



# Nemesis

by Wendy Milton

## TEACHER'S RESOURCE

### Using this resource

This teacher resource is designed to be used as students read each chapter. Each section of this resource focuses on one chapter, and is divided into the following sections:

#### Vocabulary

This section highlights some of the trickier words or phrases that students will find in this chapter. Work through the list, or pick out a few words of interest, and ask students about each word using these questions:

- What is another word the author could have used instead of \_\_\_\_\_?
- What does the word \_\_\_\_\_ mean?
- Can you find the word \_\_\_\_\_ in a dictionary?
- Can you think of another word that means the same as \_\_\_\_\_?
- What is a \_\_\_\_\_?
- What does the author mean by \_\_\_\_\_?

#### Comprehension

This section includes questions to help gauge your students' understanding of the text. Some questions can be answered by a straightforward reading of the text, while others may involve students drawing on prior information or drawing conclusions.

#### Conversation

This section includes questions of a more interpretive, open-ended nature to encourage higher-order thinking. Questions may ask students to make predictions, use their imaginations and draw upon personal experiences.

#### Worksheets

Worksheets are included for some chapters.

### Before you begin

A 'nemesis' is an opponent or rival who is repeatedly hard to defeat or overcome. Can you think of characters in other books you have read who have a nemesis? (Think: Harry Potter!)

# Chapter 1

Pages 1–6

## Vocabulary

oblivious	p.1
khaki	p.2
dehydrating	p.5
levitate	p.5
shrewd	p.6

## Comprehension

- How can Mr Brinkley know Billy is there?
- What's worrying Billy?
- What does Mr Brinkley say that makes Billy feel better?
- How are Sophie and Mrs Brinkley getting along?

## Conversation

What differences are there between a friendship of two children and a friendship of a child and an adult? Is it important to have both?

# Chapter 2

Pages 7–16

## Vocabulary

pout	p.7
pathetic	p.9
scrumptious	p.10
penchant	p.11
dollop	p.15

## Comprehension

- Astra believes Zach's mother doesn't like her. Is she right?
- Why does Billy sneer at Astra?
- Why isn't Astra keen for Zach to go to high school?

## Conversation

What three adjectives could you use to describe Mr Ferguson's emotions at the end of the chapter?

# Chapter 3

Pages 17–23

## Vocabulary

trepidation	p.17
disarmingly	p.20
indignant	p.21
orientation	p.22

## Comprehension

- Are Zach's classmates looking forward to going to high school?
- Why is Drew Dickerson unhappy?
- Why does Zach feel that inviting Drew to sit with them will cause problems?
- What is Sophie's solution?

## Conversation

Are you looking forward to going to high school? What excites you about it? What makes you nervous?

## Chapter 4

Pages 24–33

### Vocabulary

thwarted	p.24
tolerant	p.26
intriguing	p.27
mezzanine	p.27
balustrade	p.30
quizzical	p.31
gauge	p.32
obnoxious	p.32

### Comprehension

- Why does Billy call Sophie's father a snob?
- How does Zach know that the man in the library is a ghost?
- The watery-eyed man is apologising to 'Ima' and 'Aba'. Who might they be?
- 'Astra's enthusiasm ... had waned'. What does this mean?

### Conversation

'Something told Zach that beneath his obnoxious manner, Billy wasn't so bad.' Do you agree?

What, do you think, is the purpose of the big building with the curved roof?

## Chapter 5

Pages 34–43

### Vocabulary

effervescent	p.35
connoisseur	p.36
corporal	p.37
contradictory	p.37
sauntered	p.41

### Comprehension

- What is the headmaster's nickname? Why is he called that?
- Who was Wotherspoon?
- What 'uncomfortable theory' presents itself to Zach?
- Why does Zach's mother say, 'Oh, no! Not another one, Zach!'?

### Conversation

'And you'll never get a chance to be like those...' What is Billy about to say to Astra? Think back to Chapter 4 to explain how you think Billy will finish his sentence.



