianna are a representation of people from Earth. Who do you think and why?
- What does Brittney do to Storm Queen to rid her from the Land of Britannica?
- What is in the acceptance parcel?
- What do you think the poem is about?
- How does the poem relate back to the story?
- What happens to the cloud above Storm Queen's castle? Why do you think it vanishes?
- How do the townsfolk celebrate the full repair of the heart?
- Brittney has a dilemma – should she stay in the Land of Britannica where she can have everything she wants, or go back to Earth to her family. Which do you think she'll choose. What would you choose and why?
- What does Brittney choose to do?
- From Chapter Twenty-Two onwards Brittney displays no fear. Why do you think she has changed?

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

- How does Brittney go home?
- Why do you think Dad changed his mind about Brittney going to Kallie's birthday party?
- Why do think Brittney's dad is being so nice to her?

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

- How did Brittney change over the novel? What was her character arc?
- Match the characters in the Land of Britannica and who they were back on Earth.



- Who in the story is the representation of Brittney's father? Why is he only in the Book of the Kingdom?
- What was the turning point in the story?

PERSONAL QUESTIONS:

- What was your favourite part of the story?
- What was your least favourite part of the novel?
- Could you identify with any of the characters?
- Do you know any people who are like the characters in the novel?
- Which of Brittney's powers did you like the most? What power would you like to have and why?
- How do you think, going into the Land of Britannica helped Brittney to accept her parents' separation and forthcoming divorce?



### The Grief Cycle

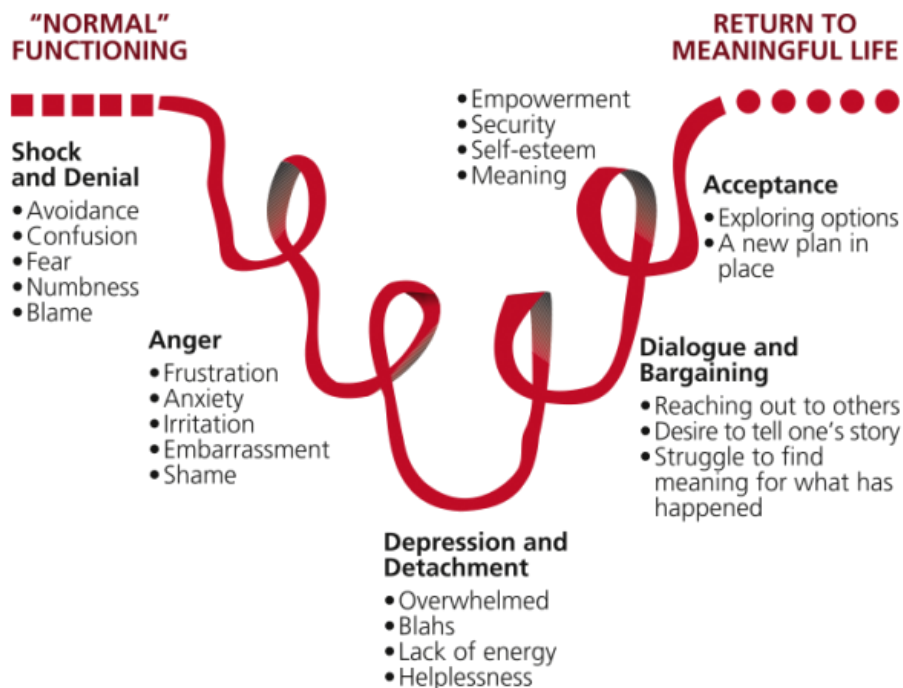
Land of Britannica is an allegory. In an allegory, such as *Wizard of Oz*, the protagonist leaves the real world and goes into a fantasy land. In this new land, they must work through their real-world problem. The characters in the Land of Britannica are representations of people and animals in Brittney's life on Earth.

- Land of Britannica – Brittney's mind and spirit
- Green heart hanging in the sky – Brittney's heart
- Marmalade – Brittney's pet cat
- Carly-Anna – Kallie
- Queen Taratha – Brittney's mother
- King Jasabee – Brittney's father
- Hunterill – Hunter
- Lawrence – Lawson
- Brianna – Brittney
- Storm Queen – Rachel (any new girlfriend Dad may have)
- Fairy Glory – neighbour Gloria
- Lady Katherine – Kallie's mother
- Mrs Dennings – Mrs Dennings

In Land of Britannica, Brittney must work through her feelings about her parents being separated and her dad bringing a girlfriend to meet them. The news that her parents won't get back together shocks and angers Brittney.

In the Land of Britannica each of the Odinarians, the farmer, and the acceptance parcel represent each stage of the grief cycle. Many children go through the grief cycle as they come to terms with their parents' relationship and their own new situation.

### Stages of the Grief Cycle



The characters in the story that represent the grief cycle:

- Shock and Denial – Mr Wolf
- Anger - Terry
- Depression and Detachment – Billy Gruff
- Dialogue and Bargaining – Guards at the wall
- Acceptance – Acceptance parcel

Through the story other items from Brittney's life are included:

- Dragons
- Trolls
- Snow globe
- Mice
- Drawing paper and pencils
- Carly-Anna's castle
- Lawson's Lego castle



## AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

## YEAR 4-6 LINKS

## English

## CREATING TEXTS:

- Persuasive Text
- Descriptions
- Recount of an event
- Narratives
- Procedures
- Information Report on another country
- Poetry and rhymes
- Book reviews
- Writing from different points of view
- Use a range of software including word processing programs with fluency to construct, edit and publish written text, and select, edit and place visual, print and audio elements (multimodal texts).

