



Robot Riot!

Andy Griffiths

Teachers' Notes

Introduction

Andy Griffiths is Australia's bestselling children's author. His books have sold over 4 million copies worldwide, have featured on the *New York Times* bestseller lists and have won over 40 Australian children's choice awards.

His latest book, *Robot Riot!* is the fourth title in the Schooling Around series. It follows the lives of the students from Northwest Southeast Central School. A new girl, Roberta, arrives in grade five. She is so well behaved and so good at so many things that the other children think she is a robot. They set out to save their school from a robot invasion with hilarious and disastrous consequences.



Curriculum Links

English: Reading, Writing, Talking, Listening, Presenting, Researching

Creative and Performing Arts: Drawing/sketching, Drama

PDHPE: Decision Making, Interacting, Personal Choices

Science and Technology: Using Technology, Design and Make, Living Things

Mathematics: Space and Geometry

Learning Outcomes

Students will have the opportunity to:

- read texts independently and in groups
- respond to themes and issues in a text
- draw on a range of skills and strategies to read and comprehend a text
- analyse techniques used by authors to create certain effects and use language creatively
- write texts in a number of genres
- copy a picture or real object using grid squares
- design and make a robot from recyclable materials
- devise, act and rehearse drama for performance to an audience.

Before You Read

Look at the author's name. Talk about other books by Andy Griffiths you may have read previously. Make the list as long as you can and share a bit about your favourite book. Discuss what makes Andy Griffiths' books so enjoyable.

Look at the front cover picture and the title of *Robot Riot!* Write a short paragraph outlining what you think the story may be about. Read out your ideas to the class.



Read the Book

Read *Robot Riot!* as directed by your teacher in one of the following ways:

- as a whole class
- in small reading groups
- individually.

Stop every now and then to re-evaluate where you think the story may be heading. Discuss your ideas with a friend as well as parts of the story you like and why.

After You Read

Use the following questions to promote discussion of the book.

Discuss these questions as a class or write the answers down.

1. What award was Principal Greenbeard hoping to win for his school?
2. What was the new girl's name and how was it significant?
3. What were some unusual things about Roberta?
4. Why do you think Roberta didn't smile much?
5. What did Roberta do to make Jenny Friendly behave in an unfriendly manner?
6. Is there ever a time you should read someone else's diary?
7. Why did the kids think Roberta was a robot?
8. Who or what saved the day and how?
9. How do misunderstandings occur and is there a way of avoiding misunderstandings?
10. What had Roberta been trying to do when she came to the school and why?

Classroom Activities

Jokes and Riddles

Mr Brainfright taught his class that laughter is one of the most important things in the world (see page 12). Write down your three favourite jokes and have a joke-telling session with the class.



Robots Versus Humans

List some characteristics of a robot. Compare and contrast these characteristics with humans. Discuss why emotions are important.

Book Behaviour

Mr Shush's list of the top ten things you should never do with a book is on pages 48–9. Make up your own top ten list of what not to do with a book.

Colour Your World

Mr Brainright makes the kids look at their world through coloured cellophane in Chapter 20. Use coloured cellophane and cardboard and make yourself a pair of funky glasses to see the world in a different way. Write down how it changes your world.

Rule Breakers

Mr Brainright says it is important to know when to break rules (see page 30). Have a class circle meeting and discuss the topic: 'It is sometimes okay to break rules'. Go round the circle saying whether you agree or disagree with the topic. Go round the circle again giving reasons for your answers and adding new ideas. Repeat this activity with the topic: 'We should look for the good in people, not the bad' (see page 73).

Amazing Arachnid (Spider) Facts

Mr Brainright and all the kids (except for Roberta) are terrified of spiders. Choose a spider to research and include the following:

- Name of spider
- Scientific name
- Description of appearance
- Habitat
- Diet
- Venom
- Interesting facts
- An illustration or picture.



Robot Spy

Henry sees a fly and thinks it is a robot spy. Invent and design a robot spy of your own. Use recyclable materials to make your robot spy. Write a short description of how your invention is a spy and how it works.

Fabulous Fun

Write a short explanation describing what fun is and why it is important. Share your ideas with the class.

Garbage Gobblers

Roberta invented a simple contraption to pick up rubbish in the playground. Design, draw and label your own invention to pick up the clothes in your bedroom and hang them in the wardrobe.

Grid Drawings

Roberta does her picture of the roses by drawing a grid and filling in the squares (see pages 77–8). Use this technique to copy a picture of flowers or to draw a bunch of real flowers. Paint or colour your picture and display them in the classroom.

Recycled Robots

Bring in old boxes, cartons, pieces of foil and other recyclable materials. Work in groups of two or three to make your own robot. When it is finished write a procedure to teach others how to make your robot. Don't forget to name your robot!

Robot Invasion Narrative

Roberta is not really a robot and her diary entries are actually a story she has written. Write your own story from the point of view of a futuristic robot invader.



A New School

After the school is demolished by Grant's robot – the Grantbot 1000 – the school has to be rebuilt and Principal Greenbeard likes the idea of rebuilding it in the shape of a ship. Create your own design for Northwest Southeast Central School using a nautical theme. Draw and label your design.

Lights, Camera, Action

Select a small section of *Robot Riot!* to perform. Work in groups, giving each student a character to play. Rehearse it with your group and perform it for the class. You may wish to bring in props and costumes.

Book Review

Write a short book review for *Robot Riot!* Include the following:

- Title
- Author
- Favourite characters
- Brief plot summary
- Favourite part of the novel
- Recommendation (who you would recommend the book to and why)
- An illustration.