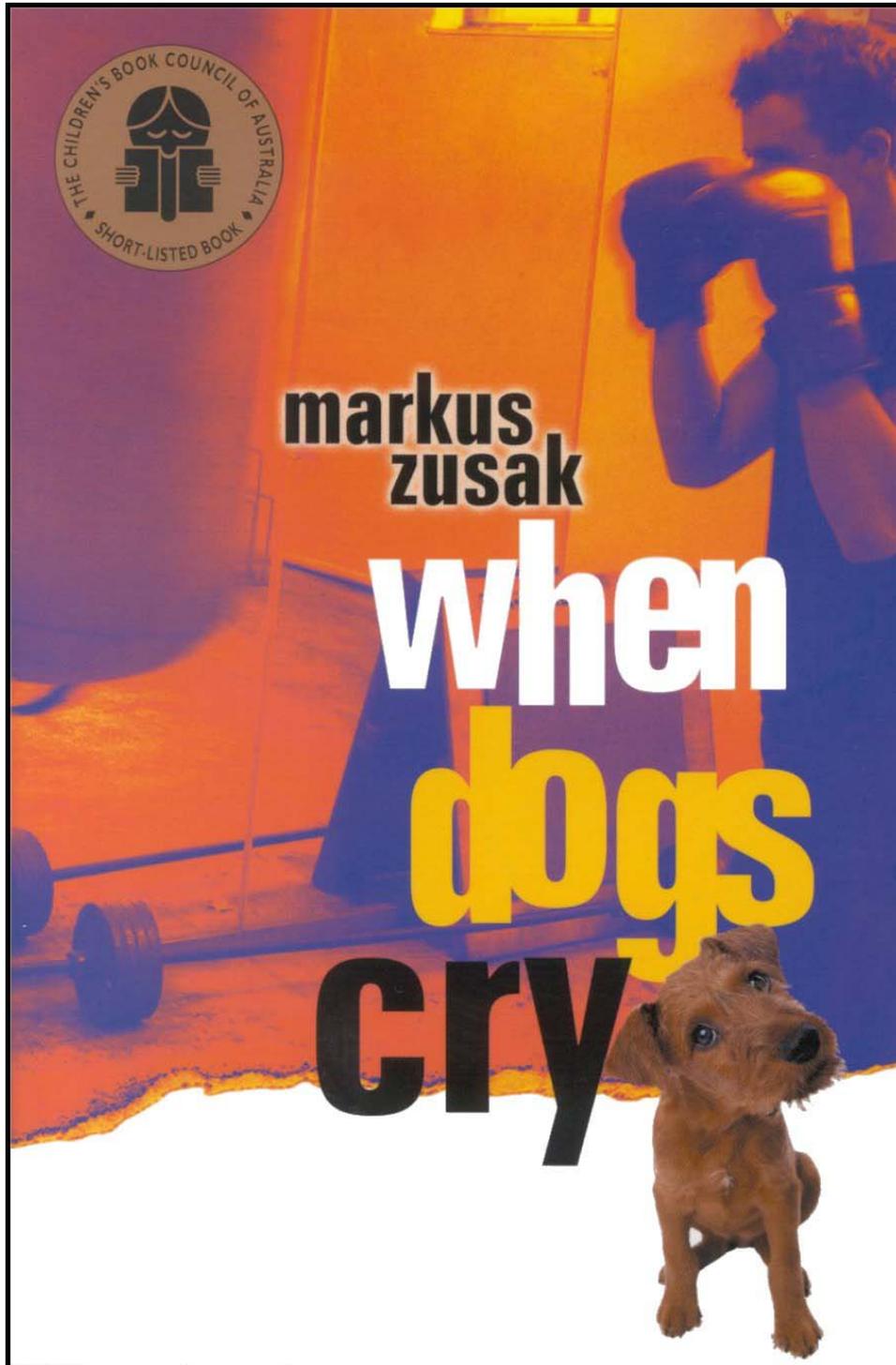




# markus zusak





# when dogs cry

*'You're a bit of a lonely bastard, aren't you?'  
said Rube.*

*'Yeah,' I answered. 'I guess I am.'*

But Cameron Wolfe is hungry. He's sick of being the filthy, torn, half-smiling, half-scowling underdog. He's finally met a girl. He's got words in his spirit. And now he's out to prove that there's nothing more beautiful than an underdog who's willing to stand up.

