



OMNIBUS BOOKS

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Author	Sally Morgan
Illustrator	Beth Norling
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Previous publications

Sally Morgan

A Feast for Wombat
(Omnibus Books, 2014)

Sally Morgan & Ezekiel Kwaymullina

Magpie Learns a Lesson
(Omnibus Books, 2014)

Flying High (Omnibus Books, 2015)

The Memory Shed (Omnibus Books, 2015)

One Rule for Jack (Omnibus Books, 2014)

Going Bush with Grandpa
(Omnibus Books, 2014)

Beth Norling

Losing Reuben (Omnibus Books, 2013)

Aussie Dog (Omnibus Books, 2011)

The Dog Sitter (Omnibus Books, 2003)

Croc Bait (Omnibus Books, 2003)

Little School (Omnibus Books, 2001)

Cherry Blossom and the Golden Bear
(Omnibus Books, 2001)

Watch out, William! (Omnibus Books, 1998)

The Best Pet (Omnibus Books, 1997)

Teachers' Notes

Cyclone Fever

Mates series

Written by Sally Morgan
Illustrated by Beth Norling

Teachers' Notes by Rae Carlyle

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Introduction

When the weather alert arrives warning of a cyclone, Danny thinks that his grandmother is overreacting. After all, how much damage can a Category One cyclone do? But Gran is determined, and Danny and his father help her prepare, even as they grumble about it. When the cyclone arrives, it turns out to be bigger and stronger than predicted, and Danny is glad that his gran had insisted that they do everything they could. But even the best of preparations can't actually stop a cyclone, and through the middle of the storm and in the days that follow, Danny, his family, and his community, have many challenges to face.

About the Author

Sally Morgan is an Australian Aboriginal author, dramatist and artist, widely known for her first book, a family history called *My Place*. Her artwork is represented in many collections both in Australia and overseas.

About the Illustrator

Beth Norling is a fine artist, published author and illustrator whose work has been published internationally and been recognised by IBBI, the International Board of Book Illustration. Beth won the Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Trust award and residencies at Varuna Writers Centre (2003 & 2007), Bundanon (2004), the Tyrone Guthrie centre in Ireland (2005), and Hill End (2006). www.bethnorling.com

Activities

English

In *Cyclone Fever* Danny thinks at first that his gran is overreacting, and putting a lot of work in that won't be needed. But then later as the cyclone hits, and after it is finished, he realises just how dangerous Cyclone Thelma was. As Danny's attitude to the cyclone changes, so does the language he uses to talk about it.

- 1) As a class, discuss the words that Danny and his family use to describe the cyclone and their feelings about it.
- 2) Make a list of the different words that you have identified. How many of them have been printed in a different font in the book? How many are in the standard font?

- 3) How does having some words in a different font affect the reader, and their understanding of the story? Why do you think the author chose to highlight the words that she did?
- 4) As a class, make three lists of different words that might be used to talk about cyclones. One list should include words that describe people's feelings such as *scared*, *cold*, *apprehensive* and *tired*. The second list should contain words that describe the cyclone as a whole such as *dangerous* and *powerful*, while the third list should contain words and phrases that describe specific features of a cyclone such as *howling winds* and *thundering rain*.
- 5) Individually, write a short story about a cyclone. Include at least one word from each of the lists your class made in exercise 4).
- 6) Choose at least one of the words that you have used in your story, and invent a font that you think adds to the impact of the word. Write the word in large letters on an A4 piece of paper in your font. Use the individual artworks to make a wall display in your classroom.
- 7) *Cyclone Fever* is written from the point of view of Danny. This means that the reader knows what he is thinking and feeling about events.
- 8) As a class discuss the point of view of some of the other characters in the story. Some characters whose point of view would be interesting to explore are Danny's gran, his father, and Grandpa Ian, whose dog was missing. You might also want to think about Danny's brother and sister, who were away on a school trip when the cyclone hit.
- 9) Write about the events in *Cyclone Fever* from the point of view of one of the characters you have discussed in exercise 7). Make sure children discuss their thoughts and feelings about the cyclone and about Danny's behaviour before, during, and after the cyclone hits.

Science and Geography

Cyclones are more common in some parts of Australia than they are in others – and there are places in Australia that never get them at all.

- 10) Danny's gran packed an Esky full of sandwiches and had lots of tinned food. She also had a battery-powered radio and Danny had a battery-powered torch. What would you pack into an Esky or box if you were in charge of preparing supplies for during and after a cyclone? Make a list of all the things that you would like to have available. Remember that after a natural disaster people often have to survive without power or running water for several days and that often stores are closed as well.

