

TEACHERS' NOTES

THE EJ12 GIRL HERO SERIES BY SUSANNAH MCFARLANE

INTRODUCTION

Emma Jacks is your average ten-year-old girl. Her favourite colour is aqua blue, she is on the school gym team and her favourite subjects are Maths and Art. Emma loves animals and chocolate and spending time with her friends. What is not so average about Emma is the fact that she is also a secret agent. She is EJ12, a field agent and code-cracker with **SHINE**, a secret agency that protects the world from evil-doers.

HEROES

A hero is defined as a main character in a fictional plot, a person of distinguished courage or performance, a remarkably brave person and somebody who is admired. EJ12 fits this description of a heroine. Male heroes, both boys and men, have dominated children's books in the past, with the occasional female as the sidekick or helper. The EJ12 series sets out to change this stereotype. These books have a female hero—a ten-year-old girl for other girls to relate to and look up to. Her name is Emma Jacks.

SECRET IDENTITY

Emma Jacks has a secret life as a spy. She is EJ12, special agent and code-cracker. She is in the top five in the **SHINE** Spy of the Year competition. In her 'normal' life she is Emma Jacks, sister of an annoying brother, animal lover and a very ten-year-old girl.

BEING 10 YEARS OLD

EJ12 is a confident spy who faces difficult, often scary challenges. In real life however Emma tends to be a worrier and can lack confidence. Losing her diary, working on projects, keeping secrets, sick family members, making the netball team and sticking to plans all make Emma pretty nervous or upset. Her secret spy missions help her to overcome many of these fears as she challenges herself to achieve above and beyond the call of duty in her endeavour to save the world from evil.

SHINE

SHINE is a secret organisation that protects the world from evil-doers. It is headed up by A1. The main enemy of **SHINE** is **SHADOW**. Members of **SHADOW** work for evil while **SHINE** agents work for good. Emma's secret agent name EJ12 uses letters and numbers—her initials EJ and the number 12 for being in the under-12 division of the **SHINE** agency.

Other characters in the stories have names with secret meanings to puzzle out, including a cat named Skygge, which is Danish for 'shadow', an agent named Hasina, which means 'good' in Swahili, an Egyptologist agent named CLEO1, and Professor Tekcor, her name being an anagram of 'rocket', and Nema, whose name is an anagram of 'mean'.

SHINE allows its agents a CHARM bracelet and a BESTie to contact when the agent needs some help or encouragement. CHARM stands for Clever Hidden Accessories with Release Mechanism and BEST is an acronym for Brains, Expertise, Support, and Tips.

SECRET CODES

Emma Jacks is chosen by **SHINE** due to her excellent Maths achievements. She is clever at cracking codes and deciphering patterns. The EJ12 series contain many challenging codes for EJ and the reader to crack. There is also opportunity for readers to write and problem solve their own codes and patterns and those of their classmates.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

The activities for EJ12 are designed to bring maximum enjoyment and learning from the series. Each activity set contains a synopsis of the story and five or six ideas for classroom activities. These are aimed to promote discussion and learning. The activities are linked to the curriculum under the curriculum links ...

ENGLISH: Reading, Writing, Talking, Listening, Grammar, Vocabulary

MATHEMATICS: Problem Solving, Patterns, Number, Mapping, Measurement, Graphs

SCIENCE: Communication, Using Technology, Design and Make, The Earth and Its Surroundings

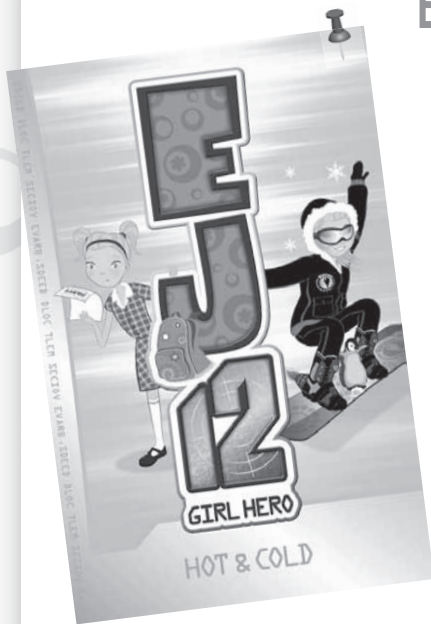
HEALTH/PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT: Decision Making, Interpersonal Relationships

HSIS/SOSE: Significant Places

CREATIVE AND PERFORMING ARTS: Drama, Performance, Making Things



MFU UIF GVO CFHJO
(LET THE FUN BEGIN)



EJ12 GIRL HERO 1 HOT AND COLD

SYNOPSIS

EJ12s mission in **Hot and Cold** is to crack tricky codes and save the world from Dr C. Hill, who is trying to melt the polar ice cap. Her mission at school is to deal with a bully and stand up for her friends.

✓ CODE BREAKERS

The author's name and the book dedication are written in code. Invite the students to look at these codes and ask the students to guess what the codes mean. Encourage the students to write their own name and book dedication using the same code pattern.

✓ CLASS DEBATE

A theme in the story is water and how precious water is. Invite the class to sit in a large circle. Present them with the topic, 'Water is more precious than gold!' Go around the circle and ask the students to say 'Yes' if they agree with the topic or 'No' if they disagree. Go around the circle again asking them to give a reason for their answer. Keep going around the circle with students adding new ideas.

✓ PALINDROMES

Palindromes are words that are spelt the same backwards and forwards. Encourage the students to find and list palindromes in the story and to write down any other palindromes they know.

