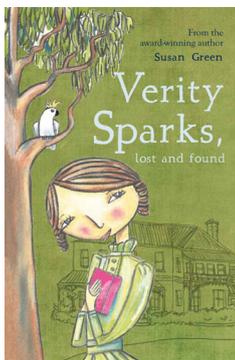


Walker Books Classroom Ideas



Verity Sparks, Lost and Found

Author: Susan Green
ISBN: 9781921977886
ARRP: \$16.95
NZRRP: \$18.99
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*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

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Outline:

Melbourne. 1879. Verity Sparks has found her father. But she has lost her gift – the ability to find lost things. Papa Savinov, eager for Verity to become a proper lady, sends her to the exclusive boarding school Hilltop House. But Verity is more interested in solving the case of the missing Ecclethorpe heiress. As the investigation deepens, danger and intrigue grow closer. Will Verity's gift return before it's too late?

Author Information:

Susan Green grew up by the beach and in country Victoria. She always wanted to write and illustrate books, but gave away her art studies and teaching to concentrate on writing when she won a short story competition. She has published several children's books. *Verity Sparks, Lost and Found* is her second book with Walker Books Australia.

How to use these notes:

This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

Susan Green on *Verity Sparks: Lost and Found*

My inspiration for *Verity Sparks, Lost and Found* was the character of Verity herself. At the end of the first book, she was heading to Australia with Papa Savinov and most of the Plush family. Because I was brought up in Melbourne, I decided that's where they would settle. I really enjoy research, and while reading history books and looking at old photographs I came up with the settings for the story, 1870s Melbourne, a fancy mansion in St Kilda, a snobbish girl's school, a country retreat on Mount Macedon. Then I asked myself, "What would Verity do?" and the story sort of unfolded all by itself.



These notes are for:

- Primary years 4-6
- Ages 9+

Key Learning Areas:

- English

Example of:

- Novel
- Supernatural/mystery genre

Themes/Ideas:

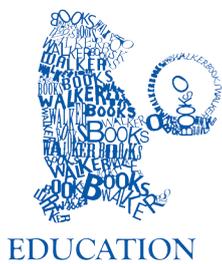
- Mystery
- Detectives
 - 1800s
- Australia
- Spiritualism
- Bullying

National Curriculum Focus:*

English content descriptions include:

Year 4	Year 5	Year 2
ACELA1498	ACELA1502	ACELA1525
ACELT1605	ACELT1610	ACELT1614
ACELT1794	ACELT1798	ACELT1800
ACELT1607	ACELT1609	ACELT1613
ACELY1694	ACELT1608	ACELT1617
ACELY1687	ACELT1612	ACELY1709
ACELY1690	ACELY1704	ACELT1801

*Key content descriptions have been identified from the Australian National Curriculum. However, this is not an exhaustive list of National Curriculum content able to be addressed through studying this text.



Walker Books Classroom Ideas

Discussion Questions and Activities

Before reading *Verity Sparks, Lost and Found*, view the cover and title of the book. Identify the following:

- The title of the book
- The author
- The publisher
- The blurb

Based on the cover, what do you think this story is about? How do you think it will begin/end?

What are the themes in this novel? As a class or in small groups identify and list the themes. Individually write a statement of belief about each theme.

Write a character study of each of the following. Include a description of their appearance, personality and list adjectives that could be used to describe them.

- Verity
- Jessie
- Connie
- Mrs Enderby-Smarke
- Miss Deane
- Lavinia O'Day
- Mrs Honeydew

Choose two pairs of characters and describe their relationship.

How has Verity grown from *The Truth About Verity Sparks* to *Verity Sparks, Lost and Found*?

Verity has a number of scary dreams throughout the novel. What suspense and horror techniques has the author used to create a dark atmosphere for the dreams?

The class structure of Victorian England and Australia at the same time is quite prominent in the Verity Sparks books. How would life be different for a working-class family as opposed to a rich high-society family?

"There are smiles, and then there are smiles. There was something about this one I didn't like. For one thing, it didn't reach her eyes. And for another, I felt like she was adding up the cost of my clothes." Page 19

What does this line tell the reader about Mrs Enderby-Smarke's character?

A number of paintings in Hightop House share their names with real paintings such as "The Charge of the Light

Brigade" and "The Battle of Waterloo". Perform a Google image search for these titles to gain an understanding of the atmosphere of the dining hall at Hightop House. How do you think this atmosphere would make the students feel? List some adjectives to describe these painting and the atmosphere of the room.

"On Thursday evening after tea, I found out why. It was because she'd decided to start on me." Page 89

This sentence is foreshadowing events that are yet to happen in the book. Why do authors use foreshadowing as a literary device? How does it add interest to the story?

Write a newspaper article about the murder of Alan Ross. Write the article in the style of Australian newspapers from the late 1800s and only use objective language.

Research spirit photography and the photo of Mary Todd Lincoln. Where else has spirit photography appeared through history? Do you believe it is real or fake? What makes you think that?

Does the last sentence in chapter 30 have more than one meaning? What are they?

Bullying

"Why is it, I wondered, that some people just have to hurt others?" Page 63

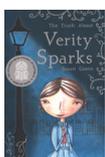
Bullying is a prominent theme in this book when Verity is attending Hightop House.

- What does it mean to be a bully?
- How does Jessie bully Connie and Verity?
- Ask students to think of words that might be associated with a bully and a bullying victim.
- What are your school's rules about bullying? Can you think of any ways to improve these rules?

Have a class discussion on bullying, including these questions:

- Can someone be a bully without meaning to be?
- What is the difference between bullying and just fooling around?
- What would you do if you saw someone else being bullied?
- What would you do if you were being bullied?
- What are some possible reasons a person might be a bully?

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Susan Green
9781921720277
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Classroom ideas available



Stagefright
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9781922077585
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