

BAILEY FINCH TAKES A STAND

INGRID LAGUNA

ISBN 9781922330994

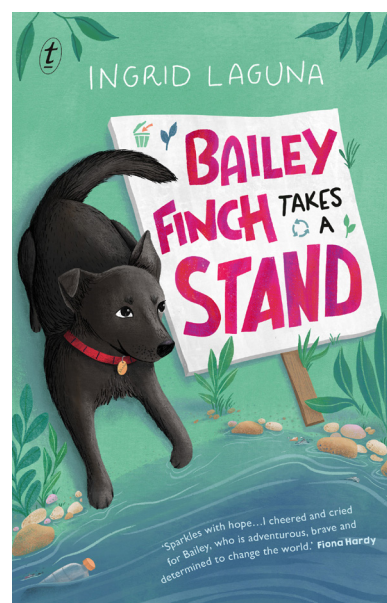
RRP AU\$14.99

Fiction, paperback

Recommended reading age: 8+

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CURRICULUM GUIDE

The following teaching guide has been designed to embrace shared curriculum values. Students are encouraged to communicate their understanding of a text through speaking, listening, reading, writing, viewing and representing.

The learning activities aim to encourage students to think critically, creatively and independently, to reflect on their learning, and connect it to audience, purpose and context. They encompass a range of forms and include a focus on language, literature and literacy. Where appropriate, they include the integration of ICT and life skills.

SYNOPSIS

Bailey Finch would do anything to get her dad to notice her. But ever since her mum died, her dad seems trapped in a bubble of his own grief, unable to see that Bailey needs him. When Bailey's beloved dog, Sheba, swallows a shard of glass down at the creek and ends up fighting for her life at the vet, Bailey realises that she needs to take matters into her own hands.

Sheba's accident makes Bailey realise that the creek isn't the idyllic paradise she'd thought, but that all of the rubbish and pollution is not only clogging up the waterways, but making the area dangerous for all the animals who live there.

So, while Bailey waits for news about Sheba, she decides to clean up the creek. A new friend, Israel, brings new insight and enthusiasm – Israel is home-schooled and fascinated by the wildlife living along the creek. He is warm and generous, and immediately agrees to help Bailey with her project. With Israel's help, Bailey learns what it means to stand up for herself, the environment, and the people she loves.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ingrid Laguna is a writer and a teacher. She lives in Melbourne. Ingrid has written four books, including *Songbird*, *Sunflower* and *Bailey Finch Takes a Stand*.

BEFORE READING

1. Make a map of local creeks and waterways or parks and gardens near your house and school. What animals live there? How often do you visit?
2. Think about the title of the book. What does it mean to 'take a stand'? Share a time that you've taken a stand about something. How did it make you feel?
3. Read the blurb of the book together as a class. What kind of story do you think this will be? Make some predictions about what might happen.

WHILE READING

1. Bailey keeps trying to impress her dad, but he doesn't notice. Why not? How does this make her feel?
2. What is significant about the day Bailey got Sheba?
3. What problems does Bailey want to share with her dad?
4. What special moments does Bailey remember about each of her parents (p9). Describe some of the special things you do with your family.
5. What does Azra mean when she tells Bailey that grief is just grief (p. 15)?
6. How do you think Bailey feels when she sees that something has happened to Sheba?
7. Bailey calls Sheba her best friend in the whole world (p31). Write three ways that Sheba is a friend to Bailey. How is Bailey a good friend to Sheba?



8. Why does Bailey feel so lonely (p. 36)? Write about a time you've felt an emotion as strong as Bailey does here.
9. Why do you think Israel offers to help Bailey?
10. Freya tells Bailey that she would make a good vet (p. 82). Why does she say this? What qualities do you think are important in a vet?
11. What is an environmental activist? What do they do? If you were an environmental activist, what would you change and how would you go about it?
12. Why does Bailey feel so angry about the creek clean up? What do you think she's really angry about?
13. How does Bailey feel when she realises that she's made a difference?

AFTER READING

CHARACTER:

1. Bailey describes her reflection in the wardrobe mirror as 'knotty brown hair, a mud streak across her T-shirt and worry in her grey-green eyes' (p. 5). What is she worried about? Describe (or draw) the way your reflection looks when you're worried about something. How is it different when you're feeling good?
2. Azra tells Bailey that her dad does care about her (p. 6). Why does she say this? Do you agree? Sometimes people show that they care in different ways. Make a list of things you do to show that you care about someone.
3. Bailey's mum is physically absent in the story, but Laguna shows her presence in other ways. Make a list of the ways that she appears in the story, and how it makes Bailey feel each time. Why is important to her to hold onto these memories? What else can we do to remember the people we've lost?

