



# Teacher's guide

## The Brandings Game



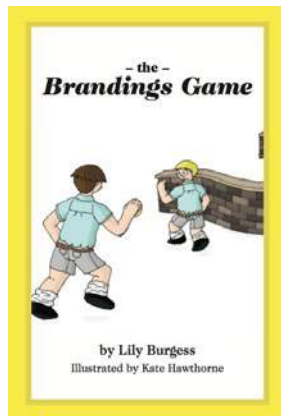
words from  
Daddy's mouth

# The Brandings Game

By Lily Burgess

Illustrated by Kate Hawthorne

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## Teachers' Notes

Prepared and written by a teacher with experience in both whole class and special education

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# The Brandings Game

## 1 Synopsis

*The Brandings Game* is the fourth book in the *Words from Daddy's Mouth* series. In this story, Dad tells how he broke his left arm. (The story of how he broke his right arm is recorded in *The Terrible Red Racer*.)

This story begins with Dad explaining to his daughters the rules of two playground games – British Bulldogs 1,2,3 and Brandings. He then explains how, when trying to dodge a ball being thrown at him during a game of Brandings, he attempted a dive roll over a courtyard wall. As he landed on his outstretched arm he heard a loud “snap”. By coincidence, his mother was working as a relief teacher at his school that day. So, he went to the staffroom to find her. When he told her he had broken his arm (again), she mistook the grimace on his face for a smile and thought he was playing a practical joke. Once she realised he wasn't joking, she arranged for her husband to take him to hospital, where the arm was set in plaster.

The story concludes with Dad recalling his worst humiliation of the day – the hug and kiss his mother gave him – in front of the whole class!

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## 2 Background

This story is set in the ACT during the 1980s.

### 3 Themes

#### **Reminiscing about childhood experiences:**

Considering the consequences of your actions.

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### 4 Writing style

This story is written in the conversational style of a father recounting childhood events to his daughters Stephanie, Jasmin and Avey, as told by another daughter, Lily. The text involves some narration and considerable dialogue. Direct speech is marked by quotation marks (inverted commas).

The story includes the interactions between the father and his daughters as he tells his story. Their different reactions to his statements and questions reflect their interests and levels of understanding.

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### 5 Study notes

#### **To introduce the story:**

- a Ask the students if their parents / grandparents have ever told stories about their childhood.
- Explain that this is a story a father tells to his daughters, and read the introductory notes.
- Show the students the front cover, read the title, and ask them to guess what a Brandings Game might entail. Do they play a similar game, and is it dangerous?
- Ask the students what they should do if they hurt themselves in the playground.

- Ask the students about the consequences of playing practical jokes.
- Read the story for enjoyment.

#### **Following the reading of the story:**

- b** Discuss the two layers to the story (Dad telling a story to his daughters, and the story about the rusty nail). Discuss this with reference to the illustration on Page 14.
- Identify the main characters in each layer (Dad, his daughters Stephanie, Jaz and Mum in the first layer, and Dad as a young boy, his school friends and teachers in the second layer).
- Ask the students to draw two pictures – one depicting the family listening to Dad telling the story, and the other, showing Dad as a young boy, injuring himself on a rusty nail.
- Create a story line for the rusty nail story.
- Identify the digressions (early computers, responsibilities in the final year of Primary school, sports and games, the rusty car floor... ).
- Discuss how the digressions help to provide context and background to the main story.

