



The Sugarcane Kids and the Mystery at Angel Bay

CHARLIE ARCHBOLD

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Fiction

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 aim to 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.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Charlie Archbold is a children's author with a deep love for storytelling. Her books have won the Readings Prize, a Davitt award, the Adelaide Festival Unpublished Manuscript award and received CBCA Notable and Honour awards. Charlie is a Premier's Reading Challenge Ambassador and writes characters who want to make things better in their world.

SYNOPSIS

The holidays are over and the Sugarcane Kids are back together, hanging out by the basketball courts under the waters off the blue quandong tree at the inlet. But not everything is back to normal. Something strange is going on at Angel Bay. During the holidays Port Jackson shark eggs were found there, which doesn't make sense since Port Jackson sharks don't live in Far North Queensland. And Jerry, the huge Queensland groper who likes to hang out under the jetty, isn't eating.

Then multiple fish kill incidents occur, and the Sugarcane Kids find more shark eggs at a cove nearby. The clean-up of the dead fish is overseen by two mysterious environmental detectives, one of whom Andy spots coming out of a fancy hotel with a big wad of cash. Meanwhile, Raymond Royce is planning a new tourist resort for Angel Bay that threatens to destroy the reef and its delicate ecosystem.

Jerry disappears, along with the spiny lobsters he loves to eat. The Sugarcane Kids investigate and discover a croc in Jerry's sea cave, and more dead fish and shark eggs hidden at Outerbank Cove nearby.

After another fish-kill incident, Angel Bay loses its protected status, and Raymond Royce announces his resort will now go ahead. Andy and Bernie go snorkelling near Angel Bay and spot divers with what seem to be garden tools. They also see Jerry under a pontoon at Outerbank Cove, and suspect someone is feeding him there to lure him away from Angel Bay.

The Sugarcane Kids find a hut with more dead fish and boxes of rare red coral inside. Will the Sugarcane Kids discover the truth about what is happening and who is behind it before it's too late to save Angel Bay and Jerry?

This third book in the Sugarcane Kids series explores environmental activism and themes of friendship and belonging.



BEFORE READING

1. Look at the front cover. What details do you notice? What clues does it give you about the story? What predictions can you make?
2. Do some research on Far North Queensland and the wildlife that lives there. Which animal is most interesting to you? Create an information poster about this animal.
3. What kinds of things do you do with your friends outside of school? Where do you like to hang out? What do you like to eat together? How do you get around?
4. Find Indonesia on a map. How close is it to Queensland? Do some research on Indonesian culture and traditions.
5. What kind of sports events do you have at your school? Do you play sports with other schools? Do you play a sport outside of school?

WHILE READING

1. What did Eli find in the holidays? What is unusual about this discovery?
2. What has been disappearing from the reef at Angel Bay?
3. What is Andy and Eli's job during the interschool-basketball carnival? Why is it exhausting?
4. Who are the Babushka Environmental Detectives?
5. What do Old Jean and Gloria find at Angel Bay?
6. Why is Harvey sick of hearing about fish and sharks?
7. What is Team One's job in the investigation at Outerbank Cove? Who is part of Team One?
8. Who is Wilbur Washington? What story does he tell about the sailors from the Outerbank Lassy?
9. Why did the Babushka Environment Detectives come to town? What have they been doing instead? Who is paying them?
10. Why do Eli and Andy convince Bernie to get to know Goodey?
11. What does Marmalade give to Andy's school?
12. Why are the Sugarcane Kids in 'big trouble' in Chapter 15? What are they falsely accused of?
13. What is Fletch's 'excellent idea' about checking out Outerbank Cove? (p. 123)
14. What is the crowd's reaction when Raymond Royce unveils the plans for his resort at Angel Bay?
15. What do Andy and Bernie see under the blue pontoon at Outerbank Cove?
16. Who does Goodey find out Raymond Royce was talking to on the phone about the shark eggs?
17. What does Eli ask Goodey to do to prove she can be trusted?

18. Which Sugarcane Kid fails to show up at the agreed meeting time in Chapter 22 and why?
19. What have Marmalade and Tuna Mornay been doing in Angel Bay while everyone thinks it's polluted?
20. Raymond Royce swears he didn't know what Marmalade and Tuna Mornay were up to. Do you believe him? Why/why not?

