



Teaching Notes



Scoop McLaren: Detective Editor
Written by Helen Castles
Illustrated by Beatriz Castro
Published by New Frontier Publishing

THE STORY

Scoop McLaren Detective Editor is a fast-paced and action-packed book series that delves into the daily life of a thirteen-year-old news editor and her roving reporter best friend. Scoop is in charge of her very own online newspaper and together with Evie, the girls strive to keep the residents of their seaside village informed while using their sleuthing skills to solve some incredible (and tricky!) mysteries along the way.

THE CHARACTERS

Scoop McLaren

Hiya, I'm Scoop :)

I'm thirteen years old and I love writing. So much so, I created my own online newspaper called *Click!* My dad (who runs his own newspaper too) taught me that delivering the news is an extremely important job because people rely on me to keep them properly informed. People also come to me when they need help because apart from being an editor, I'm also pretty good at investigating and solving mysteries.

Evie Andrews

Hello everyone, I'm Evie!

Apart from being Scoop's very best friend, I'm also a reporter at *Click!* I get to help Scoop write the news and solve mysteries which is incredibly good fun. I'm also an accomplished Girl Scout and I have a brown belt in karate, making me a handy person to have around when we're out and about, interviewing suspects and wrapping up cases.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Helen Castles is a real-life roving reporter for a newspaper in southern New South Wales. When not chasing a news story, she loves to write fiction for children. A few years ago, she decided to combine the two and *Scoop McLaren* was born!

Her love for telling stories and her belief in the importance of keeping the public informed has transpired into this delightful book series, while her quirky yet sophisticated writing style appeals to both children and adults alike. This is her first book series.

Scoop McLaren Word Search

Find these words:

camera
click
deadline
exclusive
Evie
newspaper
notebook
online
pen
readers
Scoop
story
writing

| | | | | | | | | | | |
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| E | R | S | Q | T | U | I | O | L | N | W |
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| R | L | E | T | X | N | I | A | U | X | I |
| I | D | Y | R | U | P | N | X | P | I | P |
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| W | R | I | T | C | L | I | C | K | T | L |
| J | A | E | V | I | S | U | L | C | X | E |

Fill in the Blanks

Australian Newspapers

1. Sy_ne_ Mo_ni_g He_ald
2. Ca_ber_a Ti_es
3. Th_ Aus_ral_an
4. T_e Da_ly Te_egr_ph
5. Th_ He_a_d S_n

Scoop McLaren Answer Sheet

Word Search Solution

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| E | R | S | Q | T | U | I | O | L | N | W |
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| P | Y | I | X | L | H | E | S | R | O | D |
| A | E | L | P | E | N | O | V | Y | O | E |
| P | N | Z | U | P | Z | N | E | S | K | R |
| E | I | V | U | O | S | L | Z | M | L | S |
| R | L | E | T | X | N | I | A | U | X | I |
| I | D | Y | R | U | P | N | X | P | I | P |
| C | A | M | E | R | A | E | W | E | W | E |
| Q | E | I | S | A | T | M | C | O | C | N |
| L | D | S | U | G | N | I | T | I | R | W |
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| W | R | I | T | C | L | I | C | K | T | L |
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Fill in the blanks answers:

1. Sydney Morning Herald
2. Canberra Times
3. The Australian
4. The Daily Telegraph
5. The Herald Sun

Things to do and Points for Discussion

WHY IS THE NEWS SO IMPORTANT?

The news keeps people informed with accurate information on a variety of levels. The news might be specifically relevant, something people need to know that might affect them, or it might be valuable to people who like to be informed about issues that are happening around them as well as in faraway places. While this news may not affect them personally, it can help to broaden people's minds.

In Higgity Harbour, the news comes from three sources: *Click!*, *The Higgity Harbour Gazette* and *The Dark Times*.

Have students come up with a name for their own online newspaper. Have them write a three-paragraph story to inform residents of an emergency situation in their area. What points might this story need to include to keep people properly informed and therefore safe? What sort of people might they talk to in order to get quotes, and accurate information, for this type of story.

GETTING THE NEWS IN ON TIME

All newspaper reporters work to a deadline, a strict time in which a story must be finished in order to get it out to the public in a timely fashion.

In what instances might it be important to get the news out quickly?

