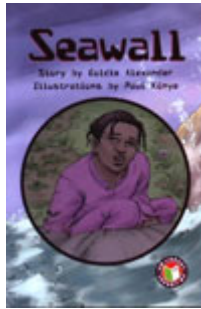


TEACHERS' NOTES FOR SEAWALL



by Goldie Alexander.
Publisher: Nelson.1996

A PM library chapter book. Ruby (SET A)

Level 27.

Here are a range of activities which can be used to extend students' knowledge of the story, explore some basic research skills and gives students the opportunity to express their ideas.

- [Outline](#)
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BRIEF OUTLINE OF STORY

It is the year 2165. Six years ago, the sea flooded the valley where Dana lived with her parents and their old dog, Silas. Dana's father died, trying to fight the floods, and a giant seawall was built to hold back the powerful water. But what happens when Dana discovers a break in the wall? Will help arrive on time?

RATIONALE

This story is very loosely based on an old Dutch story about the boy who put his finger in the dyke, thereby successfully holding back the approaching sea. With so many present fears about global warming and the subsequent rising of sea levels, the idea seemed very relevant to imagining a forbidding future. Consequently, the story is a warning about what could happen if we are not very, very careful.

RESOURCES AND PREPARATION

In a science fiction story, the trend is that it

- starts with the premise ‘what if’
- describes a society which is scientifically possible and technologically based
- future oriented
- uses other worlds
- often a quest
- has some kind of internal logic
- contains unusual but sustained characters with whom the reader can identify

Readers are guided to books by Goldie Alexander such as:

[6788](#)

[Astronet](#)

[Killer Virus: An Anthology of Short Stories](#) This selection includes a number of science fiction stories.

Advanced readers might enjoy: ‘Galax-Arena’ by Gillian Rubinstein. Anything by Phillip Pullman. Garth Nix. Catherine Jinks

TALKING POINTS

1. Try to imagine what might happen to your surroundings if it never stops raining. What would happen to your school? Your playground? The area around your house or apartment block?
2. This story is set in the future when the climate is very different. But other things are different as well. What are they?
3. Do you own a pet? If so, can you rely on that pet to look after you if something goes wrong?
4. Can an animal ever replace a human as a friend?
5. Dana is very brave. Can you think of any other situation where a child might have to be brave? Might that situation occur around you? In a far away country? On this planet?
6. Consider the story’s end. Have there been any hints that Dana has been ignoring some important information?

ACTIVITIES

1. Make a story-board or collage to convey ‘BRAVERY’ or some unexpected situation.
2. Mock up an interview with Dana with you as the interviewer.
3. Then change roles.
4. Illustrate a cover for this story.
5. Write the lyrics for a song called ‘Seawall’.
6. You are a TV producer who has just bought the rights to this story. Your budget only allows for two settings. What are they?

WRITING EXERCISES

1. Design your own pet. What does it look like? What characteristics would you like it to have?
2. Write your own science fiction story.
3. Write a story called COURAGE.
4. Choose a cover for this story.
5. Find another title for this story.
6. What might happen after the story ends?

WHAT INSPIRED SEAWALL?

"Three things. I have always enjoyed reading and writing science fiction. The writer can create whole new worlds where clothes, music and language never date. I knew the story about the boy who bravely held back the sea. And I was concerned about the effect of global warming on the environment.