✓ WHAT IS A FRIEND?

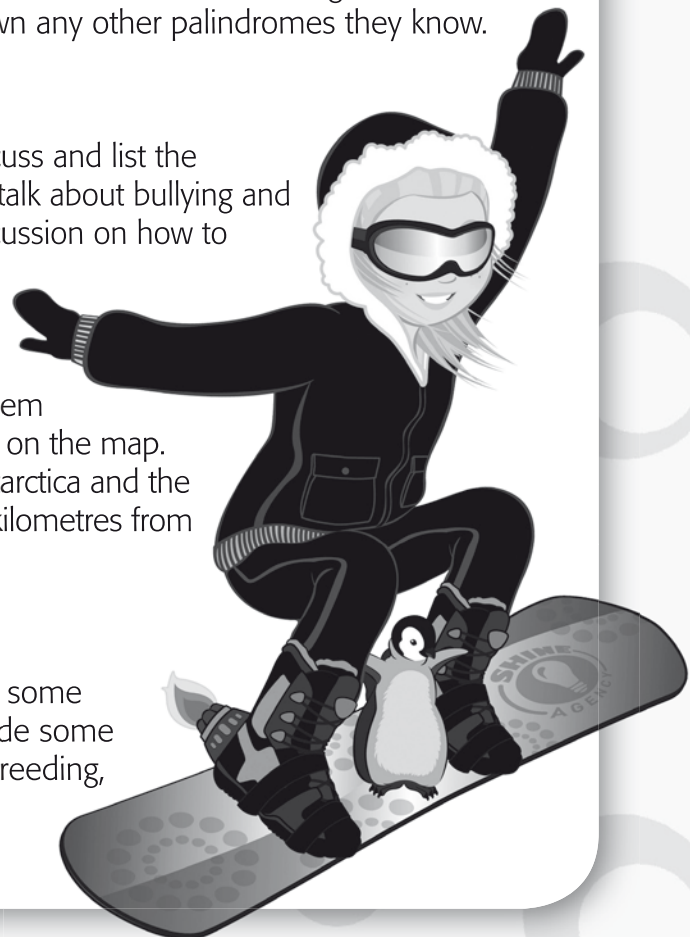
Divide the class into small groups. Ask each group to discuss and list the characteristics of a good friend. Encourage the groups to talk about bullying and why they think people become bullies. Guide a class discussion on how to have a bully-free school.

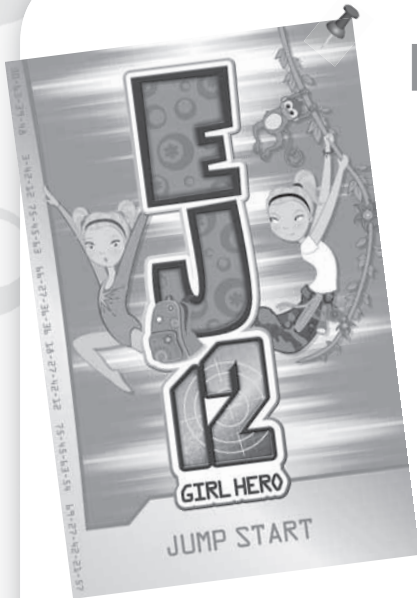
✓ MAPPING TIME

Provide the students with a stencil of a world map. Ask them to mark and label Australia, Antarctica and the South Pole on the map. Use Google Earth to show the students a real view of Antarctica and the South Pole. Ask the students to calculate the distance in kilometres from different cities in Australia to the South Pole.

✓ EMPEROR PENGUINS

Invite the students to use books and the Internet to find some facts about Emperor penguins. Encourage them to include some of the following ... a physical description, habitat, diet, breeding, predators, interesting facts, pictures and photos.





EJ12 GIRL HERO 2 JUMP START

SYNOPSIS

In **Jump Start** EJ's mission is to find out what **SHADOW** is doing in the middle of the rainforest and to stop their evil plans. Her job is to help the endangered animals and save the beautiful, natural rainforest habitats. Her mission at school is to overcome her fear of high jumps on the beam in her gymnastics competition.

✓ TIMES TABLE FUN

EJ has to crack a code that uses the 3 times table (page 109). Encourage the students to use their favourite times table above the number 3 to write a secret message for others to solve.

✓ CRACK THE CODE

Show the students the number codes on pages 3 and 5 of Jump Start. Encourage them to try and crack these codes. When they have cracked the codes ask the students to make up their own number codes with secret messages for fellow classmates to solve.

✓ WHAT MAKES YOU AFRAID?

Emma easily conquers **SHADOW** in the forest but is terrified of her high jumps on the beam at school. Break the class into small groups. Ask each group to discuss how Emma overcomes her fear to jump in the rainforest and how this helps her in the gymnastics competition. Encourage the students to share things they are scared of or have trouble trying to get past. Invite the students to problem solve strategies to help one another overcome their fears.

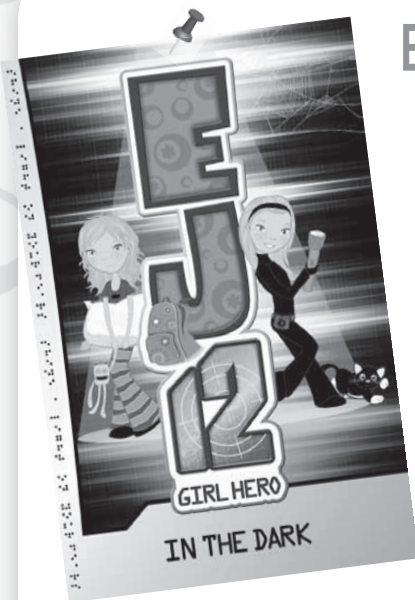
✓ SAVE THE RAINFOREST

Discuss with the class how to write an exposition. Invite the students to research rainforests then encourage them to write an exposition to convince others to help save our rainforests.

