



Spooks

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

Play a word association game using the book's title, *Spooks*, as your starting point. What is the first thing that comes to mind for students when they hear this word?

Chapter 1

Pages 1-7

Vocabulary

tousled	p.1
levitated	p.2
synthetic	p.2
complimenting	p.5
dodgy	p.6
fanatical	p.7

Comprehension

- What 'precious thing' does Mrs Brinkley say Astra gave to her and her husband?
- Why are Astra and Milly crying?
- What happens, finally, to the ghost of Josiah Batty (aka JB)?
- Does Zach like cricket?

Conversation

How is Billy affected by the fact that Zach is getting older ('You'll be fourteen next year')?

Chapter 2

Pages 8-16

Vocabulary

uprising	p.9
austere	p.10
console	p.11
lamed	p.12
demoralising	p.13
alternative	p.13

Comprehension

- What does 'conscientious objector' mean?
- Why do you think Zach has an aversion to team sport?
- How does Mr Boxer feel about Zach's aversion?
- What does Drew mean by 'spooks'?

Conversation

Do you like team sport? Why or why not? Should it be compulsory?

Chapter 3

Pages 17-23

Vocabulary

automaton	p.18
insolence	p.29
molecular	p.20
flabbergasted	p.20
chauvinist	p.22

Comprehension

- Is Raoul being rude to Miss Redpath?
- Billy, Zach and Drew find Raoul's rudeness to Sophie funny. Why?
- Why does Sophie tell Zach and Drew to shut up?

Conversation

What is your first impression of Raoul? Would you like him? Why or why not?

Chapter 4

Pages 24–32

Vocabulary

nurturing	p.24
barbaric	p.24
abrasive	p.24
calisthenics	p.25
deadpan	p.25
priority	p.26
dobber	p.31

Comprehension

- What do Raoul and Mr Pratt have in common?
- What is Mr Pratt's attitude towards the man in the suit? Why?
- What is 'a lefty', according to Zach's mother?
- What do the children conclude about the reason for the spooks' presence?

Conversation

Zach and his friends' first theory about the men in the van outside their school is that they are protecting a witness. If a surveillance van was parked outside your school, what would be your first thought?

Chapter 5

Pages 33–42

Vocabulary

radical	p.33
notoriety	p.34
tacky	p.35
disgruntled	p.36
discrepancies	p.37

Comprehension

- Why does Mrs Peebles believe Mr Feldstein can help raise funds for the school?
- Why does Raoul's decision to choose running over team sport cause problems?
- Raoul thinks his 'good luck charm' might be a tracking device. What happens when he removes it?

Conversation

In this chapter, the staff at Josiah Batty Grammar discuss various ways of raising money for the school. If you were in charge of fundraising for your school, what would you do?



Worksheet 1

TR page 13

What have you learnt about the character of Raoul so far? Create a character profile on the new kid at school using words and phrases from the story.

Chapter 6

Pages 43–49

Vocabulary

pallor	p.43
gullible	p.44
allay	p.45
ecstatic	p.47

Comprehension

- Why is Mrs Peebles angry?
- Who is 'P' and why is he known by a letter, not a name?
- Why is 'P' angry?
- What does 'without conviction' mean? What do Zach and Drew really feel?

Conversation

Has your opinion of Raoul changed since we first met him? Why?

Chapter 7

Pages 50–61

Vocabulary

condescended	p.50
obnoxious	p.50
privilege	p.53
pun	p.59

Comprehension

- How does Raoul enlist the ghosts' support?
- What fundraising scheme is proposed by Mrs Peebles?
- What worries Zach's mother about Raoul being enrolled at Josiah Batty?

Conversation

Sophie thinks it would be cheating to include Astra and the twins on the quiz team. Do you agree?

Chapter 8

Pages 62–67

Vocabulary

materialised	p.64
envisaged	p.65
dismissively	p.66

Comprehension

- Why does Sophie think, 'Patches isn't the only one'?
- How does Sophie believe they should prepare for the quiz?
- What does Mr Brinkley mean when he says, 'My money's on Sophie'?

Conversation

Who, in your opinion, would make the better team leader – Raoul or Sophie? Why?

Chapter 9

Pages 68–75

Vocabulary

democracy	p.69
rigged	p.69
intervene	p.70
distraught	p.70
poach	p.74

Comprehension

- Why are the boys fighting?
- 'You boys may live in a democracy, but while you are at this school you will be dictated to by me.' Why do you think she says 'dictated to'?
- Who is Raymond Bigglesworth?

