

Lamont Books Standing Order

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Teacher Notes and Activities

Ships in the Fields

By Susanne Gervay & Illustrated by Anna Pignataro

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\$26.95

Ships in the Field is both personal and universal. Anna Pignataro and Susanne Gervay translated their families' personal experiences of migration into *Ships in the Field*. It is a classic immigration experience of war, loss, migration, hope and home.

The story is told through the eyes of a young girl and her parents as they seek to find a happy home life. There are wonderful moments of humour, love, courage and a positive sense of the future.



Teacher Notes extracted from notes supplied by Ford Street Publishing. Full version available at www.fordstreetpublishing.com.

Themes:

- Refugees
- Family
- War
- Diversity in Australia
- Inclusion
- Immigration
- Cultural differences

Discussion Points & Activities:

- Do you like the girl and her parents? Explain why. Discuss the characters in *Ships in the Field*. Would you like them to be your friends? Why?
- Why is the girl 'frightened of war'? What is war? Why does war happen? Why is the family happy to live in a country without war? What problems do they face?
- What do you feel about each of the three dogs? Can you find them in the story?
- In what ways are the girl and her parents similar to people you know? How are they different?
- Why is the girl upset that people laugh at her father's accent? What does she do? What would you do?
- Anna Pignataro's illustrations are emotional and complex. Studying and enjoying the illustrations opens discussion. For example:
 - What are the multiple meanings in the double page spread of the ship?
 - Why is the small war torn dog on some of the pages?
 - What are funny scenes. Why are they funny? How do they make you feel?
- In what way is *Ships in the Field* a universal story?
- Do you think the cover reveals the meaning of *Ships in the Field*?
- Find out more about:
 - Australia Day- <http://www.australiaday.com.au>
 - Immigration Museum Victoria <http://museumvictoria.com.au/immigrationmuseum/>
 - Australian War Memorial - <http://www.awm.gov.au/>
 - Harmony Day www.harmony.gov.au/harmony-day/