## INTERPRETING, ANALYSING, EVALUATING:

- Literal meaning questions – What do the words say?
- Inferential meaning questions – What does the message mean?
- Personal meaning questions – What do I think about it?
- What is the main idea of the story?
- Are there supporting details?
- Describe the story with Who, What, Where, When, Why and How
  - Where does the story take place?
  - Who is the main character?
  - What was the problem?
  - What happened?
  - When did things take place?
  - What is the outcome?
  - How did Issy feel?
  - Why did things turn out the way they did?
- What are the themes of the story?
- Discuss posing and discussing questions, such as ‘Should this character have behaved as they did?’, and begin to make balanced judgments about the dilemmas characters face and relative merit and harm.
- Talk about Point of View.
- Write the story from another point of view e.g. Marmalade.

- Examine the author's description of a character's appearance, behaviour and speech and note how the character's development is evident through his or her dialogue and changing relationships and the reactions of other characters to him or her.
- Recognise the influence our different historical, social and cultural experiences may have on the meaning we make from the text and the attitudes we may develop towards characters, actions and events.
- Identify pivotal points in the plot where characters are faced with choices and comment on how the author makes us care about their decisions and consequences.
- Statement: Fact or Opinion
- Mental imagery
- Similes and Metaphors
- Onomatopoeia
- Story Map/Sequencing of story events
- Semantic Web
- Identifying facts about Vikings
- Make links between Brittney's experiences and the students' own lives/experiences.
- Make inferences about the characters' feelings.

#### LITERATURE:

- Draw upon literary texts students have encountered and experiment with changing particular aspects, for example the time or place of the setting, adding characters or changing their personalities, or offering an alternative point of view on key ideas.
- Collaboratively plan, compose, sequence and prepare a literary text along a familiar storyline, using film, sound and images to convey setting, characters and points of drama in the plot.
- Explore two or more texts by the same author, drawing out the similarities, for example subject or theme, characterisation, text structure, plot development, tone, vocabulary, sense of voice, narrative point of view, favoured grammatical structures and visual techniques in sophisticated picture books.
- Discuss how authors and illustrators make stories exciting, moving and absorbing and hold readers' interest by using various techniques, for example character development and plot tension.
- Create literary texts that explore students' own experiences and imagining.
- Create literary texts by developing storylines, characters and settings.
- Create literary texts using realistic and fantasy settings and characters that draw on the worlds represented in texts students have experienced.
- Understand, interpret and experiment with sound devices and imagery, including simile, metaphor and personification, in narratives, shape poetry, songs, anthems and odes.

- Participate in and contribute to discussions, clarifying and interrogating ideas, developing and supporting arguments, sharing and evaluating information, experiences and opinions.
- Analyse and evaluate similarities and differences in texts on similar topics, themes or plots.
- Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts.

### Health & Physical Education

- Explore how success, challenge and failure strengthen identities.
- Explore strategies to manage physical, social and emotional change.
- Examine the influence of emotional responses on behaviour and relationships.
- Describe and apply strategies that can be used in situations that make them feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
- Identify and practise strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing.
- Describe how respect, empathy and valuing diversity can positively influence relationships.
- Investigate how emotional responses vary in depth and strength.

#### GENERAL:

- Food and nutrition
- Family relationships
- Self-identity
- Resilience
- Superheroes

### Design and Technologies and Digital Technologies

- Recognise the benefits food technologies provide for health and food safety and ensure that a wide variety of food is available and can be prepared for healthy eating.
- Investigate food and fibre production and food technologies used in modern and traditional societies.
- Sequence the process of converting 'on-farm' food or fibre products into a product.
- Consider traditional and contemporary methods of food preparation used in a variety of cultures, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander methods.
- Generate, develop and communicate design ideas and processes for audiences using appropriate technical terms and graphical representation techniques.

- Select appropriate materials, components, tools, equipment and techniques and apply safe procedures to make designed solution.
- Represent and communicate design ideas using modelling and drawing standards including the use of digital technologies, for example scale; symbols and codes in diagrams; pictorial maps and aerial views using web mapping service applications.

### The Arts - Visual Arts, Media Arts & Drama

- Storyboard and film a short sequence showing a conflict, selecting camera angles, lighting and costume to convey meaning without dialogue.
- Explore genres such as narrative, non-narrative, experimental and documentary and making a trailer in a similar style.
- Practise drawing images and making objects related to self, others and personal environments in different forms, for example, painting, sculpture, photography, weaving.
- Investigate and devise representations of people in their community, including themselves, through settings, ideas and story structure in images, sounds and text
- Explore representations, characterisations and points of view of people in their community, including themselves, using settings, ideas, story principles and genre conventions in images, sounds and text.
- Use media technologies to create time and space through the manipulation of images, sounds and text to tell stories.
- Develop skills with media technologies to shape space, time, movement and lighting within images, sounds and text.
- Explore ideas and narrative structures through roles and situations and use empathy in their own improvisations and devised drama.
- Explore dramatic action, empathy and space in improvisations, playbuilding and scripted drama to develop characters and situations.
- Use voice, body, movement and language to sustain role and relationships and create dramatic action with a sense of time and place.
- Develop skills and techniques of voice and movement to create character, mood and atmosphere and focus dramatic action.
- Shape and perform dramatic action using narrative structures and tension in devised and scripted drama, including exploration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander drama.
- Rehearse and perform devised and scripted drama that develops narrative, drives dramatic tension, and uses dramatic symbol, performance styles and design elements to share community and cultural stories and engage an audience.



See [www.jennywoolsey.com](http://www.jennywoolsey.com) for free activity sheets