



RECOMMENDED FOR

Middle to upper primary (ages 9 to 12; years 4 to 6)

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KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **Learning Areas:** English; SOSE (Natural Disasters and Sustainability)
- **Cross-curriculum Priorities:** Sustainability
- **General Capabilities:** Literacy; Critical and Creative Thinking; Ethical Understanding

REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

- Considering sustainability and how our lives are affected by our environment
- Discussing moral and ethical dilemmas
- Creating empathy for others within the community
- Encouraging critical thinking
- Encouraging creative and imaginative writing
- Examining different writing styles – variations in voice, use of literary allusions and symbolism
- Analysing how language and writing evoke mood, tone, tension and characterisation

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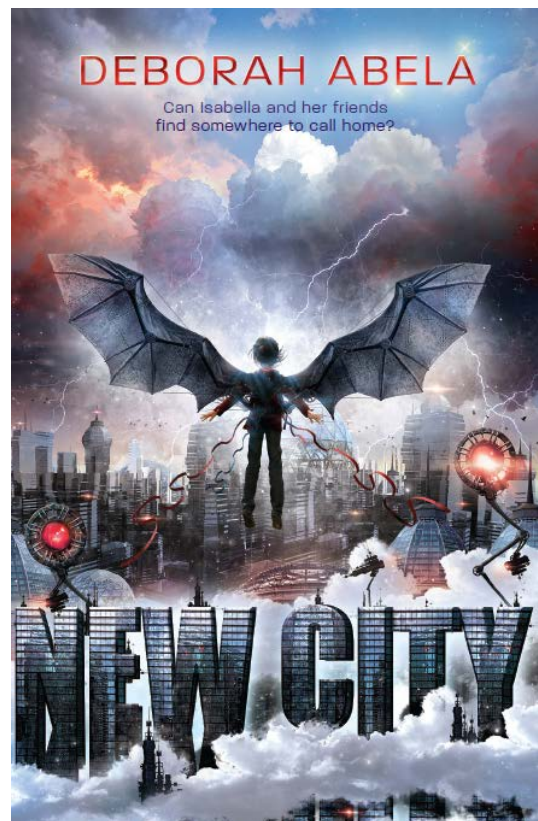
PUBLICATION DETAILS

ISBN: 9781742758558 (paperback);
9781742758565 (ebook)

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New City Deborah Abela

PLOT SUMMARY

When severe Floods hit Grimsdon, destroying everything in their path, a small group of homeless children manage to survive by creating a swag of clever inventions and developing new methods of self-sufficiency. Despite their youth, the children join together to create a united force and survive.

Three years after the Floods, the children – Isabella, Griffin, Xavier, twins Bea and Raffy and the silent Fly – along with Jeremiah, the only adult in their group, are rescued by government helicopter and taken to New City.

Here they discover a society that has not only survived the devastation, but has become increasingly powerful. Led by Major General Grimes, the city is closely monitored, supposedly to keep its inhabitants safe and protected. It is not long before the children realise that all is not as it seems and

they begin to question whether these measures are for protection or control.

When they meet a young boy, Vijay, in the local library, they discover that there is a camp for refugee children who were taken in after the Floods. Far from being cared for, the refugee children endure hard, meagre existences, receiving little food and being forced to perform hard physical labour in return. Their every move, and those of all the people in New City, is monitored by constant surveillance and they are severely restricted in their movements. When Isabella manages to break into the compound, she is horrified at what she sees and is determined to rally support by filming the situation at the camp and revealing the truth about what is really going on.

Furious at how the kids are being treated, Isabella wants to take immediate action against the authorities, but Vijay convinces her that the type of peaceful protest famously instigated by Gandhi is more effective. It is not long before Isabella discovers a group of adults who risk their lives to bring food, books and clothing to these young refugees. Isabella devises a plan to rescue the children, but the Major General realises what she is up to and destroys the refugee complex, forcing the children out into the streets, before he imprisons Isabella.

Determined to tell the truth, Isabella manages to escape and have the footage played throughout New City. As the refugee kids are being led away, Isabella and the kids run to their aid and, before long, citizens who see the truth about the camp come from everywhere offering to take in the children and to care for them as their own.

