



Lightning Strikes: Camp Croc By Trudie Trewin

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The environment
Wildlife conservation
Friendship/"mateship"
Teamwork
Adventure

Synopsis

It's a jungle out there, and Daks and his mates are in for an unexpected adventure at school camp.

Camp Trib is legendary. Daks is finally there after years of waiting. But so are two wildlife smugglers. Who should Daks and his mates be more afraid of: the smugglers or the wildlife?

Author Focus

Trudie Trewin grew up on a farm in South Australia. She moved to Far North Queensland to enjoy the tropical weather. After nearly twenty years of working with numbers in various financial jobs, she switched to working with words. She has published several titles including *I've Lost My Kisses* (Scholastic, 2007) which has been published internationally. *Camp Croc* is her first title with Walker Books Australia.

Trudie Trewin's inspiration for writing *Camp Croc*.

"The character of Daks came to me before the plot to *Camp Croc* did. He was inspired by an article I read in our local paper, about a lady who was swimming at the beach and really did bump into a crocodile – and lived to tell the tale! To help me imagine how scary it would be, I sat down and wrote a scene where a kid bumps into a crocodile while he's swimming. My heart was hammering faster than the keys on the keyboard as I wrote it! When I finished the scene, Daks was the kid who blasted out of the water.

"I knew then that I wanted to write a story featuring Daks, and I wanted it to have crocodiles and other scary animals in it. A school camp up in the jungles of Cape Tribulation was the perfect place for the boys to begin their adventure. And even though crocodiles and snakes scare me to pieces, they were never going to cause enough trouble for Daks and his mates to miss out on the "best time of their lives", so the wildlife smugglers joined the story as well."

Activity Ideas

- What are some of the challenges Daks and his friends face? How do they use teamwork to overcome them? Brainstorm times when you have used teamwork in your life.
- Using "Daks's Facts" as inspiration, make your own list of humorous observations about life.
- Discuss the use of nicknames in the novel. Which characters have nicknames? How do they get these? Does anyone in your class have a nickname? How did they come by it? Why do people use nicknames?
- Research Cape Tribulation on the internet. Focus on plants, wildlife, landscape, climate, the history of the area and recreation activities. Use this information to create a travel brochure for Camp Trib.
- Learn how to do some of the bird calls mentioned in the book. For instance, the wompoo fruit-dove, king parrot and kookaburra.
- Research wildlife smuggling on the internet. What animals are smuggled in Australia? What techniques do smugglers use to conceal these animals? What have authorities done to help stop wildlife smuggling? Design a poster to raise awareness of this issue.
- Research real-life encounters with crocodiles. What happened? How did the person survive? Choose one encounter and present it to the class as a news broadcast.
- Create a map of Camp Trib and the area surrounding it. Show the journey Daks and his friends make on the map.
- Write a newspaper article about the capture of the wildlife smugglers. You may like to use one of the headlines on page 37 as inspiration.
- In the character of Mr Longbottom, write a report for the school principal on the behaviour of the students on the camp.
- The other students claim they had the "best time" of their lives on the camp Daks missed. Write a story about what happened on this camp.