



The Water's Edge Resource Guide

Created by Thomasina Tissue
and Elizabeth Cox,
Special Education Teacher,
Beloit Memorial High School

- A piece of long-buried history.
- An ancient legend.
- And an extra nosy kid that wants to swim in the neighbor's new pool.

Ever since her brother's near-death experience, Tanya has been searching for a way to repay her friend Jack, the Sesaquet storyteller who saved his life. But Tanya's quest takes a thrilling turn when a neighbor starts digging for a pool and exposes ancient artifacts. With the help of her best friend, Steven, she discovers a newly unearthed relic that could hold the key to one of Jack's ancient legends. But returning the artifact to its rightful owner won't be easy—especially when it involves breaking into a museum and facing off against the creepy crooks. As the stakes get higher and the danger intensifies, Tanya must make a choice: listen to that desperate whisper of courage that comes from somewhere in her heart? Or, give in to the roaring sound of fear that fills her head? Join Tanya, Steven, and Jack on a heart-pounding adventure down at the water's edge.

Comprehension Questions

Chapter 1

1. Who are Tanya's brothers?
2. How old are Tanya and her brothers?
3. How are brothers disgusting?

Chapter 2

1. Who was getting a pool?
2. Who is Tanya's best friend?
3. Who is Jack?
4. What is "The Terrible Wonderful"?

Chapter 3

1. What did Ryan, Steven, and Tanya want to watch?
2. Where were they able to go to watch?
3. What is Ryan's idea of an exciting day?

Chapter 4

1. How did Tanya know Jack wasn't a recluse?
2. What tribe was Jack a descendant of?
3. What did Tanya use to bribe Ryan to go with them?
4. What was the Legend?

Chapter 5

1. Why did Mrs. Monastero stop the digging?
2. What did they find when digging for the pool?

Chapter 6

1. Why is Jack the "coolest person" Tanya has ever met?
2. Describe a quahog shell.
3. Who were Little Blue Flower's parents?
4. What was the purpose of the special ceremony?
5. What happened to the Sesaquet people after Little Blue Flower left?

Chapter 7

1. Why were police cars and other official-looking cars at the Monastero's house?
2. Why has the pool digging turned into an archaeological dig?
3. Why wasn't Ryan joining them to watch the dig?
4. Even though Ryan was only with them for a day, why did Tanya feel she needed to get him a video game?

Comprehension Questions

Chapter 8

1. Who are Banana, Sarasota, and Checkmate?
2. Could you describe what an archeological dig looks like?
3. What "loot" had they discovered on the first day?

Chapter 9

1. What did Checkmate compare holding the object to?
2. What happened to Steven and Tanya?
3. Why would Checkmate be mad?
4. What did Joey invite Steven and Tanya to do?
5. What does the swan represent?

Chapter 10

1. Why did Tanya lie about their names?
2. What did Steven bring with him to the dig?
3. Why could Steven be honest with his Mom?
4. Who, or what group, did the piece belong to?
5. The Sesaquets are a powerful and talented tribe. What ability did they have?

Chapter 11

1. Why did Tanya lie about their names?
2. What did Steven bring with him to the dig?
3. Why could Steven be honest with his Mom?
4. Who, or what group, did the piece belong to?
5. The Sesaquets are a powerful and talented tribe. What ability did they have?

Chapter 12

1. Why does Tommy agree to help?
2. What surprised Tanya at the end of the chapter?

Chapter 13

1. Does Steven like/dislike Tanya's quotes?
2. Tanya and Steven help Sarah. What do they do to help?

Chapter 14

1. How does Tanya know what quahog is?
2. Describe Tanya and Steven's reaction to finally touching the pendant. What is 'intel'?
3. What kind of intel did Tanya find out at the museum?

Comprehension Questions

Chapter 15

1. Why does Tanya say she feels a 'sense of peace'? What do clams do to Tanya's mom?
2. Why did Tanya have a bad case of the what-ifs?
3. What does Jack tell Tanya about why a Sesaquet does not leave their land? Jack tells Tanya why he isn't sad. What does he tell her?
4. Is Tanya polite? Is it important to be polite?
5. What does Jack mean when he says, "Things always have a way of working themselves out?"

Chapter 16

1. Is Tanya being responsible when she practices her saxophone?
2. What does it mean when it says 'rifling through the bottom drawer of my dresser'? What is in the special box?
3. Why was Steven still shaking his head when he left Tanya's room?

Chapter 17

1. Tanya couldn't sleep. Why?
2. What did Tanya find out when she used the bathroom? How did she find out that information?
3. Where will Checkmate be waiting for Rick?
4. Steven and Tanya explain to Tommy what happened at the museum. What does Tommy say about it?

Chapter 18

1. What was Ryan's reaction to Tommy telling him about the heist? Who questions Ryan about the gloves?
2. Why does Ryan say he is going to wear gloves?
3. What are walkie talkies? What did the kids use them for? Why do the kids review the plan?
4. Is Tanya nervous about the heist at the very end of the chapter? Are the other kids nervous?