A tough but poetic street story by the acclaimed author of *Fighting Ruben Wolfe*.



### PRAISE FOR FIGHTING RUBEN WOLFE

*'Zusak debuts with an intense tale about boxing, brotherly solidarity, and searching for self-respect ... Engrossing'*

KIRKUS REVIEWS

*'Ruggedly poetic. This guy is one hell of a writer'*  
CHRIS CRUTCHER, AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR  
OF *ATHLETIC SHORTS*

*'Zusak, in writing about a working class family's struggle for dignity, gets closer to a recognisable truth than anyone I've read in a long, long time. His fight scenes are wonderful and his thoughts about girls are so good it's almost embarrassing'*  
WALTER DEAN MYERS





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These teachers notes are written in four sections to cater for the following:

## Section One

### – Elementary Students

The **Chapter by Chapter questions (Part A)** are designed to be brief in order to allow students to keep momentum with their reading of the book. If you find that these kind of questions still stem the flow of their reading, alternative tasks are available by using the **Quarter Questions (Part B)**.

## Section Two

### – Intermediate Students

## Section Three

### – Advanced Students

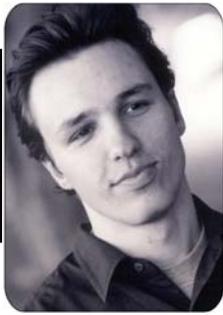
**Designed for High Ability Students**

## Section Four

### – Alternatives to writing activities.

**Includes activities of Drama, monologue, discussion and debate.**





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## Section One

### Part A

#### CHAPTER ONE:

Within the below table come up with at least three points that describe both Cameron and Rube. For example (and you can steal these ones), for Cameron, you might put "quiet" or "walks the streets alone" and for Rube you might put "confident".

Cameron	Rube

#### CHAPTER TWO:

Describe what each brother looks like as they walk up to the oval.

#### CHAPTER THREE:

Read the writing at the end of this chapter. How does it relate to the story?

#### CHAPTER FOUR:

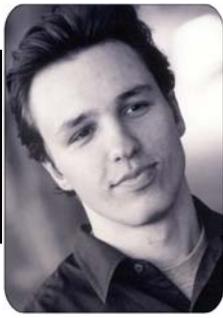
Who is Miffy and what part does he play in the lives of Cameron and Rube?

#### CHAPTER FIVE:

What does Steve share with Cameron at the end of this chapter? Why do you think he does this?

### EXTENDED WRITING TASK

Write a match report for Steve's football game. Make sure you include the beer can incident in detail!!



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## Section One

### CHAPTER SIX:

Describe Octavia Ash – what she looks like *and* her personality.

### CHAPTER SEVEN:

This chapter is the turning point of the book. In up to five lines, explain why.

### CHAPTER EIGHT:

List three things that Cameron Wolfe's soul does to him in this chapter. Do you think it becomes a separate character of the story here? Give a reason for your answer.

### CHAPTER NINE:

How has Cameron's life changed in this chapter?

### CHAPTER TEN:

Give an example of two members of the Wolfe family connecting in this part of the book. Explain briefly what happens and how it shows their closeness.

## EXTENDED WRITING TASK

Rewrite the scene at the harbour from Octavia's point of view. Include WHAT happened in detail and HOW it felt.

### CHAPTER ELEVEN:

Read Cameron's writing - *The Bridge*. How does this relate to the story?

### CHAPTER TWELVE:

Cameron talks of crying dogs in this chapter – what is he talking about?

### CHAPTER THIRTEEN:

Write again from Octavia's point of view. Tell us about Cameron Wolfe – his fears, his strengths and what draws you to him.