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## **6** Activities

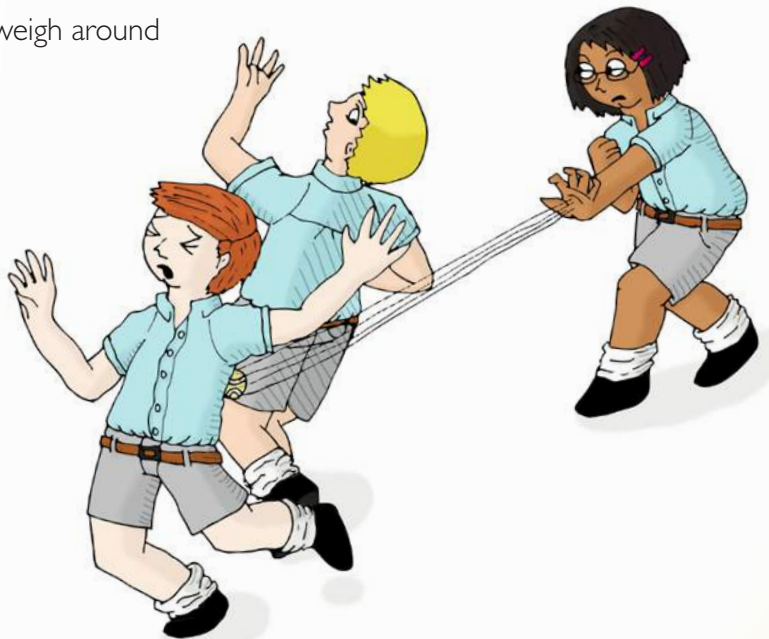
- Draw up a set of alternative rules for British Bulldogs 1,2,3 and Brandings, so they can be played more safely.
- Have the students make a model of the classroom and courtyard as Dad describes them.

## 7 Drama

- Have the students re-enact the story – retelling the majors events in their own words.
- Make puppets for each of the main characters, and turn the story into a puppet show.

## 8 Mathematics

- On p. 17 Dad explains the courtyard wall was about 1.2 metres high. Measure this distance on the ground, and have the students attempt to long-jump it.
- On p. 22 Dad says his arm was as heavy as “a thousand million kilograms”. Work out how many zeros in a thousand million.
- Obtain some scales, and weigh various objects in the classroom, noting those that weigh around one kilogram.



## 9 Writing

- Have the students list the rules for British Bulldogs 1,2,3 and The Brandings Game.
  - Have the students invent a new playground game, and describe how it should be played.
- 

## 10 Health

- Arrange for a nurse to visit the school and talk about basic first aid, and how to deal with an emergency such as a broken arm.
  - Ask someone who has recently suffered a fracture to talk to the students about their experiences.
  - Ask the students to bring any X-rays they may have at home of fractures limbs. Set up a display.
  - Discuss the importance of eating a balanced diet, and especially calcium-rich foods to ensure strong bone growth.
- 

## 11 Social Science

British Bulldogs 1,2,3 and The Brandings Game both had a set of rules. Discuss the need for rules in a society. Draw up a set of rules for day-to-day classroom management, behaviour on excursions, computer use... etc. Display these rules in a prominent place.