Discussion Questions

- Steven is Tanya's best friend and the main supporting character. Choose one word to describe him. What is his role in helping Tanya?
- Describe Tanya and Steven's friendship. What makes them good partners in solving problems? Is there magic in this book? If yes, explain. If no, explain.
- The story of *The Water's Edge* has an internal and external conflict. Explain each.
- Pick your favorite character and describe. Include that character's problem, how they feel, and how you visualize them. Explain why this is your favorite character.
- In a small group, brainstorm the qualities of a good kid. Based on your discussion, would you consider Tanya a good kid? What about Steven?
- How is mystery different than conflict? Discuss how the mystery in this novel leads to a conflict.
- A cliff-hanger is a plot device that leaves the reader in suspense about what happens next. Could you identify the cliffhangers in the novel? Which one is the most dramatic?
- The theme is the underlying message in a novel. What is the central theme of this novel? Can you identify some minor themes?
- This book is also about brothers and a sister working together. What makes a great partner?
- In chapter 10, Tanya tells the reader she's 'not technically lying'? In what ways does Tanya lie to people in the story?

Discussion Questions

- In the story of *The Water's Edge*, Tanya is trying to return a Sesaquet artifact to Jack, a native Sesaquet with a pure Sesaquet heart. Many times, when Native artifacts are discovered, they are not discovered by the original tribe. In the Acknowledgments (at the back of the book), Helen "Hart of Morning Star" Sells, the tribal leader of the Setalcotts, explained to Thomasina that her tribe has been fighting for their artifacts to be returned to them. And they are winning that fight. What do you think? Should artifacts, when found, be returned to the original tribe?
- In chapters 18 and 19, each kid has an important job. Explain the job of each character and its importance. (Tanya, Steven, Tommy, and Ryan.)
- At the very end of chapter 19, Tanya decides that Jack should reassemble the pendant because he is Sesaquet, and none of them are. What does this say about her character?
- What is something new that you learned from reading this book?
- The idea for this book was written from a seed idea from well over 40 years ago. Is there a seed idea that you might have that could lead to a new and wonderful story?

Writing Prompts

- Are boys and girls different from one another? Why, or why not? (Referring to Tanya and Steven)
- Tanya said, “The things that upset him didn’t rattle me at all, but what upset me didn’t rattle him. I guess we balanced each other out.” Do you and a good friend balance each other out? How so?
- Would you have felt the same way Tanya did if Jack had saved your brother’s life? Yes, or no. Explain.
- This story takes place in 1982. By today’s standards, there was minimal technology available at that time. How would having a cell phone and the ability to text change the story?
- Tanya has a favorite book that her Dad gave her, filled with idioms and quotes. Do you have a favorite idiom or quote? Tell what it is and why it is your favorite.

Vocabulary by Chapter

(including words and phrases)

Chapter 1

1. retching
2. morbid curiosity
3. anti-nausea

Chapter 2

4. relished
5. reverie
6. Aristotle
7. banana seat
8. backhoe
9. bluff
10. wampum
11. exasperated

Chapter 3

1. lurking
2. propping
3. grimaced,
4. conquered
5. callouses
6. designated

Chapter 4

1. recluse
2. buoy
3. barged,
4. Sesaquet
5. storyteller
6. wampumpeg
7. quahog
8. vise
9. bunions
10. hamstrings
11. artisan

Chapter 5

12. sternly
13. authorities
14. miscellaneous
15. forensic

Chapter 6

1. vision
2. pendant
3. befell
4. prosperity
5. imbue

Chapter 7

1. Lurking, propping
2. grimaced,
3. conquered
4. callouses
5. designated

Chapter 8

1. graduate student
2. unearth
3. artifact

Chapter 9

1. ramble
2. protocol
3. current
4. innovative

Chapter 10

1. documented
2. trowels
3. tedious
4. analysis

Chapter 11

1. scathing
2. amateurs
3. haughtily

Chapter 12

1. opportune
2. relieved
3. countenance
4. expertise
5. heist
6. calculating

Chapter 13

1. ire
2. nondescript
3. exhibits
4. mesmerized
5. leered
6. slink

Chapter 14

1. vigorously
2. crestfallen
3. intel
4. jeopardize

Chapter 15

1. clams
2. legal jargon

Chapter 16

1. Epicurean delight
2. arrowhead

Chapter 17

1. Hyper-paranoid
2. shady
3. felony
4. nonchalantly
5. diversion
6. dumbfounded

Chapter 18

1. tedious
2. walkie-talkie

Chapter 19

3. interior
4. antsy

Chapter 20

5. Tin-man
6. Wizard of Oz

Chapter 21

1. sacred
2. entity
3. foretelling

Chapter 22

1. bevy
2. emphatically