✓ WORLD HERITAGE SITES

Use books and the Internet to find out about World Heritage sites. Have the students make a list of different World Heritage sites they are interested in. Ask them to select one World Heritage site and find out why it was chosen and where it is, plus some other interesting facts. Encourage the students to present their findings using PowerPoint or a similar computer programme.





EJ12 GIRL HERO 3 IN THE DARK

SYNOPSIS

Emma Jacks is scared of the dark. Her mission in **In The Dark** however is to find her way underground in darkness, and work out how to stop **SHADOW** turning the lights out on the **SHINE** power supply. She must overcome this fear of the dark to stop the threat **SHINE** is facing. On the home front Emma faces her fears of Hannah's spooky slumber party.

✓ PARTY GAMES

The girls are planning to play 'Murder in the Dark' at Hannah's slumber party (page 20). Revisit the features of a procedure with the students. Invite the students to write the procedure for 'How to play Murder in the Dark'. Encourage them to include a section for 'What you need' and a section for 'What to do'.

✓ BRAILLE

When EJ receives the secret code from **SHINE** she discovers it is in Braille (page 32). Invite the students to use books and the Internet to learn more about Braille as a form of communication. Have them find out who invented it, why, when and where, as well as the Braille alphabet. Encourage the students to write and solve their own messages in Braille.

✓ CHARM

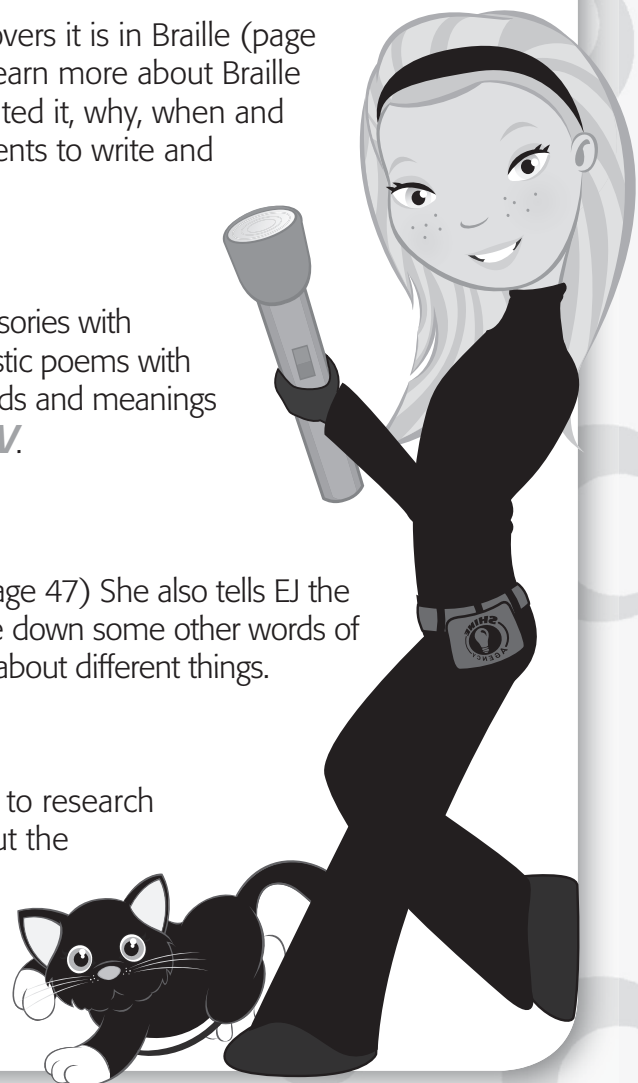
The letters CHARM are an acronym for Clever Hidden Accessories with Release Mechanism (page 48). Discuss acronyms and acrostic poems with the class. Invite the students to create their own acrostic words and meanings as well as an acrostic poem about **SHINE** or **SHADOW**.

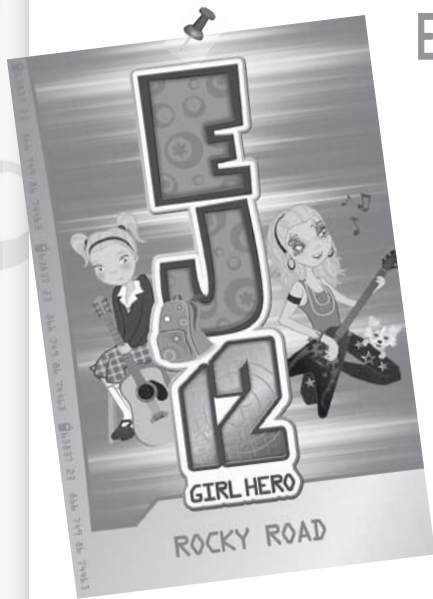
✓ WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

A1 tells EJ 'don't let your imagination run away from you' (page 47) She also tells EJ the motto 'shine a light on your fears'. Invite the students to write down some other words of encouragement for friends who might be anxious or scared about different things.

