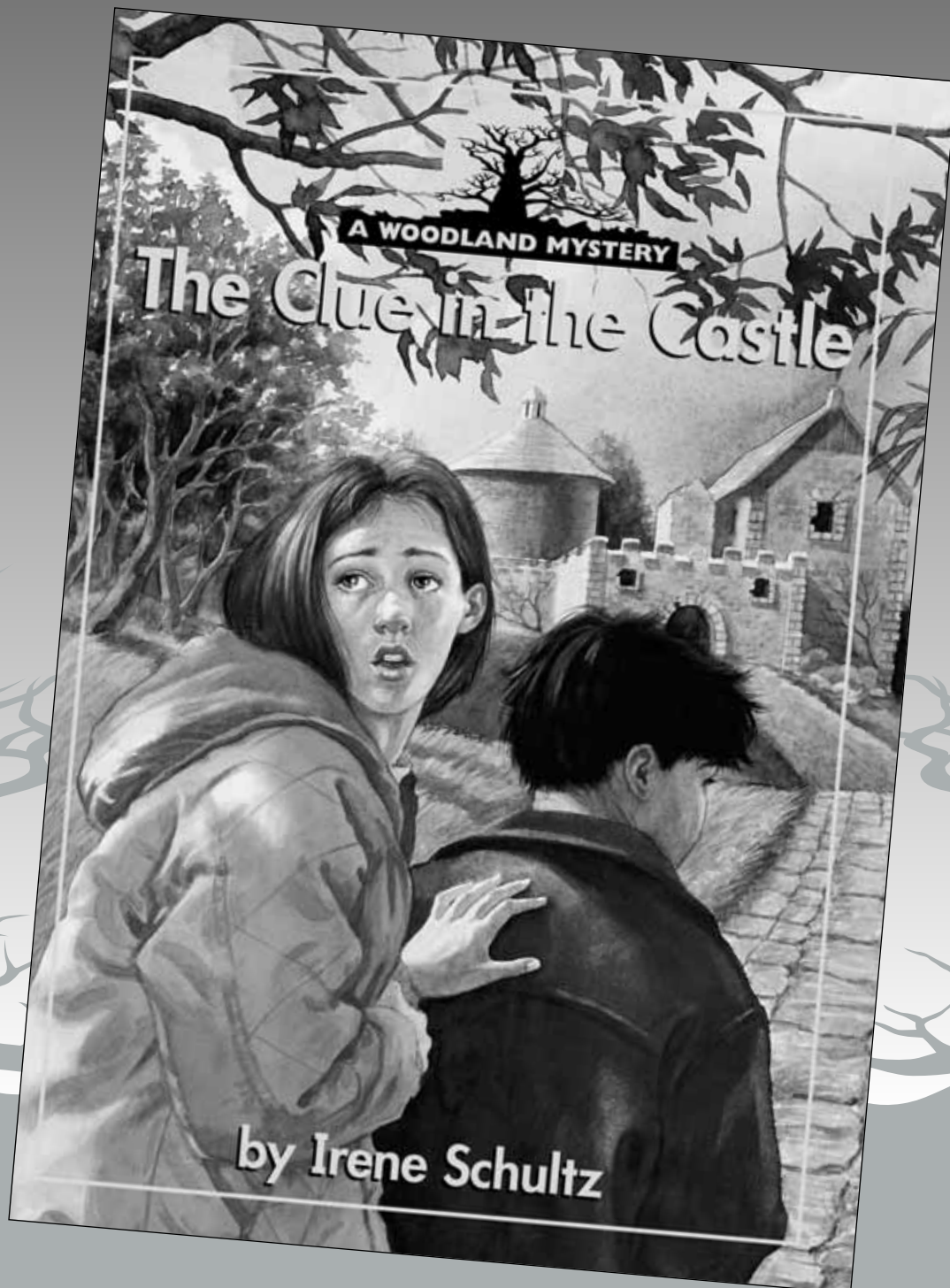


Teacher's Notes and Copy Masters





The Clue in the Castle

WHAT'S IT ABOUT?