Conversation

What does it mean to live in a democracy?



Worksheet 2

TR page 14

Voting is an important part of a democracy. Gather facts about this and other factors of a democracy and how they compare to other types of government.

Chapter 10

Pages 76–80

Vocabulary

palatial	p.76
peevish	p.77
reverted	p.77
confrontation	p.78
immune	p.79
corruption	p.79

Comprehension

- Why does Raoul's father hit him?
- What does Raoul discover about his father's government?
- How does Stinker react when Raoul rejects his bribe?
- What does 'keeping your nose clean' mean?
- Why do Zach and Drew make fun of Raoul at the end of this chapter?

Conversation

How do you imagine it would feel to find out that someone you love is doing something wrong?

Chapter 11

Pages 81–89

Vocabulary

downcast	p.82
supernatural	p.83
dubious	p.84

Comprehension

- Why is Astra angry?
- Why is Astra teaching Patches to fly?
- What happens to Zach's mother's sofa cushions?
- How does Sophie rekindle Astra's interest in the quiz?

Conversation

Can you think of a quiz question that Astra, Milly or Billy would be able to answer?

Chapter 12

Pages 90–96

Vocabulary

parasites	p.91
saviour	p.92
blitz	p.92
biplane	p.94

Comprehension

- Why has Raoul decided to 'do' with his life?
- How did he reach this decision?
- Why does it feel strange to Zach that he and Sophie are laughing at Astra?

Conversation

Raoul has decided what he wants to do with his life. Have you?

Chapter 13

Pages 97–103

Vocabulary

attentive	p.97
commiserated	p.98
witheringly	p.101
insignia	p.102

Comprehension

- Why is Sophie finding it hard to concentrate?
- Bigglesworth is worried about 'losing face'. What does this mean?
- Where was Astra during the quiz?

Conversation

Look at the illustration on page 103. What information that wasn't in the text can you tell from the picture?

Chapter 14

Pages 104–112

Vocabulary

cajoling	p.104
tsunami	p.104
obsessed	p.105
disgruntled	p.110
spontaneous	p.110

Comprehension

- Which of Astra's qualities does Zach appreciate?
- What is Mr Feldstein doing, at the fete, to help make money for the school?
- Who is the winner of the ugliest pet competition?

Conversation

Astra says: 'Successful people keep trying. It's unsuccessful people who give up.' Do you think Astra is right?

Chapter 15

Pages 113–122

Vocabulary

esteemed	p.113
stoic	p.114
tensely	p.115
jeopardise	p.116
miffed	p.120

Comprehension

- When Stinker says, 'our esteemed leader', is he being sincere or ironic?
- Why is Sophie in tears?
- How does the audience respond to Raoul's late appearance?
- What is the first question Bigglesworth's team gets wrong?

Conversation

Was the quiz run fairly? Why or why not?

Chapter 16

Pages 123–129

Vocabulary

affinity	p.124
eluded	p.125
succumbed	p.127
restraining	p.128

Comprehension

- What does 'on cloud nine' mean? Why is Zach on cloud nine?
- Why does Raoul pretend he's being kidnapped?
- Why don't the spooks want people to photograph Raoul?

Conversation

What do Mrs Peebles's dealings with Raoul tell us about her?

Chapter 17

Pages 130–136

Vocabulary

skirmish	p.130
confiscated	p.131
leniency	p.133
dispelled	p.134
prestige	p.136
protocol	p.136

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

In your own words, explain how Raoul's hunger strike worked and what it hoped to achieve.

Chapter 18

Pages 137–145

Vocabulary

daft	p.138
clandestine	p.138
proviso	p.139
concession	p.139
bravado	p.141
prototype	p.143

Comprehension

- Why does Mick tell Mobe he needs to go on a hunger strike?
- How has Raoul's image at Josiah Batty changed?
- What is meant by, 'the ambassador had undergone a sea change'?
- Is Freddy Schumacker convinced by all the talk of iFlyers, gimbals and gizmos? Is Miranda convinced?

Conversation

Zach and his friends were quick to come up with the iFlyer story to explain the floating radio. Can you think of another tall tale that might have convinced Freddy and Miranda?



Worksheet 3 TR page 15

Design a poster to advertise the quiz challenge between Josiah Batty Grammar and Burrawang High School.

Chapter 19

Pages 146–151

Vocabulary

vulnerable	p.147
bugged	p.149
smothering	p.150
spectre	p.150

Comprehension

- What are civil rights or civil liberties?
- Why does Raoul's father have every right to be afraid?

Conversation

What do you predict will happen in Chapter 20?