✓ SOLAR POWER

Solar power is a theme in In The Dark. Invite the students to research how solar power works. Encourage the students to find out the benefits, costs, advantages and disadvantages of using solar power. Ask the students to list places they have seen that use solar panels and power.





EJ12 GIRL HERO 4 ROCKY ROAD

SYNOPSIS

In **Rocky Road** Emma and her friends are excited about a school talent competition and a concert by their favourite band, The Pink Shadows. EJ finds herself on a secret mission to intercept messages from **SHADOW** and ends up on stage as the lead singer at the Pink Shadows concert. EJ doesn't miss a beat and once again saves the world from the evil plans of **SHADOW**. She also overcomes her stage fright and sings at the school talent competition.

✓ YOU'VE GOT TALENT

Break the class into groups and ask them to prepare, rehearse and perform an act for a You've Got Talent class concert. They may choose to perform a song or dance, recite a poem or act out a drama piece.

✓ PHONE CODE

Invite the students to use the message on page 30 as an example to make their own secret message using a phone keypad. Discuss whether there can be more than one word for each number/letter combination and why.

✓ GOOD OR BAD

On page 35 A1 says, 'There is always something good that comes from bad things'. Ask half the class to list arguments 'for' the topic and the other half to write arguments 'against' the topic giving examples to support their ideas. Hold a class debate.

✓ FUNNY PUNS

On page 45 Emma says 'I have seen the light on being scared of the dark'. This type of expression is a pun or a play on words. Discuss puns and encourage the students to make up some puns of their own.

✓ JUMBLED WORDS

Invite the class to write some interesting sentences then to jumble up the words. Have the students unjumble each other's sentences. (page 73)

✓ POSTER FUN

Have the students design and make posters advertising a talent quest at their school. Ask them to include times and dates as well as a catchy slogan and graphics.





EJ12 GIRL HERO 5 CHOC SHOCK

SYNOPSIS

In **Choc Shock** EJ is sent to Madame Ombre's Junior Choc Chef's cooking final with the aim of stopping **SHADOW** sending out a new code machine. Madame Ombre, the world's best chocolate chef, has been stealing gold flakes from the Institute of Cookery and EJ must get them back. EJ must stay calm and with the aid of her spy equipment she helps **SHINE** stop **SHADOW** from cooking up trouble. Back home, Emma relaxes and cooks some magnificent cupcakes and raises money to save the local animal shelter.

✓ PET SURVEY

Emma loves animals (page 8) and wants to save the local animal shelter. Survey the class to find out everyone's pets. Discuss how to turn these results into a simple graph showing 'Our Class Pets'.

✓ HOW TO LOOK AFTER A PET

Encourage the students to choose their favourite pet and to write a procedure on how to look after it. Encourage them to include a section for 'What you need' and a section for 'What to do'.

✓ KNOCK KNOCK

The story contains several Knock Knock jokes. Encourage the students to make up and tell their own Knock Knock jokes. (page 18/19)

✓ BAKING TIME

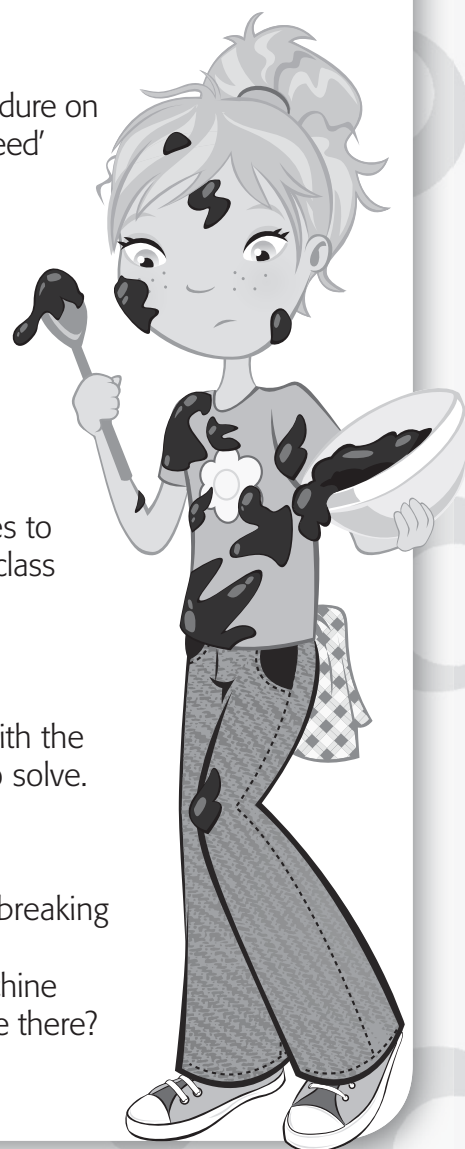
Invite the students to bring in their favourite cup cake recipes to swap and bake. Arrange a day for the students to bring in and sell their cakes to raise money for a charity. Have the students write their recipes into a class cupcake recipe book.

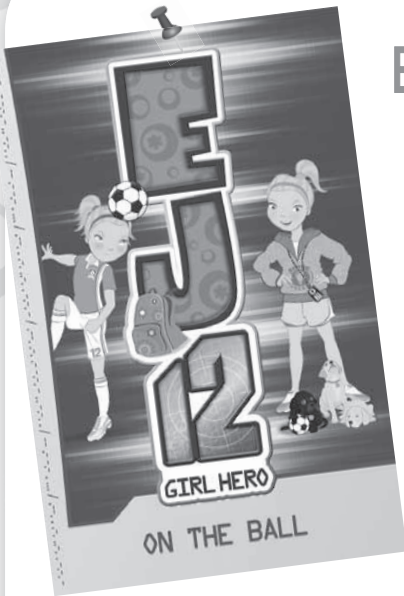
✓ AMAZING ANAGRAMS

Some of the codes in Choc Shock are anagrams. Discuss anagrams with the class and encourage the students to write their own for a classmate to solve.

