

Who Dares?

Krista Bell



Teachers' Notes
Nancy Mortimer

Who Dares? by Krista Bell in the *Junior Fiction* series tells the story of Rhys who has returned to the beach side place he has been coming to since he was a child, but this time he'll compete in the Easter Surf competition. There have been problems with his mother, and Rhys is only able to be in Lorne because of his friend, Toby. He is staying with Toby and his parents in a luxury apartment. Rhys has talked Toby into competing in the novice section of the competition, having taught him some of the basic skills of surfing. Also Toby's dad is to compete in the veterans' section, as he was once a keen surfer. Whilst the surf competition is Rhys's main focus, he becomes interested in skate-boarding and realises he could transfer his skills and use them in that sport, too. The story explores relationships between people and has several exciting sidelines as the boys attempt to find the thief who's stealing surfing gear. This detective work flows over to observing a yacht acting suspiciously and the capture of people smuggling birds out of the country.

The novel is full of action adventure and solving of mysteries and will be of interest to young people at upper primary to lower secondary levels.

**These notes can be photocopied for class use.
They and other resources are available at no charge from the
Lothian Books' website:
www.lothian.com.au**

READING

- Jot down what you know after reading the first chapter.
 - Who tells the story?
 - How is the story told?
 - Talk about the language used in this novel.
 - What made it possible for Rhys to enter the Easter Surf competition? (See page 29)
 - What is the dare that is made between Rhys and Toby?
 - Why is it constantly on Rhys's mind?
 - How did it come about?
 - What do we learn after the interlude with Braddon on pages 52-3?
- Comment on the *impassioned monologue* on page 53. What does it show?
- What are the *sinister connotations* referred to on pages 56-57?
 - Why does Brad act as he does when he's with his parents?
 - Find places where the boys speculate about what is happening.
 - Find instances where they make assumptions.
 - What were Toby's *ridiculous theories*? (95)
 - What is Rhys's motivation for entering the Easter surf carnival? (116)
 - What psychological tactics did Stacey practise against Rhys?
 - Why?
 - Relate how Toby's dad won the veterans' section of the Easter Surf competition
 - How did Rhys react when he won the junior surf title?
 - What was a surprise prize that he received?

Setting

- Where is the story set?
- How important is the setting to the novel as a whole?

Characters

- Do a character study of Rhys, relating as much as you can about him.
- Choose two other characters from the novel and write a profile of each of them.

Plot

- Make a story map of the novel, listing the characters and their involvement in the story and how they interact and connect with events and each other.
- Tell the story to a friend.

Title

- Explain in detail how the book gets its title, not just the obvious reference to the surfing competition.

Vocabulary

- Jot down words that are to do with surfing.
- Make a list of words that are connected to skateboarding.
- What are some of the words used by the characters that indicate their age?
- Use the following words in sentences to show you understand their meaning: oblivious (page 11); stridently (12); congeal (16); tentative (20); groyne (25); invigorating (27); practise (30); entranced (49); conspiratorially (58); blatant (60); animatedly (62); apprehensive (69); disoriented (72); involuntarily, (93); candid (94); accomplices (106); deteriorated (130); adrenalin (140); overprotective (169).

Ending

- Comment on how the story ends.
- What has been resolved by the finish of this novel?

SPEAKING / LISTENING

- What is a dare?
- Talk about different personalities.
- Discuss the way gender roles are dealt with in this novel.
- There are many episodes concerning social behaviour in the novel; find two instances and relate them to the rest of the class and discuss what they show.
- Look at how people often have ulterior motives for their behaviour.
- *It isn't wise to assume anything about anybody, is it?* (107). Discuss this comment in relation to what happens in the story.
- Talk about: friendship, trust, anxiety, confidence, self-esteem, pride, winners and losers.
- Talk about how feelings are dealt with in this novel.

- Look at the way things are resolved in the story.

- Look at nicknames and their purpose.

- Talk about drugs, smuggling.

- What did you learn from reading ***Who Dares?***

WRITING

- Put yourself in Rhys's place and write how you felt after you had won the Easter Surf competition.
- Write a paragraph on surfing based on what you learned from reading ***Who Dares?***
- Write a piece about the rituals and conventions of skate-boarding.
- Review this novel for your local newspaper.

THE CRAFT OF WRITING

- Examine the variety of ways that can be used to express how things are said: for instance on page 126, Krista Bell uses *sniggered*, *snorted*, *sneered* to indicate a the manner in which characters act and this broadens the reader's grasp of the text.
- This use of a wide range of words can be emulated in your own writing to give more meaning to how a character expresses something.
- Find a place that you found that gave a good description and enabled you to make a picture in your mind.
- Examine the ingredients the author uses to achieve this effect.
- In this novel many things are alluded to or hinted at and then come together or are explained later in the story.
- Find some instances of this and study how the author uses this device.
- Look at the place of questions in writing.
- Find some places where Krista Bell has used them and see what they achieve.
- Find examples of first person narrative.
- Find instances of third person narrative and look at how each can be used in writing.

About the author

Krista Bell is a full-time writer of books for young people who lives in Glen Iris, Victoria, with her husband and three boys. She travels around Australia giving writing workshops at schools and libraries. Krista has reviewed books on ABC radio and in print, run literary weekends and written for literary journals. She is the author of the *Start-Ups* book ***Sniffy the Sniffer Dog***, and the *Takeaways* books ***Read My Mind!***, ***No Regrets***, ***No Strings***, ***Get a Life!*** and ***Who Cares?***