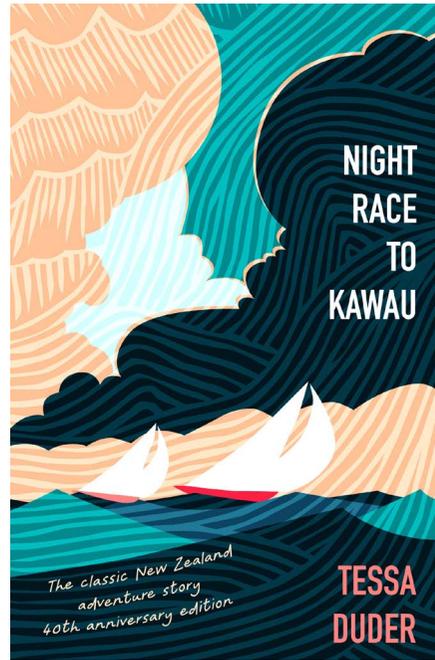




PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE

TEACHERS' RESOURCE KIT



NIGHT RACE TO KAWAU

Teacher Notes

by Lara Liesbeth

SPECIFICATIONS:

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NIGHT RACE TO KAWAU

TESSA DUDER

An award-winning classic from the author of the Alex quartet. For 40 years, this adrenaline-packed winner of the *Storylines Gaelyn Gordon Award for a Much-Loved Book* has been gripping Kiwi kids.

'He's not there, Mum. He's fallen overboard.'

What started as an exciting challenge turns into a nightmare when a gale unexpectedly develops during the night race to Kawau Island. Sam and her mother suddenly find themselves

in charge of their yacht with a dangerous task ahead of them.

It is the early 1980s, and technology on the yacht is limited: they are on their own.

Will Sam be able to save her family?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tessa Duder trained as a journalist and has published more than forty works of fiction and non-fiction for both children and adults, plays and anthologies. Her best-known work *Alex* (1987) was published in five languages and adapted for a 1993 movie. Her recent books include biographies of Margaret Mahy, Sir Peter Blake and Auckland's pioneering 'First Lady' Sarah Mathew. Her latest is about the charting of New Zealand by James Cook and her four *Alex* books were in 2019 published as *Alex the Quartet*.

Her awards include a number of children's fiction prizes, the *Storylines Margaret Mahy Medal* (1996), the *Katherine Mansfield Fellowship to Menton* (2003), an *Artists to Antarctica* award (2007), the *OBE* (1994) and the *CNZM* (2021). She holds an honorary doctorate from the University of Waikato (2008) and won the *Prime Minister's Award for Literary Achievement (Fiction)* in 2020. She serves on the board of the *Storylines Children's Literature Trust of New Zealand* and was for twenty years a *Trustee of the Spirit of Adventure Trust*. She has four daughters and two grandchildren and lives in Devonport, Auckland, where she enjoys sailing, concert-going, teaching creative writing and reading. www.tessaduder.co.nz

BEFORE READING

- 1)** Cover art and design can give us clues about the book inside. What can you see on the cover? What do you think this suggests about the story?
- 2)** Tessa Duder has written many other books, too. Read the author's biography and name one listed there.
- 3)** When was this book first published? How do you know? Why is it being republished now?
- 4)** Find the contents page at the front of the book. What clues can you gather from the list of chapters?
- 5)** Go to the glossary at the end of the book. Take your time reading through these words and definitions. They will help you enjoy the book more, and you can return at any time as you make your way through the book!

DURING READING *Comprehension Questions*

Chapter:

- 1)** Why did Sam's parents keep the night race a secret?
- 2)** How many Starr children are there? Name them.
- 3)** This chapter starts dramatically! What happened?
- 4)** What is the cat's name?
- 5)** What happens to Sam's dad in this chapter?
- 6)** What foreshadowing do we see at the start of this chapter?
- 7)** Who does the family hope sees the spinnaker?
- 8)** What do the family have for dinner?
- 9)** Which direction does the 'surprise' wind come from at the end of this chapter?
- 10)** What happened to dad?
- 11)** What near-accident happens at the beginning of this chapter?
- 12)** What makes mum upset?
- 13)** In what way does Sam have to take control?
- 14)** Why don't Mrs Starr and Sam light a flare?
- 15)** What does dad do in this chapter?
- 16)** Which bay did the family aim to anchor in?
- 17)** What does mum want Jane and Sam to do?
- 18)** What scares Sam the most on land?
- 19)** What do Jane and Sam find in this chapter?
- 20)** This very short chapter is important. Why?
- 21)** Who meets them at Kawau Island?

AFTER READING

Themes

A) Think about the following ideas. We've provided quotes from the book to back up each theme. In pairs, discuss how they relate to the book.

1) How families are made up in many different ways and yet are central to everything.

'Family pressure, she decided, was a powerful thing.' (49)

2) How gender roles condition us to behave in particular ways.

'I was brought up to believe that nice girls didn't even know words like that.' (101)

'She couldn't help being only 12 and female and weak.' (113) '... a boy of twelve would never be told he couldn't do something just because he was a boy.' (135)

'Grandmother's weather.' (140).

3) What it means to be brave. "'Well? Do you feel up to it?'" "No, I don't. I don't want to, one little bit. But I'll go.'" (166)

B) Now decide which of these themes is most important in the book. Use evidence from the book (quotes) to support your ideas. Explain why.