USING *NEW CITY* IN THE CLASSROOM

Deborah Abela's books *Grimsdon* and *New City* started as one little question: *What would happen if the world ignored the implications of climate change, a city flooded and some kids were left behind?* Deborah wanted to write about a world that has a lot of familiar elements (friends, laughter, family) but is also quite unique. The kids' need to survive drives the two books and this calls for a large dose of action, which Deborah loves writing.

Teachers and students have responded amazingly to *Grimsdon*, and it is a set text in many schools around Australia. Readers in years 4 to 7 love *Grimsdon* for

its flying machines, sneaker waves and sea monsters but also its brave and resourceful young characters.

Behind the adventure and fun, there is plenty to talk about in the classroom for both *Grimsdon* and *New City*, about the possible effects of climate change, how humanity will live in the future, and how the forces of money, power and technology affect our lives.

The two books are perfect for learning focused on the Australian Curriculum's cross-curriculum priority of sustainability, as well as the important general capabilities of critical and creative thinking and ethical understanding.

In addition to a continued focus on sustainability and the environment, *New City* particularly considers the human cost of climate change: what happens to those who are made refugees as a result of environmental disaster? How should we treat those who are less fortunate than ourselves? Like *Grimsdon*, *New City* considers these issues in a way that is not at all scary or confronting for young readers.

New City can be studied independently or in conjunction with *Grimsdon*.

Teachers' Resources for *Grimsdon* are available at randomhouse.com.au. Deborah Abela also collaborated with the Primary English Teachers' Association and they have produced a unit of work for *Grimsdon* based on KLAs (Key Learning Areas) and outcomes. You can find these additional resources here: http://www.petaa.edu.au/Libraries/Projects_and_Partnerships/Grimsdon_Unit_Deborah_Abela.sflb.ashx

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Having been a mad reader and writer as a kid, Deb left school and studied Teaching before she left Australia to see the world. For three years she travelled from America to the UK to Africa, Europe and parts of Asia before returning home and driving around Australia. After that she completed a Bachelor of Communications majoring in writing and film at the University of Technology, Sydney, which meant she got to write, read and watch a lot of films.

Her first job was in the script department at Southern Star, producers of many shows including *Blue Water High*, *Ready Steady Cook* and *Rush*.

After that, she worked in the script department of Network Ten before moving to the children's show *Chez TV* for seven years. Her main job was coming



up with the ideas and writing the scripts. She'd choose the guests, direct the studio and location segments and edit stories. It was a great job and she travelled to lots of fun places like New Zealand, New York, England and the snowfields of Australia.

She left that job in December 2001 to write. She's written the **Max Remy Superspy** series, about a feisty eleven-year-old Superspy (she's thirteen in the final book) who fights bad guys from Hollywood to the Amazon Jungle and even to the middle of her mother's wedding. Deb has written the **Jasper Zammit (Soccer Legend)** series with the advice of soccer champion Johnny Warren, **The Remarkable Secret of Aurelie Bonhoffen**, which was shortlisted for Best Children's Book in the 2010 Aurealis Awards and was named a Children's Book Council of Australia Notable Book in 2010, and the **Ghost Club** series, as well as **Grimsdon** and **New City**.

You can find out more about spies, soccer, ghosts and flooded cities at deborahabela.com, including fantastic book trailers and interviews with the author.

PRE-READING

Questions and activities

1. Before you begin to read the novel, carefully examine the front cover. What images are foregrounded on the cover? What atmosphere is created? How has this been achieved?
2. What ideas do you think are created by the images on the cover?
3. What predictions can you make about what might happen in the story?
4. Read chapter one. How does this chapter set up the idea that New City may be going to present some problems of its own?

CHARACTERS

Isabella Charm

Isabella Charm is the leader of the group of children who have lived in Grimsdon for the last three years. She is resourceful, capable, and can solve problems that many adults would find difficult. Isabella is fiercely protective of her friends, especially the younger children, Bea, Raffy and Fly. Her caring nature extends to her concern about the children in the refugee camp, but her feistiness often lands her

in trouble and brings her to the attention of Major General Grimes.

Griffin

Griffin went to school with Isabella and has known her his whole life. Although they are the same age, Griffin is anxious and cautious, and acts as a calming influence to Isabella's impulsiveness. Griffin is not athletic and is prone to fainting at awkward moments. Like Isabella, his primary concern is the safety of the younger children, and he refuses to do anything that may endanger them, even if it means abandoning Vijay and the other refugees.