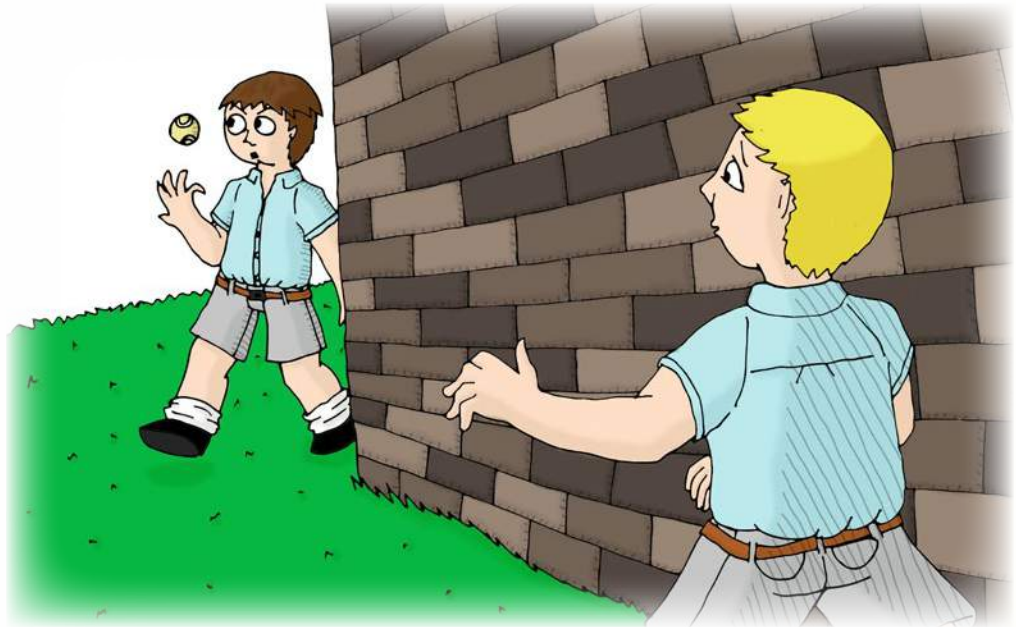


## 12 Science

- For older students, it may be possible to obtain a model skeleton and use this to name the various bones. Younger students might prefer models of dinosaur skeletons.
  - Compare the human skeleton to the skeletons of other mammals.
- 

## 13 Music

- As a follow-up to *The Terrible Red Racer*, it was suggested the students learn 'Dem dry bones' song. Revise this song.



## 14 About the author

About how this all began (and why Lily Burgess is the author on the cover of the books)

By Matthew Burgess

Being a full time lawyer Matthew needed a creative outlet, and in 2010, he began writing business books for other professional service providers.

However there was still something missing. His wife said she married me because he made her laugh with the crazy stories he told her when they first met and that he should write a book.

Many years later they began to raise 1, then 2, then 3 and finally 4, precious girls and Matthew started to share stories of his childhood with his children.

It soon became one of the family's favourite pastimes. Often embellished and seldom kept on track the girls would be absorbed. What was fact became blurred in the magic of the stories told.

A strong undertone in the stories are various life lessons, while also ensuring a healthy dose of humour and role playing.

When his third daughter, Lily, was about four years old, she said "Daddy, please tell me another story from your mouth".

From that day on, the stories became known as "Words from Daddy's mouth". Over time, the stories became known as "Lily's stories". It was therefore a natural progression that Lily Burgess would become the pseudonym for the authoring of the children books to help distinguish them from his other publications.

With so many stories, a list was created to remember them all (at last count the list was nearing 500). So over time a game developed where the girls would choose a number from the list. Whatever story related to the number chosen would be the story that would be told.

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## 15 About the illustrator

Kate Hawthorne has two Bachelors degrees, one in Fine Arts and one in Arts & Sciences. She illustrates primarily for theatre and graphic novels, though in the past she has illustrated for her college newspaper, posters, and many other contests.

Below are my steps for illustrating *The Big Rusty Nail* and all of the books in this series. The steps below are very common in the industry for illustrators and graphic novelists to employ. However different illustrators may make different choices at each step based on the story and style they are trying to achieve for their unique work.

- 1 First, I read the entire story through to see what I'm drawing and what the overall story and progression of the pictures should be.
- 2 Then I divide up the story into chunks of text that go together and that I know I could draw a good unique picture for.
- 3 Next I sketch the pages in pencil so that I can easily fix anything or change it if necessary. This step tends to be the most daunting as it's creating something from scratch and getting all the proportions correct.
- 4 After that I slowly and precisely ink the pages with a micron pen, as ink cannot be erased, so then I then only have a clean copy of the lines I want to keep from the illustration. This also provides me something easier to scan as scanners