Chapter 20

Pages 152–158

Vocabulary

sympathy	p.152
balacava	p.154
dislodge	p.154
musty	p.155
heroic	p.155

Comprehension

- In Raoul's country, how are girls disadvantaged?
- Why is Raoul critical of Zach?
- How does Zach respond to this criticism?
- What is Zach's plan?

Conversation

Was your prediction about this chapter correct? Why or why not?

Chapter 21

Pages 159–165

Vocabulary

incompetence	p.160
distraught	p.161
speculative	p.163
intervention	p.164

Comprehension

- What is P's real name?
- Why does Mrs Peebles feel responsible for what has happened?
- Why is Mr Pratt in hospital?

Conversation

Can you think of a way that Sophie, Astra and the twins, with their special powers, could help Zach and Raoul?

Chapter 22

Pages 166–173

Vocabulary

contagious p.170
curvature p.172

Comprehension

- Of what does Sophie remind Zach's parents?
- Does Mr Ferguson (Sophie's father) believe in loaming?
- What does Zach do that helps him find his way home?

Conversation

What are the landmarks in your town that you'd be able to recognise from above? What other ideas do you have that would help Zach find his way?

Chapter 23

Pages 174–186

Vocabulary

co-ordinates p.176
robotic p.178
sieges p.181
sporadic p.181
megaphone p.184

Comprehension

- At what time does Zach arrive home?
- Why does Mr Ferguson leave the women behind?
- How does a satnav work?
- How does Milly prevent the terrorists from using Zach and Raoul as hostages?

Conversation

Who, in your opinion, played the most significant role in the rescue of Zach and Raoul? Explain your answer.

Chapter 24

Pages 187–194

Vocabulary

controversial p.187
gouged p.188
entourage p.189
enormity p.189

Comprehension

- What is Raoul's real name?
- Why is Zach hailed as a hero?
- What has Miranda decided she'd like to be? Do you think she'll succeed?

Conversation

Why do you think the author chose to focus on Miranda's pursuit of knowledge in this chapter? Does it give you a clue about the next chapter?

Chapter 25

Pages 195–201

Vocabulary

mortality	p.195
furtive	p.196
plinth	p.196
mountainous	p.199
steadfastly	p.201

Comprehension

- Why does Zach believe that being kidnapped has done Raoul the world of good?
- How has Miranda's appearance changed?
- What do Miranda's teammates – in particular Rory McInerney – do?
- What does Miranda do that her team captain had instructed her not to do?

Conversation

Do you feel sorry for Miranda?

Chapter 26

Pages 202–209

Vocabulary

dumbstruck	p.202
agitated	p.204
cretin	p.204
sheepish	p.205

Comprehension

- Why does Sophie try to make Miranda feel better?
- Why isn't Ricky Vincent angry with Miranda?
- What does Mr Pratt mean when he says, 'There have been other benefits'?
- What does Zach confess to Mr Pratt about his 'heroic' clinging to the kidnapper?

Conversation

What do you think about the ending of this story?
What sort of ending would you have written?



Worksheet 4

TR page 16

Sophie, Zach, Raoul and Dean won the quiz trophy. But what trophy would you award to this book?

After you finish

Write a set of quiz questions for the second annual competition between Josiah Batty Grammar and Burrawang High School. Test them out in a class contest.

Pretending you are Raoul, write a diary entry that contrasts the Australian way of life, rights and privileges to that of his home country.

Debate the topic: 'Knowledge is better than brute strength', using evidence from the book.

Name: _____

Raoul: A Character Profile

What have you learnt about the character of Raoul so far? Create a character profile on the new kid at school using words and phrases from the story.

Appearance

Evidence from the book	Page number

Personality

Evidence from the book	Page number

Background

Evidence from the book	Page number

Name: _____

Defining Democracy

Voting is an important part of a democracy. Gather facts about this and other factors of a democracy and how they compare to other types of government.

	Democracy	Dictatorship	Monarchy
Voting			
Leaders			
Rights of Citizens			
Powers of Government			

Name: _____

Spread the Word

Design a poster to advertise the quiz challenge between Josiah Batty Grammar and Burrawang High School. Your poster should entice students and others within the community to attend.

Name: _____

The Book Awards

You have been asked to judge the Annual Book Awards! As part of your role, you also have to decide on the judging categories.

Create a judging category that Spooks should be nominated for. Examples might be 'Most Suspenseful' or 'Most Unique Characters.'

Judging category: _____

Why should Spooks be a nominee in this category?

Design the trophy for this category.