STYLE AND STRUCTURE:

1. A good story needs a strong opening line. 'Bailey opened the fridge and found limp carrots and mouldy bread.' What's your first response to this line? What does it tell you about the story? What makes a good opening line? Try to write your own.
2. Ingrid Laguna captures loss through memory, contrasting what Bailey's life was like when her mum was alive to what it's like now. What are the differences? How do these memories make Bailey feel?
3. How are sounds used to capture the natural and suburban landscapes of the book? Go outside and listen carefully. Make a list of all the sounds you hear. Which ones are natural sounds? Which ones are made by people? What does this tell you about where you are?

THEMES

Finding your voice

1. The more Israel and Bailey learn about the creek, the more committed they are to saving it. Why is education so important in making people care about things? How do Israel and Bailey use their voices to speak for all of the animals and plants at the creek?
2. Bailey does everything she can think of to make her dad hear her. What does it take to finally get through to him?
3. One of the obstacles that Bailey and Israel encounter is being too young to apply for council permits. What other obstacles do kids face when they're trying to be heard? Is that fair?

Courage

1. Sometimes we are brave in invisible ways. Sometimes we're brave by being strong for other people (like when Bailey stays on her own with Sheba even though she doesn't want Azra to leave), and sometimes we are brave by speaking up. How do we know which way we need to be brave and when? When does Bailey show each kind of bravery in the story?
2. Would you say that Bailey is showing courage when she goes into see Sheba at the vet (p27)? Why?
3. Why is Israel afraid of climbing trees? What do you think Bailey is most afraid of? What does Israel's choice to climb the Dexter tree tell you about how important his friendship with Bailey is to him? How can having a friend help you to face your fears? Write about a time you were afraid of something but did it anyway.

Environment

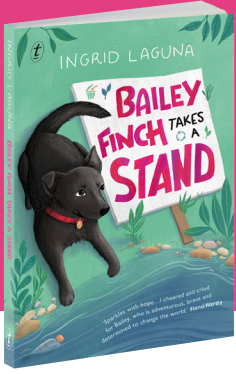
1. Bailey discovers that Harpers Creek is a special place to a number of people in the story. What are some of the reasons it's so special?
2. 'The murky water surface rippled and a plastic container floated past' (p. 25). What other signs of pollution are described in the story? Take a walk to your local creek or park, and make a list of any rubbish and pollution you find there. How does rubbish harm animals in the book? What other ways is it dangerous to animals?
3. How does Sheba's accident make Bailey see the creek in a different way (p. 32)? Where is the rubbish coming from? Why is it so important that we keep our environment clean and put rubbish in the bin? Make a list of three things that you can do to keep our environment clean and the animals who live there safe.

RESPONDING

1. Bailey uses sensory details to describe the creek—the crunch of the dry yellow grass, the shadows on the dirt, and the swishing of her mum's skirt as she

walked. Sensory details like this can really bring a place to life. Use sensory descriptions of your own to describe somewhere that's special to you.

2. Writers are told to 'show don't tell' in their writing. When Sheba goes into surgery, Bailey says 'the waiting room seemed shimmery'. What does this phrase show us about how Bailey is feeling? Can you write descriptions of the following phrases that show the emotions rather than telling them?
 - I feel sad
 - I feel happy
 - I feel angry
3. Go for a walk around the school. How much rubbish can you find? Choose one piece of rubbish. Describe it and make a note on a map of where you found it. How might it have been dangerous to an animal living in the area?
4. Why are there no more baby platypus at Harpers Creek? Research an animal native to your area, and describe its habitat. What can you do to help keep it safe?
5. Organise a clean-up day for your local creek or parkland, and come up with a list of ways to get your whole school community involved.

