

TEACHERS' NOTES

Resource Kit For Use in Schools



Danger at **Devil's Cove**

The Adventures
of Josephine
Mary Cresswell 

Written by Marilyn Bakker
Illustrated by Reuben Horn
and Pati Ahsue

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Synopsis for the Teacher

Set on Coromandel Peninsula, New Zealand, in the 1950s, *Danger at Devil's Cove* is a fast-paced adventure story with an imaginative edge. It has many levels so can be enjoyed by children 10-14 years of age.

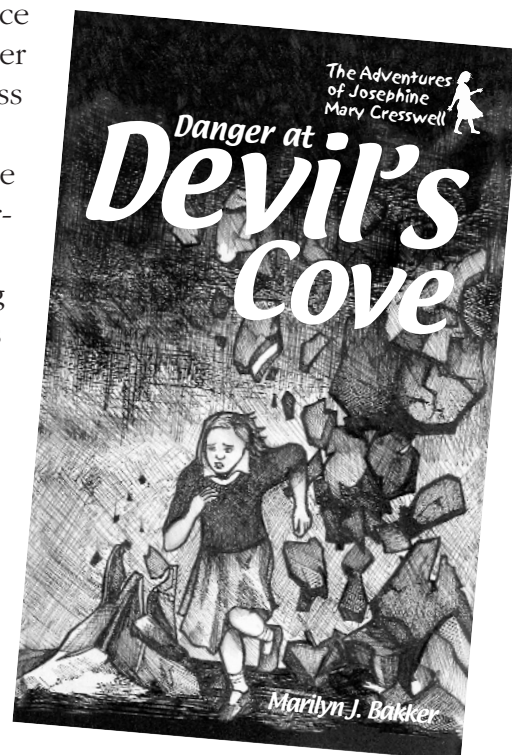
Suddenly orphaned, Josephine Mary Cresswell's world crumbles and she is thrust into a new environment, moving to live with an aunt who is a virtual stranger.

At her new school Josephine makes friends with Tommy, the son of the local constable, but falls foul of Prudence, the school bully. When Prudence goes missing Josephine and Tommy set off to search for her in an abandoned goldmine and inadvertently stumble across a covert operation which ultimately leads to Devil's Cove.

Facing many challenges, Josephine struggles to choose the right path and in the process comes to better understand who she is.

On the surface, *Danger at Devil's Cove* is a rollicking adventure story with ample action to keep the reader's interest through to the last subtle twist. The more advanced reader may pick up on themes of temptation, choice and consequence and the struggle between good and evil.

Whilst *Danger at Devil's Cove* is a fictional adventure story set in the 1950s, it contains references to early gold mining in the 1850s, and to World War Two. A section at the back of the book provides some background information for the interested reader.



Reason for Reading - Class Discussion

Explore the cover. What do the students think the book is about? Discuss ideas as to why the cover drawings are printed black and white as opposed to colour? Discuss how social attitudes of the 1950s differed from today and the meaning of the saying 'Spare the rod and spoil the child'.

Work in pairs, taking turns to report back to class.

Following the plot: Chapters 1-4.

1. When Josephine's mother died how did Josephine's life change?

Pages 9-13

2. Who helped Josephine feel better when she was grieving for her mother Name at least two people who helped her and one person who made life more difficult. Discuss their actions.

Pages 14-19

3. Why was Jack so important to Josephine. Where did he lead Josephine and Tommy?

Pages 20-24

4. What things did Josephine learn about Prudence and what did she do to help her?

Pages 28-31

Following the plot: Chapters 5-8

1. What lesson did Miss Possum have for Josephine and what was Mr Truffles most concerned about?

Page 39

2. Most people felt sorry for Prudence but Josephine didn't. Why not? What happened to soften her feelings towards Prudence?

P40, 43-45

3. The doctor described Mrs Marsh as 'evil'. Why was this? How did she escape punishment?

Page 47

4. When the treasure map was stolen from the Commander's study how did Josephine keep Prudence from worrying too much? Why was Josephine made to swear an oath of silence?

Pages 52-55

5. When Aunt Jenny offered Tommy a ride home he refused. Why? What happened between Josephine and Prudence at Dr Dreaver's house and how did Josephine react?

Pages 57-59

Following the plot: Chapters 9-12

1. At the Greenfield's house, what did Tommy and Josephine overhear? What frightening news did Mrs Greenfield receive?

Pages 65-66

2. Describe four things that happened to Prudence in the mine.

Pages 67-73

3. Make a list of Sweet Temptations. Why did Mrs Marsh offer them to Prudence and what happened when she took the last one from the plate?

Pages 75-78

4. What fell out of the envelope from the biscuit tin? Josephine read a verse out loud. Can you say this from memory? Explain what Tommy and Josephine decided to do the next day.

