



A KISS IN EVERY WAVE

By Rosanne Hawke

TEACHER'S NOTES

This moving story tells of Jessie and her family who take on the care of Jacqueline's mother after her sister, who has been looking after her, dies. Nanny has Alzheimer's Disease and the story deals with just how difficult it is to care for such a person. There are sacrifices to be made and Jessie has to give up her room and her beloved dog. Then Jessie discovers some old love letters in her Nanny's drawer. Through reading them she finds a young couple in love but kept apart by war. Slowly she becomes more understanding and tolerant and learns to adapt and accept her Nanny for who she is.

The story is filled with the preoccupations and self-centredness of young people, but there are many lessons to be learned as Jessie gets to know people and understand their true qualities as she grows up and matures.

Young people from lower to middle secondary levels will enjoy reading *A Kiss in Every Wave*.

These notes are available at no charge from the Lothian Books website (www.lothian.com.au). Please feel free to photocopy

Language And Literacy

What is the significance of the foreword? Who tells the story? Why?

What sort of voice is the novel told in?

Comment on the tone of ***A Kiss in Every Wave***

Find instances in the story of hypocrisy and sarcasm.

How does Jessie come to read the letters? What are they?

How did Jessie find them?

How does she feel about the letters? (See page 46)

When were the letters written? Who wrote them?

What did Jessie assume about them?

What does Jessie write in her soliloquy that the class is asked to write at school?

What is Jessie's relationship with her dog, Cadbury?

What preparations have the family made for Nanny?

What is Nanny's condition?

Why does Jessie like swimming? (Refer to page 35)

What is Dion's philosophy of life? (See page 82)

How does Jessie get on with him?

List some of the important lessons that Jessie learns from others.

How does the reader learn Nanny's name? (Look at page 92)

What did the troops get at Christmas time, and from whom?

What does Jessie get from the letters? (See page 95)

How has the life of the family changed because they have Nanny living with them? *Look at the letters and study them in detail.*

What conclusions can you draw about what passed between Babe and Bud? Make some comments about the letters.

What research has Hayden read about that helps to prevent your memory getting bad? List some of the things that can be done to alleviate the deterioration of memory.

What does Jessie think after she has read the poem *Keep Smiling* in Bud's letter to Babe?

How did the family get a break from the strain of caring for Nanny? (Look on page 136)

For the first time, Jessie wondered if she'd finally found an advantage in Nanny's memory loss (pp138-9). What does she refer to here?

Why doesn't Jessie believe that the letters could be her grandmother's? (See page 143).

What does Jessie resolve on page 150?

How does Jessie crack the third kissing code?

Opening

What does the reader find out in the first chapter?

What is the meaning of the last three lines of the opening chapter?

How does looking after her mother affect Jacqui?

Vocabulary

Try to ascertain the meaning of the following words by looking at them in context on the pages listed, then use each of them in a sentence.

If you do not know their meaning use a dictionary to look them up:

Intoned 9, soliloquy 16, belligerent, solicitous 22, irrevocably 24, mortification 25, composed 26, proffered 27, tentative, pacify 28, placatory 29, secrete, accosted, disdainfully 34, appeasement, plaintive 41, lucid, capitulating 43, pizzazz 50, derision, inconsistent 58, concede, faze 71, boisterous 72, clamouring 76, quizzically, exhilaration 81, sardonic, incredulous 89, chagrin 92, perverse 98, obliterate 100, querulous 106, benignly 116, cajoling 121, resplendent 123, vulnerable 125, domiciliary care 134, camaraderie 140, reproach 175, garrulous 177.

Examine Rosanne Hawke's use of similes and what they do to enhance the story.

Some examples are: *Like a ball fired from a cannon* (page 50), *like a chop in an emu's neck at a barbecue* (page 125) *It was as though all the things Nanny knew were gradually peeling away – last put in first to go* (page 129). Find more from the story.

Use such figures of speech in your own writing to make it more graphic.