✓ ENIGMA MACHINE

The Enigma Machine mentioned in the story was a code making and breaking machine from World War 2. Watch the youtube clip <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DnBsndE1IkA> Discuss how the machine works and what it was used for. How many combinations of letters were there?





EJ12 GIRL HERO 6 ON THE BALL

SYNOPSIS

In **On The Ball** Emma's boring weekend turns into a great adventure when she receives the call from **SHINE** to attend a training camp. She meets some agents, CC12 and KM12, and together they halt the evil plans of **SHADOW** while learning new skills and training the cute new puppies. EJ uses her newly acquired skills to help the girl's soccer team beat the boys.

✓ DON'T WORRY, BE HAPPY

Emma's friend Isi is an optimist (page 12). Encourage the students to list the characteristics of an optimist. Challenge the students to look at life with an optimistic view.

✓ WING-DING-A-LING

A font is a type, size and style of lettering. EJ has to crack a code using the Wingding font (page 20). Provide the students with computers and ask them to write their own secret messages using the wingding font. Encourage them to give their secret code messages to a classmate to crack.

✓ ODD ONE OUT

At training camp EJ and her Under 12 friends have to find a series of objects that don't belong (page 50). Invite the students to invent their own games where friends have to work out what does not belong. Their game may include naming, writing, drawing or finding objects.

✓ TREE HOUSE DESIGN

At the camp the Under 12 girls find a tree house lookout being used by a **SHADOW** spy. Encourage the students to design and label their own tree house lookout. Invite them to include secret trapdoors, slides, secret rooms and other spy equipment in their lookout.

✓ DOTS AND DASHES

EJ has to crack a code using Morse Code (page 84). Provide the students with copies of Morse Code. Find a dark space and let the students practise using torches to flash messages back and forth. Have them start by flashing the letters of their name.

✓ TIMETABLE

Invite the students to write a timetable for a fun day at a school camp. Encourage them to plan activities, meal times, free time, games and bedtime.





EJ12 GIRL HERO ? MAKING WAVES

SYNOPSIS

The Great Barrier Reef is in deep trouble and **SHINE** needs EJ12's help. A1's evil twin sister AX is changing the balance of the water in her attempt to steal precious black coral. Although EJ feels out of her depth she knows she must overcome her fear of deep water to save the reef from **SHADOW**'s evil schemes. EJ must locate AX and A-Sub to prevent her coral harvest. Her mission at home is to help her school swimming team win the relay.

✓ MIRROR MIRROR

Ask the students to work in pairs and to use pages 13 and 14 to write a message in mirror code.

✓ THAT'S COMPLICATED

Narratives contain many complications to make the story more interesting (page 26). Invite the students to list the complications in Making Waves. Have them list how each complication is resolved. Ask the students to add two more complications of their own to build the story's suspense.

✓ FACT FINDER

Invite the students to use books and the Internet to find facts about the Great Barrier Reef (page 41). Encourage them to present their findings to the class in a creative way. Use Google Earth to look at the Reef and try to locate the heart-shaped reef.

✓ HOMOPHONES

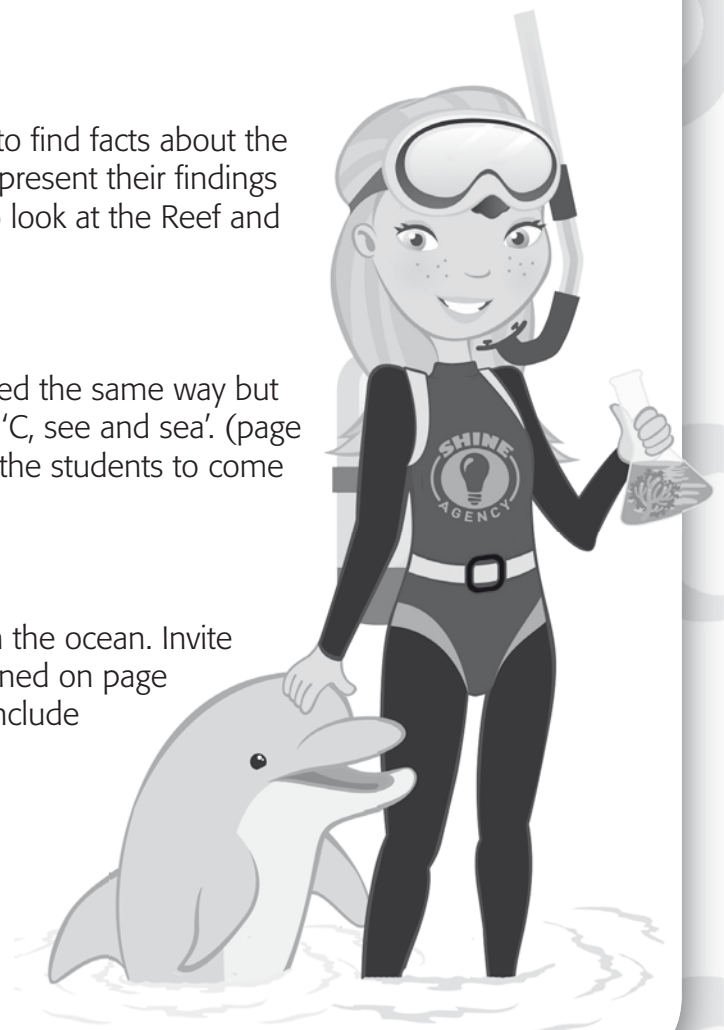
Two words are homophones if they are pronounced the same way but differ in meaning or spelling or both. For example 'C, see and sea'. (page 74). Discuss homophones with the class and ask the students to come up with their own lists of homophones.