Xavier

Xavier created the Aerotrope flying machine that finally enabled the children to make contact with the people of New City and be rescued. In contrast to Isabella and Griffin, he is more than happy to see himself as a hero for having survived Grimsdon. Unlike the other children, Xavier knows that his parents are still alive. His father has left and he has no desire to live with his mother, so he stays with the others when they return to New City. His brashness and tendency to show off can be directly attributed to the dysfunctional relationship he had with his parents. Arguably he gained a better family with the children in Grimsdon than he had before the Floods.

Bea and Raffy

Inseparable twins Bea and Raffy are younger than the others and have total faith in Isabella and Griffin. Before the Floods they had a difficult home life, which caused them to run away at times. The possibility that they could be reunited with their family scares them as they are afraid their parents will no longer remember or want them. The twins have vivid imaginations and often play fantasy games; they particularly enjoy being read to by Griffin. The Major General uses their close bond against them, separating the twins in his efforts to weaken and control the children.

Fly

Fly rarely spoke while the children were in Grimsdon, probably as the direct result of the trauma she experienced during the Floods. After their time together, she is slowly coming out of her shell, but has still never told the children her real name or anything about her family. She gained her name from the picture of the Dragonfly bi-plane painted on her suitcase when the children first found her.



Rather than talking, Fly records her thoughts in a journal, usually in picture format. She is fond of the other children, especially Griffin, and struggles to leave them when her parents come to collect her. Fly's parents are delighted to be reunited with their daughter, who they reveal to be Audrey, and take her home to their house in the country, far away from the water, where they introduce her to her baby sister, April. As good and caring parents, they are readily aware of the bond Fly shares with the other children and the reader has no doubt that their friendship will continue regardless of the distance between them.

Jeremiah

Jeremiah is the only adult the children had contact with while they were in Grimsdon. He is a little eccentric and usually has an overgrown beard and plaited hair, although he has tidied himself up for his re-entry to civilisation. He is a gentle soul who is happy to allow the children to be in control of their situation. As a Physical Oceanographer, Jeremiah worked with Isabella's father in their attempts to warn the government of the possibility of Floods. He is devastated to see the resulting destruction, which could potentially have been avoided. Jeremiah hopes to return to his house and adopt the children, keeping them all together as a family.

Corporal Smith

Corporal Smith joined the Central Garrison as a tribute to her father, who was one of the best soldiers of his generation. She also wanted a job that would help people and she believed the Central Garrison helped to maintain law and order and guaranteed people's survival after the Floods. She is completely blinded by the Major General's charisma and propaganda, and initially doesn't believe what Isabella tells her about the refugee camp. As such, her character reflects the good people caught up in bad governments who unwittingly cause harm in others' lives. Once she realises the truth, Corporal Smith assists the children to free the refugees and leaves the Garrison, becoming a civilian.

Major General Grimes

Major General Grimes has taken advantage of the Chaos caused by the Floods to increase his own power. Painting the refugees as the enemy, he convinces his people that he and his Garrison are solely responsible for their safety and salvation. He implements a number of different security measures in the new city that he claims are for their

protection, but are actually designed to enforce control and to instil fear in his people, making them more willing to support him. The Major General exploits people's vulnerabilities and uses emotional blackmail to get whatever he wants.

Mrs Gooding, Mr Finch, Mrs Fern, Mr Omar and Mr Vivas

Mrs Gooding, Mr Finch, Mrs Fern, Mr Omar and Mr Vivas risk their own safety to help the refugees, smuggling food and other resources into the camp and getting children out of it. They are able to see the true situation and understand what the Garrison is doing to people. Like Vijay, they believe that by forming a united front they will encourage other adults to do the same and to find the courage to come forward and stand up against the government.

Vijay

When we first see Vijay, we see him as a thief – but we soon learn that the reason he is stealing is to help the other refugees by finding them extra food. Vijay also likes to read in the library – for him, books are very important, as they were for his missing parents, who were professors. Vijay's hero is Mahatma Gandhi, who changed his country through his belief in *satyagraha*, or non-violent disobedience. Vijay is kind and generous, as well as clever.