### Worksheet 1

TR page 13

Zach hates the Josiah Batty Grammar uniform. Design your ideal uniform and write a persuasive paragraph about why your school should adopt it.

## Chapter 6

Pages 44–52

### Vocabulary

enrich	p.44
austere	p.46
bamboozle	p.49
nemesis	p.50

### Comprehension

- What effect does the school song have on JB?
- To what is Mr Boxer referring when he jokes about being sorted into houses?
- What convinces Drew that Zach is 'weird'?

### Conversation

From what you have read so far about Josiah Batty Grammar, does it sound like a school you would like to attend? Why or why not?

## Chapter 7

Pages 53–61

### Vocabulary

benefactor	p.54
thunderous	p.55
drivel	p.57
condemned	p.58

### Comprehension

- What does Zach do that Billy thinks is 'brilliant'?
- What does Zach mean by 'flapping'?
- What does JB call the headmaster?
- What is JB encouraging Zach to do?

### Conversation

Read JB's dialogue aloud, pronouncing the words how they are written. Does this help you to work out what nationality JB may be?

## Chapter 8

Pages 62–70

### Vocabulary

hypocrite	p.63
grievance	p.67
manipulative	p.69
vengeful	p.69

### Comprehension

- What does JB try to tell Zach that Mr Pettigrew is doing?
- Is Sophie correct when she says JB is 'thinking only of himself'?
- Apologising isn't grovelling, according to Sophie. What is she advising Zach to do?

### Conversation

If someone with authority – like a teacher or coach – was nasty to you, would it be better to respond like Zach or like Sophie?

# Chapter 9

Pages 71–78

## Vocabulary

customary	p.71
daunted	p.72
unfazed	p.73
physicist	p.73
assumption	p.73
tentatively	p.74
disrespectful	p.77

## Comprehension

- Why does Sophie sit in hand-flappers' zone?
- What does Billy mean when he says 'piece of cake'?
- What does Sophie do that shocks everyone? Does she take her own advice?
- Why does Mr Pratt applaud and encourage his class to applaud? What effect does the applause have on Pettigrew?

## Conversation

Is it always a good idea to speak our mind if we believe something to be wrong?

# Chapter 10

Pages 79–86

## Vocabulary

humiliating	p.79
diplomacy	p.80
miffed	p.81
wafted	p.84
sceptical	p.85
cahoots	p.86

## Comprehension

- What does Astra reveal that amazes everyone?
- What does Drew reveal about the headmaster?
- Why does the school board tolerate the headmaster?
- Drew is dumbfounded by the levitating tissue. Which other character in this book has already had the same reaction?
- How is Drew's skepticism finally shaken?

## Conversation

The School Board puts up with the principal to keep his funding. Have you ever put up with something because the reward was bigger than the irritation?



## Worksheet 2

TR page 14

Be a text detective by finding evidence of Zach's and Sophie's character traits in the book so far.

## Chapter 11

Pages 87–90

### Vocabulary

roster	p.87
furrowed	p.88
duped	p.90
defraud	p.90

### Comprehension

- What worries Zach's mother about joining the Parents & Citizens (P&C) group at Zach's school?
- What do we mean when we say something is only 'the tip of the iceberg'?

### Conversation

Why might someone not admit to having bought a forged painting?

Why is intention to defraud so difficult to prove?

## Chapter 12

Pages 91–96

### Vocabulary

retribution	p.91
autumnal	p.93
recite	p.96

### Comprehension

- What is 'the hardest part' for the worldly and otherworldly detectives?
- How does Astra feel about Mr Feldstein?
- Why is Mrs Peebles unhappy with Year 7 classes?

### Conversation

How would you feel if someone volunteered for you, as Sophie did for Zach?

## Chapter 13

Pages 97–106

### Vocabulary

affirmative	p.98
subdued	p.98
ridicule	p.98
antagonistic	p.99
uppity	p.103

### Comprehension

- Why is Zach angry?
- What does Mr Feldstein believe his forgery to be worth?
- What is 'provenance' and why is it so important?

