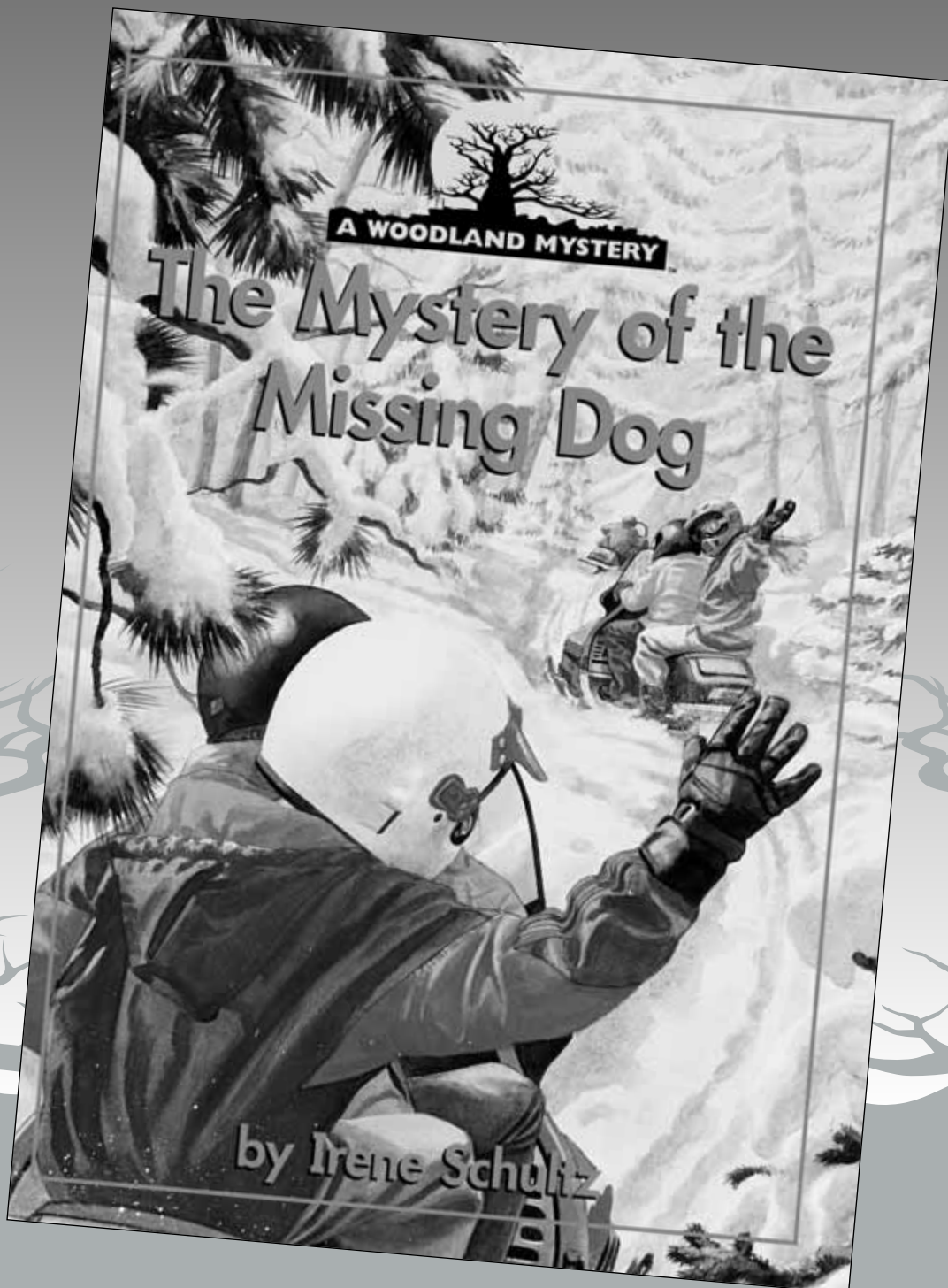


# Teacher's Notes and Copy Masters





# The Mystery of the Missing Dog

## WHAT'S IT ABOUT?

The Woodlanders are promised an exciting winter holiday at the Adams's Big River Ranch. When they learn that their much-loved dog, Dusty, has been missing for a month, the Woodlanders use snowmobiles to search the mountains for him. Finally, they discover Dusty caught in an animal trap, weak but alive. After returning Dusty to the family the Woodlanders are determined to find the hunter who has been setting illegal traps. Join the Woodlanders, racing over the snow, rescuing buried friends and chasing a trapper called Tennessee!

