

GRIMSDON

By DEBORAH ABELA



TEACHING SUPPORT KIT

A novel for ages 9 to 12

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GRIMSDON

Teaching Support Kit

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1. PLOT SUMMARY

The city of Grimsdon is in ruins. Three years ago a massive wave broke the barriers and flooded this grand city. Many were rescued, some disappeared and others were left behind to live in the tops of buildings, church domes and towers.

One of the lost is **Isabella Charm**, the feisty twelve-year-old leader of a group of children whose new home is the top floor of a once-lavish mansion called The Palace. They have a lot to deal with: thick rains and choking fog, the threat of further rising seas, powerful sneaker waves, unscrupulous bounty hunters, a ruthless harbour lord and the persistent, creeping rumours of sea monsters.

With Isabella are two ten-year-old twins called **Bea and Raffy** who are never apart, a young girl called **Fly** who never speaks and a twelve-year-old called **Griffin**, a brilliantly intelligent boy who acts as Isabella's right-hand man. He's quiet, shy and fiercely protective of this small group. He also secretly has a crush on Isabella but would never let her know.

They survive by scrounging through abandoned houses and shops, by Griffin's inventions, by creating a rooftop garden created from seeds scavenged from nearby houses. But Isabella knows their time is limited in Grimsdon. With more buildings collapsing, food sources running low and the sneaker waves getting more powerful than ever before, she knows she has to find a better home for the kids. But are the inland cities safe and if they are, how will they get there?

BLOW-BY-BLOW BREAKDOWN OF THE ACTION

- Prologue: Isabella and the children scavenge through a mansion. They are being watched by a young boy called, Xavier Stone.
- Xavier breaks into The Palace, a building where the kids live. He is caught and strung upside down while they interrogate him. He insists he hasn't come to steal anything but to share his new invention with them: a flying machine called the Aerotrope. He takes Isabella for a ride: it is magnificent. Griffin doesn't trust Xavier at all.
- Xavier takes them to the Haggle in the old parliament house, where children meet to swap objects and information, run by the dark and moody Raven.

- During one scavenging run, Isabella and Xavier escape from kidnapping adults by ducking into the State Library. It's here they meet Jeremiah, a crazy man in multiple coats and slippers held together with ties. He threatens them with a fish until he realises they offer no threat. They leave him an apple, the taste of which he hasn't had in years.
- Meanwhile, an evil harbour lord called Sneddon sends his two thugs to collect goods which they scavenge for him on a regular basis. The kids agree to this to keep the peace and protect their home. Xavier asks why they give their hard-earned scavengings to an adult when adults are the reason they're in this flooded mess. Griffin warns disobeying Sneddon may lead to trouble.
- Bea is almost killed in a building collapse, but is saved by Isabella, who just manages to pull her from the water and the clutches of a giant sea creature.
- Isabella and Griffin, still not sure if Xavier can be trusted, catch him returning from a night run to the inland. He has brought food – chocolate, custard, cake – and he explains what inland is like. Isabella has one of her nightmares about not being able to save her dad, and she asks Xavier to take her inland.
- Jeremiah reveals he was part of a team of scientists who warned the government the flood was coming and the city needed to be fortified. The government refused to listen. He takes them underwater in a contraption he built in preparation for the floods called a Submariner. They see more giant sea beasts and the submerged flood barriers. Isabella asks if he knew her father. Jeremiah and he had tried to convince the government to alter the barriers to save the city. This convinces Isabella that Xavier is right: it's the adults' fault they are here, and they should refuse payment to Sneddon.
- Xavier picks on Griffin, doing so to teach him how to fight. He shares some judo moves that come in handy when Sneddon's men come back.
- Isabella and Xavier go inland. There are muddy wastelands, including Isabella's own town, a lot of poor people living in tent cities and some richer people who live well. These are the people Xavier steals from. When they return, Sneddon has had his revenge. Fly is bound to a pole on a building opposite during a storm. Isabella rescues her and Griffin attacks Xavier, saying this is his fault. Fly asks them to stop – the first time they've heard her speak!

