



TEACHERS' RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED FOR

Upper primary (ages 9–12; years 4 to 7)

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KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **General capabilities:** Literacy; Critical and Creative Thinking; Ethical Understanding; Personal and Social Capability
- **Learning Areas:** English; SOSE (Natural Disasters and Sustainability)
- **Cross-curriculum Priorities:** Sustainability

REASONS FOR STUDYING *GRIMSDON*

- Considering sustainability and how our lives are affected by our environment
- Researching ways to protect our planet
- Discussing moral and ethical dilemmas
- Encouraging critical thinking
- Encouraging creative and imaginative writing
- Analysing how language and writing evoke mood, tone, tension and characterization

THEMES

- Family, Survival, Inventions, Loss, Mythical creatures

PREPARED BY

By Deborah Abela

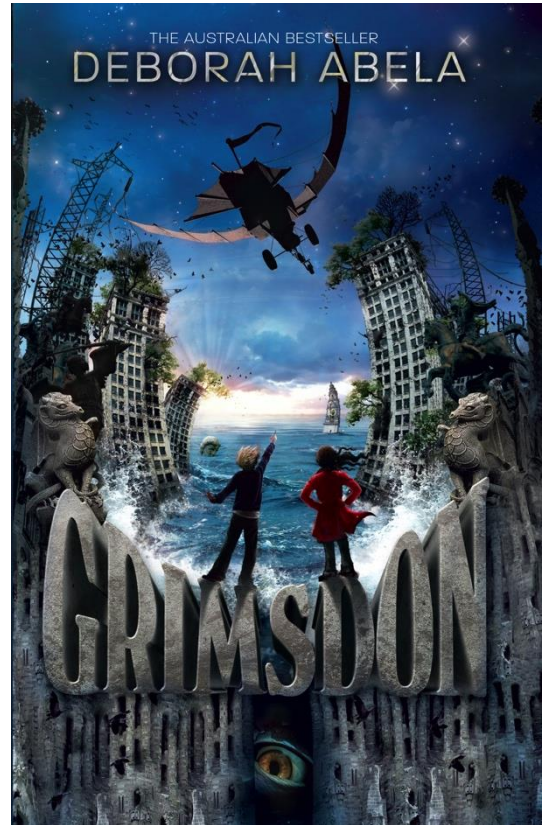
PUBLICATION DETAILS

ISBN: 9781760892548 (paperback);
9781742740829 (ebook)

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Grimsdon Deborah Abela

BOOK BLURB

Grimsdon is in ruins. Three years ago a massive wave broke its barriers and flooded the city. Isabella and her best friend Griffin live with three young kids in an opulent mansion, surviving with the help of Griffin's brilliant inventions and Isabella's fighting skills.

But will that be enough to combat the threat of powerful sneaker waves, unscrupulous bounty hunters, a ruthless harbour lord and the creeping rumours of a sea monster?

And can they trust the mysterious stranger who arrives in his flying machine?

Watch the trailer here:

[youtube.com/watch?v=qhIGvEAXnm8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qhIGvEAXnm8)

PLOT SUMMARY

The city of Grimsdon is in ruins. Three years ago a massive wave broke the barriers and flooded this grand city. Many were rescued, some disappeared and others were left behind.

One of the lost is Isabella Charm, the feisty twelve-year-old leader of a group of children whose new home is the top floor of a once-lavish mansion called the Palace. They have a lot to deal with: thick rains and choking fog, the threat of further rising seas, powerful sneaker waves, unscrupulous bounty hunters, a ruthless harbour lord and the persistent, creeping rumours of sea monsters.

With Isabella are two ten-year-old twins called Bea and Raffy who are never apart, a young girl called Fly who doesn't speak and a twelve-year-old called Griffin, a brilliantly intelligent boy who acts as Isabella's right-hand man. He's quiet, shy and fiercely protective of this small group. He also secretly has a crush on Isabella.

They survive by scrounging through abandoned houses and shops, by Griffin's inventions and by building a rooftop garden created from seeds scavenged from nearby houses. But Isabella knows their time is limited in Grimsdon. With more buildings collapsing, food sources running low and the sneaker waves getting more powerful, she knows she has to find a better home for the kids. But are the inland cities safe? And if they are, how will they get there?

MORE RESOURCES FOR GRIMSDON

Deborah Abela collaborated with the Primary English Teachers' Association of Australia and they have produced a unit of work for *Grimsdon* based on KLAS (Key Learning Areas) and outcomes. You can find these additional resources here:

petaa.edu.au/iMIS_Prod/w/Teaching_Resources/AIS/Grimsdon.aspx?New_ContentCollectionOrganizerCommon=3

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Having been an avid reader and writer as a kid, Deb left school and studied teaching before she left Australia to see the world. For three years she travelled from America to the UK to Africa, Europe and parts of Asia before returning home and driving around Australia. After that she completed a Bachelor of Communications majoring in writing and film at the University of Technology, Sydney, which meant she got to write, read and watch a lot of films.

Her first job was in the script department at Southern Star, producers of many shows including *Paper Giants*, *Offspring* and *Love My Way*.