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

*"This story is based on a Montana newspaper clipping about a dog from the ranch we go to, a ranch in the valley I knew as a child. The dog was actually missing for a month and thought dead, but was discovered alive, caught in an illegal trap. The elderly couple marooned in the snow-covered cabin lived way up the river valley when I was a child. They taught me how to pan for gold!"*

Irene Schultz

## Introducing the Book

- Help children to locate Montana, USA on a map and identify the mountain ranges that cross the state.
- Display the cover. Ask the children to read the blurb and the table of contents. Discuss how each chapter heading helps to predict what is going to happen in the story or encourages readers to "find out more". Encourage the children to use the information gathered so far to make initial predictions about the storyline.
- 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.

- **Chapter 1** *What did you find out about Mr Adams's ranch? What do you think the surprise will be? Would you like to spend your holiday at Mr Adams's ranch? Why?*
- **Chapters 2–3** *Did you predict correctly Mr Adams's surprise? Why was Sammy upset at dinner? How would you have felt if you were in the same situation? Why did the Woodlanders think they could find Dusty?*
- **Chapters 4–5** *How did Dusty survive? Why did Bill stop Sammy running to rescue Dusty? What reasoning did Sammy use to persuade the others to take Dusty back with them? Do you agree with the Woodlanders' decision? Why?*
- **Chapters 6–7** *How did Mr and Mrs Adams and Ed feel when the Woodlanders brought Dusty home? How can you tell? Who was described by Sammy as a "crook"? Why did Sammy describe the person that way?*
- **Chapter 8** *What was Tennessee Turner's attitude to trapping? Do you think the other characters in the story agree with this view? How do you know? What is your opinion?*
- **Chapters 9–10** *What connection was there between the SOS conversation and finding Jess and Lena? Did you know the cabin was buried before the Woodlanders did? What led you to this conclusion?*
- **Chapters 11–12** *How did Jess and Lena survive in the buried cabin? What did they think of Tennessee Turner? How was their opinion different from the Woodlanders' opinion?*
- **Chapter 13** *How was Tennessee Turner caught? Why did Bill and Sammy warn the others to walk in their footprints? How did the Woodlanders and their friends treat Tennessee Turner? Do you think this was right?*



## SKILLS

- **Collective nouns:**
  - discuss and list collective nouns
- **Words and phrases that indicate time:**
  - review of function and use of such words and phrases
- **Suffixes:**
  - review of function of suffixes
  - use of the suffix *-ion*

## BEYOND THE TEXT

- Children could create a travel brochure for Big Rock River Ranch. Encourage them to consider how to present this information in a clear and attractive form.
- Children could research the hunting and trapping of animals, considering the different sides of the issue. They could produce posters or hold a debate about the issue.
- Children could compare the lifestyles of Lena and Jess with their own lifestyle. Working in a group or in pairs, children could brainstorm a list of similarities and differences.
- Children could research Morse code and then exchange their own coded messages.

## Expanding Understanding and Reading Critically

- Ask for volunteers to retell the main events of the story.
- Discuss with the children the three searches the Woodlanders and their friends undertake in this story. Ask them to consider the different emotions the characters may have felt during each of these searches.
- Discuss the major decisions facing the Woodlanders in this story (how to rescue Dusty, how to save Dusty, how to find Jess and Lena, how to help Tennessee Turner). Encourage them to consider how the Woodlanders, as a group, made their decisions. Ask them whether they agree or disagree with the decisions made by the Woodlanders. Children could complete **Copy Master 2**.
- Children could complete **Copy Master 3**.

## Skills in Focus

### Collective nouns

- Write on the board: *My team will start looking for Dusty*. Discuss the idea that the word *team* represents a group of people. Brainstorm other nouns that refer to groups of people, such as *crowd*, *audience*, *gathering*, *family*. Describe these words as **collective nouns**. Extend the discussion to include collective nouns that refer to animals. Point out that collective nouns are usually treated as singular nouns, even though they refer to “more than one”; for example: *the flock of sheep is under the tree*. Children could complete **Copy Master 4**.

### Words and phrases that indicate time





- Write the first sentence of Chapter 9 on the board and underline the words, *Just at that moment*. Ask the children what these words tell us (*when* something happened). Begin a class list of words and phrases that indicate time; for example, *not long after*, *the next day*, *once upon a time*, or *suddenly*.