- Isabella goes to make Sneddon pay for what he did to Fly, but before she reaches the boat, she's caught in a sneaker wave. She almost drowns but is rescued by a giant sea creature: it's the Skelene that Fly drew and that Jeremiah warned them about. The creature scoops her out of the water and flies her back to the Palace, where Fly is waiting for them.
- Isabella, Griffin and Xavier take Jeremiah to the Haggles, where he locates government documents proving they ignored warnings about the flood – and that Sneddon was instrumental in persuading the ministers to think it was foolhardy. Raven reveals that Xavier has been lying. His parents didn't die in the floods as he claimed, but live inland in a big house, and he came to Grimsdon seeking adventure. Isabella is furious and tells him never to return to the Palace.
- Isabella sneaks out at night to attack Sneddon. A battle erupts between her and the thugs, spurred on by the arrival of Raven, Xavier and Griffin, and the timely arrival of not one but two Skelene.
- In The Palace for the last time, the kids prepare to leave. Jeremiah has spruced himself up: no more plaited beard and hair, no more slippers and multilayered coats and floppy hat. He needs to look respectable, he tells them, if he is to have any chance of applying to adopt them. A government chopper arrives to take them inland and away from Grimsdon.

2. ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Having been a mad reader and writer as a kid, Deb left school and studied Teaching before she left Australia to see the world. For three years she travelled from America to the UK to Africa, Europe and parts of Asia before returning home and driving around Australia. After that she completed a Bachelor of Communications majoring in writing and film at the University of Technology, Sydney, which meant she got to write, read and watch a lot of films.

Her first job was in the script department at Southern Star, producers of many shows including *Blue Water High*, *Ready Steady Cook* and *Rush*.

After that, she worked in the script department of Network Ten before moving to the children's show *Cheez TV* for seven years. Her main job was coming

up with the ideas and writing the scripts. She'd choose the guests, direct the studio and location segments and edit stories. It was a great job and she travelled to lots of fun places like New Zealand, New York, England and the snowfields of Australia.

She left that job in December 2001 to write. She's written the **Max Remy Superspy** series, about a feisty eleven-year-old Superspy (she's thirteen in the final book) who fights bad guys from Hollywood to the Amazon Jungle and even to the middle of her mother's wedding. Deb has also written the **Jasper Zammit (Soccer Legend)** series with the advice of soccer champion Johnny Warren, and **The Remarkable Secret of Aurelie Bonhoffen**, which was shortlisted for Best Children's Book in the 2010 Aurealis Awards and was named a Children's Book Council of Australia Notable Book in 2010. It's about a girl who lives on a seaside pier that she discovers she shares with ghosts! Friendly ones, of course.

You can find out more about spies, soccer, ghosts and flooded cities at <http://www.deborahabela.com>.

3. AUTHOR'S INSPIRATION

After books about spies, soccer and ghosts, Deb's thoughts turned somewhere different for her next book. For years governments all over the world, including Australia, had not been paying attention to what was happening to the environment. It wasn't until millions of people rallied around the world, Al Gore travelled over the globe talking about his book, **An Inconvenient Truth**, and organisations such as Clean Up Australia, Planet Ark and The Australian Conservation Foundation took their own action, that governments started to listen.

She wanted to write about a world that has a lot of familiar elements to it (friends, laughter, family) but is also quite unique. The kids' need to survive drives the novel and so calls for a large dose of action, which Deb loves writing.

Grimsdon started as a little question: *What would happen if a city flooded and some kids were left behind?*

Immediately the scene came to life in Deb's head: a flooded city with only the tops of buildings left; swirling, stormy waters; lots of rain and even a few sneaker waves, where a few waves combine as if from nowhere to form a giant powerful wave.

A few characters came to life in her head: Isabella Charm, Xavier Stone and Griffin. There were also a few younger kids with them and she knew the book would need something bigger ... so there was a bad guy living on a ship in the harbour and, of course, with the drifting of the flood waters, a sea monster dragged up from the deep.

Deb spent a few months planning the novel – working out what would happen when, and who exactly were these characters who had begun popping up in her head? It wasn't until she felt she knew them really well that she was ready to start writing chapter one.

4. PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

THE BOOK'S COVER

The cover of any book has the very important job of enticing readers to pick up the book. It hints at what may be discovered in the story, what it is about and maybe some of its main themes or concerns.

Zoe Walton, Associate Publisher of books for kids at Random House, had the job of finding the right artist to match Deb's story. She knew she wanted a cover that was a little mysterious, action-packed and dealt with a city after a big flood. She liked the work of an artist called Zdenko Bašić and knew he'd be perfect. In her brief to Zdenko she asked him to create an illustration that would convey: 'adventure, excitement, a hint of danger, friendship, whimsy and fantasy'. You can find more examples of Zdenko's work at:

<http://www.thebrightagency.com/artists/view/139>

Class discussion

1. Looking at the cover of *Grimsdon*, what do you think is happening? What things can you see? Are there any half-hidden or hinted-at objects? What do you think they may indicate?
2. What kind of book do you think it might be? Action? Adventure? Historical?
3. What do you think the story is about?
4. Describe the characters on the front. What kind of personalities do you think they have?