Style

What is the reason for some parts of the text being in italics and in other places the text is in different type?

Characters

Jessie is the main character in the story.

Do a pen portrait of her including her age, what she is good at, what she is like, what she likes doing and anything else you have learnt about her.

Write down the main characteristics of Jessica's mother, Jacqueline; her father, Ray; and her younger brother, Hayden.

Who is Elijah? What part does he play in the story?

Do a character study of Uncle Dion, touching on his appearance, what he is like as a person, his age, what he does for a living and anything else of importance that you know about him from the story.

Do a brief pen sketch of Jessie's friends, Kylie and Narelle Hamersley-Smith. Look at Seema Rashed, Rita and Lillie Henley and make some comments about them.

Jot down a list of other characters who appear in the novel.

Title

Where does the title for the novel come from?

Is there more than one reference to it in the story?

Setting

Where *is A Kiss in Every Wave* set?

Is the setting important to the story?

Humour

Are there any parts in this story that you found amusing or humorous? Give reasons to support your answer.

Human Development

What is the importance of family?

What is the importance of friends?

We all have a part to play in each other's stories. Would you agree?

There are several instances in the novel when people's behaviour is interpreted or guessed by certain looks.

Consider the significance of looks and expressions.

There are numerous references to the way people feel in *A Kiss in Every Wave*, find some examples and write them down and then determine what they add to the story.

List the signs and behaviour of someone with Alzheimer's Disease.

How does the Ryder family manage Jacqueline's mother?

Talk about *'being different'* as Jessie tells us Hayden, Seema and Rita are and perhaps Elijah.

Why do you think the others at school are intolerant of such people? Is it, as Rita says on page 118: *Everyone's so keen to pick on people like me, like Seema, just because we have a few rules.*

On page 122, Jessie says to Rita: *Then you should be as kind to yourself as you are to me.* What does Jessie mean by this?

We can't be beaten except by ourselves - Menzies. Do you think this is so?

It was then Jessie realised she was talking to the audience in her head again. Do you do this? What is the purpose of this?

Talk about the art of listening.

What does the reading of the letters between Babe and Bud do for Nanny?
(See page 154).

Referring to her Nanny, Jessie wonders on page 161: *Where did she go in her mind? What do you think about when your reality is something different to what everyone else can see?* Consider this statement and discuss it.

Talk about family sayings and the way these are handed down. There is an instance on page 206.

Ending

Look at the ending and make some observations and comments.

Discussion

Discuss the following

change, old age, reality, family likenesses, what we inherit from our parents, genetics, rules, optimism, the passing of time, patience, depression, respect, secrets, different kinds of love, attitudes and perception.

Talk about the war, censorship, coupons.

On page 213 it is said that: *Confidences, are the substances of relationships.* Do you agree?

Talk about: the difficulties of taking care of someone with Alzheimer's disease, nursing homes, having a philosophy on life.

Writing

Describe how Jessie feels when she swims.

Write about the ride on the Harley-Davidson.

Although Jessie is put out by having her Nanny come to stay, she does come to understand her, become more tolerant and eventually to love her. Write about how Jessie gets insight into her grandmother's condition and how this process comes about.

Write an essay entitled *Time seems to have no respect for feelings* (page 103).

Describe the afternoon tea party on pages 164ff.

Do you have a grandparent or remember yours, or have a friend with one?

Write about this person.

Activities

Do your own family tree.

Make up your own codes for other members of the class to decode.

Make a map of the places that Bud mentions in his letters to Babe.

Research

Find out more about Alzheimer's Disease.

Try to find a relative or friend who experienced the Second World War and ask them about the letters that were exchanged between the troops and their friends and families. Talk to them about other things they did during the war and what it was like.

Why did letters need to be censored? How was this done?

What is the 'Fringe' that Dion takes Jessie to on page 76?

About the author

Rosanne Hawke has worked as a teacher in Pakistan, the United Arab Emirates and Australia. Her published works include **The Keeper**, an acclaimed novel for younger readers.