

Fishing Fame

Author: Melanie Drewery

Illustrator: John Bennett

Synopsis

Max and his friend Dan are desperate to get their names on the Fishing Fame Board. They are both good fisherman but they face one major problem – neither of their families owns a boat. The people with boats always catch the biggest fish. The closest that Dan and Max come to being on a boat is when they work on Uncle Dave’s paddle boats. Then Max has a brilliant idea. Why not “borrow” Uncle Dave’s paddle boat and take it out into the sea to go fishing? Both Max and Dan are willing to risk breaking the rules to fulfil their dream of landing a huge fish. But what neither of them could ever have anticipated is the world of trouble that they land themselves in.

Text Type

Fishing Fame is a humorous illustrated novel which will appeal particularly to adventurous young boys. With short chapters and a fast-paced storyline, *Fishing Fame* is action-packed enough to keep even the most reluctant reader engaged. Different fonts are used throughout the story to add emphasis and humour.

Themes include friendship, fishing, breaking the rules and having an adventure.

Sharing the Novel

The novel has been divided up as follows: Chapters 1 and 2 (pp. 3–8), Chapters 3–12 (pp. 9–43) and Chapters 13–18 (pp. 44–64).

During the shared session encourage students to ask questions to clarify their understanding of words and ideas presented in the text. Have them make predictions and inferences. Students should be reading for enjoyment. Looking at the illustrations and interesting fonts will help them understand the storyline and embark on Max and Dan’s adventure with them.

Introducing the Novel

Have students study the front cover of the novel and read the blurb.

- Have you ever been fishing? Did you enjoy it? Why/why not? How successful were you?

- What sort of equipment do you need if you are going fishing?
- What kind of fish is pictured on the front of the book? Why do you think this might be featured?
- Who are the main characters in the story? What are they desperate to do?
- What do you think you need to do to get your name onto the fishing fame board?
- In what way do you think Max and Dan might break the rules?

Teacher reads Chapters 1 and 2 (pp. 3–8) aloud to the class students follow along in their books.

Comprehension Chapters 1 and 2 (pp. 3–8)

- Who is on the fishing fame board?
- What is the narrator willing to do to get his photo up on the fishing fame board?
- What aspects of fishing are the narrator and his friend Dan good at? What does the narrator think their main problem is?
- Why does the narrator think that the fishing fame board rules are unfair?

Discussion

- In what ways do the different fonts enhance the story?
- Make a prediction about what will happen in the story next.

Students read Chapters 3–12 (pp. 9–43) independently before the next shared session.

Comprehension Chapters 3–12 (pp. 9–43)

- What is the name of the narrator?
- What do Max and Dan argue over?
- What kind of boats does Uncle Dave own?
- How does Max know so much about paddle boats? Why isn't a paddle boat good for fishing?
- What advice does Uncle Dave give the boys when they tell him they want to buy a boat?
- Which one of his mother's rules does Max break when he tells her that he is going to work on the paddle boats? Why does Max find his mother's rules hard to stick to?
- What does Max take from his brother's room on Friday? What do you think he will need this for? Why is Max lucky not to get caught by his brother?

- Why does Max’s mum look at him funny before he leaves the house?
- What is wrong with the sign that Max and Dan make for the paddle boats?
- Which rule do Max and Dan break when they take the paddle boat? Where do they take the boat? What potential problems could Max and Dan have with the paddle boat in the sea?
- What is an “unspoken” rule?
- Why do Max and Dan find the first part of fishing so boring? What happens to attract the sharks? What happens when the shark becomes hooked on the line? How does Max end up in the water? What are you supposed to do if you end up in the water with a shark? Why does Max find it so hard to follow these rules?
- Why does Max think that Dan is really brave?
- Why do Max and Dan always have to paddle backwards in the boat? Why don’t they just cut the shark loose? How do the boys know that it is late when they finally get close to home? What do they start thinking about as they near the shore? Why can’t they get the shark up to the beach?
- What does Max suggest they do when the shark becomes entangled? What is Dan’s plan? How does Dan’s plan get the boys into more trouble?
- Why are the boys convinced that they have to swim for it? How do they feel when they jump in the water? How do you swim with a life jacket on?

Discussion

- What does Max’s mum mean when she says “Rome wasn’t built in a day”? What other things do Max’s mother and Dan say that Max misunderstands? Why do you think Max takes everything so literally?
- What rules do your parents or caregivers have? Are rules necessary for kids? Why/why not?
- What potential danger do Max and Dan put themselves in when they take the boat out into the sea? How do you think Max feels when he is thrown into the water with the sharks? When Max talks about Jaws what is he referring to?
- Will Max and Dan make the fishing fame board? Why/ why not?
- What do you think will happen to the boys when they finally get home?

Students read Chapters 13–18 (pp. 44–64) independently before the next shared session.

Comprehension Chapters 13–18 (pp. 44–64)

- What three people will Max be in trouble with when he gets home? Who is he the most afraid of?
- Who do Max and Dan approach for help? Why is it important that the shark be removed from the net quickly?
- How does Max's mum react when he calls her from the boat? Is her reaction justified? Why/why not?
- Why is Dan going to be in trouble with Uncle Dave?
- What brilliant plan does Mr P come up with to deal with the shark?
- What does Mr P do that impresses Max and Dan?
- How does Mr P get the shark back to the aquarium? What does he do after the shark is safely inside?
- Why do you think Max decides to tell his mother the truth about what has happened? Why does Mr P think that Max's mother should be proud of him?
- Why don't Max and Dan get their names on the fishing farmer board? Is this fair? Why/why not?
- What was the good thing that happened to Max and Dan after they caught the shark?

Discussion

- Is honesty the best policy? Why/why not?
- What do you think Max and Dan might have learnt from their experience?
- Identify the climax of the story. Why is this event important?

Activities

Static Image – Design a poster to advertise the novel. The poster should be suitable to display in your school library. Remember you are trying to encourage people to read the book so your poster needs to make the book seem appealing.

Character – Write several paragraphs explaining what Max is like as a character and what you think his experiences in the story teach him.

Important items – Imagine that you are heading out on a fishing expedition. Make a list of 10 items that you would take with you and explain why they are important.

Board game – Design a board game based on the story. For every positive event that occurs, reward the player, for every negative event, penalise them. Illustrate your board game with scenes or important settings from the story.

Script – Choose an important event from the story and write a script for it. Remember to include a list of characters and stage directions. Practise your play and present it to the class.

Writing – Write a newspaper article about Max and Dan’s adventure with the shark. Include all of the important information in the first two paragraphs (the: who, what, where, why, when and how). In the third and fourth paragraphs develop your ideas and include quotes from witnesses and people involved.

Review – Present an oral book review to the class about Fishing Fame. Include information about the plot (but don’t give too much away!). Discuss the characters, setting and themes. Remember to include your personal opinion about the book and why you would recommend it to others.

Writing – Imagine that there is a sequel being written to this novel. Write a brief outline of the new and crazy adventure that Max and Dan find themselves involved in.

Notes written by Vicki Ladd