

Teaching Notes *Scoop McLaren: Detective Editor*

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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. eople 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.

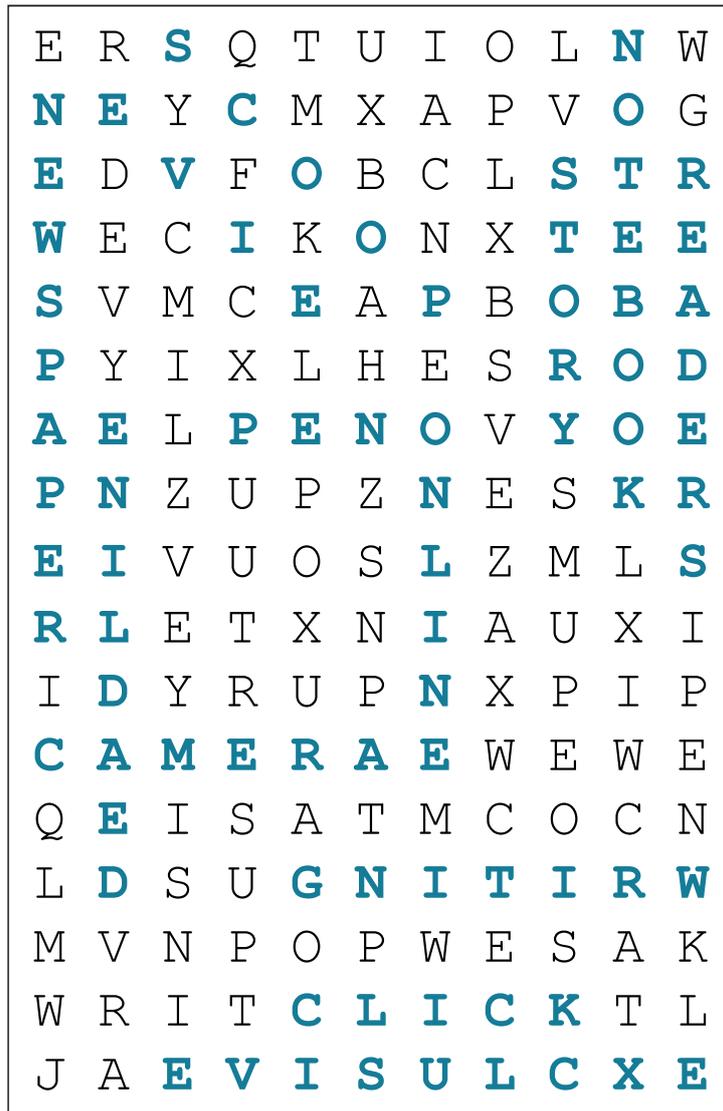
Her love for telling stories and her belief in the importance of keeping the public informed has transpired into this delightful book series, while her quirky yet sophisticated writing style appeals to both children and adults alike. This is her first book series.

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Scoop McLaren Word Search Solution



Fill in the blanks:

Australian Newspaper Names

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**



Solutions

Australian Newspaper Names

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.

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.