Have students write their own front page news story and give them a deadline to adhere to. Find a situation in the book where it was important to get the story written before a certain time? How did the characters achieve this? What was the outcome?

TYPES OF NEWS OUTLETS

Scoop writes her own online newspaper, but what other ways can people find out what's going on around them?

Have students make a list of all the places they see or hear the news.

What are their favourite ways to stay informed, and why do they think those sources are trustworthy?

TWO SIDES TO EVERY STORY

Good news stories are balanced, they tell both sides of a story.

Why is it important to have all the information when reading a story?

Have students find an instance in the book where Scoop has obtained both sides of the story.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

How does Scoop's dad, Mr McLaren's character change? At what point in the book does this change occur, and why?

Which other characters change throughout the book and how?

LANGUAGE

When writing headlines, it's important to hook the reader in so they want to go on and read the story.

Have students choose an incident from the book and write their own headline about it that will capture a reader's attention.

Things to do and Points for Discussion

ACCURACY OF INFORMATION

Scoop's dad has always taught her the importance of delivering the facts to readers.

What would happen if the news was wrong?

Discuss the importance of checking facts and doing research.

Have students choose a current news event and do research to present three facts about the story.

Which character in the book does not adhere to this very important rule, and what were the consequences?

TEAMWORK

A newspaper, and many other news organisations, often works as a team to get the story out, just like Scoop and Evie.

Find an example in the book where Scoop and Evie worked together as a team with other characters. What obstacle did they have to overcome and how did they do this?

Have students write about an instance when they had to work as part of a team? Did they enjoy it?

INTERVIEWING

Interviewing a subject is an important part of being a news reporter.

What sort of questions might you ask someone when you interview them?

Have students work in pairs. One student has a story to tell (how they spent their weekend; what occupation they would like to have when they are older and why), and the other asking a list of six questions in order to obtain information to write an accurate and informative story.

STRUCTURE OF THE STORY

Discuss the structure of the story in terms of orientation, narrative, solution and conclusion.

Orientation:

Have students write a short introduction of the main characters in the book as well as the setting.

Who is their favourite character, and why?

Narrative:

What is the problem in the book? What dilemma do the residents of Higgity Harbour face?

Solution:

How is the problem solved? What steps have the characters taken to find a solution?

Conclusion:

How does the story end? What happens to the characters?

Other Activities

POINT OF VIEW

Scoop McLaren Detective Editor is told from the point of view of Scoop, the main character. Have students write the story ending from the perspective of another character. It could be one of Scoop's friends, her dad, or even evil editor, Sonny Fink.

USING DESCRIPTIVE LANGUAGE

Have students write a description of Higgity Harbour. They could write the description as a newspaper story to entice visitors to visit the harbour. Do they think the harbour would be a good place to live, and why?

MAIN MESSAGES

What are some of the main themes and messages behind the story? What values does the story convey such as friendship, determination, truth etc. List them and give examples to prove your points.

AUTHOR INTENTION

Have students discuss the idea behind *Scoop McLaren Detective Editor*, and why they think the author wrote it.



Waves of Mystery Word Search

Find these words:

beach

surf

summer

tournament

publicity

sabotage

bribery

sleuth

escape

evidence

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| T | B | H | M | R | B | K | J | D | S | K |
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| R | Y | E | I | A | S | Y | C | R | S | L |
| D | F | K | M | B | E | U | G | F | T | M |
| S | T | X | K | A | E | B | W | R | T | P |
| U | G | R | N | D | N | R | M | U | R | E |
| M | T | D | V | X | H | R | Y | S | G | T |
| M | I | R | O | T | G | L | U | A | X | S |
| E | U | Y | G | O | P | V | T | O | L | W |
| R | P | T | X | A | I | O | K | E | T | H |
| R | G | I | G | D | B | L | U | D | B | M |
| B | P | C | I | A | F | T | U | D | S | E |
| S | E | I | S | K | H | Z | W | D | K | S |
| V | Y | L | E | V | I | D | E | N | C | E |
| D | B | B | I | V | L | Q | N | B | Q | K |
| Z | J | U | A | W | K | F | H | R | H | S |
| Q | E | P | A | C | S | E | K | Z | I | W |

Fill in the Blanks

Below are the names (both first and last name) of famous surfers with some of the letters missing. Do some research online to find out who they are and fill in the blanks. Afterwards chose one of the surfers and write a brief profile for them.