5. From reading the blurb and looking at the cover, write a first paragraph that you think would match the cover.

5. CHARACTERS

Read the following character descriptions.

ISABELLA CHARM

Isabella is a feisty twelve-year-old girl who is the leader of the group of kids who live in a building known as The Palace. She's strong and over the last few years has taught herself knife skills that have made her very dangerous to mess with.

Her mum left when Isabella was only young so, before the floods, she lived with her dad, who worked on the city's floodgates. He had been working on them the day of the floods and ever since, Isabella's had nightmares of trying to rescue him – something she only shares with her best friend Griffin.

Isabella knows their life in Grimsdon cannot last forever as the city crumbles around them. She and Griffin have tried to make their way back to dry land in the past and failed, but she knows time is running out and she needs to find a new way of making that happen.

XAVIER STONE

Whereas Isabella is measured risk-taker, Xavier loves to add a generous measure of danger to whatever he does. He is fourteen years old and street smart, having a seemingly endless knowledge of all of Grimsdon. He relishes the newfound freedom and independence the floods have given him. No school, no parents. His greatest fear is to be weak, like his shallow father and ghost of a mother. It's for this reason that he won't back down from anyone, even though sometimes, for his own safety's sake, he should.

He is brash and a show-off but also very clever. He has created a flying machine called an Aerotrope and a converted boat called an Aquacraft and enjoys living on his own – until he sees Isabella. He likes the way she and the kids are together and realises he is lonely.

GRIFFIN

Griffin is Isabella's right-hand man. Having gone to the same school together since they were kids, they are more like brother and sister than just friends. He's quiet and shy but is always ready to be there for her. He secretly has a crush on her but would never let her know.

Griffin is a bookish kid who never was any good at sport and sometimes even manages to trip over his own feet. He excelled at school and is the resourceful one of the house. He led the scavenging for seeds and plants to build their rooftop garden, created a wave-powered energy system that enables them to have light and hot baths and also set up a rainwater system for them to have fresh water.

He is cautious and overly nervous about things going wrong. He is very protective of the kids of The Palace and when Xavier muscles in with his smarmy ways and show-off behaviour, Griffin suspects something about his story isn't true. It is through his meeting with Xavier, though, that Griffin finds out that he is infinitely braver than he ever thought he could be.

BEA AND RAFFY, TWINS

Bea and Raffy are ten-year-old twins who were rescued when the floods hit. They were housed in temporary shelters until they were found separate foster parents to take them in. Having been treated badly, the twins ran away several times until they decided the one way to be together forever was to run away to Grimsdon.

They have active imaginations, something they use to hide their fears. They enjoy dressing up and having stories read to them by Griffin.

When they meet Xavier, they instantly fall for his cheekiness and sense of fun and love the fact that he can find food they had long ago said goodbye to, like chocolate and custard.

DRAGONFLY

No one is sure how old Fly is, but they guess she's around ten. She was found abandoned and alone on a rainy rooftop in Grimsdon. Isabella brought her home and even though they tried to find out about her, she refused to speak.

She got her name from the suitcase she was clutching when she was found.

It had a drawing of an old fashioned bi-plane with the word 'Dragonfly' underneath. She has been Fly ever since.

She sleeps alone in a large bay window. Often Isabella will wake and see her kneeling at the window, staring outside, her hands splayed against the glass. She carries a notebook with her everywhere and draws pictures of what she sees. Sometimes her drawings are filled with storms and the hints of huge sea creatures lurking under the waves. She draws to calm herself when she's scared.

She is fiercely loyal to the Palace kids, especially Griffin, and when Xavier arrives and makes fun of him, she makes it clear that she is sticking by her friend. She may seem meek, but when it comes to standing up for her friends, she won't let danger stop her.

RAVEN

Raven is the leader of the Hagggle, a huge Swap Meet of lost children. He runs the Hagggle with a code of honour among thieves. He is tough, very good at defending himself and almost as good as Isabella when it comes to knives.

He doesn't think much of Griffin and Isabella when he first meets them but Isabella soon shows what she is made of and Raven develops an instant respect.

He enjoys life in Grimsdon. His parents always told him he'd end up in jail so this is infinitely better. He looks after the kids, play games, stays up as late as he wants and has a fierce hatred and distrust of adults.

BYRON P. SNEDDON, ESQ.

Sneddon was once an important government minister. He has been living on an old clipper in the Grimsdon harbour since the floods. He is deadly afraid of the water and is amassing a fortune on the boat (with the help of the kids) to eventually buy his way back into society inland. He is eccentric, wears a wild hairdo and has a tiger snake called Albert that curls around his shoulders and a vial of antivenin strung around his neck. He has two thugs called Mouse and Tyran.

