



The Boy Who Disappeared

by Wendy Milton

TEACHER'S RESOURCE

Using this resource

This resource is designed to be used as students read each chapter. Each section is divided into the following:

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

From the cover image, do you think this story will be realistic?

Chapter 1 Pages 1-9

Vocabulary

genes	p. 3
tyrannical	p. 4
contrite	p. 5
quarantined	p. 6

Comprehension

- Why is Rodney unhappy?
- What is a 'cackleberry'?
- How does Mr Rowbottom explain Rodney's poor grades?
- What 'horribly extraordinary thing' is happening to Rodney?
- Upon what does Mr Middleton pride himself?

Conversation

Which of Rodney's parents is nicer?

Chapter 2 Pages 8-16

Vocabulary

deflect	p. 11
sheepish	p. 13
avalanche	p. 14
protein	p. 15

Comprehension

- How does Mr Rowbottom react to the principal's letter?
- Why are genes important?
- What is 'the royal plural' and why does Dr Beezlebaum use it?
- What does Dr Beezlebaum recommend to Rodney's mother?

Conversation

Whose genes have you inherited?



Worksheet 1 TR Page 14

Imagine you've inherited a gene that gives you a secret power. What would this power be, and how would you use it?

Chapter 3

Pages 17-24

Vocabulary

backhanders	p. 19
trinity	p. 19
diagnosis	p. 22

Comprehension

- How would you describe Ben Houlihan?
- What's magical about Mrs Strangeways' house?
- Define dowsing.
- How does Mrs Strangeways explain Rodney's fading?

Conversation

Is Mrs Strangeways spooky or nice?

Chapter 4

Pages 25-31

Vocabulary

appalling	p. 28
hindsight	p. 29
manœuvred	p. 30
conspiratorial	p. 31

Comprehension

- What is 'mad cow disease'?
- How does Rodney feel about Cyril Creevey?
- 'Dowsing' and 'dousing' are homophones. What's a homophone?
- What awful joke does the professor tell?

Conversation

Rodney notices the professor and Creepy Creevey sharing a 'conspiratorial' look. What does this suggest?

Chapter 5

Pages 32-38

Vocabulary

furrowed	p. 33
reverie	p. 33
incubating	p. 34
manipulation	p. 35

Comprehension

- What's a GMO?
- What is Rodney's impression of BAARMY?
- How does Mr Rowbottom explain the 'errant' (misbehaving) vegetables?

Conversation

Are genetically modified plants and animals a benefit to mankind?

Chapter 6

Pages 39–45

Vocabulary

prolonged	p. 41
conscious	p. 43
hemisphere	p. 44

Comprehension

- What are the dangers of a 'too-prolonged transfer'?
- What does Rodney discover about Mrs Strangeways' front garden?
- How does Mrs Strangeways describe 'the theory of switching'?

Conversation

'Sometimes explanations made good things go away.' Do you agree?



Worksheet 2 TR Page 15

Write an account of something that you couldn't explain.

Chapter 7

Pages 46–51

Vocabulary

sinewy	p. 46
calloused	p. 46
unmolested	p. 49
malignantly	p. 50

Comprehension

- If Llondieval is dangerous, why does Mr MacTavish go there?
- Why does Mr MacTavish breed worms?
- Why does Jimmy Entwistle say, 'I reckon it was the Phantom'?

Conversation

How does Rodney triumph over Ben Houlihan?

Chapter 8

Pages 52–56

Vocabulary

defection	p. 53
galling	p. 53
eavesdropping	p. 54
snide	p. 55

Comprehension

- How does Rodney's 'escape' from the toilet block affect his image?
- Is Rodney part of an 'eternal triangle'?
- Who was Harry Houdini?

Conversation

Have there been other famous escapologists?

Chapter 9

Pages 57–64

Vocabulary

pallid	p. 58
meandering	p. 58
wistful	p. 59
emissions	p. 61
gnarled	p. 63

Comprehension

- What does Rodney see, through Mrs Strangeways' windows?
- 'Llandringodd's not a land o' milk an' honey . . .' What does Mr MacTavish mean?
- Describe Remus.
- What does Rodney discover about Remus's brochure?
- How has genetic modification gone wrong in Llandringodd?

Conversation

Would you like to visit Llandringodd?

