



# Finding Cathcart

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

Look at the cover of *Finding Cathcart* and read the blurb. What do students think the word 'finding' means in the context of the book? We know from the blurb that Mr Cathcart is in a rest home; he is not physically lost. In what other ways might someone need 'finding'?

# Chapter 1

Pages 1–3

## Vocabulary

coincidence	p.1
dissidents	p.1
premonitions	p.2
demurred	p.3

## Comprehension

- What 'double life' is The Great Waldo leading?
- Why is he fearful or of what is he afraid?

## Conversation

Have you ever been really frightened? What were you frightened of, and what did you do?

# Chapter 2

Pages 4–10

## Vocabulary

easel	p.7
resented	p.9
google	p.9

## Comprehension

- What does the silver in Zach's mother's hair suggest?
- How old is Zach in *Finding Cathcart*?
- Why are Billy and Astra arguing?
- What does the school principal (Mrs Peebles) ask Zach's classmates to do?

## Conversation

According to Zach, people go into homes 'when their brains have turned to cottage cheese.' What does he mean?

# Chapter 3

Pages 11–20

## Vocabulary

tensions	p.13
tycoon	p.14
frostily	p.15
agitated	p.17
meandering	p.17

## Comprehension

- Why is Billy keen to know about wars?
- Why does Ronnie call the lady in the shrubbery a 'ding-a-ling'?
- Why does the whiteboard displays the day, date, month and season?

## Conversation

Have you ever visited a care home or an old people's home? What was it like?

## Chapter 4

Pages 22–31

### Vocabulary

gnarled	p.23
quavery	p.25
amnesia	p.27
traumatic	p.28
foundling	p.29
resourceful	p.30

### Comprehension

- What kind of woman is Matron Dimbleby?
- How does Sophie make a success of their school visit?
- What does Matron mean by, '... you've got more chance of finding Glenn Miller than you have of finding Mr Cathcart'?
- Why do Zach's parents argue that *someone* must know who Mr Cathcart is?

### Conversation

Imagine discovering, one morning, that you'd lost your memory! What items in your bedroom would be clues as to who you were and what you liked doing?



### Worksheet 1 TR page 12

Write a list of 'Who Am I?' clues, then play with the class! (They'll also come in handy if you forget who you are!)

## Chapter 5

Pages 32–39

### Vocabulary

agenda	p.35
dobbed	p.36
rift	p.37

### Comprehension

- What is Matron's computer password, and why does she use this word?
- What causes the rift between Zach, Drew and Sophie?
- What does Astra learn about Mr Cathcart?

### Conversation

Zach says, 'It's one of those things you laugh at because you can't change it.' Are there things we laugh at because we can't change them?

## Chapter 6

Pages 40–46

### Vocabulary

dilapidated	p.40
meticulously	p.40
decoded	p.45
mole	p.45

### Comprehension

- What do 'nyet' and 'da' mean?
- Who is Viktor?
- Vasily can't answer questions from his favourite quiz programme, even though it's a repeat of the programme he watched the night before. What does this tell us?

### Conversation

How would you describe Vasily?

## Chapter 7

Pages 47–52

### Vocabulary

Ruskies	p.50
espionage	p.52

### Comprehension

- Why does Sophie tell Zach and Drew a joke?
- Why is Benson, the accountant, told off by his boss?
- What is an Official Secrets Act?

### Conversation

Can you explain Sophie's joke? Did you find it funny?

## Chapter 8

Pages 53–61

### Vocabulary

stimulate	p.55
motivate	p.55
agitated	p.58

### Comprehension

- What is a therapy dog?
- In the medical sense, Patches is a failure. Why?
- How does Mr Cathcart respond to Zach's magic trick?
- What might Mr Cathcart have been, according to Zach's father?

### Conversation

What other groups of people might benefit from seeing a therapy dog? Why?

## Chapter 9

Pages 62–71

### Vocabulary

immaculate	p.62
cover	p.63
deduction	p.64
equivalent	p.68
problematic	p.69

### Comprehension

- How does Zach build upon Drew's theory that Mr Cathcart was a magician?
- What parallel does Zach see between his own experiences and those of Mr Cathcart?
- What does ASIO stand for?

### Conversation

If someone you believed was on your side, turned out *not* to be on your side, how would you feel?



### Worksheet 2 TR page 13

It's important for spies to have a foolproof cover. What would be your cover, if you were a spy?

## Chapter 10

Pages 72–81

### Vocabulary

disconsolate	p.72
protocols	p.73
predecessor	p.74
lucrative	p.74
materialised	p.77
liaising	p.79

### Comprehension

- Why is Carter disappointed?
- What does Mr Cathcart's letter say?
- What happened, in the 1950s, to embarrass Australia and annoy her Cold War allies?
- Why does Matron ignore Benson's directive to keep the children away from Mr Cathcart?
- Who is Vladimir Krushenko?

### Conversation

The commander says 'you can't trust children.' Is that fair? Why or why not?

## Chapter 11

Pages 82–91

### Vocabulary

undercover	p.86
incomparable	p.88
ticketyboo	p.89

### Comprehension

- Who lives at 'The Lodge'?
- What does 'spill the beans' mean?
- What does Commander Pinkerton do?
- What does Billy mean by, 'Turner's taken the bait'?

### Conversation

What does the end of this chapter suggest about the relationship between Astra and Billy? Have they always been this way?

## Chapter 12

Pages 92–98

### Vocabulary

untoward	p.93
transformation	p.94
reservations	p.96
memoirs	p.98

### Comprehension

- What does 'Mr Cathcart was in his stride' mean?
- What does Matron think is 'an excellent idea'?
- Why does Mr Cathcart have 'reservations'?

### Conversation

Do you think Turner will fall into Commander Pinkerton's trap?

## Chapter 13

Pages 99–106

### Vocabulary

sleight of hand	p.100
hyperdrive	p.101
footage	p.105
tabloids	p.105
assignments	p.106

### Comprehension

- Why is Mr Cathcart receiving so much publicity?
- Is the national security crisis real?
- How does Billy feel when Zach asks him to spy on Turner?

### Conversation

A codename is a name used for secrecy, like 007 or Cathcart. What would yours be?

## Chapter 14

Pages 107–113

### Vocabulary

incredulity	p.108
exposure	p.110
clandestine	p.111
bungled	p.111
allegation	p.111
decadent	p.111

### Comprehension

- Why is Vasily excited?
- Why did Nikolai and Vasily remain in Australia?
- How do Zach, Sophie and Drew plan to tell Commander Pinkerton about Turner's visit to the Russians?

### Conversation

Do you think Turner deserves to be exposed? Why?

## Chapter 15

Pages 114–126

### Vocabulary

hesitant	p.114
figurehead	p.117
obliterated	p.118
anonymous	p.119
morphed	p.124

### Comprehension

- What is Vasily's plan?
- What famous trick is Zach to help Mr Cathcart perform?
- What news does Billy bring about Turner?

### Conversation

Is Mr Cathcart at risk? Why?

## Chapter 16

Pages 127–136

### Vocabulary

absorbed	p.130
theatrically	p.131
gobsmacked	p.131
traitorous	p.131

### Comprehension

- Why does Zach say Turner is a 'slithery thing'?
- Why does Turner ask Matron for coffee-infused sugar cubes?
- Why is 'comrade' an appropriate expression for Turner, according to Mr Cathcart?
- What happens to the sugar bowl?

### Conversation

Had Zach not intervened, what might have happened to Mr Cathcart?

## Chapter 17

Pages 137–146

### Vocabulary

avenging	p.137
lunging	p.139
privy	p.140
tertiary	p.143
clairvoyant	p.143

### Comprehension

- What is 'a media blackout'?
- Would Mr Cathcart have been saved if there'd been only 001 to protect him?
- Of what does Commander Pinkerton suspect Zach?
- How does Zach's father say he'll prove otherwise?

### Conversation

If you were in danger, would you prefer Zach or 001 as your protector? Why?

## Chapter 18

Pages 137–145

### Vocabulary

candid	p.148
allay	p.149
affliction	p.150
feigned	p.151
antidote	p.151

### Comprehension

- Does Zach's demonstration convince Commander Pinkerton and Colonel Wilson?
- How has Vasily's disappearance affected Nikolai?
- Is Nikolai enjoying Ivan's fear of the funnelweb?

### Conversation

Sometimes it's difficult to work out who are the 'goodies' and 'baddies' in a story. At this point, is Nikolai a 'goodie' or a 'baddie'? Why?



### Worksheet 3 TR page 14

Ivan is scared of spiders. Are you? Come up with 8 creative and descriptive adjectives for the spider—one for each of its legs.



## Chapter 19

Pages 155–163

### Vocabulary

dementia	p.155
bargaining	p.156
twigged	p.158
plausible	p.163

### Comprehension

- What does Centrelink's database reveal?
- What does Nikolai try to explain to Vasily?
- How is Mr Cathcart a threat to Krushenko?

### Conversation

Try to pinpoint the main feeling you had when you read this chapter. What was it?

## Chapter 20

Pages 164–172

### Vocabulary

matinee	p.165
alternative	p.166
leotard	p.168
tolerant	p.168
nonchalantly	p.169

### Comprehension

- How is Mr Cathcart affected by the trunk trick alternative?
- How does Zach feel when he suspects Sophie of asking Drew to take her to the dance?
- Why does Astra look at Milly with 'mournful eyes'?

### Conversation

Do you think Astra is 'brilliant'?

## Chapter 21

Pages 173–178

### Vocabulary

persevered	p.174
defect	p.177
geriatric	p.178

### Comprehension

- What is Nikolai determined to do?
- Why does he wish to capture the little black spider?
- Why does Sergeant Dugan think 'something funny' is going on?

### Conversation

Can you explain Nikolai's strange 'conversation' with the spider? What parallel is he drawing, do you think?

## Chapter 22

Pages 179–186

### Vocabulary

sauntered	p.179
obnoxious	p.180
refinements	p.182
indelible	p.182
conspiracy	p.185

### Comprehension

- Of what is Zach afraid?
- Why does Astra say Zach should listen to his premonition?
- Why does Sophie thank the ghostly trio?
- What surprising news does Ronnie Endacott bring?

### Conversation

What could you say to Sophie to make her feel less self-conscious?

## Chapter 23

Pages 187–193

### Vocabulary

ominous	p.191
gauge	p.193

### Comprehension

- Why does Astra believe Billy is wrong about Matron and Mr Cathcart?
- Do the commander and the colonel take Mr Cathcart's news seriously? Why?

### Conversation

What do you predict will happen at the final performance?

## Chapter 24

Pages 194–200

### Vocabulary

pandemonium	p.198
disoriented	p.198
bewailed	p.200
delirious	p.200

### Comprehension

- What instructions have Vasily's 'friends' given him? Are they really his friends?
- Who, do you think, cries out, 'What about Hector?'
- What does Zach have the presence of mind to do, in spite of being shot?

### Conversation

Do you think Zach behaves heroically?

## Chapter 25

Pages 201–207

### Vocabulary

forensics	p.201
incompetent	p.201
tetchy	p.201
scornful	p.204

### Comprehension

- Why is Mr Cathcart angry?
- Why, do you think, does Zach feel as if he's been taken over by a giant jellyfish?
- Why does Astra say she'll give herself up to the grunTERS? What stops her?

### Conversation

Why, do you think, is this the final book in the Zach series?

## Chapter 26

Pages 208–213

### Vocabulary

soppy	p.208
demeanour	p.209
staggered	p.209
cynical	p.211
therapeutic	p.212

### Comprehension

- Why does Mr Cathcart call Zach 'a true professional'?
- Why is Sophie soppy?
- How does Zach feel about the 'scenario of senior love'?
- What is Mr Cathcart's poem about?
- Instead of a rabbit, what does Mr Cathcart pull from his hat?

### Conversation

What do you think about the ending of this story? Do you think it was a good ending to the Zach series as a whole?

## After you finish

There is a saying 'With age comes wisdom.' Do you believe this? Is this saying fair to the children in the Zach series? What about the adults?

Write a character profile of your favourite character in this book or the Zach series as a whole. Explain why this character is your favourite.

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

# Who Am I?

Write a list of clues about yourself for a game of Who Am I?

For example:

- I love to walk my dog
- I play basketball on Tuesday nights
- My favourite food is tacos

Your teacher collects the clues from each student, then reads them out one by one to the class. Call out if you think you know which of your classmates the clues refer to! Will your classmates guess you from your clues?

**CLUE #1**

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**CLUE #2**

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**CLUE #3**

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**CLUE #4**

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**CLUE #5**

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

# If I Were a Spy...

It's important for spies to have a foolproof cover. What would be your cover if you were a spy?

Tonight you're attending a very important party where you must spy on Sam White, the host. There will be lots of people you don't know, to whom you will have to introduce yourself.

Create your cover story and then answer the questions of the chatty partygoer below...

**Partygoer: Hi, I don't think we've met. I'm Alex. What's your name?**

**You:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Partygoer: And what do you do for work?**

**You:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Partygoer: Oh, interesting! What's the best part about that job?**

**You:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Partygoer: And how do you know Sam?**

**You:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

# Spider Describer

Ivan is scared of spiders. Are you? Come up with 8 creative and descriptive adjectives for the spider—one for each of its legs. One has been done for you.