JEREMIAH

Jeremiah is an adult who lives in the State Library. He has an overgrown beard, plaited hair and a predilection for incoherent ramblings. When he first meets the

kids, he can't remember who he is and what his life was before the floods, but he soon remembers he was a Physical Oceanographer: a person who studies winds, tides, reading patterns in the water and weather. He had spent the last year before the floods trying to convince the government that the floodgates would not be enough to save the city in flood but he was ignored.

Activities

- Choose one of the descriptions above and draw a picture of a character, adding the bits that aren't mentioned to build a representation of what this character is like.
- What do you think the author wants you to think about these characters from the way she has described them?
- Choose one of the characters from **Grimsdon** and conduct an interview with them. Make it as interesting and entertaining as you can. Find out how their childhood was, their dreams and hopes, a funny story from their life that helps us know them better. Use what you know from the story but also what you think may be true about them. Write this up as a newspaper report or a transcript of an interview, or create a video.
- **Point of View:** Each of the characters experienced the floods and what followed in a different way. Choose one of them and describe, from their point of view, either:
 - what it was like when the flood hit
 - day-to-day life in Grimsdon
 - what it was like when the building collapsed beside the Palace
 - any other scene in the book that captured your imagination.You can do this as a blog or a diary entry.
- **Leaving Grimsdon:** What do you think life will be like for the kids after they have left Grimsdon? What will it be like to eat? Shop? Go to school? Choose one of the characters and write a journal entry or blog about your first month on dry land.

6. THEMES AND ACTIVITIES

A) A NEW WORLD

In the world we live in, money, power and technology are very important, but all that changes for the kids of Grimsdon who have been left behind after the floods.

Class discussion: Are the same things still important in Grimsdon? What is important in your world? If you were one of the kids of Grimsdon, what would be most important to you?

Activity: Draw up a list of what you think was important to these kids before the floods and after.

B) FAMILY

Many families are different from each other in the way they act and how many people make up the family – some families have two parents and some have one, sometimes there are no parents and the children are brought up by other people, like the grandparents. When the kids of Grimsdon lose their families, they become a family of their own.

Class discussion

- How are the kids of Grimsdon like a family?
- How does Xavier's presence change the relationships between the kids?
- Why does Griffin find it so hard to trust Xavier?
- What was the lie Xavier told Isabella and the kids? Did he deserve their trust even after they discovered the lie?
- How many people do you think it takes to make a family?
- What do you think are important ingredients in making a family?

Activity: Draw up a family tree with you as the centre. Include not only family members but other people who make your life special.

C) LOSS

Read the following excerpt from **Grimsdon** (p. 191). **Background:** Xavier flies Isabella back to her old neighbourhood. She hasn't been there for three years and when she arrives she is faced with how it was destroyed after the floods hit.

It was only a few minutes' walk along a small side alley before they were in Isabella's old street, lined with terrace houses with small front yards. Scooters and bicycles lay tangled together; more cars were overturned or jammed against telegraph poles. In the centre of the road was a bed, sitting upright as if waiting to be made and carried back inside.

As Isabella walked along the street her legs felt heavy, as if she was treading on quicksand.

The gardens were overgrown and creepers had swarmed over fences, collapsing some, climbing up walls and invading windows and gutters. She stopped at one gate and pushed aside a clump of leaves to reveal the metal outline of a sailboat.

'This is Griffin's house.' The front door was long gone and the inside walls sagged with water rot. The roofs had partially caved in. She picked up a small toy car and put it in her pocket. 'My house is three doors away.'

She counted the forty-two steps it took to get there. Something she'd done since she was little. The fence had been torn away, and beneath the strangling greenery in the yard she found the faded remains of a skateboard. 'I rode this everywhere.'

'Good with knives and a skateboarder, too?' Xavier said. 'You are impressive.'

They drew their knives from their belts and hacked through the weeds and creepers. They had to ram their shoulders against the door a few times before it fell off its hinges.

Inside was a wreck. Furniture, books and lamps were thrown against each other in piles surrounded by muddied walls and floors.

Isabella carefully stepped past each room until she came to her bedroom. The frame of her bed was slammed against the wall with the blankets gathered around it in a soiled mess. Her books lay splayed and buckled, her schoolbag torn and emptied, but above the mess, hanging on the wall, was one possession the water hadn't touched: a photo of Isabella with her mum and dad. She lifted the frame from its rusted hook and removed the photo from beneath the glass.

'They look nice,' Xavier said.

Isabella didn't answer. Tears ran down her cheek, soaking into the sleeves of her coat.

'I'm sorry,' Xavier said softly.

'I guess a part of me knew it would be like this, but a little part of me hoped it would be okay.'

