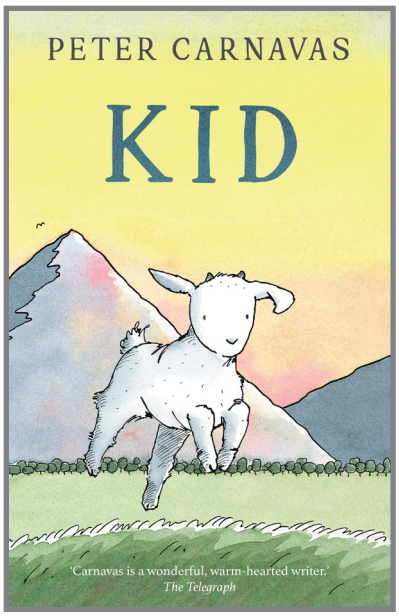
# Kid




AUTHOR
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**RECOMMENDED FOR:** Lower Primary

## SYNOPSIS

Kid may be small, but his heart is big. His days are spent in the farmyard, practising jumps, climbs and butts, dreaming of journeying past the paddock fences to the mountain that lies beyond. His nights are spent in the henhouse, with Audrey, sharing bedtime stories of Buck and Bess, Kid's parents who never returned after chasing a fox from the farm. Desperate to find them, Kid plans an adventure past the boundaries, even though Farm Law forbids it. Doubtful yet determined, Kid is soon joined by Audrey and his best friend, Harriet, who insist on coming too - three friends each with dreams of their own.

In a beautiful story that shows that families come in all shapes and sizes, *Kid* is a classic tale that champions the importance of hope, belonging and courage.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Peter Carnavas writes and illustrates books for children. His work has been published widely across the world and won many awards, including a Prime Minister's Literary Award, a Queensland Literary Award and a NSW Premier's Literary Award. Peter lives in Brisbane/Meanjin with his family.

## THEMES

- Love
- Family/ found family
- Courage
- Perseverance
- Belonging
- Hope
- Friendship
- Adventure

## WRITING STYLE

Told in third person, past tense, *Kid* is a gentle story that captures the essence of love, family and belonging. Through carefully drawn characters and their relationships with one another, readers will come to understand the importance of hope and courage in this modern-day classic. Peter Carnavas offers yet another masterclass in honest, compelling storytelling told through the lens of a child's world view. Moments of tenderness are cleverly balanced with clarity

and humour, endearing readers to Kid and his yearning for adventure, worth and the quest to become a 'proper goat'. Effective figurative language throughout further engages audiences. It is suitable for younger readers.

## STUDY NOTES

- Before reading, discuss the cover and blurb of *Kid*. What do you notice? What are you wondering about this text?
- As you read, revisit the map of the farm periodically. What details do you notice from the map as you read? After reading *Kid*, use this map to create a Story Map of the story, noting key events.
- On page 1, we learn that "It was here, among the feathers and squawks, that the small goat lived" (pp 1-2). Return to this passage after finishing the story. What clues do we get in Chapter 1 that lead us to the story's conclusion?
- Why do you think that Peter Carnavas decided to make Kid a miniature goat, and a young one at that? How does this help emphasise the themes of the story?
- Why do the hens take Kid under their wings? What are you wondering when you learn this?
- Even though he is small, Kid dreams of the "two bumps on top of his head [growing] into big curved horns, strong and majestic" (p 2). What are your dreams for your future? What is it you are most looking forward to about being older? Share in a reflection.
- Describe the relationship that Kid and Audrey share. How would Kid's life be different without her? How would Audrey's be different?
- In a recount, retell the story of Buck and Bess. Why do you think Kid loves having Audrey tell him this story? What are you wondering about this story?
- Why does Kid want to reach the mountain so badly? How would this story be different if Kid had no such ambitions?
- Kid asks Harriet what she'd like to do "more than anything else" (p 19). In a reflection, share your response to this question, expanding on your ideas with reasons.
- Why is Ma so strict about Kid staying in the yard? What makes her so wary of goats? Why is a character like Ma needed in this story? How does she show character development later in the text?
- In the role of Kid, re-enact "chasing imaginary foxes and clearing pretend boulders" (see p 24). What imaginary games do you play? Share in a reflection or describe to a friend.
- Kid is eager to know what happened next in the story of Buck and Bess. Make your own predictions. Why do you think Audrey tells the stories that she does to Kid?
- Like Kid does in Chapter 7, act out Audrey's stories of Buck and Bess.
- Why does Ma establish Farm Law (pp 35-36)? In the role of Kid, write a journal entry about discovering the implications of this. Why do you spend the next few days in the mouth of the log. the story, noting key events.
- How is the fence used as a metaphor in *Kid*?
- What does Kid need to do to become a "proper goat" (p 47)? Why is he so determined to reach this goal?
- Describe the friendship between Kid and Harriet. How does she offer a different kind of support than Audrey? Who is your 'Harriet'? Share in a reflection.
- Why does Kid have a "hiccup of doubt in his heart" about leaving the farm to find his parents (p 51)?
- In the role of Kid, write about your first impressions of being beyond the fence.
- Discuss the role of Cow-and-Bird in *Kid*.
- Discuss Audrey's question: "What was more important: to follow the rules or follow your dreams" (p 69)? How does Kid feel upon hearing that Audrey is going with him to the mountain? Why does she decide to do this?
- How is *Kid* a story about dreams? What are your dreams? Share in a reflection.
- What is the significance of Audrey and Harriet wanting to accompany Kid on his journey? Do you think he makes the right decision in leaving without them? Why does he do this? How does he feel to be reunited with them?
- Kid is trying to be the "bravest goat in the world" (p 84). What would you say to Kid about this if you could speak with him?
- Discuss the significance of Kid and Harriet meeting for the first time ever without a fence between (see p 95). How do their body language and facial expressions show this?
- How do each of the three friends use their strengths to help navigate this adventure? If you were in this story, what strengths would you bring to the group?