The Woodlanders fly to England for the summer to stay in the cottage Mrs Tandy has inherited. There, the discovery of an old silver box containing two gold Roman coins leads them and their new archaeologist friends on a hunt for a buried Roman villa. The Woodlanders solve the mystery before the thieves who are also after the treasure.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

"My husband and I were visiting a Roman ruin in England when a schoolmaster arrived with a dozen little boys in short black pants, white shirts, and ties, and told them the story of how the villa was unearthed many years back by a farmer who was hunting rabbits with a ferret. I used his account as the basis for the Woodlanders' adventure in helping find the villa. During that same trip to England we also explored a dove cote at an abandoned castle."

Irene Schultz

Introducing the Book

- Display the cover and discuss the illustration. Ask, *How do you think the girl is feeling? Why?*
- Invite volunteers to read the blurb and the table of contents. Encourage them to use this information to make initial predictions about the story. Then discuss the chapter headings, and decide which heading seems the most mysterious or exciting.
- Provide each child with a copy of **Copy Master 1** and discuss how they could use the sheet as they read.

Directing the Reading

- Have children read the book independently
 - **OR** guide children's reading using questions and discussion points such as those set out below
 - **OR** guide children through early chapters, until they are confident to read on independently.
- **Chapters 1–2** *How could you tell that the Woodlanders were excited about the trip? How would you feel if you were going on an overseas trip? How did Bill know how to find the missing child? Have you ever been lost? How did you feel? What did you do?*
 - **Chapters 3–4** *Why was Sammy surprised at the Hunters' front door? What is an archaeologist? What are the two mysteries for the Woodlanders to solve? What clues do they have?*
 - **Chapters 5–6** *Why do you think Mrs Tandy needed to be reminded to drive on the left side of the road? What was the answer to the mystery of the round tower? What was the "first real clue" discovered by the Woodlanders?*
 - **Chapters 7–8** *Why did the Hunters believe that the snuff box and its contents were important? Who do you believe is responsible for the break-in? Why? What did Mrs Tandy think about the situation? Do you agree with her? Why, or why not?*
 - **Chapters 9–10** *Why did Kathy, Bill and Dave suspect that Roger was responsible for the break-in? Were their suspicions correct? How was the location of the Roman villa discovered? Why was it important for Roger to pretend to be a real butler?*
 - **Chapters 11–12** *Why did Sammy, Bill and Roger suspect the rabbit hunters? How did Roger and Mr Hunter use this information? How did Roger and Mr Hunter plan to catch the crooks? Do you think it was fair to "trick" the crooks? Why?*
 - **Chapter 13** *What role did each of the Woodlanders play in capturing the crooks? What do you think would have happened if the Woodlanders had not been there? Where was the gold? How was it discovered?*



SKILLS

- **Comparative and superlative adjectives:**
 - word building using *-er* or *-est*
 - identifying adjectives that don't take these endings
- **"Saying" verbs:**
 - examining alternative verbs to be used instead of *said*
 - considering the different tones of voice these variations suggest
 - writing dialogue

BEYOND THE TEXT

- Children could imagine that treasure hunting is their occupation, and design and produce an advertisement for their business.
- Children could research famous archaeological discoveries (or any other aspect of archaeology), or they could arrange a visit to a museum of natural history.
- Sammy is superstitious about the number 13. Children could research other superstitious beliefs about good luck or bad luck and develop a list of common superstitions and the supposed outcomes.

Expanding Understanding and Reading Critically

- Ask the children to compare the predictions they made before and during the reading with what actually happened. They could refer to the completed **Copy Master 1** to help.
- Read together the first paragraph on page 61. Ask the children why they think the author included this paragraph, and how it affects the story and the reader. You could describe the technique as **foreshadowing** – where the author builds suspense by providing clues to future events which the characters in the story may not know about.
- Discuss the Woodlanders' suspicion that Roger was a "crook" or a "baddy". Identify the clues in the story that led them to this conclusion. Suggest that these clues are intended to distract the reader, and discuss why the author might have included "false" clues such as this in her story.
- Discuss the different types of characters found in this mystery – main characters, supporting characters, "good" characters and "baddies". Encourage the children to consider the role of each character, and his or her importance to the story. Children could complete **Copy Master 2**.
- Children could complete the quiz on **Copy Master 3**.