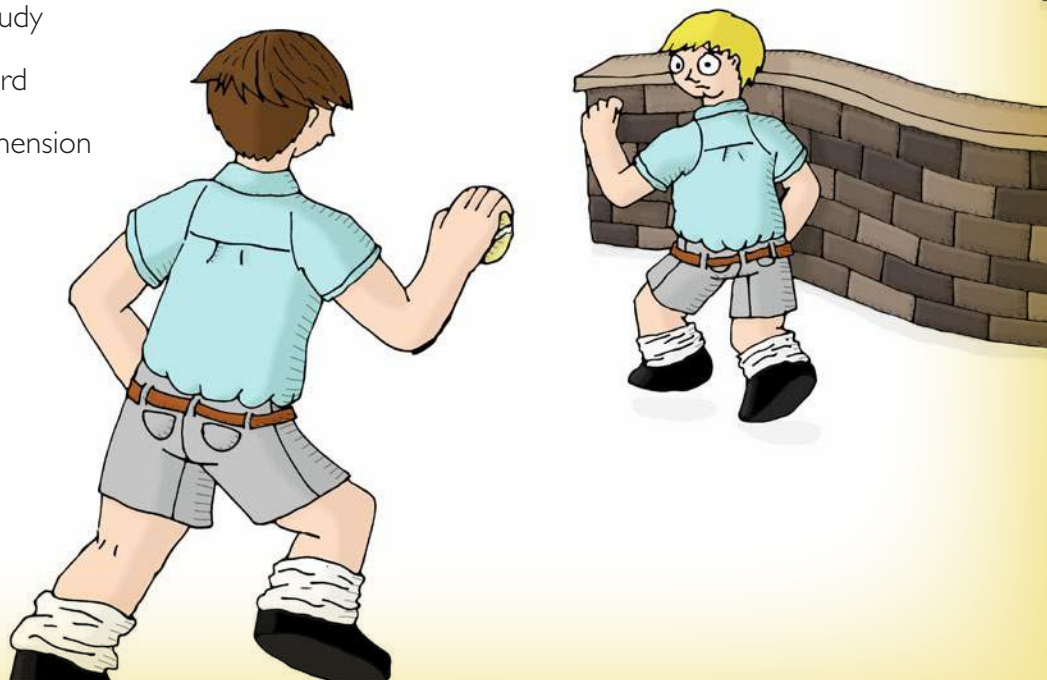
do not pick up pencil very well. It's also harder to convert a pencil drawing into something I can color as they are very messy.

- 5 This next step has a lot of mini steps that include scanning the pages, several steps that convert them into a smooth digital copy, several more that clean up the lines and pages, and then the last part of this step is to color.
- 6 Next I shade everything by hand from the smallest details to the largest objects so that I can achieve the shading for the exact area I need.
- 7 The final step is to add line shading, black lines/tic marks along where the shading goes. This adds extra character and design and makes the drawings seem more complete. I also do detail work on this step such as putting the entire cross hatching on the school kids hats or filling in lines that got erased or covered during all the previous steps..

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## 16 Worksheets available

- Word Search
- Word Study
- Crossword
- Comprehension



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# The Brandings Game

## Comprehension Sheet

Who is listening to Dad's story telling?

\_\_\_\_\_

Which arm did Dad break in this story?

\_\_\_\_\_

List six sports and games Dad enjoyed playing.

\_\_\_\_\_

Explain how Dad broke his arm.

\_\_\_\_\_

What would you do if you were playing The Brandings Game, and you were trapped in a courtyard?

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you think it was a good idea for Dad to demonstrate a dive roll?

---

Why?

---

Why do you think Avey giggled after she asked, “How come”, for the second time?

---

**Draw four things that happened to Dad after he broke his arm.**

--	--

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Brandings Game

**Word study.** Write down meanings for these words.

daydream

---

automatic

---

dangerous

---

squeeze

---

ignore

---

consider

---

continue

---

interrupt

---

Read these words:

sure

shore

Write a sentence for each:

---

---

Explain the proverb: 'Look before you leap':

---

---

---

---



Now complete these tables:

Read	Sound	Write word	Draw a picture
broke	br-oke		
woke	w-oke		
spoke	sp-oke		
bloke	bl-oke		

In this story Dad uses similes, when he says:

“as heavy as a thousand million kilograms” and “I lay like a dying bug”.