### Suffixes

- Write the word *investigate* on the board. Ask a volunteer to use the word in a sentence, and then discuss what type of word it is (a verb). Write *investigation* on the board and ask the children what type of word it is (a noun). Ask what has been added to *investigate* to make *investigation*. Use the word **suffix** to describe this ending. Discuss the idea that suffixes can change a word into a different part of speech. Then challenge the children to suggest other words ending in *-ion* and scribe their suggestions. (Write words such as *lion* in a separate column.) Ask children to decide whether all the words are nouns, and if they could make a rule for words ending with the *-ion* suffix.

# I Predict...

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

At the end of...	My predictions	My reasons								
Chapter 2 	<i>I predict</i>									
Chapter 5 	<i>I predict</i>									
Chapter 8 	<i>I predict</i>									
Chapter 11 	<i>I predict</i>									
<p>How might Jess and Lena avoid being trapped in their cabin in the future?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>										
<p>My predictions were:</p> <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td>Perfect</td> <td>Very good</td> <td>Not bad</td> <td>Not even close!</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> </tr> </table>			Perfect	Very good	Not bad	Not even close!	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Perfect	Very good	Not bad	Not even close!							
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# Take or Leave?

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

1. Write the Woodlanders' reasons for taking or leaving Dusty. Add more reasons of your own.

We should **take** Dusty because...

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

We should **leave** Dusty because...

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

2. Write about what you would enjoy, or would not enjoy, about living in an isolated cabin.

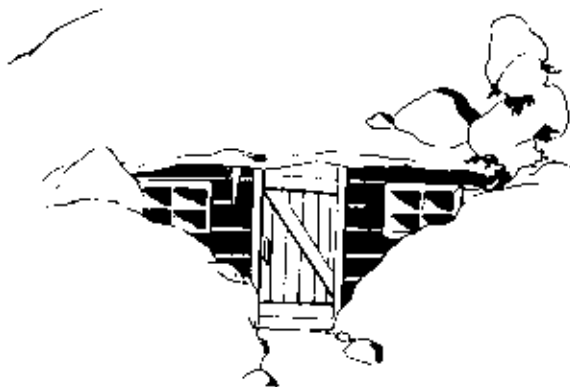
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List some of the ways you use to try to persuade people to do what you want them to do.

# Quiz

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

Read pages 65–68 of *The Mystery of the Missing Dog*. Then answer these questions.

1. *Up the mountain they roared.* (page 65) Why were the Woodlanders roaring?  
 They were making very angry sounds.  
 They were riding snowmobiles.  
 They were being driven in noisy trucks.
2. Why was the trap illegal?  
 It was too big.     It had not been checked.     It had trapped an animal.
3. Who said, “*Back there we know that animals were put on earth for skinning and eating.*”?  
 Sheriff Garza     Ed     Tennessee Turner  
Where is the “back there” he is talking about?  
 Tennessee     Montana     the Big Rock River Ranch
4. When the Sheriff speaks of Tennessee Turner “changing his ways”, he means that Turner should:  
 go back where he came from  
 only set legal traps  
 buy a snowmobile
5. How did Sheriff Garza know the trap belonged to Tennessee Turner?  
 The Sheriff saw Turner set the trap.  
 Turner had set illegal traps before.  
 The Sheriff had made a mark on Turner’s traps.
6. Find this sentence on page 68: “*Let’s get down to the ranch and do some planning.*”  
Who was speaking?  
 Mrs Tandy     Sheriff Garza     Sammy
7. Why did Sheriff Garza put the traps in plastic bags?

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# Looking at Language

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

1. Underline the collective nouns in the following sentences.

(e.g. a school of fish)

- The farmer was working with a herd of cattle.
- The beekeeper collected the swarm of bees.
- The flock of sheep was disturbed by a pack of wolves.
- A fleet of ships arrived in the harbour.
- Please pick a bunch of grapes from the vine.

2. Write the missing words.

school

gaggle

pride

foxes

birds

goats

A \_\_\_\_\_ of fish.

A flock of \_\_\_\_\_.

A \_\_\_\_\_ of geese.

A herd of \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Some collective nouns for an animal group vividly describe the animals and their characteristics. For example:

- a “pride” of lions
- a “skulk” of foxes,
- a “murder” of crows.

Write your own descriptive collective nouns for the following. Have a go and have fun!

A \_\_\_\_\_ of snakes.

A \_\_\_\_\_ of worms.

A \_\_\_\_\_ of koalas.

A \_\_\_\_\_ of dragonflies.

A \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

A \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.



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

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*The Search for the Lost Cave*  
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