### Conversation

How would you describe Sophie's response to Freddy Schumacker? What does this tell you about her character?

## Chapter 14

Pages 107–115

### Vocabulary

anticipation	p.107
flunked	p.107
florid	p.112
smarmed	p.113

### Comprehension

- Why did Astra learn to levitate?
- Who is Barnaby Jones?
- Why is Sophie angry with Zach and Drew?
- Who eventually hides the listening device?

### Conversation

Can you predict what will happen in the conversation that the listening device will record?

## Chapter 15

Pages 116–129

### Vocabulary

engrossed	p.116
dilapidated	p.118
dejected	p.122
erratic	p.125
discriminating	p.127
shrapnel	p.127
askew	p.129

### Comprehension

- What is Astra doing when Billy finds her?
- What is Mr Feldstein's reaction when he sees Astra's warning?
- How does Mr Feldstein threaten Pettigrew and Barnaby?
- Why is Barnaby weeping?

### Conversation

In the gallery scene, what words and actions suggest that Pettigrew has lost control? What are some other words or expressions for losing one's temper or self-control?

## Chapter 16

Pages 130–138

### Vocabulary

berserk	p.130
gnarled	p.133
peevd	p.135
disgruntled	p.136
exhorting	p.136

### Comprehension

- Why isn't downloading the evidence onto Zach's mobile a good idea, according to Sophie?
- Why does Sophie persuade Zach to join them?

### Conversation

Have you ever performed in a concert? How did it feel to go onstage?



# Chapter 17

Pages 139–147

## Vocabulary

siblings	p.139
patriotic	p.140
intermission	p.140
charismatic	p.141
furtively	p.141
sauntered	p.142
geocentric	p.143
rhetoric	p.146

## Comprehension

- How does the headmaster appear, in spite of the bad publicity?
- What does PR mean, and why does Zach's father say, 'Who needs a PR machine?'
- What disaster strikes? How did this disaster come about?

## Conversation

The rappers' act is about two conflicting theories of the universe. What are these conflicting theories and in which one do we believe today?



## Worksheet 3

TR page 15

Write the lyrics for another rap to be performed under the title 'Science Takes a Rap'. Sophie, Drew and Zach sang about the solar system and gravity. What science concept will your rap be about?

# Chapter 18

Pages 148–156

## Vocabulary

dignitaries	p.148
mesmerised	p.148
rife	p.148
humongous	p.149
paranormal	p.149
conspiracy	p.152
anonymously	p.154

## Comprehension

- What is Pettigrew's explanation for what's happening to him?
- What do the children decide to tell Mr Pratt about their act?
- Why doesn't Mr Pratt want to know what they've been up to?
- Why does Drew say they should give their evidence to a journalist?
- What does Milly mean by 'pass-the-parcel'?

## Conversation

Sophie says ironically that Drew's uncle selling the fake paintings to a total stranger is 'entirely different' to selling them to someone he knows. Do you agree? Why or why not?



## Chapter 19

Pages 157–165

### Vocabulary

principle	p.158
stickler	p.158
congested	p.158
rabbiting	p.161
conspiring	p.163

### Comprehension

- What does Astra point out to Zach about Sophie?
- What does Billy learn through spying on Barnaby?
- What 'common interest' do Astra and Billy have?

### Conversation

'You can't have a life if you stay in my pretend world.' Is Astra right?

## Chapter 20

Pages 166–172

### Vocabulary

dismissively	p.167
dedicated	p.170
unscrupulous	p.170
perspective	p.171

### Comprehension

- Why doesn't Astra like Robert Rossetti?
- What assurance does Sophie extract from Robert Rossetti?
- Why does Astra want some bits of the recording left out?
- How does Robert Rossetti's 'angle' make Mr Feldstein look?

### Conversation

How do journalists influence how we feel about a subject because of the perspective or angle from which they tell the story?

## Chapter 21

Pages 173–177

### Vocabulary

eluded	p.174
waive	p.174
dependent	p.176

### Comprehension

- In what condition is Mr Feldstein at Barnaby's club?
- How does Astra manipulate Mr Feldstein?

