

Unit written by Dr Pam Macintyre & Dr Susan La Marca

Born to Run

Born to Run: My Story by Cathy Freeman

YEAR 7

Background

In Born to Run, Cathy tells the story of her life, from her childhood in Mackay with her brothers and sisters, to lighting the cauldron at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games before going on to win gold in the four hundred metres....Cathy talks candidly about experiences of racism she encountered, and also about the trials of constant training and the need for self motivation and positive encouragement to help bring her to the point where she achieved her childhood dream. Bronwyn Owen Teachers' Notes p1.

Objectives

Students practice setting short-term and long-term goals, prioritising their available time and developing strategies for monitoring their progress towards goal achievement. Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (2005) VELS Physical, Personal and Social Learning Strand – Personal Learning Level 4 p16.

Focus: My Life in Snapshot

A wonderful aspect of this book is the inclusion of the photographs that tell a story in themselves. Create a similar record of your own life at this moment using the photographs in Freeman's story as a model. Family, siblings, sport and hobbies, pets and environment could all be possibilities.

Collect between 10 and 20 photographs, write captions for each photo exploring why each is important to you.

- How you present the photographs – digitally, on a poster, in a folder is a matter of your choice.
- Consider the way Cathy has presented the photos with post it notes and stuck on sections – what does this tell you about her?
- Some of the photos are official pictures, others are family photographs from her personal collection. Consider constructing 'official' shots for your collection.

My Story

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- Think carefully about the way you present your collection - the order, style and decoration you choose. Be creative.

Focus: 'I am the world's greatest athlete'

At the age of ten Cathy made a certificate for her wall with the above words on it in big, bold print to motivate her and remind her of where she wanted to be in the future.

- Discuss how important self-worth and motivation are to elite athletes. Is that what makes them special, or do such ambitious ideals have a place in ordinary lives?
- Explore the place of self-worth and motivation in the lives of different types of people. Sometimes achievements that contribute to our sense of self, and the things that motivate us may appear small and insignificant to an outsider. Are they any less important than the successes of an elite athlete?
- Create your own slogan to motivate you.

Assessment

The students could present their 'life in a snapshot' to a small group of peers. The group would be invited to question the presenter about content, presentation and choices in relation to design, layout etc. A simple assessment sheet could be completed by the group incorporating their views on what they learnt and their reactions and thoughts about the material.

This form of assessment is allied to the strength of this text, which is its effective, recognisable voice that conveys with feeling, an interesting life.

Further Reading

Forrest, Lisa *Making the Most of It*
Duder, Tessa *Alex* series
Crowley, *Gracie Faltrain* series
Arena, Felice & Lyons, Gary *Specky Magee* series
Martin, Jesse *Lion Heart*
Armstrong, Lance *It's not About the Bike*
Sheppard, Barrie *Louise Sauvage*
Stynes, Jim and Carnegie, Jon *Finding Heroes*

CATHY
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My Story