

Tasmanian Devil

AUTHOR

CLAIRE SAXBY

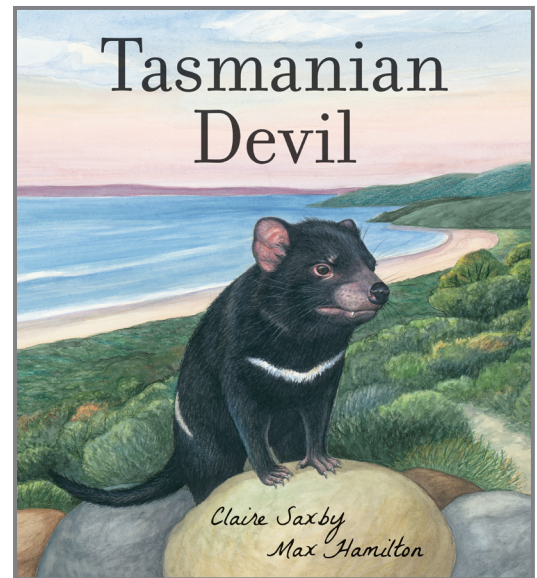
ILLUSTRATOR

MAX HAMILTON

SCIS: 5405441

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower to Mid Primary



SYNOPSIS

In *Tasmanian Devil* award-winning author Claire Saxby and talented artist Max Hamilton tell the story of two imps, or young devils. As the book progresses the brother and sister grow and venture further from the den, exploring more and more of their world in this stunning Nature Storybook.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Claire Saxby writes fiction, non-fiction and poetry for children. She has nearly forty books in print with more in production. Her poetry appears in magazines, anthologies, on train walls and in museum resources. Claire has been writing for children for about 15 years. Before that, she was a podiatrist, and worked in community health. She has been inspired by her own children, memories of childhood and by the children around her. Claire lives in Melbourne with her husband, three very tall sons and a dog that often pretends to be a cat.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Max Hamilton has worked as a graphic designer and illustrator for the past 23 years. She studied fine art at COFA and went on to study Graphic Design and Illustration at Enmore Tafe under the guidance of amazing teachers such as Wayne Harris. Wayne helped confirm that what she wanted to do with her life is to illustrate children's books. Max was awarded an illustrators residency at Pinerolo in November 2018, through WestWords.

BEFORE READING

- View the cover and title of the book. Identify the following then answer the following questions:
 - The title
 - The author
 - The illustrator
 - The publisher
 - The blurb.
- Look at the front cover and read the blurb on the back. Try to predict some of the events that might happen in the story.
- As a class, brainstorm what you know about Tasmanian devils then use this information to create a mind-map. Use subheadings to help organise the information.

- Write down 5 adjectives you would use to describe Tasmanian devils. Come up with a list of questions about Tasmanian devils. Look for the answers to these as you read the book, then use any unanswered questions to guide further research.

EXPLORING THE TEXT

- Revisit the list of adjectives you wrote to describe Tasmanian devils. Cross off any which you think no longer apply and add 3 new words.
- Retell the story verbally focusing on sequencing, or the order in which events happen.
- The text in this book is presented in two styles. Identify the formats. Why do you think the book is designed this way? Read the book using each format separately and then discuss how the different formats change the purpose and alter the perception of *Tasmanian Devil*.
- Which writing style do you prefer: the descriptive storytelling style or the informative factual style? In what types of texts would each of these writing styles usually be used? For example: novels, short stories, newspaper articles and reference books.
- Choose a spread and write a short paragraph about how you think the devils pictured are feeling and why, using the text and illustrations to support your opinion.
- The two imps are brother and sister. Do you think these two get along? Why or why not? How might sibling relationships be different in the wild?
- The phrase 'two devils in a den' is repeated throughout the book. Why do you think author Claire Saxby chose to do this? How does it affect your reading experience?
- The author, Claire Saxby uses descriptive language, or imagery, on many occasions in the book. For example, 'Nose by nose, they emerge to peek at their world.' What other examples can you find? How does this description help bring the world of the Tasmanian devil to life?
- Alliteration is when the first letters of words near each other are repeated. What examples can you find in this book?
- On p 18, the words 'Rumble, tumble, climb, chomp and growl' are presented in italics. Why do you think this might be? How are they different to the other words on this spread?
- *Tasmanian Devil* includes an index at the back of the book. What is the purpose of an index? How do you use it? In what kind of books would you normally find an index? Using the index as a starting point, collect any other words from the book that you don't know the meaning of and create a *Tasmanian Devil* dictionary. You can also collect words and phrases from any further research to add to your dictionary. Illustrate some of the entries to help further explain their meaning.
- Compare *Tasmanian Devil* to a fiction picture book. How is the language different in each? Why have the authors of these texts chosen this language?

EXPLORING THE ILLUSTRATIONS

- Look at the colours the illustrator, Max Hamilton, has used in *Tasmanian Devil*. Why do you think she chose to use these colours? Do they accurately represent the environment that Tasmanian devils live in?
- How does the illustrator use colour to show the time of day? What colours help identify morning, daytime or evening?
- Discuss how the illustrator has used the following on each page:
 - Colour
 - Line
 - Positioning/Layout
 - Framing Angle.
- Gaze is a word which describes where someone, or something, is looking. Choose a spread, and identify where the devil or devils' gaze is directed. Why do you think the illustrator has drawn them with this gaze?
- What extra information do the illustrations give us? How would the book be different with no illustrations?

ACTIVITIES

- Tasmanian devils tend to live a solitary life. Why do you think this might be? What do you think would happen if lots of Tasmanian devils lived in the same spot for a long time? What do Tasmanian devils eat? Use the text and illustrations for clues.
- Look at photographs or video clips of Tasmanian devils on the internet. Do they look, sound or act differently to how you imagined them from the story? Did you learn any extra information?
- Tasmanian devils were named for the fearsome-sounding noises they sometimes make. Find a recording of the vocalisations of Tasmanian devils. Why do they make such noises? Think about other animals—why do they make the noises they do?
- By the end of the story, the imps have grown from being looked after by their mother to finding their own homes. What are some things the devils had to do in order to become independent? What are some of the things humans do to become independent? What do you think the human equivalent of leaving the burrow would be? Some ideas could include starting school or moving out of home.
- Using your research and *Tasmanian Devil* as a guide, create a timeline of a typical Tasmanian devil's life, from birth to adulthood. In small groups, students could present their timeline as a multimedia presentation.
- Devil facial tumour disease has decreased numbers so that they are now considered endangered. Research other threats to Tasmanian devils, and discuss ways your class could help protect them.
- How would you feel if you encountered a Tasmanian devil in the wild? Write a diary or blog entry about your imagined experience.
- Do you think a Tasmanian devil is a good animal for a pet? Why or why not? Discuss as a class.