AFTER READING

CHARACTER

1. Read the descriptions of Washington and Constable on pages 4 and 5. What are the main differences between them? Write character profiles for these two animals. Write a profile for your own pet.
2. Why is Eli's grandmother called Turtle? Why doesn't she use her real name?
3. Who are the Sugarcane Kids? Which Sugarcane Kid do you relate to most? Why? Choose your favourite member of the gang and create a character profile for them.
4. 'Eli is a funny mix of things. He can be so silly and funny but other times he is quiet and serious. Dad says he's wise, like Turtle. Wise is a strange word to describe my best friend, but when Eli talks everybody listens.' (p. 8) Do you know anyone like this? What do you think makes someone wise?
5. 'That shark Raymond Royce can't build on the land and wreck the habitat.' (p. 22) Why does Sylvie refer to Raymond Royce as a shark? What similarities do they share? Think about other characters in this story. What animals could they be compared to? Why?
6. 'The Goodey girl has moved away from Royce and the camera and she's picking up dead fish.' (p. 87) What does this sentence tell you about Goodey's character?
7. 'A baddy could be good and Posh Bottom Goodey could be bad.' (p. 104) What does Goodey turn out to be? Which other characters in this story turn out to be 'good' or 'bad' in the end? What makes them this way?

STYLE AND STRUCTURE

1. This story starts with a list of 'Facts'. How do these facts help your understanding of the book? What other facts could have been included? Write your own list of facts that you think are important to this story.
2. 'The grass around it is thick and strong like green buffalo fur.' (p. 13) What other similes can you find in this story? Go outside and write a list of similes to describe the world around you.
3. 'There is no way I am letting any of my body parts dangle in this water. These waterways are full of



crocodiles.' (p. 15) How does this foreshadow what happens to Andy later in the story?

4. 'Because every time animals I know are off their food it usually means something bad is going on.' (p. 17) This book is part of a series. Have you read either of the other two books in this series? What other Sugarcane Kid mysteries might Andy be thinking of when he says this?
5. 'The massive fig tree in the middle of the front yard looks like it's stretching its octopus roots in the fresh morning air.' (p. 41) What metaphor is being used here? What is being compared?
6. What does Andy compare his teacher, Mrs Cummins, to in Chapter 11? What are all the different descriptions in this chapter that support this comparison?
7. 'I am always surprised how quickly things return to normal after a big drama.' (p. 208) Re-read this paragraph on pages 208 and 209. What metaphor does Andy use to describe this feeling? What other metaphors can you think of that would also be appropriate?

THEMES

Friendship

1. 'Eli knows Harvey and I can wind each other up, and he gives me a look. He is good like that. Good at calming me down.' (p. 60) What do your friends do to help you?
2. 'Fletch laughs. And then we both laugh the relief laugh, the one you do after there has been a near-disaster.' (p. 74) Have you ever laughed 'the relief laugh' with your friends? When? Why do you think people laugh like this after escaping something disastrous?
3. What does Harvey decide each member of the Sugarcane Kids is in charge of? Why is Andy in charge of animals? If you were part of a mystery-solving gang like the Sugarcane Kids, what would your special role be? What about your friends? Why?
4. 'Mrs Cummins doesn't let us sit with our friends until she thinks we've earned it and she is sure we can work without distracting each other. This is hard, as we Sugarcane Kids can be chatty.' (p. 87) Do you think this is a good idea? What are the seating arrangements like in your classroom?
5. 'Harvey and I aren't sure how we will get there yet. I am a last-minute sort of person and so is he.' (p. 166) What sort of person are you? Do you plan in advance, or leave things until the last minute? What about your friends?

Animals and the environment

1. What does 'sustainability' mean? (p. 13)
2. What is an ambush predator? What are some examples?

3. 'Lenny the golf-club lizard stares hard at Terry from inside his massive new terrarium. He has lizard friends on the outside who are not happy about Raymond Royce's ambitions, which could wreck habitats. Animals know more than people think.' (p. 38) What other things do animals know? Are there other animals in this story with important knowledge?
4. 'The morning smells fresh and green. When you look at plants in the morning, after they have had a rest or a good drink, the leaves are bouncy.' (p. 40) Re-read the description on pages 40 and 41. Write a description of the morning environment where you live.
5. 'I know some of the corals I see: organ pipe and flowerpot coral. Most corals are actually grey, yellow or brown. This part of the reef is special, though, because it has rare blue and red corals' (p. 145). What is Andy's top fact about coral? Do your own research to learn more about coral, and make a list that includes your own 'top facts'.
6. 'The beach is beautiful today. It stretches for miles. Fine white sand with turquoise water on one side and a fringe of palms and other tropical plants on the other. It is a beach paradise sandwich' (p. 164) Draw or paint a picture of the 'beach paradise sandwich'.
7. 'Outerbank Cove has a creepy zombie feeling, that feeling something isn't quite right but you can't say what it is.' (p. 179) Why do you think Outerbank Cove feels this way? Have you ever been to a place and had this feeling?