✓ FOOD CHAINS

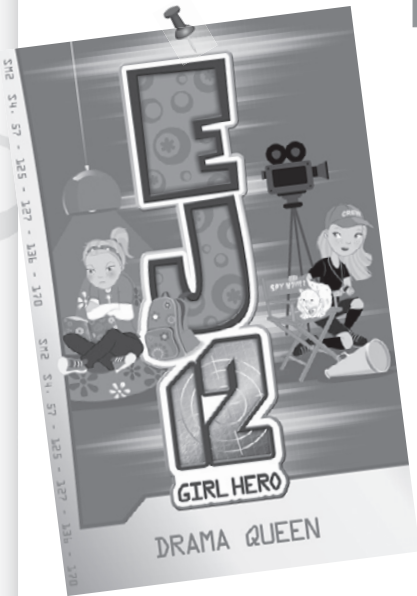
Encourage the students to research food chains in the ocean. Invite them to draw a diagram of the food chain mentioned on page 43. Ask the students to label their diagrams and include pictures.

✓ WHAT'S IN A WORD?

The Latin word for water is aqua (page 62). Encourage the students to find out the words for water in different languages. Have them include aboriginal words for water.



EJ12 GIRL HERO & DRAMA QUEEN



SYNOPSIS

When Emma Jacks finds her diary covered in muddy marks she leaps to conclusions and acts like a drama queen. Then *SHADOW* threatens to dry up the city's water supply unless one of their agents is released. EJ12 goes on mission on a movie set to find out more. By gathering evidence and thinking things through, she stops a movie star carrying out *SHADOW*'s plot. Heading home, Emma rethinks who the real dairy-dirtying culprit might be.

✓ SECRET PLACES

Emma keeps her charm bracelet in a hidden compartment (page 27), her mum has a secret office (page 30) and **SHINE HQ** is beneath a light shop (page 31). Invite students to draw their own bedroom with added hidden features.

✓ MAGAZINE MESSAGES

Students can make messages like the one EJ decodes on pages 36–45. Give two photocopies of an article to each student. Use copy 1 to work out the message. Then write the code at the top of copy 2. Students swap copy 2 and work out each other's messages.

✓ NO SWEAT

Students can think of examples from the story of when EJ thinks things through. In a class discussion, compare these instances to how she behaves when she finds her diary. Have students write about something little that they became upset about and how they realised it wasn't such a problem.

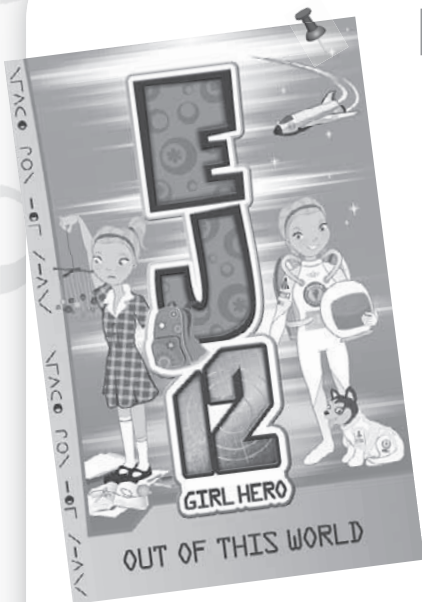
✓ DRAMA QUEENS AND KINGS

Invite students to look at the layout of the script on pages 36–37. Working in pairs, students can write a short scene for two actors where one person is being a drama queen. The pairs can perform their skits for the class.

✓ GOOD FOR BAD

In this story, super-absorbent polymers (pages 53–55) are used to cause harm but in real life they have many good uses. After doing some research, students can draw a diagram showing SAPs are useful in any one situation, or make up one of their own.





EJ12 GIRL HERO 9 OUT OF THIS WORLD

SYNOPSIS

Emma's space project is due in a week but she can't seem to get interested. Then EJ12 heads into space to stop **SHADOW** downloading the data from **SHINE**'s satellite. Professor Tekcor, who is behind the plot, lures EJ into a trap. Quick-thinking EJ escapes, reaches the satellite before the professor and stops her from carrying out her plan to use space junk to block other satellites. Back on Earth, Emma shares her new knowledge about space with the rest of her class.

✓ GETTING STARTED

Emma has trouble starting her project, but as EJ she has no choice but to jump in and start. To show how jumping in works, students can take a piece of paper and write the word 'moon' then as fast as they can for two minutes, write any words that pop into their heads. Then pick three words from their list to start a poem about the moon.

✓ MOON WRITING

Using the Moon writing alphabet on page 38, students can write a short message. Stick the messages up around the room and see how many they can decode.

✓ WHERE DO YOU FIT IN?

SHINE has lots of divisions. Students can list their skills, areas of knowledge and favourite activities to work out what division they could be in—they can invent a new one—and draw themselves ready to go on mission.

