

Teacher Notes

for *The Slightly Alarming Tale of the Whispering Wars* by Jaclyn Moriarty

Glim's gabble

On page 22-23, Glim describes herself as shy. Listen to the description and reflect if you agree or disagree with her description.

Words and pictures

A number of pencil illustrations support this tale. After reading the novel, revisit the pages with illustrations and reflect on how they support this tale.

Alternatively examine each illustration, ask students to brainstorm as much information as possible from looking at the picture. Read the associated chapter and compare what you predicted to what was written by the author.

Endpapers, pages 5, 12, 18,

Opening words

A great book has a beginning sentence, paragraph or chapter that draws the reader in. Brainstorm as a class, all the questions you ask yourself about the first chapter: *Opening words*.

Curious characters

Read the first three chapters pages 1-16. List all the characteristics of Finlay and Honey-Bee you discover in these chapters. Use a grid to distinguish what each character reveals about his/herself and each other.

About the Author, About the Illustrator

Read the information at the back of the book about the author and/or the illustrator. Distinguish between what you believe is possibly fact, possibly fiction, certainly fact or certainly fiction (impossible).

Title tumbles

A title is often the first thing that draws the reader into selecting a book. Play with the title to create new ones that generate different ideas and feelings for stories.

Write the title, *The Slightly Alarming Tale of the Whispering Wars*, on the board. Use the word *tale* as an example. Brainstorm other words for *tale*, (story, anecdote, narrative, account, report, account, legend, fable, myth, yarn, saga.) Replace some of these words into the title. How does each word affect the way you feel about the title? Divide the class into four groups. Each group brainstorms alternative key words: *slightly* (adverb ending in the suffix -ly), *alarming* (present participle verb or gerund), *whispering* (present participle verb or gerund), *wars* (plural noun).

Each group substitutes a word into the title to create tumbled titles for *The Slightly Alarming Tale of the Whispering Wars*.

Dictionary delights

On page 3, Finlay defines some of the words he uses:

‘(Annual means once a year. Spindrift is my town)...(Athletics are running, high jump and so on. Compete means- Listen, you can look things up in the dictionary if you don’t know what they mean. Otherwise this will take forever).’

On page 21, Finlay writes:

‘Crowds of Kingdoms and Empires and almost everyone is wicked and nefarious. (Nefarious is just another way of saying *wicked*, to underline how bad these places are.)

On page 25, Finlay is offended by Honeybee.

‘ She could not abide them. That’s what she said.

It’s because she’s rich, see. Regular people would say, ‘I don’t like violins,’ meaning they’d prefer to stay away from violins, thanks.

But rich people cannot abide things, and what they mean is violins should not exist.’

Jaclyn Moriarty uses a range of interesting words to describe people and events and to make her writing more engaging.

Use the list of words below, found in the first few chapters, to define these words and create your own engaging sentences to share with the class.

crackerjack
prowess
affectionately
deportment
splendour
pageant
interject
associate
conceal
amidst
slovenly
constabulary
vigilant
pavement
determined
soothingly
fierce
squabble
daft
git
cobblestones
befriend
marquee
relevant
tallow
kippers
guffaw