Belonging

1. 'Why do I feel weird? Animals are so my thing. But for a second I don't feel as important as the others.' (p. 80) Why do you think Andy feels this way? Do you ever feel like this?
2. 'Bernie can be so cold.' (p. 111) What does Bernie do to Goodey that is 'cold'?
3. 'I think about how it feels to be on the outer of things. Eli gets the outsider thing too. He knows what it's like to be new in town. For a while, Harvey teased Eli and called him Stonefish. He feels really bad about that now, but words and actions can hurt.' (p. 113) Has someone ever done anything that made you feel 'on the outer of things'? Have you ever said or done something that might have made someone else feel this way?
4. 'I feel important in the group again.' (p. 124) What makes Andy feel important in Chapter 16? Why didn't he feel important before?
5. Why did Goodey pretend to believe the things Raymond Royce said in his letter to the *Shire Times*? Do we have a responsibility to stand by our family even when they do things that aren't good?
6. 'I am not so good at schoolwork, but I am good at swimming.' (p. 5) School is not the only way to be good at things. What are you good at?



Justice

1. 'Dad told me Mrs Montgomery is not a person who encourages awards for just taking part. She is a winner-takes-all kind of lady.' (p. 30) Do you think everyone should get an award for participating, or are you more like Mrs Montgomery? Why?
2. 'If there is one thing the Sugarcane Kids can't stand, it is when things are unfair.' (p. 33) What is unfair about the basketball game? What other unfair things happen in this story that the Sugarcane Kids don't like?
3. 'When they were young, Turtle, Old Jean and my grandad were involved in lots of political protests here and on the islands. They got in a bit of trouble and they all used code names so the authorities couldn't catch them.' (p. 175) Why is Turtle's codename 'Turtle'? Choose a codename for yourself. How does it match your personality?
4. Why do people protest at Raymond Royce's announcement? What other things might people protest about? Have you ever been to a protest?
5. 'It's like rules in a game, if they are clear and fair it is heaps better for everybody.' (p. 21) Do you agree? What games do you play? What are the rules?

RESPONDING

6. Draw a map of the area where this story is set. Include the school, the mangroves, Angel Bay and Outerbank Cove.
7. Re-read the description of Jerry the Queensland groper on page 15. Choose another animal from the story and write a descriptive paragraph about it. Imagine the reader you are writing for has never seen this animal before.
8. How do you think Harvey got locked in the stationery cupboard in Chapter 4? Write a short story explaining what happened.
9. What is 'canang sari'? Do some research to find out more about this ritual.
10. What is Andy's kite shape? Design your own kite to fly on a windy day. Include some images and ideas from *The Sugarcane Kids and the Mystery at Angel Bay* in your design.
11. The collective noun for spiny lobsters is a *risk*. What other collective nouns do you know? Research the collective nouns for the following animals: sharks, stingrays, crows, bears.
12. What do the gang eat for their picnic at Angel Bay? Design your own perfect picnic. Include food and drinks, people and pets, and a location.
13. What is the NATO phonetic alphabet? What does NATO stand for? What does Juliet, Echo, Romeo, Romeo, Yankee mean? Use the NATO phonetic alphabet chart on page 155 to create your own messages for your friends.
14. 'There is a wild energy, but afterwards there is a calm. It seems to me that life has to have a bit of both. It would be exhausting to always be in a storm and tossed about, but it would also be super dull to always be in a calm.' (p. 209) Do you agree with Andy? What moments in your life have been stormy? What moments of calm have come afterwards? Write a poem about these moments.



Word Search

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W	A	B	A	S	K	E	T	B	A	L	L	T	C	W	H
T	E	L	I	P	H	E	O	S	E	E	E	Y	T	A	N
S	V	U	I	I	L	V	R	Y	I	O	E	N	U	S	M
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C	I	U	V	L	O	E	E	A	R	N	G	S	M	N	S
R	O	A	V	O	B	N	H	O	J	G	E	F	O	G	E
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Q	U	E	E	N	S	L	A	N	D	G	R	O	P	E	R

Find all the words listed below and write out the letters left over to reveal an important clue.

- | | | | |
|--------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------|
| Andy | coral | Harvey | sea cucumber |
| Angel Bay | Eli | inlet | shark eggs |
| basketball | evidence | Jerry | spiny lobsters |
| Bernie | Fletch | jetty | Tuna Mornay |
| blue quandong tree | Friends | Marmalade | Turtle |
| clues | Gloria | Queensland groper | umpire |
| Constable | Goodey | sea creature | Washington |

Write the clue below:
