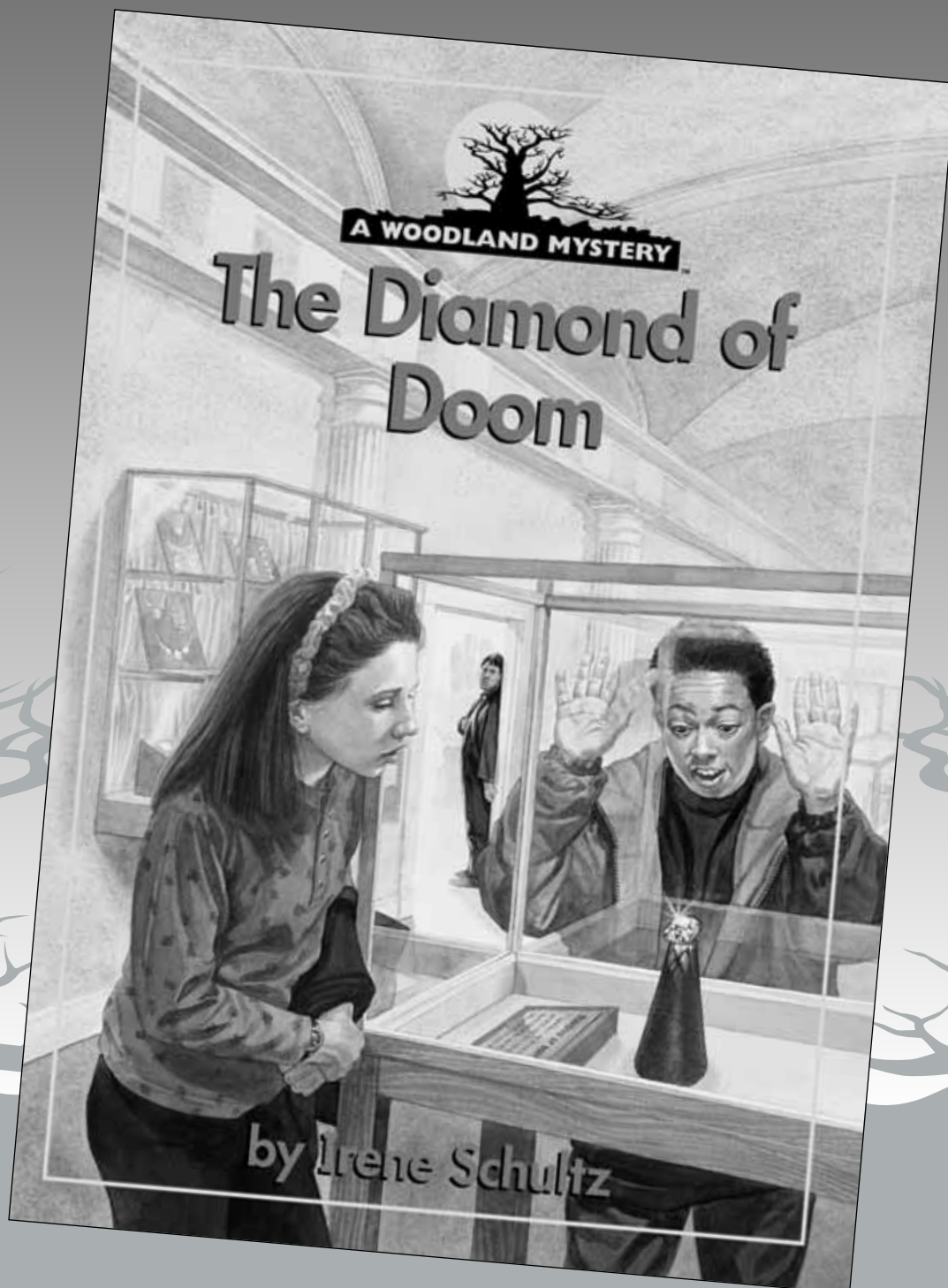


Teacher's Notes and Copy Masters





The Diamond of Doom

WHAT'S IT ABOUT?