Questions and activities

1. Create a wordle for each of the characters, highlighting key words or phrases that describe their personalities.
2. The children are about to leave the only safe place they have known since the Floods and move to New City. We hear predominantly Isabella's story. Imagine that you are one of the other children (or Jeremiah) and write about how you are feeling about leaving Grimsdon and moving to New City. What are your hopes, your fears, your questions, etc. Does anything change when we hear it through another person's voice?
3. Imagine that New City is to be made into a film. Create a casting board, showing who you would cast as each of these characters. What attributes does each of these actors have that makes them suitable for the roles?
4. What animal would you choose to represent each of these characters? Explain your choices.



THEMES

Survival

I wasn't sure if we could survive with no electricity, food or water, but with a bit of scrounging for parts and scientific know-how, we did it. We created power using the energy from the waves and sun, and built a greenhouse on the roof filled with fresh fruit and vegies (p. v–vi).

Questions and activities

1. The children have survived for three years in Grimsdon before being rescued and taken to New City. Would you have the skills to survive? Would it have been more challenging to have had no adults to help them?
2. Imagine that your home town has been destroyed by a flood. What would you need in order to survive? How could you achieve this with the very limited resources available?
3. The children are depicted as heroes – symbols of strength and courage (Chapter 6). When asked what their secret for survival was they reply: 'We had each other' (p. 46). How did being together help them to survive?
4. What other attributes would they need in order to survive?
5. When we first meet Vijay, he is risking his safety in order to steal food and resources. He also risks his life when he goes to the library. What does this reveal about human nature? Is he doing this to rebel? What risks would you be prepared to take to ensure your (and others') survival?
6. In groups of 5 or 6 create a survival plan. Focus on what needs to be done and how you would choose who would do what.

Natural disasters

Questions and activities

1. Why do you think the government failed to listen to people such as Jeremiah and Isabella's dad before the floods?
2. Why does New City have light cafes for its people? (p. 54)
3. In New City everything is done indoors, from recreation to farming. Is this a good solution to the problem? What other problems might this cause?

4. What impact have people had upon the environment?
5. Is there anything we can do to prepare for natural disasters such as these? What measures could world leaders put in place now to protect their people?

Humans vs nature

Questions and activities

1. Man has always tried to conquer nature. What does this novel (and *Grimsdon* before it) suggest about our ability to do so?
2. Throughout New City the weather patterns are shown to be unstable and often dangerous. Do you think that this is a natural occurrence or do you think this is controlled by humans? Give evidence to support your opinion.
3. Do you agree that moving everything indoors is the only way to win the battle with nature?
4. What impact has human settlement had upon the natural environment?
5. How have our weather patterns changed since human existence, and especially since the height of industrialisation?
6. What can we do to counteract the impact we have had on the environment?
7. Do you think that there will be an increase in the number of natural disasters in the future? Why?
8. The environment and nature are very strong forces. Which do you think poses the greater threat, the environment or mankind?

Refugees

Questions and activities

Vijay and his friends have done nothing wrong. They are simply left orphaned and homeless after the Floods.

1. Why are they kept imprisoned?
2. Why are people afraid of refugees?
3. What are the people of New City told about them?
4. Why have they been kept hidden from the people?



5. *'It looks like a prison.'* Jeremiah too saw the spread of long, grey buildings ... The others took one last look at the grey buildings.

'Do you think children live there too?' Raffy asked.

'They wouldn't put kids there.' Bea shivered. *'No one would be that cruel.'* (p. 35)

What does it tell you about the leaders of New City that they would keep refugees in a place like this? Why is it worse that children are the ones housed here?

6. What is a refugee? What would it take for people to leave their homes and seek refuge in another country?
7. What is Australia's stance on the refugee situation?
8. Why do people come to Australia as refugees? What sorts of things are they trying to escape?
9. Do you think it is fair to put them in detention centres?
10. What are the benefits and disadvantages in treating refugees in this way?
11. What are the benefits of accepting refugees? What are the disadvantages?
12. Set up an opinion line: a continuum that at one end says strongly agree and the other end says strongly disagree. Students need to stand along a line to indicate what their opinion is on the topic of refugees. Make statements such as:
 - Australia should take in refugees
 - Refugees are a drain on our economy
 - Refugees steal all our jobs
 - Refugees deserve a helping hand
 - People who have things should help those who have nothing
13. Read some stories by refugees and then do the activity again. Ask students to note how their opinions have changed. (See <http://www.ras.unimelb.edu.au/index.html>)

Loss

When Isabella and the children fly from Grimsdon to New City they see the devastation and destruction created by the Floods that until now they had never seen.