✓ SATELLITES

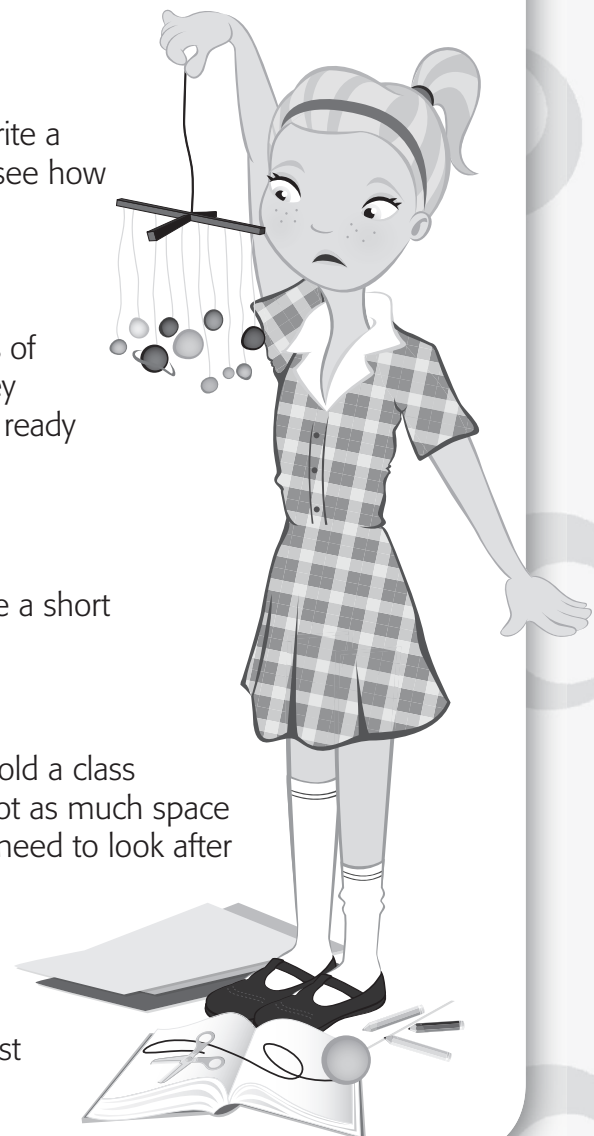
Encourage students to find out more about satellites and write a short exposition about them, including how they add to space junk.

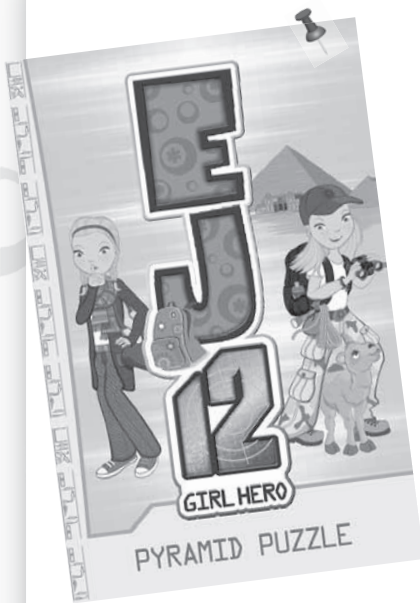
✓ FOR AND AGAINST

Using the information gathered in the research topic above, hold a class debate based on Emma's statement on page 121: 'there is not as much space in space as we think and we need to look after it just like we need to look after Earth.'

✓ BESTIES

When she is on mission, EJ12 is only accompanied by Pip. How do IJ12, A1 and SJ45 support her? Have students suggest ways in which they can support their friends.





EJ12 GIRL HERO 10 PYRAMID PUZZLE

SYNOPSIS

Elle is angry when she hears that Emma, Isi and Hannah have been keeping a secret. Before anyone can explain, Emma and Isi are called to **SHINE HQ**. EJ12 has to go to agent training and EJ12 has to race two **SHADOW** agents to a secret pyramid, following ancient clues left by a queen's faithful servant. EJ stops the **SHADOW** agents from taking the queen's treasure. When she and Isi get home, they give Elle her birthday surprise and explain why they kept it a secret.

✓ PASS IT ON

When Nema overhears Emma and her friends talking, she misunderstands them. To help students understand how misunderstandings can occur, play the game known as 'Chinese whispers', or 'broken telephone', with a long line of seated students passing a whispered message from one to the other. The first and last students can report what the message was.

✓ CHARMS OF YOUR OWN

In this story, EJ12 uses a number of the charms from her bracelet. Students could design and draw charms of their own for particular situations.

✓ HIEROGLYPHICS

Encourage students to find out more about hieroglyphics and how they changed over time. Did the symbols always stand for sounds?