The Woodlanders' visit to the city museum does not go exactly as they planned, as there is not enough time to view all their favourite exhibits (including the cave family display, the mummy room and the jewel room which contains the magnificent *Diamond of Doom*). With only a few minutes left before closing time, Sammy's visit to the toilet leaves them accidentally locked in the museum overnight, and caught in the middle of a diamond theft.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

"This story simply began writing itself as I sat in the old Field Museum's basement dining room with my feet sticking to the floor. I picked up my bill and in tiny handwriting began telling about the Woodland family being there. I wasn't surprised at Sammy's attitude towards the giant squid, and towards the candy bars, but I was as surprised as anyone else when they got locked in. I had no idea that would happen until I wrote it down, and I had to get another copy of the bill from the waitress because I wasn't going to give up my story!"

Irene Schultz

Introducing the Book

- Display the cover of the book. Read the title and discuss the meaning of the word "doom". (Children could use a dictionary to check the meaning.) Discuss the **tone** or **mood** this word sets for the story. Ask volunteers to make some predictions about the story. Encourage children to support their predictions using evidence drawn from the illustration.
- Ask volunteers to read the blurb and the table of contents. Invite children to extend or modify their earlier predictions about the story, using this new information
- Provide each child with a copy of **Copy Master 1**, and explain how the children could use this during reading.

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.
- **Chapter 1** *Why did the Woodlanders need to select the exhibits they would see? Do you think Dave's method for choosing the exhibits was fair? Why? What makes you think something unusual is going to happen?*
 - **Chapters 2–3** *Why were the Woodlanders surprised when they came to the cave family exhibit? What is your opinion of the man who spoke to Sammy? What information from the story influenced your answer? Why do you think the man suddenly changed his behaviour?*
 - **Chapters 4–5** *Who do you think enjoyed the insect and water creatures display the most ... the least? How do you know?*
 - **Chapters 6–7** *Why was the diamond called The Diamond of Doom? What was different about the cave display when the Woodlanders walked back past it? Were you surprised when the Woodlanders were locked inside the museum? Why, or why not? How do you imagine you would feel if it happened to you?*
 - **Chapters 8–9** *How did the Woodlanders react to their situation? What actions did they take? What made the Woodlanders think someone else was in the museum? Who else do you believe is in the museum?*
 - **Chapters 10–11** *How did the Woodlanders react to the idea of someone else being in the museum? Who do they think this person might be? How did they work out what was going on? What plan did the Woodlanders carry out next? How would you behave in a similar situation? Why?*
 - **Chapters 12–13** *Why did Mrs Tandy persuade the "crook" she was alone? What plan did the Woodlanders have to save Mrs Tandy? What made them decide on this plan? What action of Sammy's ensured the "crook" was caught? How might the story have ended if the Woodlanders had not knocked out the "crook"?*



SKILLS

- **Punctuation:**
 - considering how question marks and exclamation marks assist with expressive reading
 - writing questions and exclamations
- **Figurative language:**
 - identifying and writing similes
- **Pluralisation:**
 - examining spelling patterns of regular plurals
 - listing irregular plurals

BEYOND THE TEXT

- At the end of the story, television reporters interviewed the Woodlanders about their adventure. Working in pairs, children could prepare and present an “on-the-scene” television interview about the capture of the jewel thief in the museum.
- Children could research the way of life of cave people from prehistoric times. Encourage them to compare the lifestyles of the cave people and modern day people using headings such as **Cooking and eating, Food gathering, Clothing, Learning, Transport, and Housing.**
- Children could use the map on page 12 to plan a visit to the museum. The plan could be presented in a timetable form with a brief explanation of why each exhibit was selected.

Expanding Understanding and Reading Critically

- The main events in this story occur in the museum. Review the map on page 12 and ask children to identify where the key events in the story occurred.
- Direct children to the last sentence of Chapter 1. Discuss how the author creates suspense. Repeat the discussion for the end of Chapter 3.
- Discuss how the story builds up to a **climax** – the most exciting or suspenseful moment in the story. Ask children to describe what they consider to be the climax of the *Diamond of Doom*. Encourage them to support their answers with evidence drawn from the story. Children could complete **Copy Master 2**.
- Children could complete the quiz on **Copy Master 3**.