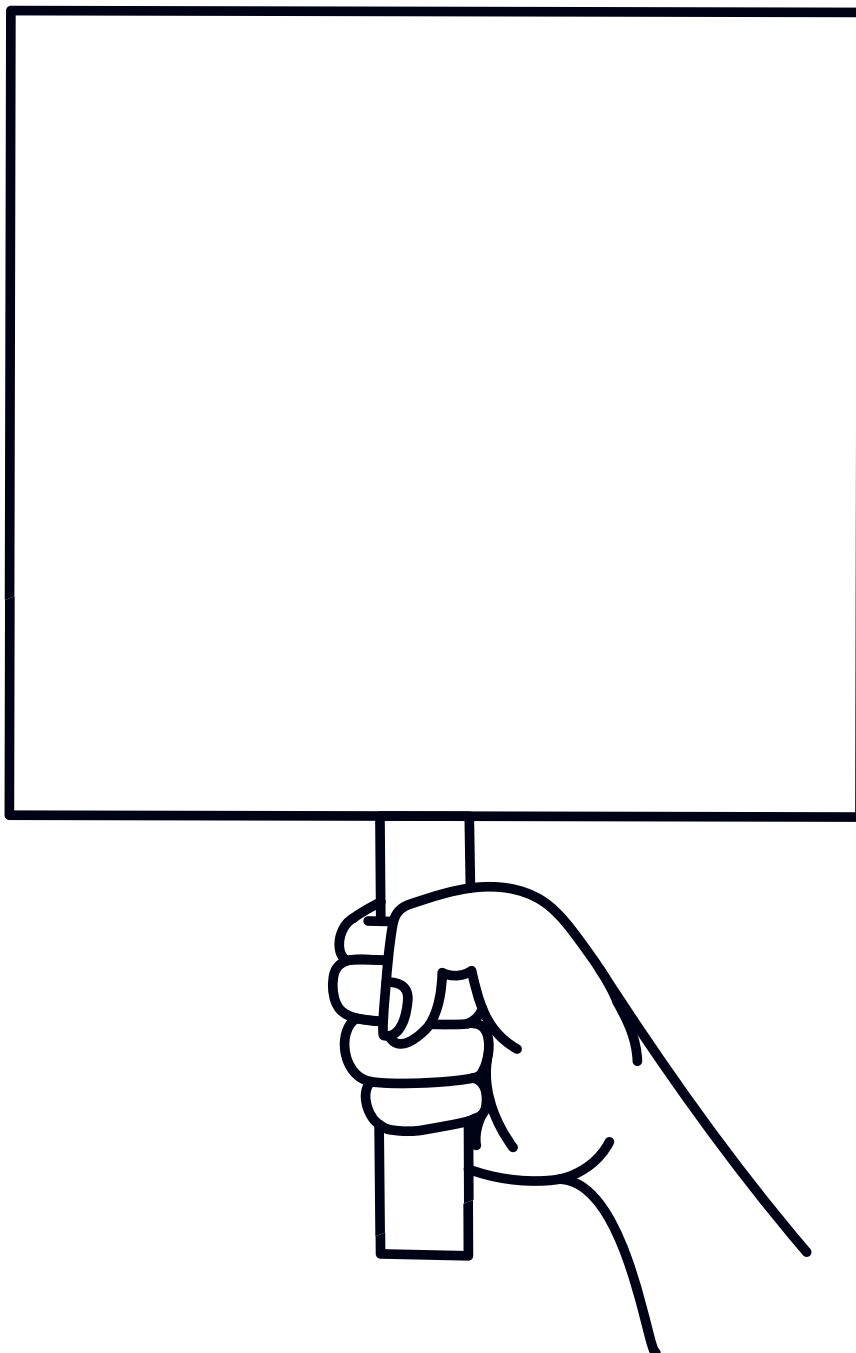


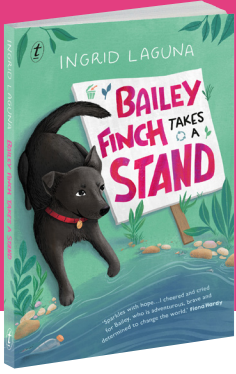
Take a Stand

Design your own protest placard

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Imagine you are attending a protest for action on climate change. What would you want your placard to say? Sketch a design using the template below.





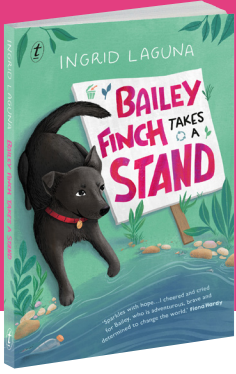
Word search

Inspired by *Bailey Finch Takes a Stand*

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SHEBA
 BAILEY
 FINCH
 ISRAEL
 CLIMATE
 CREEK
 WATER
 DOG
 ENVIRONMENT
 FRIENDSHIP
 TREES
 MUM
 DAD
 RUBBISH



Further questions

Considerations inspired by *Bailey Finch Takes a Stand*

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1. Fear

'I said to myself, today I am going in. I went in up to my knees, and then to my waist. I was scared but I kept going. I ducked under the waves. And after that, I was okay. I think fear gets smaller when you look right at it.' (p. 86)

Israel tells Bailey that he used to be scared of the sea when he was younger. He overcame his fear by tackling it straight on. What are three things you could do to overcome a fear you have?

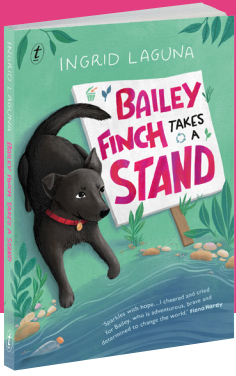
1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

2. Friendship

Bailey and Israel are good friends to each other and support one another in different ways throughout this story. What do you think are the most supportive ways to be a friend?



Further questions

Considerations inspired by *Bailey Finch Takes a Stand*



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3. Grief

Grief is a hard feeling to understand and deal with, especially when we lose a parent. How does Bailey deal with her grief? How does that differ from how Bailey's dad grieves Bailey's mum?

4. Taking a stand

Have you noticed any rubbish in your local area? Think of three ideas that you could put into action to help clean up your community.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____