She tried to stop them coming but couldn't. Her body slid down the wall, shaking with sobs.

Xavier crouched beside her. Isabella softened and collapsed against his shoulder.

Every character in *Grimsdon* faces losing things they cherish. Have you ever faced losing something precious to you? How did it make you feel?

Activity: Draw up a chart of the positive and negative sides of living in Grimsdon. What are the personal qualities the kids of Grimsdon need to have to survive in their new world?

D) CLIMATE CHANGE

Part of the reason Isabella and her friends are living in a flooded city is because governments had been ignoring issues about climate change for years, believing it wouldn't happen in their lifetime.

Class discussion

- How important do you think it is for governments to not only make laws to suit people now, but in the future as well?

Internet research

Here are some wonderful internet resources about climate change:

- www.primaryschool.com.au/environmentresults.php?strand=Energy%20and%20Climate%20Change&grade=56

Brilliant resource for kids in primary school when talking about climate change. It includes quizzes, sustainable energy sources, tips and we can do to tackle climate change and a challenge to be the president of the EU with the aim to reduce carbon emissions and keep the voters happy!

- http://portal.environment.wa.gov.au/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/DOE_ADMIN/GR EENHOUSE_REPOSITORY/TAB6327544/CCHANGEPMY_10.PDF

Practical handout for kids to learn about climate change.

- www.climatechangematters.net.au/resources.htm

A website that has ideas for climate change activities from years 3 to 10.

- www.forteachersforstudents.com.au/ClimateChange/Primary/lesson-ideas.php

A resource for teachers and students to apply climate change activities

across the curriculum.

- www.scienceinschool.org/2008/issue10/psiclimate

A website that spells out science activities related to issues surrounding climate change.

- www.google.co.uk/schools/primary.html

This website has eight different lesson plans for primary students dealing with issues such as animal habitats, climate change, and chocolate and fair trade.

- www.walk.com.au/WSTSD01/page.asp?pageid=260

Walk to School Safely campaign.

- www.themeatrix.com

An interactive website with fun animation that talks about factory farming and alternatives, e.g. local organic farming or buying from farmers' markets.

Activities:

i) Debate topics

- That individuals cannot make a big impact in combating climate change
- That being a vegetarian is better for the environment than being a meat-eater
- That protecting the environment is a government problem.

ii) Researching environmental agencies

Choose an organisation which is actively helping to improve the world's environment. Who are they? What do they do? What do they suggest we do to help the planet have a healthier future? What can we do in our own backyards to ensure we help protect our part of the planet? Present a report as a powerpoint, a blog or webpage.

iii) Make a poster

Think about all the things you have learned about climate change and design a poster that points out why it is an important issue to you. You may like to focus on the causes of climate change, what we can do to help reduce carbon emissions,

some facts about climate change good and bad. Think also of images associated with climate change: carbon footprint, renewable energy sources such as wind farms, colours such as green for the environment, black for pollution.

iv) Give a 'rabble-rousing' speech

What are the issues about climate change and protecting our environment that are important to you? You can make it local, e.g. what my family are doing to help the environment, or make it larger, e.g. the impacts of climate change on animals around the globe.

Prepare a speech that is going to inform and inspire your audience in a convincing and entertaining way. Research your speech so you can add persuasive facts or statistics. Avoid using generalizations and exaggeration and don't forget, even though it can be a serious subject, a good speech can often contain humour.

E) DESIGN YOUR OWN BOOK COVER OR TRAILER

Book covers are very important. Sometimes if a book hasn't sold well, the publisher may change the cover to try and reach the audience they want.

In designing your own book cover for *Grimsdon*, think about the following questions:

- Who do you think is the audience for *Grimsdon*?
- What are the most important elements of the story to you?
- What images would you put on the cover to best portray the story?
- What scenes from the book may grab the reader's attention but not give away too much of the story?

Book trailers are a new way to tell readers about books. Have a look at two of Deb's book trailers for her books, *The Remarkable Secret of Aurelie Bonhoffen* and *Grimsdon*. Think about the music she has used, the images, the pace of changing the images, how they match the music and the book.

- *Aurelie* trailer: http://deborahabela.com./Aurelie_1.html
- *Grimsdon* trailer: http://deborahabela.com./Grimsdon_Preview.html

Make a trailer for **Grimsdon** that you think captures the story well and make the reader want to grab the book. Follow these steps:

- Start by writing a script – make it catchy, perhaps use some intriguing questions, or maybe write a cliffhanger that makes your reader want to know more.
- Storyboard your trailer – decide if you will use actors, drawings or photos. (See BLM attached.)
- Choose images and music.
- Edit your trailer together, adding images, music and sound effects. Decide how you will move from one image to another, e.g. dissolve, cut, wipe, etc.
- You can find music from free music websites, use your own photos or ones from free sharing websites such as flickr. You may also like to find sound effects from free sound effects websites. Have fun!