Skills in Focus

Punctuation to aid expression

- Write the following sentences on the board: *Museums are interesting places. Are museums interesting? Museums are interesting!* Ask children to identify the punctuation marks used to finish each sentence. Discuss *why* each mark is used; for example, an exclamation mark is used for emphasis. Discuss how punctuation also affects the way a sentence is read. Ask the children to skim page 20 to find sentences that include question marks and exclamation marks. Encourage the children to read the sentences aloud.

“Saying” verbs

- Ask children to skim page 41 and identify the verbs used to mark direct speech (*said, replied, asked, answered, yelled*). Discuss the author’s purpose for using a variety of verbs and the effect they have on the way the speech is read. Children could complete **Copy Master 4**.

Figurative language





- Write these sentences: *The sea was as clear as glass. The lambs were as white as snow.* Discuss the comparison (**simile**) in each one. Ask the children to skim page 46 and identify the simile Bill uses to describe the Diamond of Doom (*as big as a grapefruit*). Invite volunteers to suggest other similes to describe the diamond.

Pluralisation

- Write *thief* on the board and ask the children for the plural (*thieves*). Brainstorm other plurals that change in a similar way (*knife/knives*). Ask the children to skim the text and identify plurals, such as *insect/insects, child/children, potato/potatoes*. List each example (with its singular form) on the board, discussing the spelling as you write. (You could list plurals with similar spelling conventions together.) Challenge children to find irregular plurals such as *mouse/mice, sheep/sheep* and so on.

I Predict...

Name: _____

At the end of...	My predictions	My reasons
Chapter 2 	<i>I predict</i>	
Chapter 4 	<i>I predict</i>	
Chapter 7 	<i>I predict</i>	
Chapter 12 	<i>I predict</i>	

Which clues were most helpful for your predictions?

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

Exciting Events

Name: _____

1. Mark how exciting you found each of the listed events.

Compare your graph with a friend's.

Degrees of excitement	Extremely exciting																		
	Very exciting																		
	Exciting																		
	Not exciting																		
Story events																			
		The Woodlanders make plans to visit the museum.	The Woodlanders visit the mummy room.	Mrs Tandy threatens to report the cave display worker.	The man with the thick hair follows the Woodlanders.	The Woodlanders see the Diamond of Doom.	The Woodlanders are locked in the museum.	Kathy realises the lift changed floors.	The Woodlanders search the ground floor of the museum.	Sammy notices one of the cavemen is missing.	Mrs Tandy is captured by the jewel thief.	The jewel thief trips on Sammy's marbles.	Chief Hemster and the museum guard arrest the thief.						



2. Which event in the story did you find **most** exciting? Why?

3. On the back of this sheet, list the five most important clues in the mystery. Describe where each clue was uncovered and how it helped solve the mystery.



Imagine you are one of the cave people in the exhibit. Describe the jewel robbery from your point of view.

Quiz

Name: _____

Read pages 45–48 of *The Diamond of Doom*. Then answer these questions.

1. The Museum has three floors of displays. On which floor is the Jewel Room?
 basement ground floor first floor
2. On page 46, Mrs Tandy says, “*This takes my breath away!*” She means that she is:
 frightened impressed tired
3. On page 46, Sammy says, “*Boy, it makes you want it all!*” What does the second “it” refer to?
 chocolate bars jewels museums
4. Why does the *Diamond of Doom* have that name?
 Its owners have died soon after they took possession of it.
 It has never stayed in one place for long.
 It scares people who look at it.
5. Why did Sammy make a “scary face”?
 He was pretending to be scared.
 He was keeping thieves away.
 He was trying to frighten Bill.
6. Do you think the *Diamond of Doom* is a good name for the huge diamond? Why, or why not?

7. Create a new name for the diamond and explain how it describes the diamond.

Looking at Language

Name: _____

1. Skim the book to find words that can be used instead of "said". List the words below.

shouted, replied, _____

2. Write a short conversation between two people who are looking at a display of precious jewels. Use some of the words you listed.

3. Rewrite this statement as a question and as an exclamation.

Statement: *You can cover the display.*

Question: _____

Exclamation: _____

4. Complete the following similes.

The ice cream was as _____

The thief was as _____

The coat was as _____

The dinosaur was as _____



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

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Reading level: Years 3–4

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The Good-for-Nothing Dog
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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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