Pages 83-85

Following the plot: Chapters 13-16

1. Describe Scarface and Stinker. What do you think they were up to? Describe what Josephine and Tommy discovered when they entered Black Jack's mine.

Pages 91-93

2. What prompted Tommy to leave the girls alone in the mine? Who helped Josephine find the cure for Prudence and how did she escape from the room of Sweet Temptations?

Pages 96-97

3. How did Tommy find Lucky Strike Mine and work out where he was? What did he uncover?

Pages 105-106

4. Describe how Tommy, Josephine and Jack travelled through the Lucky Strike Mine.

Pages 110-112

Following the plot: Chapters 17-20

1. Give two reasons why Tommy thought they had uncovered a smugglers' den. What happened when the children tried to escape across the swing bridge?

Pages 115-118

2. When Josephine awoke from a strange dream she felt confused. Explain the sequence of events that took place after she met the commander. Did he believe what she had to tell him?

Pages 121-126

3. Why did Josephine and Tommy avoid answering Constable Greenfield's questions? Describe what you think happened to Mrs Marsh at the swing bridge?

Pages 129-132

4. What was wrong with Prudence? What happened to the elixir and how did Mr Truffles help Josephine find a solution?

Pages 136-137

Following the plot: Chapters 21-24

1. Why did Josephine blame herself for Prudence being ill? Do you think she was to blame? Why/why not?

Page 139-140

2. Why did Constable Greenfield want Josephine and Jack to help him? What difference did Josephine notice inside the shed. Describe in one sentence what happened next?

Pages 144 and 148

3. For what purpose did Tommy and Constable Denby climb to the clifftop ? Describe Tommy's behaviour. Work in pairs to mime how he helped capture Stinker.

Pages 149-151 and 153

4. Josephine and Constable Greenfield were rescued from the shed by whom? What did they find on the other side of the swing bridge and why did they race to Devil's Cove?

Pages 157-59

Following the plot: Chapters 25-28

1. Describe what Josephine saw inside the cavern at Devil's Cove. What action did Josephine take to distract Mrs Marsh's attention away from the constable and the commander?

Pages 165-166

2. Constable Denby and his men were outnumbered 4 to 1. What happened to change that? What did the commander learn about Mrs Marsh?

Pages 169-170

3. When the barge smashed onto the rocks at Devil's Cove what did Josephine believe she saw? What do you think happened?

Pages 175

4. Describe what was in the oilskin package and what Josephine learnt about her father.

Pages 183

Following the plot: Part Two

1. When Prudence was a baby she went missing. Where did she go and how did Josephine find out about it?

Pages 187-189

2. Why do you think Prudence recovered from her coma?

Pages 190-192

3. Josephine said, "This is the best birthday ever." Describe three things that happened on her birthday?

Pages 105-106

4. Discuss one new fact you learnt from the following pages:

Pages 199-203

Analysing the characters - Work in pairs to discuss the following statements. As each statement is read by one of the pair, students decide which one of two lines they want to stand in - **AGREE or DISAGREE**. The second member of the pair explains why they agree / disagree. Students can then move to the other line if they change their minds.

1. Josephine lost her voice because she believed she was to blame when her mother had an accident. p10, p14, p19, p21-22.
2. Prudence was a mean bully who would never change. p17, p31, p44, p51, p59, p71, p193, p197
3. Constable Greenfield disliked children. p32, p64, p65, p80, p119, p121-122, p129, p148, p169, p173
4. Mr Truffles was as real to Tommy as he was to Josephine. p29-30, p62, p130-132
5. Scarface and Stinker both had the same kind of personality. p69-71, p89, p131, p153, p163, p165
6. Aunt Jenny enjoyed working at home. p11, p15, p16, p30, p57, p133-135, p138,
7. At times, Prudence felt jealous of Josephine and Josephine of Prudence. p35-40, p48, p56, p58
8. Tommy preferred to act quickly rather than think about things for a long time. p15-16, p18, p22-24, p25-28, p56, p57, p63-64, p82-85, p90, p95, p104, p106, p109, p111, p113-117, p152-153, p197
9. Constables Greenfield and Denby were good members of the community. p31, p64-65, p195-196
10. The commander was a busy man yet he always found time to spend with Prudence. p43-44, p177, p187, p191

Language differences

How it was said in the 1950s	What we might say today
Example: "Come along young lady. You and I are going for a walk."	"C'mon, let's go for a walk".
"My Mum said your mother was a heroine."	
"This tastes delicious."	
"Serves you right, smarty pants."	
"Well, has the cat got your tongue?"	
"Heavens child, I've been looking for you everywhere."	
"My, you do have a hearty appetite."	
"She barely ate a morsel at breakfast."	
"I've been absolutely horrid to you at school."	

Proverbs - Work in pairs.