After that, she produced and wrote a national kids' TV show for Network TEN before leaving in 2001 to write 26 books for children, including the *Max Remy Superspy* and *Jasper Zammit (Soccer Legend)* series. Her crankiness about climate change led to the novels, *Grimsdon*, *New City* and *Final Storm*. *Teresa A New Australian* was inspired by her dad, who, with a million other refugees, made the journey to Australia after surviving the devastation of WW2. *The Stupendously Spectacular Spelling Bee* and sequel, *The Most Marvellous Spelling Bee Mystery*, have been published to great acclaim here and in the US. Her first picture book is, *Wolfie, An Unlikely Hero* and was chosen by Dolly Parton to be part of her Imagination Library. She is a proud ambassador for the Premier's Reading Challenge, [Room to Read](#) and [Books in Homes](#).

You can find out more about spies, soccer, wolves and flooded cities at deborahabela.com.

AUTHOR'S INSPIRATION

Deb's crankiness about inaction in the face of climate change led her to write the *Grimsdon* trilogy. For years governments all over the world, including Australia, had not been paying attention to what was happening to the environment. It wasn't until millions of people rallied around the world, Al Gore spoke about his book and documentary, *An Inconvenient Truth*, and organisations such as Clean Up Australia, Planet Ark and The Australian Conservation Foundation took their own action, that governments started to listen.

She wanted to write about a world that has a lot of familiar elements to it (friends, laughter, family) but is also quite unique. The kids' need to survive drives the novel and so calls for a large dose of action, which Deb loves writing.

Grimsdon started as a little question: What would happen if a city flooded and some kids were left behind?

Immediately the scene came to life in Deb's head: a flooded city with only the tops of buildings left; swirling, stormy waters; lots of rain and even a few sneaker waves, where a few waves combine as if from nowhere to form a giant powerful wave.

A few characters began forming: Feisty, sword-wielding Isabella Charm, confident Xavier Stone and brilliantly clever Griffin. There were also a few younger kids with them and she knew the book would need something bigger ... so there was a bad guy living on a ship in the harbour and, of course, with the drifting of



the flood waters, a sea monster dragged up from the deep.

Deb spent a few months planning the novel – working out what would happen when, and who exactly were these characters? It wasn't until she felt she knew them really well that she was ready to start writing chapter one.

USING GRIMSDON IN THE CLASSROOM

Teachers and students have responded amazingly to *Grimsdon*, and it is a set text in many schools around Australia. Readers in years 4 to 7 love *Grimsdon* for its flying machines, sneaker waves and sea monsters but also its brave and resourceful young characters.

Behind the adventure and fun, there is plenty to talk about in the classroom; about the possible effects of climate change, survival, courage, inventiveness and how humanity will live in the future.

The three books are perfect for learning in the classroom as they focus on the Australian Curriculum's cross-curriculum priority of sustainability, as well as the important general capabilities of critical and creative thinking and ethical understanding.

In addition to a continued focus on sustainability and the environment, *New City* considered the human cost of climate change: what happens to those who are made refugees as a result of environmental disaster? How should we treat those who are less fortunate than ourselves? *Final Storm* looks at solutions to saving the planet, including robotics, but this isn't enough without leadership and major industry, communities and governments working together. All three books consider these issues in a way that is exciting and fun for young readers.

They can be studied and read independently of each other.

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

The book's cover

The cover of any book has the very important job of enticing readers to pick up the novel. It hints at what may be discovered in the story, what it is about and maybe some of its main themes or concerns.

Zoe Walton, Publisher of books for kids at Random House, had the job of finding the right artist to match Deb's story. She knew she wanted a cover that was a little mysterious, action-packed and dealt with a city after a big flood. She liked the work of an artist called Zdenko Bašić and knew he'd be perfect. In her brief to Zdenko she asked him to create an illustration that

would convey: 'adventure, excitement, a hint of danger, friendship, whimsy and fantasy'.

Class discussion

1. Looking at the cover of *Grimsdon*, what do you think is happening? What things can you see? Are there any half-hidden or hinted-at objects? What do you think they may indicate?
2. What kind of book do you think it might be? Action? Adventure? Historical?
3. What do you think the story is about?
4. Describe the characters. What kind of personalities do you think they have?
5. From reading the blurb and looking at the cover, write a first paragraph that you think would match the cover.

BREAKDOWN OF THE ACTION

- Prologue: Isabella and the children scavenge through a mansion. They are being watched by a young boy called, Xavier Stone.
- Xavier breaks into the Palace, a building where the kids live. He is caught and strung upside down while they interrogate him. He insists he hasn't come to steal anything but to share his new invention with them: a flying machine called the Aerotrope. He takes Isabella for a ride: it is magnificent. Griffin doesn't trust Xavier at all.
- Xavier takes them to the Haggie in the old parliament house, where children meet to swap objects and information, run by the dark and moody Raven.
- During one scavenging run, Isabella and Xavier escape from kidnapping adults by ducking into the State Library. It's here they meet Jeremiah, a crazy man in multiple coats and slippers held together with ties. He threatens them with a fish until he realises they offer no threat. They leave him an apple, the taste of which he hasn't had in years.
- Meanwhile, an evil harbour lord called Sneddon sends his two thugs to collect goods which they scavenge for him on a regular basis. The kids agree to this to keep the peace and protect their home. Xavier asks why they give their hard-earned scavengings to an adult when adults are the reason they're in this flooded mess. Griffin warns disobeying Sneddon may lead to trouble.
- Bea is almost killed in a building collapse, but is saved by Isabella, who just manages to pull her from the water and the clutches of a giant sea creature.



