

A TEACHER'S GUIDE TO

TARANTULA TIDE by Sharon Tregenza



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Themes/issues addressed in this book

Friendship, exotic creatures, animals, family, island life, deceit, Shetland, coming to terms with the death of a parent

Book Summary

Shetland should be a great place for a holiday, but Jack is harbouring a secret, and he's less than enthusiastic to be there. When he meets Izzie and her exotic pets, things start to liven up. They find a tarantula underneath the fridge and after that, they start to notice all kinds of odd things happening around them. Who is loitering on the beach at night? Are the well-dressed professor and the scruffy tramp really the same person? And where exactly does Sheila, the vet, fit into the picture? This award-winning novel mixes humour, drama, and a fantastic location to create a thought-provoking adventure which centres on the lucrative smuggling of exotic creatures.

BEFORE READING

Group Activities

- Discussion: where is Shetland? What do you know about Shetland? What do you think it would be like to live on an island?
- Discussion: what type of creature is a tarantula? How do you feel about spiders?
- Discussion: what do vets do? Have you ever visited a vet with your pet?

AFTER READING

Individual Work

- Write a paragraph on the thoughts and feelings you had when:
 - a) Jack came face-to-face with the tarantula (chapter 1/chapter 2)
 - b) The Eigg man told Jack & Izzie about the smuggling (chapter 5)
 - c) You found out that Jack's father is dead (chapter 10)
 - d) You found out that Sheila is behind the smuggling (chapter 11)
- Draw or paint a picture of one of the following:
 - a) A Mexican red-kneed tarantula like Octavia
 - b) A chameleon like Karma
 - c) An Oriental Fire-Bellied Toad like Bombina
- Write at least four paragraphs on the mini Viking fire festival that Jack uses to say goodbye to his father. Do you think this helped Jack come to terms with his father's death? How? Why do you think Jack lied about his father's death?

Group Activities

- Class project: what are exotic creatures? Using the Internet and your school library, try to find twenty different types of exotic creature, and create a fact-file about them. Include facts such as: what characteristics they have; where you might find them in the wild; what their life span is.
- Group project: think about the differences between living in a city like Jack does and living on an island like Izzie does. Try to find ten differences in the way they might live from day-to-day. For example, does Izzie ever go to the cinema? Is there a cinema on Shetland? You can use the Internet and your library to do some research.

Vocabulary

- Check you know what the following words mean:

antibiotic	frantic	Norse	silhouette
broch	galley	paranoid	stereotypical
circumstantial	hysterical	phenomenon	tier
didgeridoo	illegal	quarantine	venom
expedition	misfit	satellite	viking

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