- 11) Individually or in pairs, choose one Australian cyclone and research it in more detail. Make a poster or PowerPoint presentation about your chosen cyclone, and share your research results with the class. Some questions to think about include:
- What was the cyclone called?
 - Where did the cyclone start?
 - Where did the cyclone cross the Australian coast?
 - How far inland did the cyclone travel, and which path did it take?
 - When was the cyclone?
 - What category storm was the cyclone, and did its rating change?
 - How much damage did the cyclone do, and where?
 - How much warning did the people affected by the cyclone have?
 - What did people do after the cyclone had passed?
 - How did communities help each other with rebuilding?
- 12) Danny and his family spent most of the day preparing for the cyclone to hit. As a class discuss the preparations that Gran insisted Danny help her with. Make a list of all the things that Danny and his family did before the cyclone, and why they did them.
- 13) What did the people in Danny's community do to help themselves and each other after the cyclone had passed? Discuss what else would have to happen after a cyclone for a community and town to recover.
- 14) Individually, write a brief paragraph outlining the things that you and your family could do to make your home safer if you heard that a cyclone was coming.
- 15) As a class discuss which parts of Australia experience cyclones. Look at where they start (out to sea), and which parts of the coastline they are most likely to hit. Discuss the category rating system. Research, either online or in the library, cyclones that have hit Australia. Some websites that have a lot of information about cyclones are the Australian Geographic website and the Australian Bureau of Meteorology website.
- <http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/topics/science-environment/2011/02/australias-worst-cyclones-timeline/>
 - <http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/topics/science-environment/2011/02/cyclones-facts-and-figures/>
 - <http://www.bom.gov.au/cyclone/history/index.shtml>

Creative Activities

- 16) Use different colours of duct tape to make patterns and cyclone-themed designs on your classroom window. Use whiteboard markers to colour between the duct tape lines for a stained-glass effect.

- 17) Look at the artwork in the book. There are pictures of objects on the top and bottom of the pages, with swirly lines between them. Create your own page border artwork, using the illustrations in the book as inspiration. Before you start, as a class discuss:
- What do you think the swirly lines represent?
 - What are the different objects shown?
 - Why do you think the illustrator chose these objects?
 - Is there any significance to the colour choices?
 - How does the use of white space affect the impact of the artwork?
- 18) Make a cyclone in a bottle. You will need two empty clear plastic bottles without lids, either soft drink bottles or water bottles. Fill one of the bottles 2/3 full of water, and add a few drops of food colouring to it. Turn the second empty bottle upside down, and place it carefully on top of the first bottle. Use duct tape to tape the two bottles securely together, so that when you tip them up water can flow from one bottle to the other without spilling. Turn your bottles over and watch the water flow from the top bottle into the bottom bottle. Experiment with moving the top bottle in a small circle just after you turn it upside down. You should see the water swirl around like the winds of a cyclone, with an empty space in the middle like the eye of a storm.
- 19) Use recyclable materials to make a cyclone-inspired musical instrument. Your instrument might be a plastic bottle with a handful of sand or dried peas in it, thick card for wobble boards, empty bottles that you can blow over the top of to make a whistling noise, wooden sticks that can be tapped or rubbed together, or pieces of string with bottle tops threaded on them. Think about the sounds that wind makes and be as creative as you can. As a class, compose a piece of cyclone music using everyone's instruments, and perform it at assembly or for another class.
- 20) Look at satellite photos of cyclones. Discuss the patterns that you can see in the clouds and the colours of the land and ocean below. After looking at the shapes, lines, and colours, use crayon and dye to make cyclone-inspired paintings for a classroom display.
- 20) Make a word search puzzle featuring the names of Australian cyclones.
- 21) Individually make model buildings using paper, cardboard, sticky tape, ice-block sticks and glue. Assemble all the buildings into a table-top town. Turn on a fan on low to create winds for your town. If possible use a desktop fan that can be moved around. Gradually turn the fan speed higher to create greater winds. Observe your town - which buildings are affected the most? Which buildings are the sturdiest? What happens when you increase the wind speed? With the fan still blowing on high speed and pointing at your town, move it around to the other side of the table so that the wind is now blowing in the opposite direction. What happens to the remainder of your town when the wind changes direction? As a class discuss what the fan-wind did to your model town, and the similarities (and differences) to how a real town is affected by a cyclone.

- 22) Write a poem about cyclones. You may want to write about a specific cyclone that you have studied, or you can write about cyclones in general.

- 23) Create a dance based on a cyclone, and people who experience it. Have some dancers represent the winds, while others represent the people trying to shelter from it. Perform your dance at assembly.