✓ FOLLOW THE CLUES

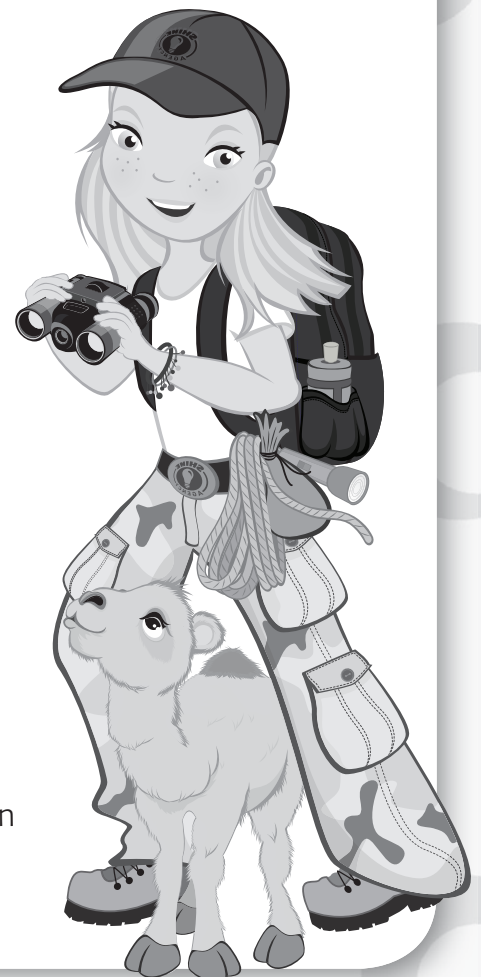
Using the guide on pages 28–29, students can write a clue in code to locate something in the classroom, making their paper look old. Students can swap clues and see if they can find the mystery object.

✓ GUIDE TO LUXOR

Students can research some of the ancient buildings of Luxor then make a travel guide.

✓ MEMORY GAME

When EJ finds CC12, they identify themselves with a funny dialogue (see page 69). Working in pairs, students can write a short dialogue together. Explain that it has to be a bit unusual or it might come up in everyday conversation. They can try to memorise it and present it to the class.





EJ12 GIRL HERO 11 CHRISTMAS COUNTDOWN

SYNOPSIS

Just before Christmas, Emma's grandma has an accident on a **SHINE** mission. EJ12 has to leave on her own mission without knowing if Grandma is all right. EJ, with IJ12's help, finds out that **SHADOW** has taken diamonds from the display in the window of a big department store. More **SHINE** agents come on board to help them stop **SHADOW** smuggling them out of the country. When her mission is over, Emma is relieved to learn that Grandma is okay. Now she can really enjoy Christmas!

TRADITIONS

As a class, pick out the different things Emma's family does each year at Christmas that are the same. Students can discuss or write about the traditions they have in their families at either Christmas or on birthdays. They could research different festivals from around the world.

MY FIRST IS IN ...

Following the pattern of the riddle on page 31, students can choose a word and write clues for other students to work out what it is.

IN THE WINDOW

Students can make shop window displays by turning a cardboard box on its side and decorating it with a scene.

STATUES

CC12 disguises herself as a statue so she can watch the goings-on in Christmas Wonderland. Have a game where students strike a pose and try to hold it as long as possible. Who can stay still the longest?

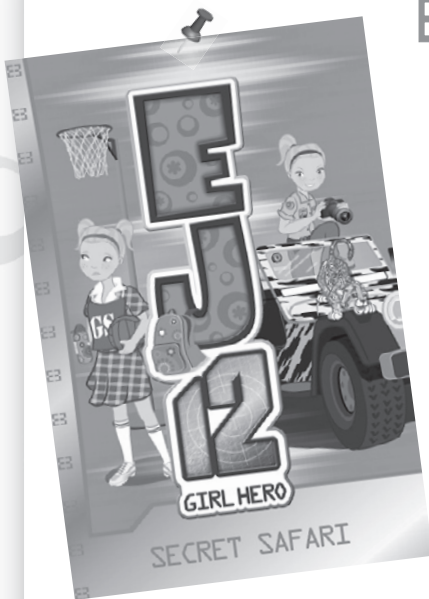
TOY PARADE

EJ and her spy buddies use their charms to disguise themselves as figures in a parade. Students can think of their favourite toy from when they were little. Make a paper cut-out version of this toy about 30 cm high. Make a parade mural by pinning all the cut-outs on the wall.

WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO KNOW ...

Emma finds out things about her mum and grandma that she didn't know before—like that they are **SHINE** agents! Students can write questions and then interview their parents, grandparents or other carers. Maybe they will find out something new!





EJ12 GIRL HERO 12 SECRET SAFARI

SYNOPSIS

When Emma and her friends mix up their netball practice plans, she can't understand how it happened. Then she finds out about an exciting change of plans: her mum has won a family holiday to Africa. It becomes clear that the trip is a **SHINE** mission. Adriana X is on the trail of wildlife to sell them—dead or alive. While SJ45 helps treat the injured animals, EJ12 upsets Adriana's plans. Back at school, Emma is thrilled when she and her friends all make the netball team.

✓ UPSIDE-DOWN AND BACK-TO-FRONT

In this book, the messages are written backwards. Students can try writing backwards, starting in the bottom right corner. This takes great dexterity. They can also try turning a book upside-down and reading out aloud.

✓ THE GREAT MIGRATION

Students can research the Great Migration across the southern African plains. They could also pick one of the animals mentioned in the book to research for a poster.

✓ WORD SYMBOLS

A number of African symbols are used in messages from *SHADOW* and on friendship bracelets. Invite students to make up their own symbols to stand for words or phrases. On separate strips of paper, they can make patterns with them. Use sticky tape to make them into bracelets.

✓ TEAMWORK

Have students read the netball game scene (pages 18–20). Who would make the better team member, Emma or Nema? Why? Give students a few minutes think about and then discuss how the **SHINE** agents in the story are good team members.

✓ WHAT DO YOU THINK?

On page 122, Nema talks about using animal skins to make fashion items and on page 114, Adriana says the animals she is capturing and killing are worth a lot of money. Elle and Emma don't agree. Have students write a short piece giving their opinion on what they think about killing wild animals for fashion.