Chapter 10

Pages 65–71

Vocabulary

tendrils	p. 66
foolhardy	p. 67
clones	p. 69
longevity	p. 69

Comprehension

- Why is the Black Forest a disappointment for Rodney?
- What's different about Llandringodd's nettles?
- Why are there only good-looking people in Llandringodd?
- What does Rodney learn about Time in Llandringodd?

Conversation

Do you like Evelyn?
Why?

Chapter 11

Pages 72-81

Vocabulary

furtively	p. 72
riveted	p. 73
gyrations	p. 75

Comprehension

- Who is Mr Pearson impersonating?
- Why does Mrs Dopple say: 'Chance would be a fine thing'?
- Why does Evelyn ask what's it's like on Earth?
- What has Mr Pearson discovered, and what does he plan to do?

Conversation

Impersonators dress up as famous people, as would you if you were going to a fancy-dress ball. Why does Mr Pearson dress up, do you think?

Chapter 12

Pages 82-89

Vocabulary

Greenies	p. 83
tentacle	p. 85
lumbered	p. 86
fibrous	p. 86

Comprehension

- Why is Creepy Creevey angry with the professor?
- Why doesn't the professor succeed in selling his 'products' to Mr Fenwick?
- What does the professor call his 'pet' - the one he keeps at home in a birdcage?
- How does Rodney escape from Jerome?

Conversation

Do you think Professor Nettleforth is crazy? Why?



Worksheet 3 TR Page 16

Draw a picture of Jerome taking a shower and eating a banana.

Chapter 13

Pages 90–98

Vocabulary

squalid	p. 95
unethical	p. 97
genome	p. 97

Comprehension

- What is Evelyn trying to tell Rodney?
- Why is Rodney's father being interviewed?
- Rodney's mother thinks Cyril Creevey is 'sweet'. Do you?

Conversation

Have you ever been let down by someone you trusted?

Chapter 14

Pages 99–104

Vocabulary

hounded	p. 99
recede	p. 100
flipped	p. 103
fluted	p. 104

Comprehension

- Why are journalists hounding Rodney's family?
- Why does the newspaper headline say 'Frankenfood'?
- What is Ben Houlihan's father growing?

Conversation

If you could become invisible, what would you do?

Chapter 15

Pages 105–115

Vocabulary

blackmail	p. 106
cleaver	p. 110
adversity	p. 111
emaciated	p. 112

Comprehension

- Why does Mr Fenwick contact Rodney's father?
- What is happening in Llandringodd?
- Where is Evelyn?
- Is Remus in touch with reality?

Conversation

How would you rate the Dopples as a family? Why?

Chapter 16

Pages 116-123

Vocabulary

gourd	p. 116
bartering	p. 117
brazier	p. 118
rapt	p. 120

Comprehension

- Why does Rodney call his hiding place 'poo corner'?
- What kind of man is Harold (Rodney's mother's second cousin once removed)?
- Why does Rodney's attempt to reason with Harold fail?

Conversation

Do you think Rodney's determination to save Evelyn makes him a hero?

Chapter 17

Pages 124-132

Vocabulary

shrewd	p. 124
shrine	p. 126
waning	p. 127
inflexible	p. 128

Comprehension

- The inspector calls Rodney's father 'a mine of information'. Does he mean this?
- How do the children at Frogmore Primary respond to Rodney's disappearance?
- What theory presents itself after Mr Trouncer's and Miss Finchley's interviews?

Conversation

Do Chief Inspector Fox and DS Hound remind you of other police duos on TV?

Chapter 18

Pages 133-142

Vocabulary

vehemently	p. 133
dismissive	p. 136
traumatised	p. 136
morosely	p. 140

Comprehension

- Do the police accept Jimmy Entwistle's theory?
- What is meant by: 'A roo loose in the top paddock'?
- Why is Fiona Winchcombe's interview a 'performance'?
- What does DS Hound's 'garden' reference mean to Razza?
- What has Rodney's father discovered about Cyril Creevey?

Conversation

How many suspects do the police have, so far?

Chapter 19

Pages 143-151

Vocabulary

spit	p. 143
battlements	p. 144
daunting	p. 149
suckling	p. 151

Comprehension

- How long has Rodney been missing?
- How, according to Mr MacTavish, can Rodney avoid answering questions?
- What happened to Evelyn's dog?