- Isabella and Griffin, still not sure if Xavier can be trusted, catch him returning from a night run to the inland. He has brought food – chocolate, custard, cake – and he explains what inland is like. Isabella has one of her nightmares about not being able to save her dad, and she asks Xavier to take her inland.
- Jeremiah reveals he was part of a team of scientists who warned the government the flood was coming and the city needed to be fortified. The government refused to listen. He takes them underwater in a contraption he built in preparation for the floods called a Submariner. They see more giant sea beasts and the submerged flood barriers. Isabella asks if he knew her father. Jeremiah and he had tried to convince the government to alter the barriers to save the city. This convinces Isabella that Xavier is right: it's the adults' fault they are here, and they should refuse payment to Sneddon.
- Xavier picks on Griffin, doing so to teach him how to fight. He shares some judo moves that come in handy when Sneddon's men come back.
- Isabella and Xavier go inland. There are muddy wastelands, including Isabella's own town, a lot of poor people living in tent cities and some richer people who live well. These are the people Xavier steals from. When they return, Sneddon has had his revenge. Fly is bound to a pole on a building opposite during a storm. Isabella rescues her and Griffin attacks Xavier, saying this is his fault. Fly asks them to stop – the first time they've heard her speak!
- Isabella goes to make Sneddon pay for what he did to Fly, but before she reaches the boat, she's caught in a sneaker wave. She almost drowns but is rescued by a giant sea creature: it's the Skelene that Fly drew and that Jeremiah warned them about. The creature scoops her out of the water and flies her back to the Palace, where Fly is waiting for them.
- Isabella, Griffin and Xavier take Jeremiah to the Haggie, where he locates government documents proving they ignored warnings about the flood – and that Sneddon was instrumental in persuading the ministers to think it was foolhardy. Raven reveals that Xavier has been lying. His parents didn't die in the floods as he claimed, but live inland in a big house, and he came to Grimsdon seeking adventure. Isabella is furious and tells him never to return to the Palace.
- Isabella sneaks out at night to attack Sneddon. A battle erupts between her and the thugs, spurred on by the arrival of Raven, Xavier and Griffin, and the timely arrival of not one but two Skelene.
- In the Palace for the last time, the kids prepare to leave. Jeremiah has spruced himself up: no more plaited beard and hair, no more slippers and multilayered coats and floppy hat. He needs to look respectable, he tells them, if he is to have any chance of applying to adopt them. A government chopper arrives to take them inland and away from Grimsdon.

CHARACTERS

Read the following character descriptions.

Isabella Charm

Isabella is a feisty twelve-year-old girl who is the leader of the group of kids who live in a building known as the Palace. She's strong and over the last few years has taught herself knife skills that have made her very dangerous to mess with.

Her mum left when Isabella was only young so, before the floods, she lived with her dad, who worked on the city's floodgates. He had been working on them the day of the floods and ever since, Isabella's had nightmares of trying to rescue him – something she only shares with her best friend Griffin.

Isabella knows their life in Grimsdon cannot last forever as the city crumbles around them. She and Griffin have tried to make their way back to dry land in the past and failed, but she knows time is running out and she needs to find a new way of making that happen.

Xavier Stone

Where Isabella is a measured risk-taker, Xavier loves to add a generous measure of danger to whatever he does. He is fourteen years old and street smart, having a seemingly endless knowledge of all of Grimsdon. He relishes the newfound freedom and independence the floods have given him. No school, no parents. His greatest fear is to be weak, like his shallow father and ghost of a mother. It's for this reason that he won't back down from anyone, even though sometimes, for his own safety's sake, he should.

He is brash and a show-off but also very clever. He has created a flying machine called an Aerotrope and a converted boat called an Aquacraft and enjoys living on his own – until he sees Isabella. He likes the way she and the kids are together and realises he is lonely.

Griffin

Griffin is Isabella's right-hand man. Having gone to the same school together since they were kids, they are more like brother and sister than just friends. He's quiet and shy but is always ready to be there for her. He secretly has a crush on her but would never let her know.



Griffin is a bookish kid who was never any good at sport and sometimes even manages to trip over his own feet. He excelled at school and is the resourceful one of the house. He led the scavenging for seeds and plants to build their rooftop garden, created a wave-powered energy system that enables them to have light and hot baths and also set up a rainwater system for them to have fresh water.

He is cautious and overly nervous about things going wrong. He is very protective of the kids of the Palace and when Xavier muscles in with his smarmy ways and show-off behaviour, Griffin suspects something about his story isn't true. It is through his meeting with Xavier, though, that Griffin finds out that he is infinitely braver than he ever thought he could be.

Bea and Raffy

Bea and Raffy are ten-year-old twins who were rescued when the floods hit. They were housed in temporary shelters until they were found separate foster parents to take them in. Having been treated badly, the twins ran away several times until they decided the one way to be together forever was to run away to Grimsdon.

They have active imaginations, something they use to hide their fears. They enjoy dressing up and having stories read to them by Griffin.

When they meet Xavier, they instantly fall for his cheekiness and sense of fun and love the fact that he can find food they had long ago said goodbye to, like chocolate and custard.

Dragonfly

No one is sure how old Fly is, but they guess she's around ten. She was found abandoned and alone on a rainy rooftop in Grimsdon. Isabella brought her home and even though they tried to find out about her, she refused to speak.

