

Educational Resource

The House That Went to Sea

By Melinda Szymanik, illus. Gabriella Klepatski

Synopsis

Michael Mariner must live with his Grandma in her house by the sea, when his parents get lost in the jungle. Michael prefers watching television and playing on his computer and doesn't care for trying new things or playing out of doors. Grandma thinks a trip on the ocean might be good for Michael and sets sail with Michael in her little cottage. Michael thinks life on the ocean is boring but Grandma loves adventure. They meet mermaids, a shark and pirates but each time Grandma decides its best to sail on with Michael. When Michael finally takes a swim he finds a message in a bottle. It's from his parents giving their location. Although reluctant to try rescuing them Grandma convinces him they can do it and with the knowledge he's gained from reading the world atlas during his time at sea they set out to rescue Mr and Mrs Mariner. Michael is no longer the boy he was at the beginning of the story.

Themes

Family relationships, grandparents, shyness, loneliness and isolation, personal growth and adventure, trying new things, bravery, direct experience of life vs. experiencing life through computers and television.

Questions

1. Why do you think Michael has never stayed with Granny Gale before?
2. How would you describe Michael when he first comes to stay with Granny Gale?
3. Why do the television and toaster stop working?
4. Describe where you would find the Equator on a map?
5. Do you think the water is really warmer at the Equator?
6. Draw a map of the Mariner's island. What things do you need to include on a map?
7. Would you like to have a granny like Granny Gale?
8. Where would you like to go if you lived in a floating house?

Extra for experts

1. Why does Michael suggest calling the coastguard? What does the coastguard do?
2. Does NZ have coastguards?

Activities

1. Find the compound words in this book
2. Find synonyms for these words: jump, declined, empty, nasty, note, saved, yelling, climbed
3. Word-find attached



P T W N P H G E M H Y T D M H
Q X D T O B U A D K S Q D A A
R D A T L A S R P E X V T R D
C O A S T G U A R D V R W M N
L L H R E N R O O I O Z K A A
Y P D C F E F E D P C R F L R
T H U I N N H I I O A A I A E
H I O V I A A C T H L D N D V
C N U A N M A T S N T F U E N
E R R S R L A H S I F R A T S
U N U E M G V L L M E V Y F D
C C M I E I M A R I N E R I T
S O N N S S W E T A R I P S S
E N V E U E L S L H C X I H F
R X E E R B D B X I V Y W U M

Ahoy sailors, it's your task to find these words in this sea of letters.

ANCHOR
ATLAS
COASTGUARD
COTTAGE
COVE
CRUISED
DOLPHIN
FISH
HURRICANE
MARINER

MARMALADE
MERMAID
PIRATE
RAINFOREST
RESCUE
SHARK
STARFISH
SWIMSUIT
TROPICAL
VERANDAH