F) CREATIVE WRITING

Be your own action hero – creating action scenes

Read the following excerpt from page 130 and see how the author has created action and tension. Underline words, phrases or dialogue that help to build the suspense and makes you worry for the safety of her characters.

Background: While scavenging on a nearby building, Bea becomes trapped on a building that begins to collapse. Xavier and Isabella use the flying machine to try to save her but Bea can't hold on and she falls in. Isabella dives in after her. The others watch from the roof of the Palace.

Another loud crack echoed from the collapsing building. The river churned and rolled restlessly.

'There she is!' Raffy pointed at Bea's red curls. She spluttered and gasped, her hands smacking the water, trying to find something to hold onto.

'She keeps getting dragged under.'

Fly held Raffy's hand in a futile attempt to calm him down.

Isabella emerged from the waves seconds later. She pushed her hair from her face and searched for Bea as another clump of stone broke away and smashed into the water only metres away.

'She's there!' Raffy shouted.

Isabella followed Raffy's finger and ploughed towards her, slamming her arms into the water.

*'Please, please, please,' Raffy whispered.
Fly tapped Griffin on the arm and pointed a little way upriver.
There was something stirring in the water.
'What is it?'*

As if in answer to Griffin's question, a curved back rippling with spikes curled out of the water before rolling back into the swell, pushing aside building waves on either side as it plunged below.

*'It's heading straight for them!' Raffy pulled forward. 'Let me go.'
Fly dug her fingers into his arm and held him back.
'Isabella!' Griffin called. 'Watch out!'*

Activity: Write what may happen next, keeping in mind that you want to keep the action suspenseful and exciting.

Mythical creatures

FACT: An estimated 50-80% of all life on earth is found under the ocean's surface. Less than 10% of that space has been explored by humans. 85% of the area and 90% of the volume constitute the dark, cold environment we call the deep sea. (Source: marinebio.org/MarineBio/Facts) Who knows what animals exist down there that we have never seen.

In **Grimsdon**, scientist Jeremiah believes that the movement of the oceans that has led to the flooding of their city has led to the awakening of sea creatures lying deep beneath the oceans of the north.

There have been many writings about sea monsters throughout the ages. Some of the most famous are from *A Natural History of Norway* by Erik Pontoppidan, Bishop of Bergen, written in 1752. Some creatures resembled serpents, giant finned dragons and colossal squid and had names like Ziphius, Pristis, Physeter and Architeuthis.

Quote:

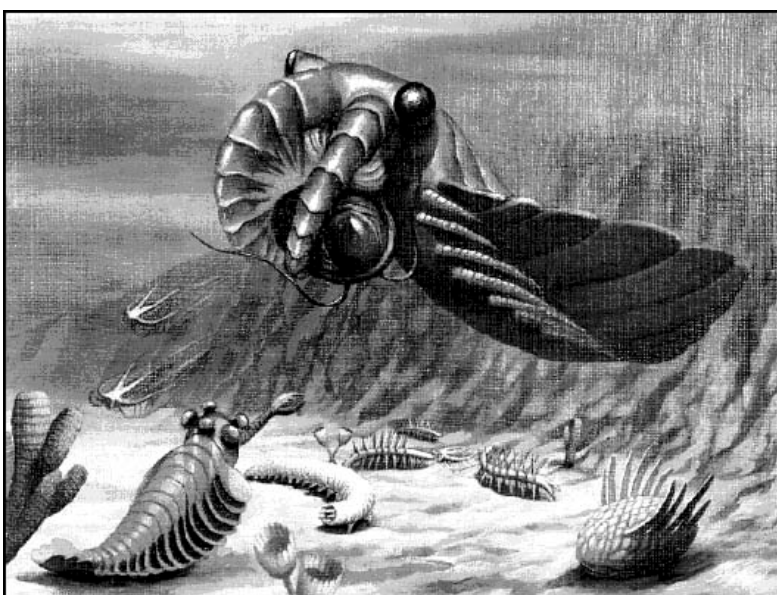
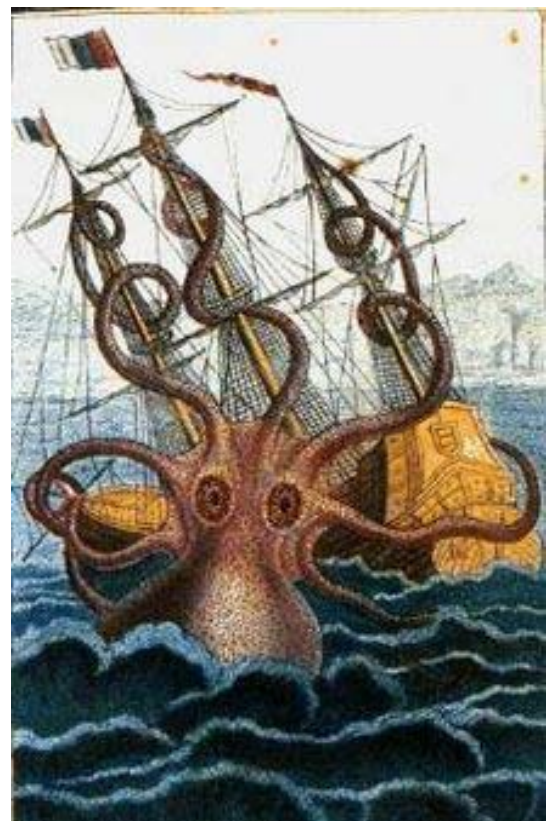
'In Norse legend, the Skelene rose from the deep.' He (Jeremiah) flicked through the pages, searching. 'Floating quietly on the waves. Sneaky thing. Sailors thought it was an island, but when a ship came close, the Skelene pulled it under, ate everyone on board. Here!' He pointed at an illustration of an oval-headed beast with bulging eyes wrapping its many tentacles around the hull of ship. (Grimsdon, pp. 109–110)