She got her name from the suitcase she was clutching when she was found. It had a drawing of an old fashioned bi-plane with the word 'Dragonfly' underneath. She has been Fly ever since.

She sleeps alone in a large bay window. Often Isabella will wake and see her kneeling at the window, staring outside, her hands splayed against the glass. She carries a notebook with her everywhere and draws pictures of what she sees. Sometimes her drawings are filled with storms and the hints of huge sea creatures lurking under the waves. She draws to calm herself when she's scared.

She is fiercely loyal to the Palace kids, especially Griffin, and when Xavier arrives and makes fun of him, she makes it clear that she is sticking by her friend. She may seem meek, but when it comes to standing up for her friends, she won't let danger stop her.

Raven

Raven is the leader of the Haggles, a huge Swap Meet of lost children. He runs the Haggles with a code of honour among thieves. He is tough, very good at defending himself and almost as good as Isabella when it comes to knives.

He doesn't think much of Griffin and Isabella when he first meets them but Isabella soon shows what she is made of and Raven develops an instant respect.

He enjoys life in Grimsdon. His parents always told him he'd end up in jail so this is infinitely better. He looks after the kids, play games, stays up as late as he wants and has a fierce hatred and distrust of adults.

Byron P. Sneddon, Esq

Sneddon was once an important government minister. He has been living on an old clipper in the Grimsdon harbour since the floods. He is deadly afraid of the water and is amassing a fortune on the boat (with the help of the kids) to eventually buy his way back into society inland. He is eccentric, wears a wild hairdo and has a tiger snake called Albert that curls around his shoulders and a vial of antivenin strung around his neck. He has two thugs called Mouse and Tyran.

Jeremiah

Jeremiah is an adult who lives in the State Library. He has an overgrown beard, plaited hair and a predilection for incoherent ramblings. When he first meets the kids, he can't remember who he is and what his life was before the floods, but he soon remembers he was a Physical Oceanographer: a person who studies winds and tides, reading patterns in the water and weather. He had spent the last year before the floods trying to convince the government that the floodgates would not be enough to save the city from the flood but he was ignored.

Activities

1. Choose one of the descriptions above and draw a picture of the character, adding the bits that aren't mentioned to build a representation of what this character is like.
2. What do you think the author wants you to think about these characters from the way she has described them?
3. Choose one of the characters from *Grimsdon* and conduct an interview with them. Make it as interesting and entertaining as you can. Find out how their childhood was, their dreams and hopes, a funny story from their life that helps us know them better. Use what you know from the story but also what you think may be true about them. Write this up as a newspaper report or a transcript of an interview, or create a video.



4. **Point of View:** Each of the characters experienced the floods and what followed in a different way. Choose one of them and describe, from their point of view, either:

- what it was like when the flood hit
- day-to-day life in Grimsdon
- what it was like when the building collapsed beside the Palace
- any other scene in the book that captured your imagination

You can do this as a blog or a diary entry.

5. **Leaving Grimsdon:** What do you think life will be like for the kids after they have left Grimsdon? What will it be like to eat? Shop? Go to school? Choose one of the characters and write a journal entry or blog about your first month on dry land.

THEMES

A new world

In the world we live in, money, power and technology are very important, but all that changes for the kids of Grimsdon who have been left behind after the floods.

Class discussion:

Are the same things still important in Grimsdon? What is important in your world? If you were one of the kids of Grimsdon, what would be most important to you?

Activity:

Draw up a list of what you think was important to these kids before the floods and after.

Sustainability

Part of the reason Isabella and her friends are living in a flooded city is because governments had been ignoring issues about climate change for years, believing it wouldn't happen in their lifetime.

Class discussion:

How important do you think it is for governments to not only make laws to suit people now, but in the future as well?

In the *Grimsdon* trilogy, parts of the world have been lost forever because humans haven't taken enough care of the planet. There are a number of measures taken in the book to improve sustainability, from wind turbines and fields of solar panels. Here is a website and Facebook page with lots of facts, info and videos about climate change: coolaustralia.org/

Questions and activities

1. What is the difference between global warming and climate change?
2. Research five ways the earth's rising temperature has affected the way people live. E.g. emergency services, how and where people live, farming, tourism etc.
3. Investigate five new ways that are being developed to take care of the planet as we move into the future and write a persuasive speech about why you believe they will work.
4. Imagine you are in government. Name five laws you would pass to take better care of the environment.
5. You are an inventor – create a new invention or method that you think would help tackle climate change and protect our planet in the future.
6. Write a persuasive speech about why we need to act sustainably to protect our planet. Research your speech so you can add persuasive facts or statistics. Avoid using generalizations and exaggeration and don't forget, even though it can be a serious subject, a good speech can often contain humour.
7. Sustainability in schools. Have a look at these Facebook pages. Is there anything you can do in your school to improve your waste management and promote sustainability? facebook.com/groups/1021992804620105/ and facebook.com/sustainableschoolsnsw/ and coolaustralia.org/take-action/sustainability-in-your-class-all-you-need-to-know/
8. Challenge each class in your school to come up with a plan to improve your school's carbon footprint, sustainability and waste management.
9. Research resources online (websites, movies, documentaries etc.) that help explain climate change and sustainability and offer ways we can take better care of our planet. Create a webpage and share the top points with your class.
10. Even though Australia is just one country, do you think it is important we do what we can to take care of the planet? Do you think richer countries have an obligation to help those who aren't so wealthy?
11. One major way to combat climate change is planting trees. Gardening superstar Costa Georgiadis chats about planting a trillion trees to combat climate change: tinyurl.com/y2a86ca9 Discuss ways you can help make this can happen in your school and community.