C) Write a paragraph telling us why you think it is the most important. Share with the class and discuss.



Characters

Sam Starr is the most important character in this book. She is the first character we meet. Other characters include her grandfather William, her dad Nick and her mum, who is introduced as 'Mrs Starr'. Jeremy and Jane are Sam's younger siblings.

1) Write down everything you learn reading about:

- a) Sam
- b) William
- c) Nick (dad/Mr Starr)
- d) Louise (mum/Mrs Starr)
- e) Jane
- f) Jeremy

2) How do these characters develop throughout the novel? Divide a page into three columns titled 'Beginning', 'Middle' and 'End'. Fill in the columns with your understanding of these characters throughout the text. Find quotes from the book to support your opinion. Add the quotes to this character development page.

Character	Beginning	Middle	End
Sam			
Mr Starr			
Mrs Starr			
William			
Jane			
Jeremy			

Genre, Style and Language

Vocabulary:

There is some excellent vocabulary in this book. Here are some examples.

- Silhouetted (7)
- Conspiracy (8)
- Acquiescence (22)
- Phosphorescence (26)
- Peevishly (38)
- Implications (47)
- Terylene (51)
- Simultaneously (52)
- Curlicues (52)
- Evaporate (65)
- Unsympathetically (75)
- Plaintively (81)
- Incredulous (99)
- Erratically (134)
- Precipitous (155)
- Unrepentant (173)

1) Choose ten words you don't know and write the definitions for each word.

Use each in a new sentence.

2) Write a short story using at least 10 of the words above. You decide the genre!

Descriptive language:

An author can use descriptive and figurative language to describe things in an interesting way. There are many examples of this in the book. Similes and metaphors are interesting ways of describing things using comparison. A simile is a comparison using like or as; a metaphor compares directly. Sometimes writers use personification, which is when inanimate objects are given human or living qualities. Personification is a type of metaphor, too.

Here are some examples from the book:

Similes:

'... as sheepish as a small boy.' (8)

'... throwing a silver sheen over the still water like a vast sheet of clear plastic ...' (13)

'... like a scarecrow on skates.' (47)

Metaphors:

'The sun was creeping up through a bright haze ...' (13)

'... describing crazy circles in the air.' (52)

'The other boats were illusions, ghost ships ...' (78)

'... she turned and surveyed the coast line's black arms ...'(155)

Personification:

'Aratika was lurching grumpily from side to side, her bare mast shaking an irritable finger at the sky.' (53)

Alliteration and assonance:

What effect do alliteration and assonance generally have in writing?

Identify whether the following examples are alliteration or assonance. Explain the effect of these techniques in the following examples from the book:

- a) '... big black-backed gulls ...' (7)
- b) '... as sheepish as a small boy.' (8)
- c) '... keeping her rhythm on a route that went up and down several sets of shallow steps.' (9)
- d) 'I just can't imagine that sea out there all whipped up into waves and white horses, ever again.' (15)
- e) '... dad sinking silently to the seabed.' (90)

Now it's your turn. Find as many other examples of similes, metaphors, personification and alliteration/assonance in the book as you can.

List them in the table to the right.

Tense and narrative perspective:

This book has been written in third person; this means we view the story with slight distance from the characters, as if observing them. It is a flexible style, though! We can easily be 'allowed' into the thoughts of characters.

1. Write down an example of where we are observing what is happening, without character perspective.
2. Choose a second moment in the novel where we are party to the thoughts of a character.

Tenses can be fun to play around with in your own and other people's writing.

3. Choose three paragraphs from throughout the book that you think are well-written in past tense. Write each paragraph in present tense, then in future tense. What are the similarities when you change the tense? What are the differences? Which do you prefer? Why?

Simile	pg	Metaphor	pg	Personification	pg
1)		1)		1)	
		2)		2)	
2)		3)		3)	
		Alliteration	pg	Assonance	pg
		1)		1)	
3)		2)		2)	
		3)		3)	

FURTHER RESEARCH AND CREATIVE RESPONSES

- 1.** 'They too would have been able to stand at the window in the mornings and look across the shining water to Rangitoto Island' (7). Research the history of Rangitoto Island. Present as a poster.
- 2.** This book was written 40 years ago. Did you notice any differences in characters, relationships or culture? Draw a table with the headings '1982' and '2022'. List, describe and match up the differences side by side.
- 3.** Draw a map of Kawau Island and the route Jane and Sam had to take from the boat.
- 4.** Rewrite a chapter of the novel from the perspective of a different character. You might like to use first person narrative style instead of third person. Share with your class.
- 5.** Research the sailing boat used in 'Night Race to Kawau'. Label all the parts as they were described in the book (parts of the hull, but also the types of sails. You don't need to name everything! Just make sure it is interesting to look at).
- 6.** Use the New Zealand history encyclopaedia site Te Ara <https://teara.govt.nz/en> to research New Zealand in the early 1980's. Restrict your research to sit between 1980 and 1983.
What events happened then in Aotearoa? Make a timeline and present as either a poster or a powerpoint.
- 7.** Alternatively, present the above timeline as a series of sketches, filmed on your phone (with school permission) and show this to your class.