# when dogs cry

## Section One

### CHAPTER FOURTEEN:

Who is the phonecaller?

### CHAPTER FIFTEEN:

Are the Wolfe brothers loyal to each other? How do we know?

### CHAPTER SIXTEEN:

Cameron often talks about his words and how they make him okay. How does his sister Sarah fit into this idea?

### CHAPTER SEVENTEEN:

It's written that Sarah took photos of the action in this chapter. Describe what's happening in one of those photos.

### CHAPTER EIGHTEEN:

What is important about the scene in Sarah's bedroom?

### CHAPTER NINETEEN:

"This Chapter is simply about violence."  
Do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer in detail.

### CHAPTER TWENTY:

What is the most important statement in this chapter? Why?

## EXTENDED WRITING TASK

Write an obituary for Miffy the dog. Include his age (make it up), who he was beloved to, how he died, the events of the funeral, and as much as you can about how sorely he'll be missed.



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## Section One

## Part B

### CHAPTERS 1-5:

Under these headings, write a brief description about what happened in these sections in *When Dogs Cry*:

- a. *Going to Glebe (chapter one)*
- b. *Shots at Goal (chapter two)*
- c. *The Barber (chapter three)*
- d. *The Beer Can (chapter five)*

### CHAPTERS 6-10:

What are the TWO most important incidents in these chapters in your opinion? Give good reason for your choices.

### CHAPTERS 11-15:

Try to come up with THREE ways in which Cameron Wolfe has changed since the beginning of the book.

### CHAPTERS 16-20:

Writing exercise: Imagine that you're Ruben Wolfe. Give your version of what happened at the end of the book. Mention what you've learned and how you now view Cameron.



# when dogs cry

## Section Two

### 1. THE WRITING

- a. Describe the dog and who you feel it represents, and why.
- b. What kind of world is the one expressed in Cameron's writing? Why do you think it is chosen to be such a place?
- c. Choose one piece of Cameron's writing and show how it relates to the story. Explain the importance of this section of writing in terms of Cameron's character.

### 2. THE CHARACTERS

- a. Choose one character from the book and explain him or her under these headings:
  - His or her defining moment
  - How they changed throughout the book
  - One quote that sums him or her up

### 3. THE THEMES

Love versus Lust – Loyalty – Personal Pride – Respect for Women – Violence – Revenge – Fear – Family.

Choose TWO of the above-mentioned themes and explain ONE part of *When Dogs Cry* where it occurred. How does it affect Cameron Wolfe?



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## Section Three

### 1. "DOGIFICATION"

In *When Dogs Cry*, a kind of reversal of personification occurs, where Cameron often sees himself as an underdog or scruffy dog. Try to find three examples where this occurs. Think especially of his appearance and mannerisms.

### 2. STYLE

Explain the style that *When Dogs Cry* is written in. Things to consider might be the overall structure, paragraphing, sentence length, language, imagery, contrast of comedy, sadness and action, and use of dialogue.

### 3. ESSAY QUESTION

Themes, characters, dialogue and action...

Which of these aspects of *When Dogs Cry* stands out as the most important?





# when dogs cry

## Section Four

### Alternatives to Writing Activities

#### 1. DRAMA

In pairs or threes, or a group, choose one part of the book and act out what is happening. Include body language and dialogue. (Example scenes might be the beginning, Cam confronting Steve in chapter twelve, Octavia and Cam in the park, Cameron coming to Rube's aid at the end, the final scene at the harbour, the Miffy funeral scene etc.)

#### 2. MONOLOGUE

Imagine that you are one of the characters from *When Dogs Cry*. Talk about what happened to you in the story and how it affected you.

#### 3. DISCUSSION QUESTION

Love versus Lust.

How accurate is Cameron's theory about love and lust in chapter three at the barber's? This can include a class survey on how the males view themselves, how girls view them etc.

#### 4. DEBATE

"All the girls go for the nasty guys".

Use this topic to form a positive and negative argument in class.