Conversation

Were there times in our history when people were burned at the stake?

Chapter 20

Pages 152–158

Vocabulary

psychiatrist	p. 154
agitated	p. 157
cue	p. 158

Comprehension

- What explanation does Rodney's mother give for Harold's behaviour?
- Why is Rodney's father angry with Dr Groper?
- What 'cue' does Rodney's mother give him?
- Why does Rodney's father laugh?

Conversation

Do you think Mr Rowbottom has improved a little?

Chapter 21

Pages 159–166

Vocabulary

illicit	p. 160
besmirched	p. 160
wincing	p. 162
pandemonium	p. 163

Comprehension

- Who doesn't believe Rodney has amnesia?
- What has happened to Mr Pearson?
- Why is Mr Trouncer measuring the distance between two trees?
- 'I wonder what it could be?' said Mr Trouncer innocently. Why 'innocently'?

Conversation

Are you glad corporal punishment has been abolished?

Chapter 22

Pages 167–176

Vocabulary

overwrought	p. 167
devastated	p. 169
controversial	p. 170
fallible	p. 170
precautionary	p. 170
malignant	p. 176

Comprehension

- Why is Jimmy upset?
- What impression does Evelyn make on Mr Rowbottom?
- How does Rodney manage to foil the kidnappers' plans?

Conversation

Are there qualities more important than the way we look?

Chapter 23

Pages 177–182

Vocabulary

mortification p. 177
patronisingly p. 178
substantial p. 182

Comprehension

- How is Fiona Winchcombe proved wrong?
- What does Evelyn do that no one else has managed to do?
- How does Evelyn's plan for overcoming Jimmy's jealousy work?

Conversation

How would you compare Fiona Winchcombe and Evelyn Dopple?

Chapter 24

Pages 183–195

Vocabulary

uniqueness p. 183
jubilation p. 187
emaciated p. 188
swarthy p. 189

Comprehension

- What has happened to Remus's teashop?
- How have 'the tables turned' for the nards?
- What does Rafferty smuggle into the company headquarters kitchen?
- What dance do Miss Tremblechin and Professor Clout do?
- Why does Professor Clout call Rafferty 'an absolute genius'?
- What gene is Professor Clout trying to isolate?

Conversation

Do Professor Clout and Professor Nettleforth have anything in common?

Chapter 25

Pages 196–203

Vocabulary

hypodermic	p. 197
pestle	p. 200
negotiating	p. 201
plinth	p. 202

Comprehension

- What does Miss Tremblechin's syringe contain?
- Why does Rodney lose his temper with Remus?
- What effect does Rodney's criticism have on Remus?
- Why does Mr MacTavish call Professor Clout 'Jummy'?

Conversation

Have you ever said something you later regretted?



Worksheet 4 TR Page 17

Outline a story in which your character feels like saying something, but doesn't. It could be because your character lacks courage, or because he or she is worried about hurting someone's feelings. What happens as a result of your character's silence?

Chapter 26

Pages 204–210

Vocabulary

embellishments	p. 205
pollutants	p. 209
algal blooms	p. 209
cross-pollinated	p. 210

Comprehension

- What is tormenting Rodney?
- What was Llandringodd like before the environmental disaster?
- According to Remus, what went wrong?
- Why is BAARMY genetically modifying plants?

Conversation

Should fear be allowed to stop experimentation?

Chapter 27

Pages 211-214

Vocabulary

fledgling p. 212

legitimate p. 213

Comprehension

- How do Remus and Mr MacTavish 'put Llandringodd to rights'?
- Why have Miss Tremblechin and Rafferty disappeared?
- What does the 'faint gleam of a torch' in the professor's back yard suggest?
- What has happened to the Smedley's cat?

Conversation

Does it worry you that you might be eating genetically modified food?

After you finish

Does this story raise questions about protecting the environment?

Debate the topic: 'Genetic engineering benefits mankind.'

Write a story about how being a switcher enabled Rodney to solve another problem.



