

THE DEAD DON'T HURT US

A RESOURCE FOR TEACHERS

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A RESOURCE FOR TEACHERS

This is an educational resource for teachers in the United Kingdom. The material is suitable for Scottish teachers working with the Curriculum for Excellence second stage. In England and Wales the resource can be used with pupils at Key Stage 2 transitioning to Key Stage 3.

The Dead Don't Hurt Us can be purchased from www.amazon.co.uk or the publisher at www.astwood.org.uk

The author, P. F. Cairns, is happy to respond to questions about the book and to receive feedback on this educational resource. She welcomes photographs or videos of any project work undertaken by classes. Please contact her at pfcairns@astwood.org.uk

SYNOPSIS OF THE 'DEAD DON'T HURT US'

This is a fast moving, hard hitting, contemporary adventure story based in the hot and dangerous Amazon jungle and the Peruvian city of Iquitos.

A highly stressed, arrogant British oil executive and his wife search for their children who are missing in the rainforest. During the rescue mission, the parents come face to face with the terrible destruction of the rainforest by oil exploration and mining. They come to realise the huge impact this has on the village communities and an ancient way of life.

The children experience the hardships of jungle life, encountering witch doctors and cocaine smugglers along the way. Reaching the jungle city of Iquitos, they are mistaken for street rats. Pursued by the authorities, they hide in the sewers.

An exciting story where love triumphs over evil and hope over despair. A book, the author hopes, will communicate to the reader the effects of poverty, the importance of education and the need to take every opportunity to make the world a better place. To do nothing is not an option. The 150 million street children of the world need today's generation to do something to help them.

The somewhat scary title comes from the fact that the author was shocked to learn while in Peru, that street children often hide in cemeteries because they say 'the dead don't hurt us'.

INTRODUCTION

The author has received many encouraging letters from readers; young people enjoy reading the novel '**The Dead Don't Hurt Us**'. One experienced teacher stated that her students would frequently ask to read yet another chapter in class; she was not accustomed to such enthusiasm!

As well as providing an enjoyable read, this novel raises awareness of various worldly and personal issues, as such it can be used as a cross-curricular resource. At the beginning of each section is a list of curricular areas that may be covered. These areas are outlined below.

LITERACY AND ENGLISH

The novel can be used as a text to improve literacy; however, the topics covered also allow an opportunity for discussion, debate, drama and creative writing. This resource encourages the student to dig deeper, research for more information on issues raised and critically analyse and evaluate their findings.

SOCIAL STUDIES

The novel is based in the Amazon jungle; students will be challenged by exploring the geography of the region. The looming environmental catastrophe that is deforestation and how this impacts on the lives of the indigenous population is worthy of in-depth study. Students can compare their lives in the United Kingdom with the life of an Amazonian villager. The vulnerability of street children, the responsibilities of governments and the response of the United Nations can be researched, discussed and debated also.

RELIGIOUS AND MORAL EDUCATION

Christian values are demonstrated in the narrative, giving the teacher the opportunity to discuss these in more detail with students. The need to care for weaker members of any society is all too evident in the story, an issue that can be developed further in class.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Several characters are, at times, under considerable emotional stress during this adventure. Their response and the response of others to them can be explored and analysed by students. There is an opportunity to consider the risks to health while in a hostile environment such as the Amazon jungle, and this can be further researched by students.

TECHNOLOGY

Within this resource there are various investigative tasks that will require the students to use the internet as a tool for further research. The information gathered will then have to be understood, analysed and evaluated.

Scottish pupils have produced and presented an animation of the novel using various technologies. The excitement and satisfaction of the pupils with their achievement was evident at the 'premier' of their film.

CREATIVE ARTS

There are many creative opportunities within the resource; drama, artwork, and animation. Working together, enthusiastic students may present their animation or play to invited guests.

A. FIRST IMPRESSIONS

CURRICULAR AREAS

Literacy and English: enjoyment and choice, understanding, evaluating and analysing.

Social studies: caring for vulnerable groups.

Creative Arts: arts and design.

Discussion Points

1. Look at the cover:
 - a. Why do you think the author has used such bright colours?
 - b. Why do you think the light shines on one child's face?
 - c. What does the blurb tell you about the author?
 - d. Which words in the blurb make you want to read the book?
2. What type of book is this?
3. Does the preface encourage you to read the book?
4. How did you feel after reading the poem *The Street Boys*?
5. Why do you think the author chose that title for the book?
6. Why do you think the author wrote the book?

Things to do

1. Where in the world is the story set?
 - a. Locate the Amazon and the city of Iquitos on a world map.
2. What does the preface tell you about the storyline?
 - b. Take a blank sheet of paper and write down the main words which point to the plot.
3. From the poem, make a diagram showing the dangers that street children face.
4. Draw a picture of the children in the poem.
5. Imagine you are the author; design the front cover that you would like to use.