**Complete these similes:**

---

The car was as slow as

---

The grass was as high as

---

The tree was as tall as

---

The boy was as quiet as

---

The stars twinkled like

---

The night was as dark as

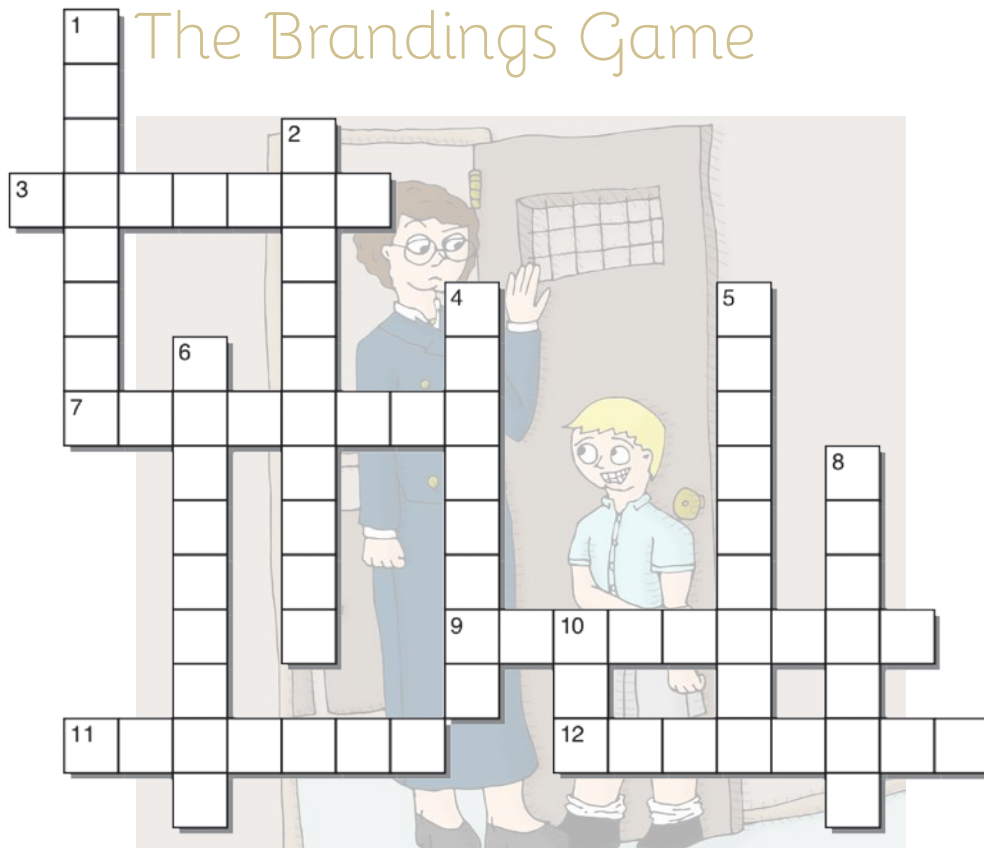
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The air was as cool as

---

The river was as wide as

---



### Across

- 3 After he broke his arm, Dad had a \_\_\_\_\_ cast put on his arm
- 7 Giant \_\_\_\_\_ were used to cut off the plaster.
- 9 This time, Dad did not need to go to hospital in an \_\_\_\_\_.
- 11 Dad was not very good at \_\_\_\_\_ over walls.
- 12 Dad's mum said, "Oh my \_\_\_\_\_".

### Down

- 1 When he was little, Dad used to play British \_\_\_\_\_ 1,2,3.
- 2 Dad played brandings with a \_\_\_\_\_.  
Dad had to go to \_\_\_\_\_ when he broke his arm.
- 5 Dad ran into a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6 When Dad broke his arm, it felt as a heavy as a thousand million \_\_\_\_\_.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 8 Dad's mum was a relief \_\_\_\_\_.
- 10 When he broke his arm, dad fell down like a dying \_\_\_\_\_.

# The Brandings Game



announce  
courtyard  
jump  
runner  
tennis

brandings  
dangerous  
laugh  
scissors  
zigzag

break  
daydream  
person  
story

broke  
hospital  
plaster  
tackle