Skills in Focus

Comparative and superlative adjectives





- Write the word *fast* on the board and demonstrate how the suffixes "*-er*" and "*-est*" can be added to form the words *faster* (**comparative adjective**) and *fastest* (**superlative adjective**). Discuss how these adjectives are used to compare two, three or more nouns. Invite volunteers to give sentences to illustrate each adjective. Ask the children to suggest other groups of adjectives such as *slow, slower, slowest; big, bigger, biggest; angry, angrier, angriest* and so on. Draw attention to the different spelling patterns. You could also discuss adjectives that take the words *more* and *most*, such as *beautiful (more beautiful, most beautiful), foolish (more foolish, most foolish)*, and other irregular adjectives such as *good (better, best)* and *bad (worse, worst)*.

"Saying" verbs

- Ask the children to turn to page 42 and identify the verbs used instead of "said" to mark direct speech (*told, added, cried*). Discuss the reasons for using a variety of verbs; for example, to show the volume of the voice (*whispered, exclaimed, shouted*) or to avoid repetition. Children could experiment with using verbs other than "said" by working in pairs to write a short dialogue.
- Children could complete **Copy Master 4**.

I Predict...

Name: _____

At the end of...	My predictions	My reasons
Chapter 3 	<i>I predict</i>	
Chapter 5 	<i>I predict</i>	
Chapter 8 	<i>I predict</i>	
Chapter 12 	<i>I predict</i>	

How did the Woodlanders solve the mystery of Jonathan Hunter's gold coins?

My predictions were: Perfect Very good Not bad Not even close!

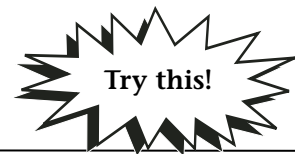
Who Am I?

Name: _____

1. Complete the table.

Character	How I appear to others	What I am like	My role in the mystery
Kathy			
Bunny			
Sammy			
Lord Frost			
Roger			
Liz Hunter			
Mrs Tandy			
Man under window			

2. Which character is your favourite? Why?



Invent your own mystery-solving character and describe what he or she is like.

Quiz

Name: _____

Read pages 76–79 of *The Clue in the Castle*. Then answer these questions.

1. Why did Sammy describe the process of looking over their house as “*more like bottom to top*”?
 - Everything was in a mess.
 - They went upstairs first.
 - Everything had been moved from the bottom to the top of the house.
2. The Woodlanders thought the intruders were looking for:
 - gold jewellery.
 - the Roman villa.
 - the silver box.
3. When Ben Hunter heard about the break-in, he was:
 - happy that the Woodlanders’ house was a mess.
 - relieved that he had the silver box.
 - angry at the police for not checking the house.
4. How did Sammy feel when Dave found the clue on the screen-door spring?
 - thoughtful
 - excited
 - angry
5. Find the following sentence on page 79: *Dave said, “I hope he lets us in on it soon.”*
Dave means that:
 - Roger should solve the mystery quickly.
 - the Woodlanders should be allowed to help.
 - Ben Hunter should tell them everything that is going on.
6. Why would Mrs Tandy think that they have a “bigger mystery” to solve than just a break-in?

Looking at Language

Name: _____

1. Complete the chart.

Adjective	"er" or more	"est" or most
perfect	more perfect	most perfect
dark	darker	darkest
		most careful
		highest
wet		
		busiest
	happier	

2. Write a sentence using two of the words from the chart.

3. *called yelled shouted gasped laughed answered asked explained
groaned muttered whispered exclaimed replied added*

Write direct speech for each of these characters. Choose a different word from the box to use instead of "said" in each sentence.

• Sammy _____

• Mrs Tandy _____

• Bill _____



The Woodland Mysteries series provides **high interest, low reading level novels** that build reader confidence and develop reading proficiency.

Interest level: Years 5–6
Reading level: Years 3–4

All ten titles in the series are **mystery adventures** featuring the “Woodlanders”, a fun-loving family of five with whom children will readily identify. All texts feature:

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- Discussion questions and activities to develop **comprehension and critical responses**
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The Mystery of the Missing Dog
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The Secret of the Song
The Two Runaways

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Especially written for pupils in Years 5 and 6 who need **Additional Literacy Support (ALS)**. The *Teacher’s Notes* and *Copy Masters* directly support NLS word-level and sentence-level work at the Year 3 and 4 levels.

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