- How does Audrey show extraordinary courage on the adventure with Kid and Harriet? How is she an important role model to them?
- Why does Kid want to go home? Why does he think he is "hopeless in the wild" (p 122)? Have you ever felt hopeless or homesick? Looking back, what did you learn from this experience? Share in a reflection.
- What prompts Audrey to confess that her stories about Buck and Bess are not real? How does Kid feel about this?
- On page 127, Kid feels "dazed" upon learning the stories about his parents have been made up Why does this hurt him so much? Why does Kid ask, "If the stories aren't real, why are you here?" (p 128)?
- • Why does smelling "That small pile of droppings" give Kid a much-needed sense of hope (p 129)? In what ways is *Kid* a story of hope?
- • What prompts Kid to believe "He had sheltered too long under the wing of a hen and in the shadow of a pig" (p 174). What happens next?
- Kid lives by the mantra to be the "bravest goat in the world" (p 177). What is your mantra? Why? Share in a reflection.
- What is it that finally makes Kid feel like a "proper goat" (p 178)? In the role of Kid, write a journal entry about this moment.
- In the role of Kid, write and perform a monologue about finally meeting the mountain goats, only to be butted off the mountain by the buck (see Chapter 41).
- Why, as he falls into the chasm, are Kid's final thoughts of Audrey (see p 192)? What does this share about their special bond?
- What impact does flying "high above the earth" (p 196) with Gavin have on Kid? In the role of Kid, write a recount of your experience.
- Explain what Gavin means when he says that Kid will find his family (p 198). Refer to the illustration.
- How important is "the promise of home" to Kid, Audrey, Harriet and Pa (p 212)? What does home mean to you? Share in a drawing, poem or piece of writing.
- Explain how Kid's dreams come true 'in a funny sort of way' (p 213). Has this ever happened to you? Share in a reflection.
- How has Audrey's dream come true in *Kid*?
- How does Kid show himself to be the "bravest goat in the world" (p 231)?
- In what ways is *Kid* a story about family?
- Which is your favourite part of *Kid*? Why?
- How would the story be different had Audrey and Harriet never accompanied Kid on his journey?
- How important is Pa to this story? How would the story be different without him?
- Create a Character Portrait of Kid. How does he grow and change as the story progresses?
- What is your biggest takeaway from reading *Kid*?
- Retell this story from Audrey's point of view.
- In small groups, create a picture book version of *Kid*.
- Draw a diagonal line on a piece of A3 paper. On either side, use drawings to depict the differences between the farm and the wild. Add excerpts from the text to support your ideas.
- Create a board game that reflects the main characters, settings and events of *Kid*.
- Write the next chapter of *Kid*.
- Use Talking Strips to retell this story to a friend:

| **First...** | **Then...** | **After that...** | **Finally...** |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |

- Peter Carnavas uses figurative language throughout his novel to enhance the reading experience. Discuss the impact these devices have on the text. Examples include:
  - “It was the trunk of a tree that had fallen long ago, an ancient timber beast, patched with moss” (p 3).
  - “His hooves click-clacked” (p 5).
  - “The peak was a jagged point piercing the sky” (p 5).
  - “it moved like a shadow” (p 10).
  - “He leant into her feathery warmth” (p 13).
  - “Sadness bubbled in his belly” (p 13).
  - “her eyes were small black dots that wrinkled at the corners” (p 17).
  - “it zipped away” (p 18).
  - “A string of drool slipped from Harriet’s mouth. Kid’s tongue tingled” (p 20).
  - “Kid left the question floating by the fence and bounced back across the yard” (p 21).
  - “He watched the mountain change from green to purple and then black” (p 23).
  - “He was a white streak in the dark” (p 24).
  - “Standing over him was an enormous dog. Huge, white and furry, with eyes as black as a raven’s wing” (p 24).
  - “Her voice was like a rumble in the earth” (p 25).
  - “those tunnel-dark eyes” (p 26).
  - “Stars flickered in the sky like faraway moths catching the light” (p 27).
  - “The question hung in the silent henhouse” (p 28).
  - “Buck and Bess shook off their sleep” (p 32).
  - “His belly knotted up, a chill ran down his legs and a question appeared in his mind” (p 34).
  - “I didn’t raise you to blob around like a snail without a shell” (p 41).
  - “Her feathers were ruffled, and her comb blood-red” (p 41).
  - “An exciting thought hatched in his mind” (p 41).
  - “Audrey let out a strangled squeak, as if a spiky seed was caught in her throat” (p 42).
  - “That thought made his heartbeat stumble” (p 43).
  - “A weak laugh fell from her beak” (p 44).
  - “he would fall asleep with a hiccup of doubt in his heart” (p 51).
  - “The fur on the back of Kid’s neck stood up He threw his best deathly squint” (p 53).
  - “his chest burned like fire” (p 54).
  - “Did Buck’s horns grow straight or curve like branches bent in the wind?” (p 56).
  - “a blanket of birds soared into view, a flock of hundreds flying as one. They moved their wings in smooth, slow beats and wheeled through the sky like water” (p 57).
  - “it was like falling into a bed of feathers” (p 58).
  - “Kid’s belly squirmed” (p 59).
  - “her tail hung down like a piece of rope” (p 61).
  - “Their shadows lengthened as the sun slid lower in the sky” (p 62).
  - “Something fluttered in Kid’s chest, like a moth trying to get out” (p 64).
  - “The mountain bulged like a giant strawstack in the dark” (p 68).
  - “There was a feathery feeling in his belly” (p 68).
  - “a sharp worry made him wince […] The worry buzzed inside him like a bee that couldn’t get out” (p 75).
  - “Your soft pink nose, your legs like folded twigs - you were a fluffy, four-legged angel” (p 77).
  - “he felt like the birds he had seen, slicing through the air” (p 79).
  - “The world around him melted away […] water tanks, sleeping tractors […] flew by and fell behind him like vanishing clouds” (p 79).
  - “the words wouldn’t fall out” (p 80).
  - “a cloud of butterflies took off into the air” (p 92).
  - “Something warm coursed through Kid’s body and the bumps on his head tingled” (p 95).
  - “Their bellies bulged” (p 98).

- “the air had grown steamy and thick” (p 98).
- “Kid sank into a deep sleep, as if he was falling through an ever-collapsing tower of straw” (p 100).
- “Schools of silver fish moved with him, and their slippery, scaly bodies tickled his sides” (p 101).
- “a chill trickled from his hooves to his ears and all down his spine” (p 102).
- “tears leaked from his eyes” (p 105).
- “A sludgy feeling gurgled in his gut, as if he had eaten a rotten weed” (p 106).
- “there was an earthy warmth to the wild, and the sky was fringed with purple-grey clouds” (p 109).
- “the sky grumbled, lightning flashed and a wall of rain collapsed on them” (p 111).
- “Raindrops stung his back, and the wind belted his side. Leaves swirled, tall trees danced about and the purple-grey sky darkened the whole mountainside” (p 112).
- “The rain sliced sideways through the trees” (p 113).
- “his heartbeat bounced all around his body” (p 120).
- “He […] crashed through a curtain of leaves” (pp 120-121).
- “His mind was full of everything and nothing at the same time” (p 152).
- “The first thin curve of the moon appeared. Stars glittered as if they were dancing on a lake” (pp 153-154).
- “The fox suddenly leapt from the dark, like a shadow springing to life” (p 154).
- “Kid’s whole body rattled like an old farm gate in the wind” (p 157).
- “A breeze whipped across the farm” (p 164).
- “soft dewy light bled into the cave” (p 170).
- “His head felt dull and his heart hollow” (p 172).
- “The thought sparkled inside him, and a pebble-sized feeling formed in his chest – not hope, but a stubborn sort of grit” (p 174).
- “Kid flew sideways through the air […] like a leaf spinning in the wind” (p 190).
- “he still felt as light as a hen’s feather” (p 196).
- “Like a snake slipping from its skin, he had shed his worries and let them float off” (p 196).
- “Sunlight bounced off the surface” (p 208).
- “her face melted with a grin” (p 208).
- “Weak moonlight fell on the fenceposts” (p 212).
- “A warm feeling rushed through Kid’s body, like sunlight flooding a field” (p 216).
- “all his heavy thoughts threatened to return” (p 221).
- “a wave of feelings rose up inside” (p 225).

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