1. K _ L _ Y _ LAT _ R
2. D _ K _ KAHAN _ M _ _ U
3. SHA _ _ ON W _ _ ER
4. L _ S _ AN _ ERS _ _
5. T _ L _ R W _ _ GHT
6. MA _ _ OC _ _ _ LUPO

Write your surfer's profile here. Try to find out where they are from, when they started surfing, what titles they have won and any other interesting facts.

Scoop McLaren Waves of Mystery Quiz

Scoop is a great detective because she notices the little details. Take the quiz below to see if you notice the little details in *Scoop McLaren: Waves of Mystery*.

1. What is Fletcher's surfing nickname?

- a) In Flight.
- b) The Shark.
- c) Flying Fletch.

2. What is Scoop's real name?

- a) Helena Jane McLaren.
- b) Henley Sarah McLaren.
- c) Henrietta McLaren.

3. What does 'snaking' mean?

- a) Snaking is when another surfer drops in and steals your wave.
- b) Snaking is when you walk in a zigzag line.
- c) Snaking is when you pretend to be a snake.

4. What is the full name of the surfing competition happening at Higgity Harbour?

- a) The Master Wave Supreme Grommet Title.
- b) The Master Wave World Surfing Competition.
- c) The Monster Wave Supreme Grommet Title.

5. What job does Scoop's mum do?

- a) She is a librarian.
- b) She works as a dog trainer. She trains dogs to be in movies.
- c) She is a journalist like Scoop.

6. What are the two names of Fletcher's main surfing competitors?

- a) Arnold Wallace and Tom Meyers.
- b) Tom Broadmeyer and Wallace Arnold.
- c) Ace Broadmeyer and Arthur Wallace.

7. What bird is on the badge of the motorcycle that tried to run down Fletcher, Scoop and Evie?

- a) An eagle.
- b) A raven.
- c) A falcon.

8. Who founded Higgity Harbour?

- a) Harry Higgity.
- b) Deadeye Dan.
- c) Henry Higgity.

9. What job has Mr. Mack always wanted to do?

- a) Policeman.
- b) Fireman.
- c) Doctor.

10. Where was the beach house in which Fletcher and Evie were held captive?

- a) 274 High Cliff Road.
- b) 277 Beachside Avenue.
- c) 374 Ocean Drive.

Answer Sheet

Word Search Solution

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| T | B | H | M | R | B | K | J | D | S | K |
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| R | Y | E | I | A | S | Y | C | R | S | L |
| D | F | K | M | B | E | U | G | F | T | M |
| S | T | X | K | A | E | B | W | R | T | P |
| U | G | R | N | D | N | R | M | U | R | E |
| M | T | D | V | X | H | R | Y | S | G | T |
| M | I | R | O | T | G | L | U | A | X | S |
| E | U | Y | G | O | P | V | T | O | L | W |
| R | P | T | X | A | I | O | K | E | T | H |
| R | G | I | G | D | B | L | U | D | B | M |
| B | P | C | I | A | F | T | U | D | S | E |
| S | E | I | S | K | H | Z | W | D | K | S |
| V | Y | L | E | V | I | D | E | N | C | E |
| D | B | B | I | V | L | Q | N | B | Q | K |
| Z | J | U | A | W | K | F | H | R | H | S |
| Q | E | P | A | C | S | E | K | Z | I | W |

Fill in the Blanks Answers

1. KELLY **SLATER**
2. **DUKE** KAHAN**AMOKU**
3. SHARRON **WEBER**
4. **LISA** ANDERSEN
5. **TYLER** **WRIGHT**
6. MARK OC**CHILUPO**

Quiz Answers

- 1.**a** 2.**b** 3.**a** 4.**c** 5.**b** 6.**b** 7.**a** 8.**c** 9.**a** 10.**a**

Things to do and Points for Discussion

SPORTS EVENTS

In *Scoop McLaren: Waves of Mystery*, you've seen a new kind of reporting: sport reporting! Sport reporting is very exciting, and as a sport reporter, you'd want to convey this excitement to your readers.