Questions and activities

1. How do they react to what they see? (pp. 19–20)
2. Do you think they would ever have really understood what the rest of their world looked like until now?
3. How might this change the way they see the future now? What realities would hit home when they see this destruction?
4. How would the children have reacted to their rooms in New City that were full of bedding, books and toys? What would you miss most if you lost your house and all your belongings?
5. When Mrs Gooding, the cook, asks the children what they would like for their special dinner they ask for sausages and mash. What does this reveal about them and the things they have missed? What would you ask for?

Courage

Questions and activities

1. What does it mean to have courage?
2. What does it mean to be a hero? Are the two synonymous?
3. Complete the Frayer definition of courage (see Worksheet 3)

'The Major General believes what you did to survive in Grimsdon makes you heroes and he'd like to hold you up as a symbol of strength and courage.' ... 'I understand you may not want to, but this new world can be frightening for children, and by showing how brave you've been, the Major General believes you'd be helping them most.' (p. 38)

Major General Grimes presents the children as heroes. Do you agree that they are? Why is it in his best interests to present them in this way?

4. Are Mr Finch, Mrs Gooding, Mrs Fern, etc, heroes? Why?
5. In many times of war or hardship, we see the emergence of heroes, ordinary people who risk everything to help others in need. Research some well-known heroes such as Miep Gies who hid Anne Frank and her family; and the Resistance movements throughout Europe in WWI and WWII. What do all of these people have in common?



Family

Questions and activities

1. What does it mean to be part of a family?
2. What benefits do we gain from being in a family?
3. Why does Jeremiah want to adopt the children? Would this make their lives different from just continuing to be together?
4. In what ways have the children become a family unit?
5. Why does Xavier choose to be with these children rather than with his own parents? What can they provide that his real family cannot?
6. How would Fly feel about being reunited with her family? What would be the positive aspects and what negative aspects would there be?
7. Why did Fly never tell the other children that her name was Audrey? Do you think she feels that Fly and Audrey are the same person? Explain.
8. What are the similarities between Isabella's group of children and Vijay's group? What factor enabled the Grimsdon children to survive better than the New City refugees?
9. Imagine that you hadn't seen your family for six years. How would you feel when you were reunited? Would the fact that you shared blood be enough for you to reconnect with your family?
10. Do you agree that the bonds you share with your family are stronger than those you share with your friends?
11. Are there people in your life who are more significant than your family? What role do they play?
12. Stage a debate on the topic: That blood is thicker than water.
13. Write or draw a journal entry made by Fly the night she goes home with her parents. How is she feeling? What is she thinking? What would be familiar and unfamiliar about the situation?
14. Create a family web that links you with all the significant people in your life. Consider how you would be a different person if any one of these people was removed.
15. Choose the person on this web who you feel has the most significance in your life and write a short paragraph about this person.

Adults

Questions and activities

1. The Major General tells the children that the adults are in charge and will take care of them. How have they survived without the adults up until now?
2. Do children need adults to help them?
3. 'Adults?' Xavier scoffed. 'I don't mean to be rude but, apart from Jeremiah, we didn't meet any adults we could trust.' (p. 29). Why do the children not trust adults?
4. How do the adults take control over the children's lives after they arrive in New City? (Chapter 4).
5. Why might adults be less trustworthy than children? Do you find this surprising?
6. What assumptions might most adults make about children?
7. In what ways might children be more capable of surviving after a disaster than the adults?
8. Think about all the adults in your life. How would it be different without them? Make a list of the advantages and disadvantages of having adults around.
9. Stage a debate or write a persuasive piece on the topic: That Children make Better Leaders than Adults.

Class divisions

Questions and activities

In New City there is a marked distinction between those who have things and those who have nothing.