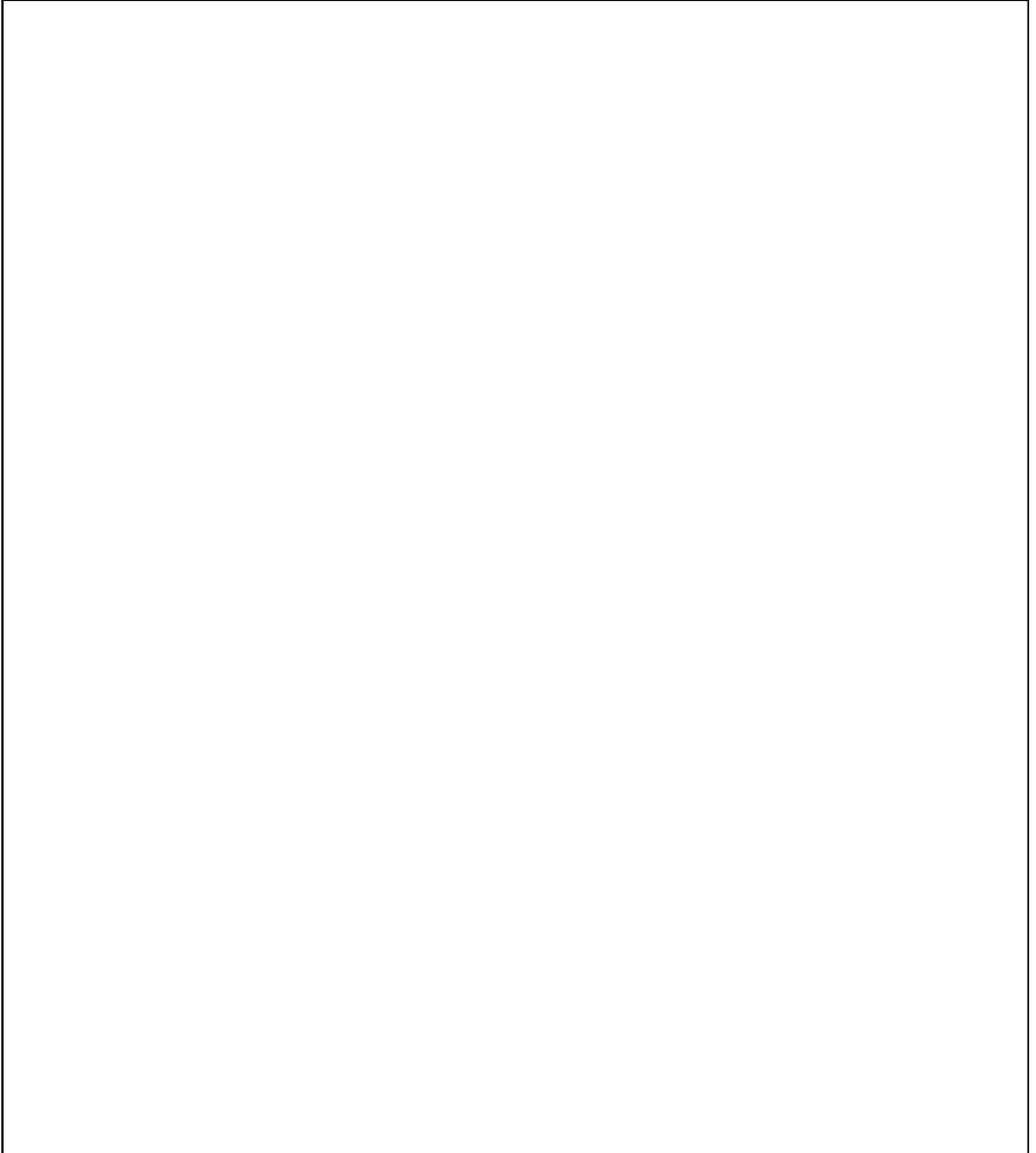
Worksheet 5 TR Page 18

Write a review of *The Boy Who Disappeared*.

Name: _____

Jerome in the shower

Draw a picture of Jerome taking a shower and eating a banana.



Name: _____

Book Review

Write a book review of *The Boy Who Disappeared*.

Story type: *Was this story a mystery, an adventure, fantasy fiction, realistic fiction, non-fiction . . . ?*

Plot outline: *What happens in the beginning, middle and end of this book?*

Characters: *Describe the appearance and personality of two of the main characters.*

Opinion: *What was your favourite part and why? Did the story have a moral? What was it?*

My rating: 