

# A TEACHER'S GUIDE TO

## QUEST FOR A KELPIE by Frances Mary Hendry



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### Themes/issues addressed in this book

Jacobitism, family, class, Scotland, justice & injustice, second sight, illness, legends, female & male roles in society, bravery

### Book Summary

Life is tough in the northeast of Scotland at the time of the 1745 Jacobite rebellion. When Jeannie Main – a young fisher girl – saves a tinker girl and her family from an injustice, one of the tinkers tells her future. Jeannie learns that the fate of Scotland lies with her, and in order to have her heart's desire, she must ride the fearsome kelpie. She goes into service at the surgeon's house, and is content with her lot in life – she is able to help her family financially, and receive an education. However, in time, the tinker's prophecy comes to pass. The Jacobites arrive in town, followed by the Duke of Cumberland's armies, and loyalties are divided. As Scotland is torn apart, Jeannie's parents fall gravely ill with typhus, and all seems lost. Then Jeannie remembers the tinker's words and she goes hunting for the kelpie. Eventually she gets her heart's desire, but it is due to her own strength of character and bravery rather than any creature of legend. This is a thrilling, fast-paced historical adventure.

## BEFORE READING

### Group Activities

- Discussion: what does 'Jacobite' mean? What do you know about the Jacobite rebellion?
- Discussion: what is second sight? Do you know any stories about second sight?
- Discussion: what is a kelpie? What do you know about the kelpie legend?

## AFTER READING (note, contains spoilers!)

### Individual Work

- Write a paragraph on the thoughts and feelings you had when:
  - a) Duggie Ralph says the tinker girl kicked over the tar pot (ch 1, The Fight)
  - b) Margaret Davidson has 'The Sight' on her (ch 2, The Sight)
  - c) The Duke of Cumberland spares Iain's life (ch 8, The Test)
  - d) Jeannie tells of the Jacobites' planned attack (ch 9, Make and Break)
  - e) The Redcoats find Jeannie and Margaret (ch 12, The Kelpie)
- On page 9 in 'Letter to my great-great-granddaughter', Jeannie says of her family '...their faults are not their fault...' Write three paragraphs on what you think this means.
- On page 113, Jeannie says she will write a letter to the Duke of Cumberland to plead for Iain's life. Put yourself in Jeannie's place and write a letter asking the Duke to spare Iain's life. Think about why he deserves to live, and how best you may plead his case. Remember the Duke has no love for the Jacobites and their supporters – he will be difficult to convince.

### Group Activities

- Class discussion: on page 67 the minister objects to Jeannie being educated – he says she will get above herself. Why do you think he is so annoyed by this? Discuss female and male roles in society during this period and why it would have been almost unheard of for Jeannie to be educated. How do you feel about this? Do you think it was fair?
- Group task: The Monarchy. Using the internet and your library, create a list of kings and queens of Scotland, England and Great Britain. Start with our present queen and go back as far as you can. When does the list split into two?
- Class project: The Jacobites. Using the internet and your library, find out all you

(continued overleaf)

## KELPIES

### Series Summary

The award-winning Kelpies series is Scotland's favourite collection of children's fiction. Floris Books took over the list in 2001, republishing classic works by authors such as Kathleen Fidler and Allan Campbell McLean. Since then, we have continued to add to the series with a range of highly successful new Scottish novels for children. Of these, *Chill* by Alex Nye won a Royal Mail Award in 2007 and *Hox* by Annemarie Allan was nominated for a Royal Mail Award in 2008.

## CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS COVERED

### 5-14 Curriculum (Scotland)

Years: P4-P7

#### Listening:

Listening in Groups

Listening for Information, including instructions and directions

#### Reading:

Reading for Information

Reading to Reflect

Awareness of Genre

#### Talking:

Talking in Groups

Talking about Texts

Talking about Experiences, including feelings and opinions

#### Writing:

Functional

Imaginative

### National Curriculum (England, Wales, Northern Ireland)

Key Stage 2

#### English: Reading

Reading Strategies

Response to Texts, including

analysing and evaluating

Reading for Information

#### National Literacy Strategy:

Text-Level Reading

Text-Level Writing

Vocabulary

can about the 1745 Jacobite rebellion. What caused it? Who were the 'sides' involved? Find out about the characters in the book, such as Prince Charles Edward Stuart, the Duke of Cumberland and General Wolfe, and give their life stories both before and after the events of the book. Find out what the repercussions of the Jacobite rebellion were. How did the uprising change Scotland? See if you can find any songs and poems about the Jacobites. Display your project on the walls of your classroom.

## Vocabulary

- Check you know what the following words mean (page numbers of example words in brackets):

abomination (115)	biddable (51)	billeted (98)	bizzom (20)	canny (11)
chaff (23)	coble (12)	colic (158)	dawdle (49)	deputation (27)
duress (96)	farthing (16)	flighty (63)	fret (7)	gibbet (34)
girded (91)	gratitude (32)	havers (159)	impertinence (60)	liniment (33)
Michaelmas (67)	midden (31)	perceptible (87)	pompous (9)	poultices (24)
practicable (56)	rapscallions (94)	recollection (122)	solemnity (167)	strake (12)
subverting (61)	transgressions (115)	tremor (55)	uncanny(25)	valerian (150)
vengeance (74)				