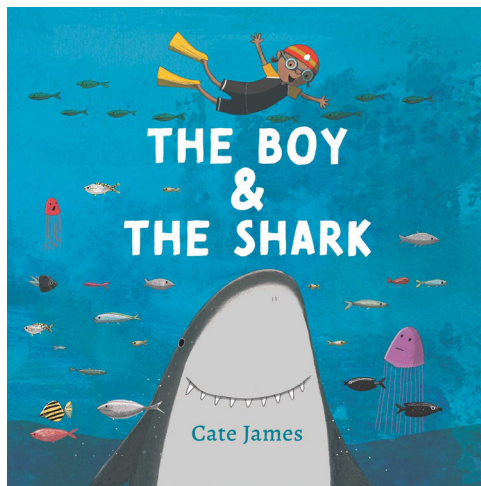




Teacher Notes

The Boy and the Shark

Written & Illustrated by Cate James

Teacher notes prepared by Bec Kavanagh

Publication details

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About the Author

Cate James is an illustrator, artist and author based in the beautiful Northern Beaches of Sydney, Australia. She moved here from Edinburgh, Scotland in 2015 and loves the sunshine. She has been working as a full-time freelance illustrator since 2010 and has a background in printmaking.

Themes

- Sharks
- Adventures
- Friendship
- Conservation
- Imagination

About the Book

William is stuck at his little sister's noisy birthday party.

William does not like parties. William likes sharks.

He wonders if sharks do not like parties either. Perhaps he should find one and ask ...

From Cate James comes a timeless adventure full of curiosity, surprises and friendship.

Before Reading

- Read the title and the blurb of the book aloud. Who or what is the story about? What do you think will happen?
- What do you know about sharks? Would you want to meet one?
- Explore the cover. What details make you want to read (or not read!) this story?

Comprehension questions

- Whose birthday is it?
- What doesn't William like about parties?
- William likes sharks. How many sharks can you spot in his bedroom?
- Who offers to help William find a shark?
- What different underwater animals does William meet on his way to find a shark?
- What do you expect the shark to do when it meets William? What really happens?
- What games does the shark enjoy?
- William forgets to ask the shark one question. What is it, and what do you think the answer will be?

Literacy

HOME, AWAY, HOME

No matter how grand the adventure, most adventure stories follow the same basic journey – home, away, home.

The hero (William) starts the story somewhere familiar (home). But something happens (an annoying birthday party) that makes them want to set out on an adventure. The adventure takes them away from home (into the depths of the ocean) where they resolve the problem (gets an answer from the shark) and are able to return home.

Writers call this journey the structure of the story, which basically means the shape of the story.

- What other stories can you think of that follow this structure?

Normally, the hero of the story (William) returns home with new knowledge, wisdom or skills. What new knowledge does William return home with?

FICTION vs NON-FICTION

There are lots of stories about sharks, and not all of them are true. When a book is true and accurate, we call it a non-fiction book. When an author has written a story from their imagination, and some or all of it is made up, we call it fiction.

- What kind of book is this? How do you know?
- Why are both kinds of stories (fiction and non-fiction) important?
- What kind of book do you prefer to read? What would make you read other types of stories more?

THEME: SHARKS

Some of the animals warn William not to find the shark. The eel even suggests that the shark might eat William! What are some of the things other people have told you about sharks? It's always wise to be cautious, but sometimes we fear things that we don't understand. Read one of the following books as a companion text:

- Smart About Sharks by Owen Davey
- Great White Shark by Clare Saxby and Cindy Lane
- Australia's Amazing Sharks by Australian Geographic
- Sensational Sharks by Tim Flannery and Emma Flannery

Use the following questions to guide your discussion:

- What should you do if you ever see a shark?
- What are some of the common shark myths that people believe?
- What three facts do you think people should know about sharks?

Final reflections

- Do you think this is the last time William will meet the shark?
- Do you think the shark learned anything from William? What?
- How would you describe the ending of the story?

Creative Activities

- Use the structure of this story to plan your own adventure story:
 - One day (NAME OF YOUR HERO) is hanging out at (A PLACE THEY FEEL SAFE). But suddenly (WHAT HAPPENS TO DRIVE THEM AWAY) and they have to set out on a quest. The adventure takes them away from home to (THE PLACE THEY GO ON THEIR ADVENTURE) where they (RESOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM)

and finally are able to return home to bed. Give your story a title and draw a picture for the front cover.

- Do some research on sharks and make an informative poster to share with the class. You might decide to focus on a single type of shark, or look at all the sharks that live in a particular location. Include the following:
 - A drawing of your shark/s
 - The name of your shark/s
 - Where your shark/s are found
 - What they eat
 - Any other interesting facts
- The book ends with a hint that William will go to visit the shark again. What adventures do you think William and the shark will go on in the future? Write a short story imagining a future adventure for these two unlikely friends.
- William meets a number of underwater animals on his way to find the shark. Imagine that you are one of them and rewrite this story from their perspective. Start with the moment they wake up, and finish after they've said goodbye to William.