Activity: Eyewitness account of your battle on the high seas!

Write about your encounter with a sea monster. Choose one of the sea creatures below, give it a name and write a story about the day you saw this beast. It can be as a newspaper article, a diary or a blog, or you may like to do a graphic story, using cartoon panels to help you to tell your story. It can be set now or in the past. Perhaps you even saw it over a series of days or weeks.

Whatever you choose, make your story suspenseful, exciting and mysterious. Remember to include how the beast looks, where it was seen, what it did and what your reactions were. You can choose to be whoever you like: a sailor, a scientist, an explorer or a rich passenger on a luxury ocean liner.

Make sure it has a strong beginning, an imaginative and interesting sequence of events in the middle and a satisfying end.



7. GRIMSDON QUIZ

Now you've reached the end of your study of **Grimsdon**, see how well you go at the Grimsdon Quiz.

1. What is the name of Xavier's Flying machine?
2. What is the name of the home where Isabella and the kids live?
3. Which character gets stuck on the roof of a collapsing building?
4. How did Fly get her name?
5. What is the name of Isabella's neighbourhood that she and Xavier fly to?
6. What is the name of the harbour lord?
7. What is the name of his ship?
8. How does Jeremiah try to defend himself against Isabella and Xavier?
9. What vehicle did Jeremiah build in preparation for the floods?
10. What is the Haggie and where is it?
11. What is the name of the book Griffin reads to the younger kids?
12. What forms when smaller waves collide into a giant wave?
13. What is the name of the creature Jeremiah warns is coming toward Grimsdon?
14. What is Xavier's sailing invention called?
15. Name two foods the kids miss most from before the floods?
16. Why aren't they usually allowed to talk about them?
17. What self-defence technique does Xavier teach Griffin in the greenhouse?
18. What kind of pet does Byron P. Sneddon have?

READERS' THEATRE: *Grimsdon*

Dress as the following characters from the scene below. How do you think they may stand, talk and look? Practice a few times to be familiar with the dialogue and to get a feel for how it will work as a group. You can keep the script in front of you but it is good to try to remember some lines so you can look at your fellow actors and the audience.

Dramatic excerpt from *Grimsdon*

Based on Chapter Six: The Haggle (from p. 51 on)

7 minutes duration

Characters: Narrator, Xavier, Griffin, Isabella, boy, girl and Raven

Background: Xavier has flown Isabella and Griffin in his flying machine to the Haggle, a kind of Swap Meet where kids meet to exchange items they have found in the abandoned houses of Grimsdon. Entry is gained by giving the leader, Raven, something of value.

Narrator: Xavier led the way into an enormous hall crammed with tables heaving with old appliances, tins of food, tools and toys. And there were kids everywhere. Talking, laughing, riding skateboards and kicking footballs. Some were breaking up furniture and throwing the pieces into fire drums dotted around the room.

Griffin: Where did they all come from?

Xavier: Same place we did. Some were left behind, others abandoned, some chose to be here.

Narrator: A group of boys playing cards waved at Xavier. He waved back.

Isabella: And their parents?