12. It is said that cow farts contribute more greenhouse gases than cars.
[youtube.com/watch?v=oH79CGm4u7s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oH79CGm4u7s)
Research ways to reduce these farts.
13. Many believe that protecting the planet can only happen with government leadership, people power and industry making changes and all three working together. Name one thing each of these groups can do that you think will be world-changing and explain why you think so.
14. 'You are never too small to make a difference.'
Greta Thunberg, climate activist.

In August 2018, Greta started a school strike for the climate outside the Swedish Parliament that has since spread all over the world in a movement called Fridays For Future.

[youtube.com/watch?v=uRgJ-2zS_Rs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uRgJ-2zS_Rs)
Watch this video. What does it make you think? What are the main points you took from this video? Greta says her Asperger's made her more focused and says it made her act. What do you think of Greta's journey to becoming an activist? Do you think this movement, started by one person, will make a difference?
15. If you were asked to address a climate conference like Greta, what would be your main reasons for asking the adults of the world to act? Include facts about climate change, as well as your thoughts about the ethics of taking care of the planet.
16. Other websites to investigate:
climatekids.nasa.gov/
interestingengineering.com/21-sustainability-innovations-and-initiatives-that-might-just-change-the-world <https://tinyurl.com/y27wzym7>
tinyurl.com/y68ju5yk and TED talks on climate change can be found here:
ted.com/topics/climate+change
17. David Suzuki has been an environmental warrior for decades. His foundation shares ideas to help save the planet: davidssuzuki.org/what-you-can-do/top-10-ways-can-stop-climate-change/. Which ideas do you think you, your family and your class could put into action tomorrow?
18. Debate topics: That individuals cannot make a big impact in combating climate change. That being a vegetarian is better for the environment than being a meat-eater. That protecting the environment is a government problem.

Family

Many families are different from each other in the way they act and how many people make up the family – some families have two parents and some have one,

sometimes there are no parents and the children are brought up by other people, like the grandparents. When the kids of Grimsdon lose their families, they become a family of their own.

Class discussion

- How are the kids of Grimsdon like a family?
- How does Xavier's presence change the relationships between the kids?
- Why does Griffin find it so hard to trust Xavier?
- What was the lie Xavier told Isabella and the kids? Did he deserve their trust even after they discovered the lie?
- How many people do you think it takes to make a family?
- What do you think are important ingredients in making a family?

Activity:

Draw up a family tree with you as the centre. Include not only family members but other people who make your life special.

Loss

Read the following excerpt from *Grimsdon* (p. 191).
Background: Xavier flies Isabella back to her old neighbourhood. She hasn't been there for three years and when she arrives she is faced with how it was destroyed after the floods hit.

It was only a few minutes' walk along a small side alley before they were in Isabella's old street, lined with terrace houses with small front yards. Scooters and bicycles lay tangled together; more cars were overturned or jammed against telegraph poles. In the centre of the road was a bed, sitting upright as if waiting to be made and carried back inside.

As Isabella walked along the street her legs felt heavy, as if she was treading on quicksand.

The gardens were overgrown and creepers had swarmed over fences, collapsing some, climbing up walls and invading windows and gutters. She stopped at one gate and pushed aside a clump of leaves to reveal the metal outline of a sailboat.

'This is Griffin's house.' The front door was long gone and the inside walls sagged with water rot. The roofs had partially caved in. She picked up a small toy car and put it in her pocket. 'My house is three doors away.'

She counted the forty-two steps it took to get there. Something she'd done since she was little. The fence had been torn away, and beneath the strangling greenery in the yard she found the faded remains of a skateboard. 'I rode this everywhere.'



'Good with knives and a skateboarder, too?' Xavier said. 'You are impressive.'

They drew their knives from their belts and hacked through the weeds and creepers. They had to ram their shoulders against the door a few times before it fell off its hinges.

Inside was a wreck. Furniture, books and lamps were thrown against each other in piles surrounded by muddied walls and floors.

Isabella carefully stepped past each room until she came to her bedroom. The frame of her bed was slammed against the wall with the blankets gathered around it in a soiled mess. Her books lay splayed and buckled, her schoolbag torn and emptied, but above the mess, hanging on the wall, was one possession the water hadn't touched: a photo of Isabella with her mum and dad. She lifted the frame from its rusted hook and removed the photo from beneath the glass.

'They look nice,' Xavier said.

Isabella didn't answer. Tears ran down her cheek, soaking into the sleeves of her coat.

'I'm sorry,' Xavier said softly.

'I guess a part of me knew it would be like this, but a little part of me hoped it would be okay.'

She tried to stop them coming but couldn't. Her body slid down the wall, shaking with sobs.

Xavier crouched beside her. Isabella softened and collapsed against his shoulder.

Every character in *Grimsdon* faces losing things they cherish. Have you ever faced losing something precious to you? How did it make you feel?

Activity:

Draw up a chart of the positive and negative sides of living in Grimsdon. What are the personal qualities the kids of Grimsdon need to have to survive in their new world?

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

Design your own book cover or trailer

Book covers and trailers are very important. It gives the reader a sense of the story, tone and genre, without giving too much away.

