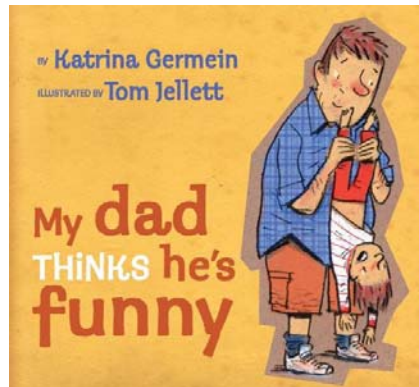


# My Dad Thinks He's Funny



## Teaching Notes

*My Dad Thinks He's Funny.*

*Written by Katrina Germein and illustrated by Tom Jellett*

*Published by Black Dog Books ISBN: 978-1-74203-121-7*

### **Synopsis**

Fondly told from the point of view of a child *My Dad Thinks He's Funny* is about a father with a joke for every occasion. With at least one gag on each page *My Dad Thinks He's Funny* is packed full of everyone's favourite, familiar 'dad jokes'.

### **Educational Applicability**

*My Dad Thinks He's Funny* is suited to primary school classes. The text is engaging and entertaining and the story considers humour and family relationships. Highly recommended for Years 2 to 6.

**Primary Themes:** Fathers and Family, Humour

**Secondary Themes:** Relationships, Fathers' Day

- About the Author
- Author's Notes
- Study Notes, Fathers and Family
- Study Notes, Humour

## About the Author

Katrina Germein began writing books by accident when a story in her head wouldn't go away. She wrote it down to set it free. This story went on to become Katrina's first picture book, *Big Rain Coming*.

Katrina has continued to write for children ever since. *My Dad Thinks He's Funny* is her fifth picture book.

Katrina lives in Adelaide, Australia with three children, one husband and a black and white dog named Sunny.

## Author's Notes

As soon as I had the idea for the book *My Dad Thinks He's Funny* I started listening out for jokes. Every time I heard a gag I would try to remember it and then write it down as quickly as I could. My father in law probably contributed the most but there are also jokes in the book from my sister in law, my step father and my husband. I was looking for the kind of jokes that fathers typically use; the kind of jokes that we've sometimes heard before, and even though they make us roll our eyes, they still make us laugh.

Once I had a collection of 'dad jokes' I decided to write the book from the point of view of a child. I wanted to create a story that was warm and humorous rather than just collection of jokes.

I'm still in the habit of collecting jokes. I have a file on my computer named 'spare dad jokes' which I keep adding to. Some of these spare jokes were used for the *My Dad Thinks He's Funny* blurb.

Author website: [www.katrinagermein.com](http://www.katrinagermein.com)

## Study Notes - Fathers and Family

In all the following activities 'Dad' can be substituted with another family member or special person.

**Discussion:** Is your dad funny? Is your dad like the father in the book? Who in your family is funny? What makes a family? How are families different to each other? What are some of the good things about being part of a family? Are there any disadvantages to being part of a family? How do families support each other? What do family members need to remember about each other? How do family members show each other that they love each other? How do the characters in the story show that they love each other? What are some the different roles of different family members in your family? What is your role in your family? What is your dad's role?

**List:** Ten Things I Like About My Dad.

*Could be presented on a poster or in a card for a Fathers' Day gift.*

**Reflection:** Write a personal piece about the things you like to do with your dad and some of your favourite times together.

**Public Speaking:** Use the following topics to interview your dad and prepare a presentation for the class. *Favourite Foods, Favourite Sports, Favourite Music, Favourite Movie, Favourite Hobby, Favourite Pastime, Least Favourite pastime, Favourite Animal, Favourite Time of the Year, Favourite Joke.*

**Writing:** Create a book modelled on *My Dad Thinks He's Funny* using one of the following titles - *My Dad Thinks He's Sporty, My Dad Thinks He's Brainy, My Dad Thinks He's Handy, My Dad Thinks He's Speedy, My Dad Thinks He's Fancy, My Dad Thinks He's Silly.*

Begin by brainstorming a list of anecdotes before drafting the prose.

**Craft:** Make a Memory Book. Design and create scrap book pages using photos of you and your dad. Present the photos on coloured card with captions and decorations made from stickers, craft materials and memorabilia.

*Option: Each class member contributes one page to be collated into a whole class book.*

**Research:** Choose a famous dad and present information under the following headings:

- Name
- Birth and Death
- Childhood- *where they grew up and went to school*
- Family- *family members*
- Adulthood & Fame - *what they do, why they're famous, other facts*
- Achievements - *awards, records, people they've helped, challenges they've overcome*

**Investigation:** Be a super sleuth. Read the *My Dad Thinks He's Funny* Author's Notes about how the author collected jokes for the book. Listen out for funny phrases and comments from your dad or other people around you and record good and bad jokes on a notepad. Read them to a partner or the class during sharing time.

### **Other Picture Books about Dads**

- *I Spy Dad* by Janeen Brian & Chantal Stewart, New Frontier
- *My Dad* by Anthony Browne, Macmillan
- *My Dad's a Wrestler* by Matt Zurbo, Lothian Books

## Study Notes - Humour

**Discussion:** What is a joke? Do you have a favourite joke in the book? What is a punch line? Do all jokes have a punch line? Why do people make jokes? Are jokes always funny? Do you think the father in the story is funny? When is the best time for a joke? When is the worst time for a joke? Who do you know who is funny? What sort of jokes do you like? What sort of jokes don't you like?

**List:** Ten Things That Make Me Laugh.

**Reflection:** Write a personal piece about the funniest person you know and the funny things they say and do that make you laugh.

**Speaking:** Students select their favourite page from *My Dad Thinks He's Funny* to share with their group. Students talk about why they have chosen a particular scenario. Has everyone chosen the same page? Why? Why not?

**Enquiry:** Humour is **subjective**. What does subjective mean? What other things are subjective? How do we judge subjective things like art, music, books and humour? Why are some things more popular than others?

**Writing:** Create a book, modelled on *My Dad Thinks He's Funny*, about the adventures of a funny animal. (For example, *Black Cat Thinks She's Funny*.) Start by brainstorming a list of things a funny animal could do before drafting the prose. Students could work individually or in pairs or this could be a class activity to create a group negotiated text.

**Maths:** Hold a class vote or create a school survey to determine *The Funniest Show on Television* or *The Funniest Book*. Record and graph the results. See book list suggestions below.

**Research:** Choose one of the three topics for a research assignment:

Jesters

Favourite/Famous Comedian,

The Scientific Benefits of Laughing

**Competition:** Hold a school/class joke contest.

**Class Project:** Create a joke book. Each student contributes their favourite joke with an illustration. The pages are collated into a book. Organise a book launch and invite families to attend. Students take turns on the microphone to read their page. Copies of the book can be printed for students to take home.

### **Other Humorous Picture Books**

- *Caar Caaar* by Geoff Havel & Peter Kendall, Fremantle Arts Centre Press
- *The Wrong Book* by Nick Bland, Scholastic
- *Old Tom's Holiday* by Leigh Hobbs, ABC Books
- *The Story of the Little Mole who Went in Search of Whodunit*, Werner Holzwarth & Wolf Erlbruch
- *Revolting Rhymes* by Roald Dahl & Quentin Blake