

TO THE LIGHTHOUSE

CRISTY BURNE

ILLUSTRATIONS BY AMANDA BURNETT

ISBN (PB): 9781925164619

YEAR LEVEL: Y3–6

CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITIES: Sustainability; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures

ABOUT THE BOOK

Isaac arrives on Rottneest Island hoping for an awesome holiday adventure, but his mum would rather he stayed inside where it's safe. Then Isaac meets Emmy. She's allowed to do whatever she wants – and she wants to have fun! With Emmy daring him on, Isaac's life gets more and more exciting. But when things go horribly wrong on their secret midnight adventure, they both wonder whether this time they've gone too far.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cristy Burne grew up climbing trees, jumping drains, chasing cows and inventing stories. She has a passion for learning through doing and loves to inspire creativity, daring and resilience in her readers. Cristy is a children's author and science writer with degrees in biotechnology and science communication. She has also worked as a science circus performer, garbage analyst, Santa's pixie and atom-smashing reporter.

THEMES

- Family
- Friendship
- Adventure
- Honesty
- Forgiveness

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Y3–6 English

Y3–6 History/Geography

Y3–6 Biological Science

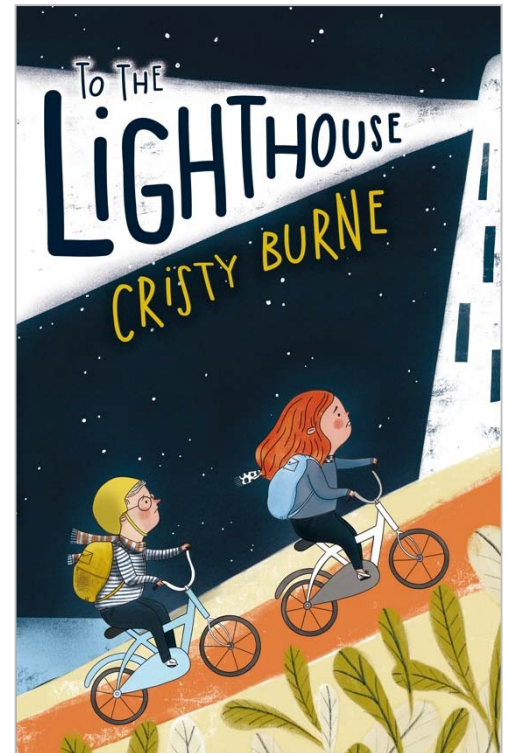
USEFUL WEBSITES

- Author's website: www.cristyburne.com
- Illustrator's website: amandaburnettillustration.wordpress.com

CLASSROOM IDEAS

Discussion questions

1. Have you ever visited an island? Where? What was it like?
2. *Mum could worry about anything, even nodding. It wasn't really her fault. It was just that Isaac was all Mum had left.* (p. 16)
 - a. How would you describe Isaac's mum's behaviour? Why might this be? What do you think Isaac means by 'all she had left'?
 - b. What things do you worry about?
 - c. What are some of the negative health effects of stress?
 - d. What strategies help you relax when you are feeling anxious? Some examples are reading, writing, meditating, drawing, listening to music, watching TV, visiting friends and exercising.
3. Compare and contrast the characters of Isaac and Emmy using a Venn diagram. How are they similar/different? Why do you think their friendship works so well?



4. How would you describe Emmy's relationship with her dad? How does it compare to Isaac and his mum?
5. Emmy claims she's not scared of anything, while Isaac sometimes admits to feeling fear. What things are you most afraid of and why? Discuss with a partner.
6. Why do you think Isaac and Emmy dared each other to tell the truth at the end of the story?
7. Have you ever lied to someone you loved? How did this make you feel? Did you tell the truth in the end?
8. Using quotes from the book to support your claims, describe what messages you took away from the book in relation to one of the following themes: friendship, family, honesty, forgiveness, adventure.

Creative writing

1. Write a short story on the theme 'dares'. What will your characters dare each other to do? Will something go wrong? Or will they successfully complete the challenge/s?
2. What is the most exciting school holiday adventure you have ever had? Write a recount of this experience. Alternatively, write a short story about an imagined school holiday adventure. Where will it be set (e.g. a camp, a beach, overseas)? What exciting activities will your protagonist/s undertake?
3. Where would you most like to spend your school holidays if you could choose any place in the world? Why? Write a persuasive article aimed at convincing your parents and peers to go there.
4. *Emmy grinned down at him from the jetty ... 'How good is that?' she asked, face lit up like sunrise. (p. 38)*
 - a. What are similes? How do they enhance imagery?
 - b. What other similes can you find throughout the book?
 - c. Create some similes of your own to add to descriptions of characters/settings in your stories.
5. Continue the story – how will Isaac and Emmy's holiday end? Will they still be able to have adventures now that Emmy is grounded? Will they bring her siblings along? Will Isaac's mum and Emmy's dad become friends? Will Isaac's mum give Isaac a little more freedom? Will Isaac and Emmy stay friends once they are back on the mainland? Write the next three chapters.

History and geography

1. Reread the note on p. 2, then visit: www.rotnnestisland.com/the-island/about-the-island/our-history.
 - a. What is the *sad history* referred to in the note?
 - b. What were the beliefs, laws, foods, shelters, rituals and ways of life for the Whadjuk Noongar people on Rottnest before colonisation?
 - c. When/why was the name of the island changed from Wadjemup to Rottnest?
 - d. Who lives on the island today?
2. To practise your map-reading skills, view a map of Rottnest Island online and locate the following places: the settlement, the two lighthouses, the main jetty, the salt lakes. Trace the route Isaac and Emmy take on their bikes to the Wadjemup Lighthouse tour.
3. What is the purpose of a lighthouse? How many shipwrecks are estimated to surround Rottnest Island? Choose one and research the history of the vessel. When and why did it sink? Where was it from and what was its cargo? How many passengers were on board? Were there any survivors?

Biological science

1. Create a fact sheet about quokkas with the following information: name, physical characteristics, habitat, diet, life cycle, interesting facts, labelled diagram, conservation status. Include a reference list of all sources used in your research. (Link: www.rotnnestisland.com/quokka)
2. Why is it bad to feed quokkas and what is the fine for doing so? (Link: www.rotnnestisland.com/the-island/about-the-island/quokkas-and-wildlife/protect-wildlife)
3. Rottnest has six major habitats: coastal, salt lakes, brackish swamps, woodlands, heath and settled areas. Compare and contrast the ecosystems in each of these habitats.
4. Visit the sustainability link for Rottnest Island: www.rotnnestisland.com/the-island/about-the-island/sustainability. What sustainability strategies are being used and why are they important?
5. Isaac and Emmy are disappointed when they visit the pink lake at night and disturb the water, only to find that it doesn't glow. What causes the lake's pink colour? What does 'bioluminescence' mean? Why didn't the lake glow? Where in the world can you travel to see bioluminescence in the water?