Find a news article about a sports event and analyse it. How does the sport reporter convey the action of a sports event through their words? Here are some literary features that you can look out for:

- **Hyperbole** - exaggerated language used for emphasis.
- **Onomatopoeia** - the formation of a word from a sound associated with what is named, like 'smash' or 'clash'.
- **Alliteration** - words next to each other which start with the same letter.
- **Rhetorical questions** - a question which implies its own answer.
- **Emotive language** - language that is geared towards making the reader feel a particular emotion.
- **Triples** - three points to support an argument.
- **Imperatives** - giving an instruction to the reader.
- **Figures and statistics** - factual data used to demonstrate accuracy and lend credibility to a report. This is very important in sports writing because readers will want to know scores.

Now that you can identify the techniques used in sport reporting, why not take on the role of a sport reporter? Watch a sport event of your choice on TV or online and write a report on it. Here are three things to research before you write an excellent sport report:

- **Research the athlete/team that you're reporting on.**
- **Research the sport.** (Whether it's cricket, rugby, gymnastics or any other sport you choose to report on.)
- **Research the event.** (This could be the Cricket World Cup, the Monaco Grand Prix, the Tour de France or any other sporting event.)

INTERVIEWS

The students have already learnt how to be a great interviewer from the first set of *Scoop McLaren* activities. Now you can try the interview activity with a little twist!

Ask the students to pair up and choose a sportsperson to research. After they have researched their chosen sportsperson thoroughly, the students can conduct an interview, with one as the sportsperson and the other student as the interviewer. And always keep your readership in mind, think about what they would like to know about the sportsperson being interviewed.

SPORTS ADJACENT EVENTS

Sport reporting does not just consist of reporting the results of a sports events. There are many other fascinating topics to investigate. For example, the Epsom Derby is a horse racing event where the spectators famously dress up very formally. BBC presenter Sonali Shah did a very interesting report on what people were wearing at the Epsom Derby. You could research developments in sports equipment or the construction of sporting facilities. People tend to be very interested in how different countries prepare for their turn to host the Olympics.

Ask the students if they can find a sports related topic (but not a match or race in itself) and write a report on this subject. The report could be written as a news feature or a PowerPoint presentation to the rest of the class. Relevant information will vary according the topic chosen but ask the students to think about how their report will interest readers in the related sport or sporting event.

Things to do and Points for Discussion

MYSTERIES

People love a good mystery, from books to films to TV series. Discuss the mystery genre with the class. Here are some questions to lead the discussion:

- **What is a mystery?**
- **What adjectives come to mind when you think of a mystery?**
- **What are the elements of a good mystery?**

By the end of the discussion, the students should be able to identify the following key features of a mystery:

- **A strong hook – the mystery should intrigue the reader and prompt them to try and put together the clues to solve the mystery.**
- **A crime – this event prompts the investigation and is central to the plot.**
- **An investigator – this is usually the main character of the story, who is determined to solve the crime.**
- **A villain – the perpetrator of the crime. The investigator is usually trying to figure out their identity and their motives.**
- **Clues – a good mystery should have clues peppered throughout the story. An attentive reader might even unravel the mystery before the investigator!**
- **A twist – often in mystery stories, the clues can be a misleading and take the investigator down the wrong path. A new clue can put a whole new slant on an investigation.**
- **A conclusion – the conclusion should satisfy the reader and unveil the truth.**

Remember that this is not an exhaustive list, your students may come up with many other ideas! Now ask the students to look at the blurb of both *Scoop McLaren* books. They can also read the blurbs of other mystery books to help them. Think about how the blurb draws the reader in and makes them want to read the book. Now ask the students to write a blurb of their own, for their own imaginary mystery novel. The characters, setting and plot are completely up to them.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Choose a character who has appeared in both *Scoop McLaren: Detective Editor* and *Scoop McLaren: Waves of Mystery* and trace their development across the two books. Have they changed in obvious or subtle ways? What parts of their character have stayed the same? Have their circumstances changed?

INTRODUCING NEW CHARACTERS

In *Waves of Mystery*, you meet Fletcher, Scoop's childhood friend. What do you think of Fletcher? What does the reader learn about Fletcher before they meet him? What do the other characters say about Fletcher? What does the reader learn about him when they first meet him?