



Fiction

Oxford Level 12 Pack A

Shelley Holmes Ace Detective

Author: Michaela Morgan

Range: Story in a familiar setting

Theme: Solving a problem

Teaching Notes authors: Thelma Page and Gill Howell

Synopsis

Shelley Holmes decides to be a detective. When all the dogs in the area begin to get ill, she has a problem to solve.

Group or guided reading

Introducing the book

- Read the title and ask: *Do you know the name of a famous detective that sounds like 'Shelley Holmes'?*
- Read the blurb on the back of the book. *What do you think the mystery might be?*
- Ask the children if they have read *Robbie Woods and his Merry Men* by Michaela Morgan. *Which famous name does 'Robbie Woods' sound like?*

Strategy check

- Ask the children to explain what 'ace' means in the title. *What does 'ace detective' mean?*
- Find the word 'pollution' in the news on page 42. Ask the children to use the context to check its meaning. *Is it clear from the rest of the sentence what pollution is or does?*
- Using dictionaries, ask the children to find the definition of 'pollution'.

Independent reading

Focus: Explain that you want the children to think about this question while reading: *Can you find parts of the story where the author tells us the same thing in different ways?*

- Ask the children to read the story independently while individuals read aloud to you. Notice whether children cope with the variety of presentation without any problems.
- Praise children for concentrating well.

Returning and responding to the text

- Ask the children to tell you where the author said the same thing in different ways. Find the page each time. *Why does this help the author to tell the story?*
- Help the children find all the phrases that mean 'thought' on page 9. *Why does saying the same thing in different ways add to our understanding of the story?*
- Together look at pages 20 and 21. Find all the ways that the author uses to explain that Dustbin was not his usual self.
- Ask the children to find all the things that Shelley did on pages 26 and 27. *Why is it funny that the author writes 'so did her trusty assistant' several times? How does the illustrator show the same idea in different ways?*

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- Using page 31, prompt the children to find all the words and phrases that the author uses to explain that the fish is not moving.
- Then ask the children to find all the words or phrases for the nasty smell on page 37. Talk about how this adds humour.
- Ask the children to say which part of the story they found funniest.

Speaking and listening activities

- Ask the children to explain why pollution is bad for the environment.
- *Does it matter if wild creatures get ill or die?*
- *Is there anywhere near to where you live that is polluted?*
- Ask the children to suggest what the Health Inspector said to the factory owner. *What excuses might the factory owner have?*
- Ask two volunteers to be the Health Inspector and the factory owner. Ask them to make up a conversation.
- The rest of the class can now ask questions to either character.
- Ask the children to say how they can help to keep the environment clean and safe.

Further reading activities

- Suggest that children read another Michaela Morgan story, such as one of the *Cool Clive* titles. *Do you like this form of presentation of stories? Why?*
- Ask the children to make a storyboard for the main points of this story, and to use speech bubbles or notes under each picture to say what happens.

Suggestions for using ICT

- Help the children to find out more about Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's detective, Sherlock Holmes on the internet. Ensure that they only have access to child-friendly sites.

Writing activities

- Find page 10 and read the first two sentences aloud. *Why are there commas after 'digging' and 'fighting'?*
- Remind the children that you need to use commas in a list. Notice that this was a list of Dustbin's favourite things. Highlight how you do not need to use a comma before 'and'.
- Read the list of fishing equipment that Dad had on page 28. Notice that there is no comma before 'and'.
- Find 'niffy, whiffy, strong and pongy and absolutely disgusting' on page 37. Notice where the commas are placed.
- Write some lists together. Use a thesaurus to find words for 'delicious', e.g. 'yummy', 'scrumptious', 'mouthwatering', 'tasty'. Ask the children to put them into a sentence, e.g. 'The pudding tasted scrumptious, delicious, mouthwatering and moreish'. Write the sentence and decide where the commas should go.

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