1. Vijay makes the comment that when people own a lot, they seemed to forget what they had (p. 4). What do you think he means by this? Do you agree that the more people have the more they take it for granted?
2. Why do societies often have very uneven distribution of wealth?
3. How did the Floods create huge social divisions?
4. Mrs Gooding tells Isabella, 'It's nobody's fault where they were born, and it's not right that that



- should determine a person's future.*' (p. 102) Did the people left with nothing do anything to deserve this outcome or was it simply luck?
- How can wealth and security be seen to bring out the worst in people?
 - Many people and governments argue that societies should all be equal. Do you think it is possible for everyone to be equal? In what way does human nature challenge this ideal?
 - Think about your own house. Make a list of all the things you own that you tend to take for granted, but that would seem unimaginable to people who have nothing.

Safety vs control

The members of the Central Garrison ruthlessly defend the city and keep control over the people. With their probionic legs, the soldiers are able to travel anywhere and to chase down offenders. They carry weapons that help them to enforce control.

Questions and activities

- Make a list of all the methods of protection or control used by the soldiers in the Central Garrison. What does it suggest about New City that the Central Garrison need to use such extreme measures?
- Do you think that the years following the Floods would have seen a marked increase in crime and disruption that would have justified these measures?
- Do you think that these devices and rules are really designed to protect the people? What other purpose might they serve?
- What are the benefits for a government of having total control and instilling fear in its people?
- Vijay has a fake ID card that identifies him as Peter. What does this suggest about the way people respond to strict measures of control?
- Apart from all the security devices, what other forms of control does the Major General use to control his people?
- Why does he talk to Isabella about her father and tell Vijay that his parents chose not to come for him?
- In what way can strict control be seen to cause as many problems as it solves?
- Imagine that you lived in a very strict regime. Would you meekly go along with all the rules? What sorts of things might you do to get around them?
- Is emotional control more powerful than physical control? Why?
- Imagine that the Australian Government has just legislated the Australia Card, a card that will contain all of your personal details – medical records, criminal records, work history, financial details, etc. What would be the advantages and disadvantages of such a card?
- Write a persuasive speech to convince people of your opinion of whether or not we should introduce the Australia Card.

Conformity

Questions and activities

- Why do tyrannical governments want all people to conform and not be individuals?
- How does dressing people in grey and shaving their heads help to achieve this? What psychological impact does this have on people?
- Why do leaders like Major General Grimes ban books and teaching? How can these be seen to be dangerous?
- Why did Frederick disappear?
- Why are people like him a threat to the government?
- Write the blog that Frederick would have posted if he had not disappeared.

Leadership vs power

Questions and activities

- The Major General would see himself as a great leader. Do you agree?
- What circumstances enabled the Major General to have so much power?
- Consider the different models of leadership in this story, as shown through Isabella, Griffin, Vijay and Major General Grimes. What are the similarities and differences in their leadership styles?
- What sort of leader would Xavier have been?
- Why do Griffin and Isabella work so well together even though they are quite different people?



6. What makes a good leader? What qualities do they need to have?
 7. What is the difference between being a leader and having power?
 8. How is it possible for ordinary people to fight back against an oppressive regime?
 9. Do you agree with Gandhi's philosophy of Satyagraha – resistance through mass non-violent non-cooperation? How can it be a successful technique?
 10. Consider some world leaders (Mao Zedong, Stalin, Hitler, Gandhi, Churchill, Roosevelt and Obama). Research their leadership styles and identify the methods they used to hold power and rule their people. Identify the positive and negative characteristics of each leader.
 11. Create a poster that celebrates positive leadership styles.
3. Read some famous speeches by the masters of propaganda. Deconstruct them to identify the techniques used, the style of language, etc.
 4. Re-read the speech the Major General makes to his people and identify any propaganda techniques. (See Worksheet 1)
 5. Imagine that you wanted to become a new leader. Write a speech to persuade your people to make you their leader. Use strong emotive language and present them with a common enemy to make them see you as their greatest hope for survival.

Propaganda

Questions and activities

The Major General uses propaganda to maintain control over his people. This works by picking a common enemy to blame for all that is bad or undesirable in your world and setting the leader up as the person who can rescue you from all that is bad.

'Immediately after the Floods, shops were looted, homes were broken into and public buildings destroyed.'

'Why didn't the police stop them?' Bea asked.

