

Teacher Notes

The Grumpy Lighthouse Keeper
written by Terrizita Corpus and illustrated by Maggie Prewett

Magabala Books

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SYNOPSIS

On a dark and stormy night, the lighthouse keeper leaves the warmth of his home to ensure the lighthouse lamp is still lit. Meanwhile, some creatures of the sea seek refuge from the storm in the lighthouse keeper's bed. Coming home cold and wet to find a crab, turtle, jellyfish, octopus and bluebone fish in his bed, *The Grumpy Lighthouse Keeper* orders them out only to find that now, his bed is wet and slimy.

Expressive illustrations combined with poetic devices such as alliteration and onomatopoeia and a simple, fun storyline create an accessible and engaging text for younger readers.

THEMES

Friendship

- The frightened sea creatures are pleased to find one another in the comfort of the lighthouse keeper's bed

Storms

- Storms can create fear
- Sheltering from storms is necessary

Poetic devices

- Onomatopoeia and alliteration underpin the text

Lighthouses and Lighthouse Keepers

- Lighthouses were originally manned by humans as kerosene lamps had to be tended
- The connection of lighthouses to mains electricity meant that lighthouse keepers were no longer employed

Moods and emotions

- There are many moods and emotions incorporated in the text and illustrations such as fear, relief, comfort, frustration and grumpiness

WRITING STYLE

Written in third person, past tense, *The Grumpy Lighthouse Keeper* is a simple and fun way in which to explore sea creatures as well as themes of emotions and friendship. It also allows for the exploration of language conventions through the use of poetic devices.

STUDY QUESTIONS

- Before reading, examine the front cover
 - What is a lighthouse?
 - What is a lighthouse keeper?
 - Why might the lighthouse keeper be grumpy?
 - Look at the lighthouse keeper's body language
 - Discuss non-verbal communication such as that evident through body language
- Look carefully at the end covers of the book. What creatures are these?
- Play a memory game using sea creatures. Put plastic toys of sea creatures on a tray. Give students twenty or thirty seconds to view the tray, then cover with a cloth. See how many creatures students can recall. Remove a creature or two. Can students tell which creature/s have been removed?
- The dedication page explains the history of the lighthouse in Broome. Use images and information from the internet to further explore this lighthouse at Gantheaume Point. http://www.kimberley-australia.com/Kimberley_%20GantheaumePoint.php Alternatively, investigate the history of a lighthouse local to your area. Discuss why lighthouses are important and still used today and the changes in technology over the years.
- Scan the illustration from the first page opening that shows the storm at sea. Use this on a whiteboard to stimulate discussion about storms. Write a recount of a storm. Illustrate this recount.
- On each page, words with onomatopoeia are written in a larger, coloured font. Focus on these words, discussing why the author has chosen these words. How do they contribute to the story? What other words might have been appropriate?
- Alliteration is used throughout the text. Focus on this device as the text is read aloud. Have students identify examples of alliteration as they further explore *The Grumpy Lighthouse Keeper*.
- Look carefully at the illustrations of each sea creature. Brainstorm ideas and words to describe each creature. Discuss the expressions on the creatures' faces.
- Why is the lighthouse keeper grumpy? Does he have a right to feel grumpy? Discuss.
- How important is friendship to the sea creatures? When you feel scared, how do your friends and family help you?
- How do the sea creatures feel throughout the text? Use examples of illustrations and vocabulary from the text to help describe their emotions.

- With older students, deconstruct sentences from the text to examine parts of speech such as nouns, verbs and adjectives. Also focus on clauses, phrases, complex and compound sentences and the use of apostrophes to denote ownership.
- Compare *The Grumpy Lighthouse Keeper* with other stories such as *The Bad-Tempered Ladybird* by Eric Carle.
- Jumble the sequence of events from *The Grumpy Lighthouse Keeper*. In partners or small groups, have students re-order these events.
- Brainstorm other sea creatures that could have also gone to the lighthouse keeper's bed. What might their name be? How would they move? Write and illustrate your own page for *The Grumpy Lighthouse Keeper* using these ideas.
- Create a display in your classroom of sea creatures that the students have made.
- In groups of 6, act out the story of *The Grumpy Lighthouse Keeper*
- Write a poem about one of the sea creatures in the book.
- Complete an information report on a sea creature of your choice. This could be presented in a variety of formats such as a brochure, poster or Power Point.
 - Use a graphic organiser to help plan the information report. What information is required, for example diet, habitat, appearance, life cycle etc