In designing your own cover or trailer for *Grimsdon*, think about the following questions:

- Who do you think is the audience for *Grimsdon*?
- What are the most important elements of the story to you?

- What images would you put on the cover to best portray the story?
- What scenes from the book may grab the reader's attention but not give away too much of the story?

Book trailers: Watch the trailers for all three books in the series.

Grimsdon [youtube.com/watch?v=qhIGvEAXnm8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qhIGvEAXnm8)

New City [youtube.com/watch?v=bC7KnxmbalA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bC7KnxmbalA)

Final Storm [youtube.com/watch?v=rewgPM7qBok](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rewgPM7qBok)

Film and book trailers try to give a sense of the story without giving too much away, while trying to entice the audience to read the book or watch the film. Consider the audience, the most important elements of the story to you, which images will best portray the story, music, the pace of changing the images and how they match the music and the book.

Make a trailer for *Grimsdon* that you think captures the story well and makes the reader want to grab the book. Start by jotting key plot points, writing a script, storyboarding the trailer, choosing images, music and titles. Decide how to move from one image to another, such as dissolve, cut, wipe etc. Make sure you use royalty free music and images.

Creative writing: Be your own action hero – creating action scenes

Read the following excerpt from page 130 and see how the author has created action and tension. Underline words, phrases or dialogue that help to build the suspense and makes you worry for the safety of her characters.

Background: While scavenging on a nearby building, Bea becomes trapped on a building that begins to collapse. Xavier and Isabella use the flying machine to try to save her but Bea can't hold on and she falls in. Isabella dives in after her. The others watch from the roof of the Palace.

Another loud crack echoed from the collapsing building. The river churned and rolled restlessly.

'There she is!' Raffy pointed at Bea's red curls. She spluttered and gasped, her hands smacking the water, trying to find something to hold onto.

'She keeps getting dragged under.'

Fly held Raffy's hand in a futile attempt to calm him down.

Isabella emerged from the waves seconds later. She pushed her hair from her face and searched for Bea as another clump of stone broke away and smashed into the water only metres away.

'She's there!' Raffy shouted.



Isabella followed Raffy's finger and ploughed towards her, slamming her arms into the water.

'Please, please, please,' Raffy whispered.

Fly tapped Griffin on the arm and pointed a little way upriver.

There was something stirring in the water.

'What is it?'

As if in answer to Griffin's question, a curved back rippling with spikes curled out of the water before rolling back into the swell, pushing aside building waves on either side as it plunged below.

'It's heading straight for them!' Raffy pulled forward. 'Let me go.'

Fly dug her fingers into his arm and held him back.

'Isabella!' Griffin called. 'Watch out!'

Activity:

Write what may happen next, keeping in mind that you want to keep the action suspenseful and exciting.

Creative writing: Mythical creatures

'In Norse legend, the Skelene rose from the deep.' He (Jeremiah) flicked through the pages, searching. 'Floating quietly on the waves. Sneaky thing. Sailors thought it was an island, but when a ship came close, the Skelene pulled it under, ate everyone on board. Here!' He pointed at an illustration of an oval-headed beast with bulging eyes wrapping its many tentacles around the hull of the ship. (pp. 109–110)

Fact: An estimated 50-80% of all life on earth is found under the ocean's surface. Less than 10% of that space has been explored by humans. 85% of the area and 90% of the volume constitute the dark, cold environment we call the deep sea. (Source: marinebio.org/MarineBio/Facts) Who knows what animals exist down there that we have never seen?

In *Grimsdon*, scientist Jeremiah believes that the movement of the oceans that has led to the flooding of their city has led to the awakening of sea creatures lying deep beneath the oceans of the north.

There have been many writings about sea monsters throughout the ages. Some of the most famous are from *A Natural History of Norway* by Erik Pontoppidan, Bishop of Bergen, written in 1752. Some creatures resembled serpents, giant finned dragons and colossal squid and had names like Ziphius, Pristis, Phyceter and Architeuthis.

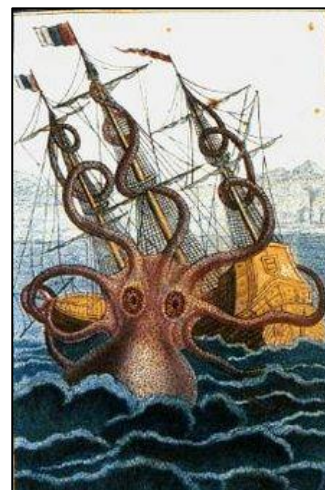
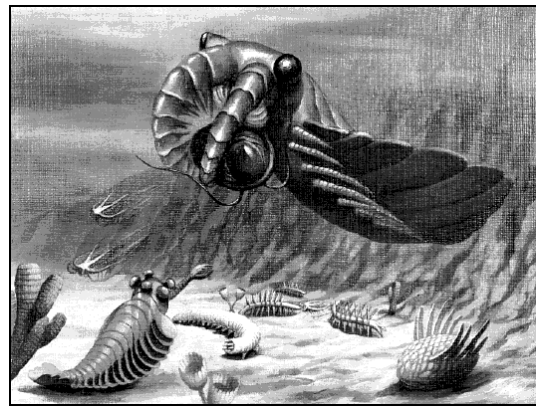
Activity: Eyewitness account of your battle on the high seas!