A proverb is a short pithy saying that is in general use and expresses commonly held ideas and beliefs. Proverbs were commonly used in the 1950s. For example if a student acted without thinking a teacher may have said to him/her, "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

Each chapter in the book begins with a proverb. Go to the contents page to locate the correct pages and choose 10 proverbs at random. Use your knowledge or the listed websites below, to find the correct meanings for your selected proverbs.

[<http://www.syvum.com/proverbs/> <http://www.answers.com/topic/proverb>]

The Meaning of ANZAC - work in groups

ANZAC is an acronym for Australia New Zealand Army Corps and dates back to World War 1. In New Zealand we celebrate ANZAC Day the 25th of April each year to remember the fallen soldiers from both World War 1 and World War 2.

ANZAC BISCUITS

1. Go to anzacday.org.au/miscellaneous/bikkies.html and learn why ANZAC biscuits were first made.
2. Find a recipe for ANZAC biscuits at home, or go to <http://www.nzs.com/new-zealand-articles/seasons-and-celebrations/anzac-biscuits-recipe.html>
3. Work together as a group to each bring necessary ingredients from home to school.
4. Follow recipe to make and bake ANZAC biscuits.
5. These may be for fundraising for a chosen project or eaten.

World War Two - The Battle of Britain

Find information using encyclopedias, the net and reference books to answer the following questions:

1. Write one sentence explaining where and when the Battle of Britain occurred.
2. Name two countries who fought in the Battle of Britain.
3. Work on your own to draw in detail one type of aircraft used in the Battle of Britain.
4. Work in a group to make an A1 poster about the Battle of Britain and paste your aircraft onto it to make a montage.

Gold Mining

Newmont Waihi's Gold Education Centre, established in 2000, caters for over 5,000 students per year. The facility provides a curriculum-linked activity circuit and educational programme to all age groups.

Education Officer:

Jeannine Wiki

Phone 07 863 9880

Email: jeannine.wiki@newmont.com

Natural Wildlife on the Coromandel - work in groups

Choose one interesting creature from pages 203-204 or find another in reference books in the library (three suggestions below). Individuals can draw and cut out the shape of the chosen creature using A4 coloured paper/material. Paint a mural (3 x A1 posters laid horizontally) showing typical Coromandel Peninsula flora. Glue the creature shapes onto the background when dry. In neat handwriting, write 3 bullet points about your creature to glue to the mural under the relevant shape.

Coromandel Striped Gecko

Only a few of these native lizards have been found. As a means of escaping its predators, this gecko will drop his tail.

White Herons

White herons often visit Coromandel Peninsula during winter, returning to Okarito for breeding in spring. It is always exciting to see them.

Hochstetter Frog.

Found in the Coromandel Ranges.

Discussion for Older Students: Themes

The struggle between ‘Good’ versus ‘Evil’

The characters of the “baddies” are less rounded and more one dimensional than the other key “good” characters in the story. Why do you think the author has chosen to do this? How can we recognise the ‘evil’ in people/ in ourselves? Is it a constant state or are people ‘evil’ some of the time? Discuss the idea that there is good in everyone. Discuss the idea that there is no such thing as an evil or bad person rather there are people with behaviour problems. What factors contribute to the way people behave? In what circumstances would you excuse the bad behaviour of others.

Place the adjectives below in order of what you believe is ‘most good’ and ‘most evil’. Descriptions that are neither ‘good’ or ‘evil’ or apply equally to both should sit in the middle.

Kind, jealous, mean, rude, stubborn, determined, thoughtful, spiteful, angry, impatient, helpful, mournful, energetic, impulsive, intelligent, lazy, interested, cheerful, humourous, cruel, callous, sensitive, clumsy, envious, greedy, hardworking, bossy, bullying, responsive, organised, responsible, irresponsible, wise, foolish, thrifty, stupid, weak, sensible, grumpy, brave, fearless, capable.

GOOD.....EVIL

Choice, action and consequence

‘Sweet Temptations’ and ‘the pathways’ the children choose are used symbolically in *Danger at Devil’s Cove* to highlight the theme of choice, action and consequence. Describe the way Prudence acted in the room of ‘Sweet Temptations’ in terms of choice, action and consequence - pages 76-78. Next, compare this to the way Josephine acted in the same room - pages 99-101. Find two other examples relating to this theme. Page 27, page 72-73.

Discuss the temptations that exist in society today. How can we best prepare ourselves to make the right choices?

Accepting Responsibility

Discussion: Should we always accept responsibility for our own actions? Should we ever accept responsibility for other people’s actions? Find one example of a character accepting responsibility in the book and discuss (pages 22 /139-140). How can we influence others to act a certain way? Are some people more easily manipulated than others?

Choose five or more of the above italicised adjectives which best describes the character and write on the relevant line, positioned between ‘good’ and ‘evil’.

‘GOOD’.....	 ‘EVIL’
Josephine		
Tommy		
Mrs Jones		
(imposter) Mrs Marsh		
Mr Truffles		
Miss Possum		
Aunt Jenny		
Scarface		
Prudence		