### Conversation

'I always longed to hear you say you were proud of me.' What does this suggest about Mr Feldstein's mother?

## Chapter 22

Pages 178–183

### Vocabulary

subdued	p.178
immunity	p.180
prosecution	p.180
cursory	p.181
conned	p.183

### Comprehension

- Who is Mr Smith?
- What does 'turning Queen's evidence' mean?
- Is the customer in the gallery a genuine buyer? How do you know?

### Conversation

What do you think would be a fair punishment for Mr Feldstein, if any?

## Chapter 23

Pages 184–190

### Vocabulary

dobbed	p.185
languished	p.186
eye-to-eye	p.187
anomalies	p.189
preened	p.189
malicious	p.190

### Comprehension

- How is Pettigrew behaving, according to Milly?
- How has Drew's uncle had 'a change of heart'?
- What problem does Mrs Peebles present to the headmaster that seems to make him 'be himself' again?

### Conversation

Mr Feldstein and Drew's uncle both have a 'change of heart'. Have you ever experienced a change of heart about something?

## Chapter 24

Pages 191–197

### Vocabulary

counsellor	p.192
steely	p.194
relinquished	p.195
dodgem	p.197
feints	p.197

### Comprehension

- What gives Mr Feldstein the courage to revisit Pettigrew?
- What does 'the worm has turned' mean?
- Why does Mr Feldstein's bravery desert him?

### Conversation

Both Mr Feldstein and Mr Pettigrew think they know who is levitating the paintings. Who do they each think it is, and who is it really?

## Chapter 25

Pages 198–204

### Vocabulary

squirm	p.199
perpetuated	p.199
prosecution	p.180
unassuming	p.200
hypocrite	p.203

### Comprehension

- How does justice catch up with Barnaby Jones?
- What does Sophie discover about Drew?
- What is Mrs Peebles' attitude to Pettigrew at the end of the chapter?

### Conversation

Has it been easy for you to tell the difference between the good characters and the bad characters in this book? Why or why not?

## Chapter 26

Pages 205–211

### Vocabulary

wretched	p.206
simmered	p.206
careering	p.208
adrenalin	p.208
manoeuvred	p.210

### Comprehension

- How did Zach's mother keep an eye on him?
- What is meant by having 'a screw loose'?
- Who finally put a halt to the chase around the quadrangle and how?

### Conversation

The pursuit of Zach in this chapter 'resembled a scene from a silent movie'. What is the picture you see in your head when you read this?

## Chapter 27

Pages 212–217

### Vocabulary

vindictive	p.212
tarnish	p.212
coerced	p.214
notorious	p.214
infamy	p.215

### Comprehension

- What happens to Barnaby?
- What does 'suspended sentence' mean?
- How does Mr Pratt make Mr Feldstein feel?

### Conversation

Do you think this book has a satisfying ending? If you could change one thing about it, what would it be?

## After you finish

Pretend you are a court reporter and write a newspaper article about the outcome of the cases against Pettigrew, Barnaby Jones and Mr Feldstein.

Write a short biography for you school newsletter about your school's founder (it probably won't be as bizarre as that of Josiah Batty!)

Debate the topic: 'There's no such thing as a bad person, just bad judgement', using evidence from the book.



### Worksheet 4

TR page 16

Choose two characters from *Nemesis*. Explore the traits, opinions and attitudes that they share, and those they don't.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Text Detective

Be a text detective by finding evidence of Zach's and Sophie's character traits in the book so far. An example has been done for you.

## ZACH

Character trait	Prove it!	Page number
Quick-witted	Oh, no, sir. The school is cool. It's this building that sucks. I don't like Federation architecture, sir.	55

## SOPHIE

Character trait	Prove it!	Page number

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Character Comparison

Choose two characters from *Nemesis*. Explore the traits, opinions and attitudes that they share, and those they don't.

CHARACTER 1: \_\_\_\_\_

CHARACTER 2: \_\_\_\_\_

