



Storm Tide

Kari Jones

Reading Level: 3.4

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AR Quiz # 143247

Book Summary

Left alone with his sister for the first time on the island he calls home, Simon is looking forward to a day of personal indulgence. His sister Ellen only wants to make sure they get their chores done. Their parents are busy trying to convince the government not to close the lighthouse that the family operates, and it's up to the kids to make sure everything runs smoothly. Neither Simon nor Ellen is prepared for the mysterious and potentially dangerous visitor who brings with him an unexpected storm and a riddle that may lead to treasure—treasure that could help them save the lighthouse. Simon and Ellen have to work together to solve the riddle before the stranger—or the weather—destroys their chances.

Author Biography

Kari Jones is happy to call Victoria, British Columbia, home: a city where you can go down to the beach with your kayak, find an island, a lighthouse and an adventure, and be back in time for dinner. Kari is a college instructor who teaches students to write but when school is out, she can often be found with her family and friends exploring the natural world and dreaming up adventures to share. *Storm Tide* was inspired by the many adventures that Kari and her family have had in a lighthouse on nearby Discovery Island.

Connecting to the Text**Character**

1. Simon says that Discovery Island is the only home he's ever known, and he's been home-schooled. As a creative writing assignment, ask students to choose from the following topics, incorporating information and passages from *Storm Tide* in their writing:
 - ♦ What would be the advantages and disadvantages of living alone with your family on a small island? Do you think you'd get bored, or would the freedom be invigorating?
 - ♦ If Simon's family must leave Discovery Island and move to the city, what do you think will be easiest and most difficult changes for Simon to adjust to? What skills does he bring that would help him adjust to school life? (prompt: he is able to navigate difficult situations, is mostly calm under stress, and can read maps.)
 - ♦ What do you think Simon will do for a living when he grows up? How do you know?
2. Early in the novel, Simon said he and his sister didn't get along. He found Ellen to be bossy and said, "Someday my sister is going to make one scary mother" (ch. 1). By the end of the novel, things look very different and Simon and Ellen are working as a team and enjoying their time together. Ask students to reflect on this transition for both characters. What changed for them? Did their view of each other change, and how?

Connecting to the Curriculum**Art**

Have students create individual art projects using images from *Storm Tide*. Ideas could include collage, sketching, pastel or paint, or dioramas. Prompts:

- (ch. 3) *"Nature's colors are soft, and so are its shapes. Bright red or yellow or blue is usually plastic. A sharp edge is usually man-made."*
- (ch. 3) *"Next to the tent peg is a curious stone...It has numbers carved into it on one side and a flower like a rose on the other."*
- (ch. 4) *"...that's the thing with wind and waves: you often can't tell how strong they are until you're in them."*
- (ch. 5) *"There are seagulls, as always, screeching overhead. The trees creak in the wind, and the sea scratches at the rocks on the beach as it surges."*

Current Events

Simon and Ellen's family have lived on Discovery Island for a long time. They are the keepers of the lighthouse. Simon said, "The government's been closing lighthouses all around here. Dad is sure Discovery Island Lighthouse Station is next" (ch. 1). Where manned lighthouses were once common on coastal islands, many have been closed or automated.

- Ask students to research this topic, answering the following questions: Why are lighthouses built? What purpose do they serve? Why would governments choose to close lighthouses?
- Simon describes many things his family does besides keeping the lighthouse, including rescuing boaters, keeping weather records, and helping biologists collect data. Are these activities taken into consideration when a lighthouse is closed or automated? Given what you've learned, do you think Simon's family has a chance to stay in the lighthouse?

Geography

Simon and Ellen know a lot about maps and charts, and he describes this in chapter 12. He says, "Charts are a lot like maps, but they are for boaters. They show water features like tides and currents." Invite students to explore maps and charts online (see suggestions for web sources below). After reading chapter 12 and learning more about maps and charts through research, can students identify and explain the "squiggly blue lines," the compass and the "contour lines of the land" that Simon describes?

History

1. In chapter 1, Simon describes a midden as "an ancient First Nations garbage dump... All the gross stuff has decomposed...and all that's left are shells and bones covering a large stretch of beach." Middens provide important archeological information about ancient human habitats and cultures. Invite students to research a midden site and report on what they've learned (prompt: midden sites can be found in Australia, Canada, Greenland, Japan and throughout the United Kingdom).
2. Juan de Fuca was a real explorer who lived in the 16th century. He travelled the coast of North America in search of the Northwest Passage, which he believed would link the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. Ask students to research this explorer, and map his voyages, starting from his home, which is believed to be in Greece.

Language Arts & Vocabulary

There are many ocean, island and sea life terms used in *Storm Tide*. Ask students as they are reading to record them in their journals or on the board. Following this, invite students to incorporate five or more of the sea terms into a short story, instructional tri-fold brochure, or other idea of students' choice. Encourage students to refer to the novel in their work. Ideas could include:

Short story:

- Simon and Ellen rescue a boater who is swept up onto the shore after a storm. But why is the boater dressed like a 16th century explorer?
- Simon thought he knew everything about the midden. After all, hadn't he been to the midden nearly every day of his life? Today, something looked different. What is that bottle doing over there? Wait – it's got a message in it!
- Simon picked up the small leather pouch. Inside were a miniature cassette tape and a GPS device, both in a ziplock bag...

Tri-fold brochure:

- How to use a rowboat: Why you need two people; the areas of the boat; steps to learning; what to take with you; what to do in a storm. (see ch. 4)
- Telling the difference between a map and a chart, and how each would be useful for people who would like to visit small lighthouse islands. (see ch. 12)

Vocabulary Words

bailing	life jacket	ruffles	thermometer
barometer	lists	salt spray	tidal flats
bay	oar	starboard	weather
headland	mind	strait	whitecaps

Connecting to the Students—Ideas for Exploration

1. Simon can always tell when something is different on Discovery Island. He is very observant and appreciates nature. In chapter 3, he says, "Nature's colors are soft, and so are its shapes. Bright red or yellow or blue is usually plastic. A sharp edge is usually man-made." Ask students to test this theory over a few weeks, taking note of natural environments such as parks, gardens and farms, and man-made environments, such as school, stores and streets. Ask students to collect their findings and reflections in a scrapbook of photos, drawings and journal notes.
2. Living on an island and keeping a lighthouse, Simon's family speaks with the Coast Guard often. Ask students to research the Coast Guard in their country. What is the Coast Guard responsible for? How do they recruit new members? What would make a career in the Coast Guard different than other careers students may have considered?
3. Simon, Ellen and Joseph are racing to find the answer to the riddle written on the map. If students are interested in riddles, invite them to do a search online for riddles in folklore and literature. Challenge students to create or share stories that have riddles in them, inviting their peers to answer the riddles they put forward.

Web Resources

US Coast Guard
www.uscg.mil

Canadian Coast Guard
www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca/eng/CCG/Home

Museum websites from the Archaeology Society of British Columbia,
www.asbc.bc.ca/links

Information on BC's lighthouses
www.unc.edu/~rowlett/lighthouse/bc.htm

Archaeology activities for kids
<http://cybersleuth-kids.com/sleuth/Education/Lessons/Archaeology>

Fisheries and Oceans Canada lighthouse data
www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/oceans/data-donnees/lighthouses-phares/index-eng.htm

Fisheries and Oceans Canada—information on Discovery Island
www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/maps-cartes/rca-acs/rca-acs/south-sud/DiscoveryChathamIslandsChart3462-eng.htm