

The Mystery of the Cryptic Creatures (Freddie Jones #3)

AUTHOR

KATE FOSTER

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Mid Primary



SYNOPSIS

Freddie's third adventure is unlike anything he's done before: a family reunion in Andalusia, Spain, to celebrate his great-grandma Alba's 100th birthday. Freddie is glad to have Hobnob and Grandma Lilly with him, because being around so many unfamiliar people makes Freddie's worries multiply. It doesn't help that Dad's family has a 'complicated' history that Freddie doesn't understand.

But the beautiful countryside of Andalusia is a good distraction - and so are the cryptic creatures! There have been sightings of a wolf long thought to be extinct, disappearing snakes are terrorising hotel guests, and strange beetle worms are appearing on olive trees. Freddie, Hobnob and Grandma Lilly have a new case to solve...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kate Foster is a children's author writing about friends, family, and dogs. Originally from a small town in the south east of England, she now lives on the stunning Gold Coast in Australia with her family and second-hand dogs. She is passionate about encouraging and teaching a wider understanding of autism and mental illness via positive approach and representation.

STUDY NOTES

BEFORE READING

- Before reading, view the cover and title of the book. Identify the following:
 - The title of the book
 - The author/illustrator
 - The publisher
 - The blurb
- What do you think the story might be about from looking at the title only? Do your ideas change after seeing the cover?
- Activity: Write your own story using the title of the book.
- Based on the cover, what do you think this story is about? How do you think it will begin/end? Revisit your answer after reading the story to see if your predictions were correct.
- Discuss the title of the book. Do you think this is a good title? Why or why not? If you were asked to choose an alternative title for the book, what would it be? Remember, a good title should capture the audience's attentions and give them some idea of what the book is about.

EXPLORING THE TEXT

- Discussion:
 - Who do you think the audience for this book is? Why?
 - Is the book an imaginative, informative or persuasive text? How can you tell?
- Literary techniques allow a writer to convey a deeper meaning in their text.
 - What techniques can you find in this text? e.g. metaphor, imagery, alliteration, personification.
 - What deeper meaning can you draw from the text?

EXPLORING THE TEXT IN DEPTH

- This book, as the title suggests, is a mystery novel. What do novels in this genre stereotypically include? (e.g. clues, secrets, suspects) What clues are there in the text that help the reader to solve the mystery, even as Freddie is solving it? Did you pick up on these clues before finishing the book, or after? How does the way in which the clues are spaced out throughout the book make it more or less interesting to read?
- Freddie's family comes from many different places, and they've moved to live in different places too. Draw your own 'Family Map', showing where you, your parents and grandparents were born, and where you each now live. Discuss the different backgrounds and experiences of students amongst the class. (You can even make the map more extensive, including great-grandparents, like Alba, aunts and uncles, like Uncle Tony, and cousins).
- This book is set in Andalucía, the southernmost region of Spain. Research the environment of Andalucía and write about how it is similar to and/or different from Australia's environments.
- In the story, Freddie learns about the local extinction of Iberian wolves and the (fictional) Imperauta butterfly. Research some other animals, from anywhere in the world, that are threatened by extinction. Choose one animal to prepare a detailed report on, explaining where it is found, why it is at risk, and what is being done to help protect the species.
- You be the author! This book is Freddie's third adventure. In *The Mystery of the Troublesome Trees*, Freddie went to the Daintree Rainforest. In *The Mystery of the Ghostly Garden*, he went to Kent, England. And now he's been to Andalucía, Spain. Where should Freddie go next? Write either a short story, or an outline for a novel, and decide where in the world Freddie's should travel to next, and what mystery he might solve there.