

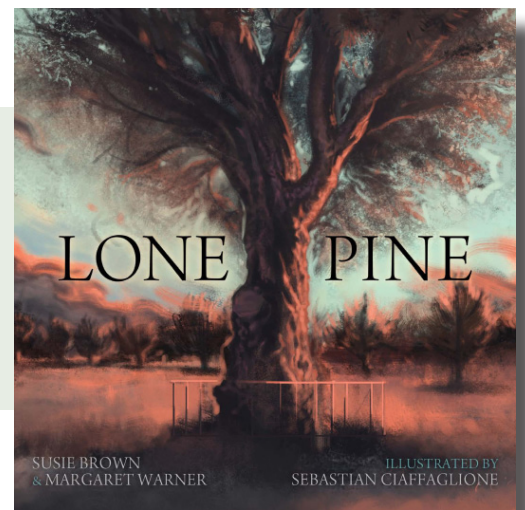
LONE PINE

Written by Susie Brown & Margaret Warner

Illustrated by Sebastian Ciaffaglione

Published by Little Hare

2012



Teachers Notes

by Bec Kavanagh

SYNOPSIS

Based on the true story of a mother's loss and a hope that grows from the barren waste of war to a living memorial in two Australian cities, *Lone Pine* is a beautiful, sparse and hopeful introduction to the themes of war, loss and memorial for readers young and old.

The striking illustrations bring out exactly the right tone in the text, giving the words movement and causing their sounds (be it silence or gunfire) to echo through the pages. It is a true collaboration between artist and writer(s) as they bring to life this incredibly personal tale that stems from one of the many battles that make up Australia's history.

There is an excellent balance between severity and hope in this book, which makes it ideal for upper primary students who are starting to learn about war and history, and the personal stories that take place within these vast ideas.

Readers will be taken on a breathtaking visual journey, from the dark colours of the first page through to the lighter colours that sneak into the later parts of the book. The story is seamlessly shared between image and text, making this an excellent book to explore the shared storytelling of a picture book at a slightly more advanced level.

Ultimately this is a book about life and its seasonal and continuous nature. The lone pine is the central metaphor that captures beautifully the idea of something withstanding even the harshest conditions to become the seed of a new life. What makes this book even more poignant is the revelation that the story is real.

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Topics

- War
- Family
- True Stories
- Australian History

About the Authors



Susie Brown

For as long as she can remember, writing has been part of Susie's life. As a child, when asked what she wanted to be when she grew up, her answer was either a teacher or a writer. She grew up to be both.

Susie has been a classroom teacher since 1992 and a teacher-librarian since 2007. She has written extensively for both the educational and trade market since 2002.

Her co-author, Margaret Warner, taught in adjoining classrooms for much of the 1990s and developed the story together.



Margaret Warner

Margaret Warner has been writing since she was 9 years old. Her first manuscript was published in 2001, she has since written numerous fiction and non-fiction children's books, short stories and poems and taught at many writing workshops.

A qualified English and ESL teacher, Margaret is also an environmentalist and wildlife carer who is interested in Australian history.

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About the Illustrator



Sebastian Ciaffaglione

Sebastian Ciaffaglione is a freelance artist based out of Melbourne. After studying Design and Illustration at NMIT Preston, he has been working steadily as an illustrator for a number of publishers across Australia and North America.

Carol Wilkinson's Dragon Keeper series is probably his most recognised work to date, but he also loves video game and movie concept art.

Questions/ Comprehension

- Why do you think the authors have included the dates at the beginning of some of the pages? What does this tell you about the story?
- How is colour used on each of the pages?
- What moods do the colours of the illustrations evoke as you read the book?
- Does this influence how you feel as you read the book?
- What words on the first page stand out because of the illustrations? Why do you think this?
- Who are the characters mentioned in the book? How are they all connected to this particular story? Can you connect them all to a particular person or object?
- How does the image of the lone tree and the pine cone reappear throughout the story? List all the places that you see the tree or the pine cone in the book (as well as the places that it is mentioned).
- What does this image mean to each of the characters?
- Some of the characters are never actually pictured in the book. Why is this? How are they described instead? Do we know what has happened to them?
- How are the three saplings like the three brothers?
- How do you feel when you discover that the story is real? Does it make you think differently about the book that you have just read?

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Activities

- Talk about moods in class. How do you know when a person is in a particular type of mood? How can you tell what kind of mood the authors and illustrator are trying to show in the book?
 - Which elements of the illustrations indicated mood – think about things like colour, lines, shading, features, lightChoose one of the illustrations in the book and trace or photocopy it. Colour it in with different colours and shading. Does this affect the mood of the text?
 - Now think about the text – which words were used to evoke the mood of the book? How did they do this?See if you can change the words slightly so that the mood of the piece changes without changing the story itself.
- Think about how alive the language makes this story. The words give the book sound and vibrancy. What words are used to show sound?

In groups create a radio play based on a part of *Lone Pine*. Think about the noises that you will need to create – try to use things that are easy to find and will sound realistic on the radio – be creative. As a class put all of the pieces together and either record or act them out.
- In groups of individually research the battle of Lone Pine or the story of the three brothers. Present your findings to the class in a creative format such as a dairy, a poem, a letter home, a photograph album.
 - Why do we use personal stories to describe things like war?
 - Does it change the way we see these events?
 - What parts of your piece are real and which have you embellished or made up?
 - Where has this happened in the book?
 - Why is it just as necessary to *imagine* parts of a story as it is to read about the facts in the news?

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Activities

- Look into memorials (if one is close to you this could be a good chance to visit it). In either groups or individually work on a photo project that you can present to the class.
 - Find pictures or take your own of the memorial that you have chosen. Look at the elements that make up a memorial (names, shapes, symbols, pictures etc) – what do these mean? Can you find more photos that show the meaning of these elements (photos of the people named, photos of the war, photos of the symbols, take your own photos)
 - Share your photo project with the class – talk about how the memorial has changed the way you see the event or the people that it is in memorial to. Discuss why and how people create memorials.

Further reading

*****as Lone Pine is based on a true story, I have included some links to further information about the battle and several about the pine trees themselves which may be useful for projects or extension work for older readers***

<http://www.firstworldwar.com/battles/lonepine.htm>

http://www.awm.gov.au/units/event_71.asp

<http://www.anzacsite.gov.au/5environment/vc/lonepine.html>

http://www.australiansatwar.gov.au/stories/stories_war=W1_id=7.html

<http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/journal/lone-pine-from-seeds-to-a-living-memorial.htm>

http://www.warmemorialsnsw.asn.au/pdf/story_of_the_lone_pine.pdf

<http://www.storycentral.com.au/assets/releases/11418/australian-geographic-lone-pine-article.pdf>