Write about your encounter with a sea monster. Choose one of the sea creatures below, give it a name

and write a story about the day you saw this beast. It can be as a newspaper article, a diary or a blog, or you may like to do a graphic story, using cartoon panels to help you to tell your story. It can be set now or in the past. Perhaps you even saw it over a series of days or weeks.

Whatever you choose, make your story suspenseful, exciting and mysterious. Remember to include how the beast looks, where it was seen, what it did and what your reactions were. You can choose to be whoever you like: a sailor, a scientist, an explorer or a rich passenger on a luxury ocean liner.

Make sure it has a strong beginning, an imaginative and interesting sequence of events in the middle and a satisfying end.



QUIZ: *Grimsdon*

Now you've reached the end of your study of *Grimsdon*, see how well you go at the Quiz.

1. What is the name of Xavier's Flying machine?
2. What is the name of the home where Isabella and the kids live?
3. Which character gets stuck on the roof of a collapsing building?
4. How did Fly get her name?
5. What is the name of Isabella's neighbourhood that she and Xavier fly to?
6. What is the name of the harbour lord?
7. What is the name of his ship?
8. How does Jeremiah try to defend himself against Isabella and Xavier?
9. What vehicle did Jeremiah build in preparation for the floods?
10. What is the Haggie and where is it?
11. What is the name of the book Griffin reads to the younger kids?
12. What forms when smaller waves collide into a giant wave?
13. What is the name of the creature Jeremiah warns is coming toward Grimsdon?
14. What is Xavier's sailing invention called?
15. Name two foods the kids miss most from before the floods?
16. Why aren't they usually allowed to talk about them?
17. What self-defence technique does Xavier teach Griffin in the greenhouse?
18. What kind of pet does Byron P. Sneddon have?



READERS' THEATRE: *Grimsdon*

Dress as the following characters from the scene below. How do you think they may stand, talk and look? Practice a few times to be familiar with the dialogue and to get a feel for how it will work as a group. You can keep the script in front of you but it is good to try to remember some lines so you can look at your fellow actors and the audience.

Dramatic excerpt from *Grimsdon*

Based on Chapter Six: The Haggie (from p. 51 on)

7 minutes duration

Characters: Narrator, Xavier, Griffin, Isabella, boy, girl and Raven

Background: Xavier has flown Isabella and Griffin in his flying machine to the Haggie, a kind of Swap Meet where kids meet to exchange items they have found in the abandoned houses of Grimsdon. Entry is gained by giving the leader, Raven, something of value.

Narrator: Xavier led the way into an enormous hall crammed with tables heaving with old appliances, tins of food, tools and toys. And there were kids everywhere. Talking, laughing, riding skateboards and kicking footballs. Some were breaking up furniture and throwing the pieces into fire drums dotted around the room.

Griffin: Where did they all come from?

Xavier: Same place we did. Some were left behind, others abandoned, some chose to be here.

Narrator: A group of boys playing cards waved at Xavier. He waved back.

Isabella: And their parents?

Xavier: Some kids still have them somewhere, others don't and the rest figure they're better off without them.

Narrator: There were brief interested glances as they walked through the hall. Two young boys were in the middle of a deal.

Boy: I'll trade this axe for your scooter.

Girl: Throw in that crowbar and you've got a deal.

Narrator: The two dealmakers spat on their hands, shook them and did the swap. Griffin stopped at a large sheet of material pinned to the wall covered in writing.

Griffin: What's this?

Xavier: The Code. A list of rules you have to obey if you want to stay.

Griffin (reads): A deal made is a deal in stone. A fight won fairly is a fight won. No theft amongst traders. All unresolved disputes will be settled by Raven.



- Xavier: Which it looks like he is doing now.
- Narrator: Xavier nodded towards a tall, thin boy in a long, oversized coat. He had vampirish white skin and black hair that fell across his eyes. Two boys stood before him. One had a cut lip, the other scratch marks across his face. Raven spoke. The boys nodded. They shook hands and walked away. Raven stretched his feet on a table and began polishing a sword.
- Xavier: Don't say anything that's going to upset him.
- Griffin: Like what?
- Xavier: You know. Upsetting things. Wait here until I call you over.
- Narrator: Xavier tucked his hands into his pockets and sauntered across the room, waving to more of the kids as he passed. Raven slid the sword into the scabbard. He and Xavier exchanged an elaborate handshake where they clicked fingers, linked arms and bumped chests. They sat down. Raven's eyes were trained on the newcomers.
- Raven: How well do you know them?
- Xavier: Pretty well. They're good kids.
- Raven: Why should I let them in?
- Xavier: Because they're friends of mine.
- Narrator: Xavier turned his back on Isabella and Griffin and held out a small, antique-looking knife.
- Xavier: And because I'll give you this.
- Raven: Last new kid we let in left Fergus with a broken arm. How do I know they won't cause trouble too?
- Xavier: They won't, I promise, in fact I ...
- Isabella: What's the hold-up?
- Narrator: Isabella stood behind them, her arms crossed. Griffin was a few steps behind her.
- Raven: I was deciding whether to let you in.
- Xavier: And I was explaining why he should, and that ...
- Isabella: Xavier said we could enter the Haggie by bringing something useful.
- Raven: And you think you have something I want?
- Isabella: I know I do. Griffin?
- Narrator: Griffin reached into his pocket and held out a cube, covered on each side with a reflective surface.
- Xavier: What is it?
- Griffin: It's an energy pack. It stores energy created by wind, water and the sun that can be used to create light or heat. All you have to do is ...
- Raven: Where did you get this?
- Griffin: I made it.