Xavier: Some kids still have them somewhere, others don't and the rest figure

they're better off without them.

Narrator: There were brief interested glances as they walked through the hall. Two young boys were in the middle of a deal.

Boy: I'll trade this axe for your scooter.

Girl: Throw in that crowbar and you've got a deal.

Narrator: The two dealmakers spat on their hands, shook them and did the swap. Griffin stopped at a large sheet of material pinned to the wall covered in writing.

Griffin: What's this?

Xavier: The Code. A list of rules you have to obey if you want to stay.

Griffin (reads): A deal made is a deal in stone. A fight won fairly is a fight won. No theft amongst traders. A fight won fairly is a fight won. All unresolved disputes will be settled by Raven.

Xavier: Which it looks like he is doing now.

Narrator: Xavier nodded towards a tall, thin boy in a long, oversized coat. He had vampirish white skin and black hair that fell across his eyes. Two boys stood before him. One had a cut lip, the other scratch marks across his face. Raven spoke. The boys nodded. They shook hands and walked away. Raven stretched his feet on a table and began polishing a sword.

Xavier: Don't say anything that's going to upset him.

Griffin: Like what?

Xavier: You know. Upsetting things. Wait here until I call you over.

Narrator: Xavier tucked his hands into his pockets and sauntered across the room, waving to more of the kids as he passed. Raven slid the sword into the scabbard. He and Xavier exchanged an elaborate handshake where they clicked fingers, linked arms and bumped chests. They sat down. Raven's eyes were trained on the newcomers.

Raven: How well do you know them?

Xavier: Pretty well. They're good kids.

Raven: Why should I let them in?

Xavier: Because they're friends of mine.

Narrator: Xavier turned his back on Isabella and Griffin and held out a small,

antique-looking knife.

Xavier: And because I'll give you this.

Raven: Last new kid we let in left Fergus with a broken arm. How do I know they won't cause trouble too?

Xavier: They won't, I promise, in fact I ...

Isabella: What's the hold-up?

Narrator: Isabella stood behind them, her arms crossed. Griffin was a few steps behind her.

Raven: I was deciding whether to let you in.

Xavier: And I was explaining why he should, and that ...

Isabella: Xavier said we could enter the Haggie by bringing something useful.

Raven: And you think you have something I want?

Isabella: I know I do. Griffin?

Narrator: Griffin reached into his pocket and held out a cube, covered on each side with a reflective surface.

Xavier: What is it?

Griffin: It's an energy pack. It stores energy created by wind, water and the sun that can be used to create light or heat. All you have to do is ...

Raven: Where did you get this?

Griffin: I made it.

Raven: And you use this to power things where you live?

Griffin: We got sick of cold canned soup and baths.

Raven: Can you show us how to do the same here?

Griffin: Sure.

Raven: Give us a list of what we'll need and we'll get it.

Narrator: Raven got to his feet, pocketed the device and walked away.

Raven: You'll hear if we're going to let you in.

Isabella: We'll *hear*? We've given you a device for storing power and all you're going to give us is, 'you'll hear'?

Raven: I could have said 'no'.

Narrator: He kept walking away. Other kids gathered, tittering and laughing into their sleeves and each other's shoulders.

Griffin: He can't do that, can he?

Isabella: Not to us he can't. And that's supposed to be good enough? We can give you the technology to have a warm bath for the first time in years, which won't be a minute too soon, and we're supposed to wait around for your say so?

Narrator: Raven stopped and half-turned towards her.

Raven: I'm sure you reign in the little kingdom where you live, but here, you play by my rules or you don't play at all.

Narrator: There were slapped backs and laughter from the other kids.

Griffin: Give me the energy pack. It's ours.

Narrator: Raven turned and pushed Griffin away like an annoying fly. He fell to the ground, his glasses sliding across the floor. Isabella pulled her knife from her belt, stepped forward and hurled it with all her strength. It cut through the air and struck a wooden support beam only centimetres from Raven's ear. The room snapped into silence. Griffin felt around for his glasses, the figure of Raven a towering blur above him.

BOOK REPORT: *Grimsdon*

Author: _____

Setting: _____

Main characters:

Synopsis (brief description of the story)

_____, _____,
_____, _____,
_____, _____,
_____, _____,
_____, _____

What happens at the climax and resolution?

What was your favourite part of the book? Why?

If you could be any character, who would it be? Why?

Describe and draw two inventions that have been created to deal with the new world of the floods.

Themes: What are the themes you think the author cares most about in this book?

BLACKLINE MASTER

STORYBOARD

Filmmakers use storyboards to plot out scenes. Create a storyboard with text and illustrations to explain what will happen in your book trailer for ***Grimsdon***.