- Raven: And you use this to power things where you live?
- Griffin: We got sick of cold canned soup and baths.
- Raven: Can you show us how to do the same here?
- Griffin: Sure.
- Raven: Give us a list of what we'll need and we'll get it.
- Narrator: Raven got to his feet, pocketed the device and walked away.
- Raven: You'll hear if we're going to let you in.
- Isabella: We'll *hear*? We've given you a device for storing power and all you're going to give us is, 'you'll hear'?
- Raven: I could have said 'no'.
- Narrator: He kept walking away. Other kids gathered, tittering and laughing into their sleeves and each other's shoulders.
- Griffin: He can't do that, can he?
- Isabella: Not to us he can't. And that's supposed to be good enough? We can give you the technology to have a warm bath for the first time in years, which won't be a minute too soon, and we're supposed to wait around for your say so?
- Narrator: Raven stopped and half-turned towards her.
- Raven: I'm sure you reign in the little kingdom where you live, but here, you play by my rules or you don't play at all.
- Narrator: There were slapped backs and laughter from the other kids.
- Griffin: Give me the energy pack. It's ours.
- Narrator: Raven turned and pushed Griffin away like an annoying fly. He fell to the ground, his glasses sliding across the floor. Isabella pulled her knife from her belt, stepped forward and hurled it with all her strength. It cut through the air and struck a wooden support beam only centimetres from Raven's ear. The room snapped into silence. Griffin felt around for his glasses, the figure of Raven a towering blur above him.



BOOK REPORT: *Grimsdon*

Author: _____

Setting: _____

Main characters:

Synopsis (brief description of the story)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

What happens at the climax and resolution?

What was your favourite part of the book? Why?

If you could be any character, who would it be? Why?

What are the themes you think the author cares most about in this book?

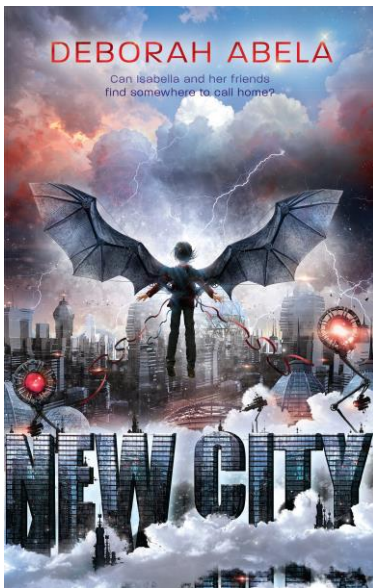


STORYBOARD

Filmmakers use storyboards to plot out scenes. Create a storyboard with text and illustrations to explain what will happen in your book trailer for *Grimsdon*.



FURTHER READING



New City
by Deborah Abela

A new city offers a new life - but what kind of life will Isabella and her friends find?

The city has been divided in two: the citizens who have, and those who the ruling Major General says have come to steal from them – the refugees who have fled the rising waters, who are imprisoned in a camp on the edge of the city.

The kids of Grimsdon now face new threats. From freakish weather events that whip up with little warning to the fierce misinformation that swirls around the city to the theft of their freedom, now they face the prison-like restrictions and control of the New City.

Unlike the refugees, they're heralded as heroes. But what does the Major General really want from them?



Final Storm
by Deborah Abela

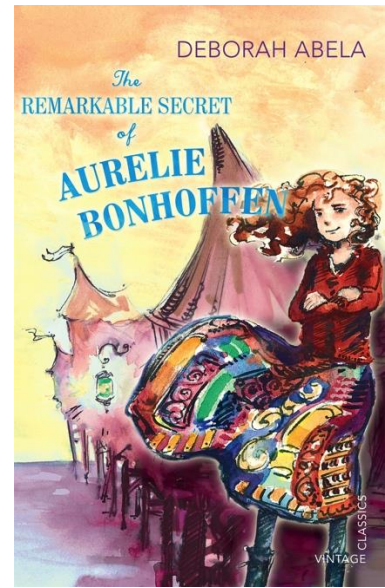
In a world of wild weather, is anyone safe?

Isabella, Griffin and their friends have settled into New City, enrolled in school and are making new friends, including the charming Aleksander Larsen.

But their home is facing a new threat – weather patterns are becoming erratic and fierce ice storms batter the city.

When someone from Isabella's past returns, loyalties are tested. Who is watching her from the shadows? And can Isabella and Griffin's friendship survive this furious final storm?

[Teachers' resources available.](#)



The Remarkable Secret of Aurelie Bonhoffen
by Deborah Abela

A quirky and mysterious tale of friends, fire-twirlers and ghosts from one of Australia's best storytellers.

Ever since Aurelie Bonhoffen was a child, she has juggled, played the dead girl on the ghost train and the back end of the cow in the marquee of Bonhoffen's Seaside Pier. She adores her family – especially her uncles Rolo and Rindolf - but on her twelfth birthday, she stumbles on her family's remarkable secret. It's hard to accept at first, but when her new friend at school reveals a dangerous plot against the pier, the secret helps Aurelie confront the greatest threat her family has ever faced.

[Teachers' resources available.](#)



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