'They tried but the city was overrun by people who had lost everything and those who wanted to protect what they had. Neighbours turned against each other and streets were filled with bonfires and barricades of furniture and overturned cars. For weeks the police were powerless. Some of them even joined in.'

'The police broke the law?' Raffy asked.

Corporal Smith nodded. 'The Major General knew if something wasn't done fast the city would be ruined. He gathered together people he could trust and formed the Central Garrison. Order was restored and a model city created.' (p. 52)

1. Do you think this was the truth? How could the Major General have used this situation to his advantage?
2. Why is propaganda such a powerful tool for a leader?

Stories

Questions and activities

1. Vijay tells Isabella it is important she survives so that she can tell their story. Why is it important for these stories to be told?
2. Do you think that knowledge of these events will prevent future occurrences? Why?
3. 'History is told by the victor.' What does this mean? What effect does this have on the stories we are told?
4. What impact did Isabella's film footage have on the people of New City? Would there have been an equally powerful way to achieve this effect?

LANGUAGE AND WRITING STYLE

The glittering city appeared before them like a peaked island surrounded by wave after wave of tightly packed houses with thin, winding streets in between. Everything was grey. There were no gardens and only the rarest green smattering of shrubs and trees. (p. 22)

In the centre of it all, perched on the highest point, was a vast labyrinth of a building with turrets, battlements and a fortified gatehouse. It sat like a sleeping grizzly, lording over the cowering buildings beneath and protected by its own forbidding stone wall. (p. 23)

Four soldiers stepped out of the building. They stood before the helicopter, guns held firmly against their chests. They wore helmets with dark visors covering their faces, each with a shiny red viewfinder over one eye. On their legs they wore curved metal attachments. (pp. 24–25)

These are our Armavans,' the corporal explained. 'Would you like a ride?'

'You bet!'



Corporal Smith pressed the remote on her key and a metal door opened upwards. Bea and Raffy climbed onto the front seat beside her while the others sat in the back. The door closed with a quiet hiss and the engine purred to life.

'They were invented here in New City. They are made of reinforced steel and cyclone glass – they can withstand any storm or hurricane and are powered by energy generated from our solar and wind farms.' (p. 50)

Questions and activities

1. Draw each of the surveillance devices described in the novel.
2. Create your own surveillance device. Describe it as Deborah Abela has done and give it an appropriate name.
3. Throughout the novel, each chapter is almost a scene in a movie, with its own orientation, complication and resolution. In this way the author is able to increase and decrease the tension, keeping the readers on their edges of their seats, while still allowing them a chance to breathe.

Trace the events in the novel and chart them on a graph. Where are the major incidents or complications in the plot? How does the author take us on a roller-coaster ride?

4. Deborah Abela's writing is very vivid and imaginative, creating strong word pictures. Imagine that you have decided to turn New City into a film. Choose a chapter from the novel and prepare a storyboard to help convert it into a scene from your film. (See Worksheet 2) What can you do to help keep the same level of tension and atmosphere as Deborah Abela has in her writing? What images, music, dialogue and lighting could help create this scene effectively?

LITERARY ALLUSIONS

Questions and activities

1. Throughout the novel, Griffin reads the children *Oliver Twist*. What similarities can you identify between Oliver and the children in the camp?
2. What is the impact of including extracts from another story?

SYMBOLISM

Questions and activities

1. Consider the animals the Major General chooses to surround himself with (the panther and the golden eagle). What qualities does each of these animals have? What images or ideas do they represent (e.g. rare, kings of their domain, regal, powerful, beautiful)?
2. In what way can they be seen to represent everything the Major General wants to be?
3. How do they represent everything he is not? What is the Major General really like?
4. Although the links between the Major General and Hitler are never made overt, there are a number of symbolic references. What similarities can you find between the two regimes?



CHAPTER OUTLINE

Prologue	Griffin's diary reveals that they are leaving Grimsdon and heading to New City thanks to Xavier and his flying machine.
1. A Late Night Visitor	In New City, a child breaks the curfew to steal food. He is careful to avoid the soldiers from the Central Garrison who patrol the streets with their high-tech weapons, knowing that others who have broken the curfew have vanished, never to be seen again.
2. An Uneasy Farewell	Isabella and the children are nervous about finally leaving Grimsdon. They have struggled at times to survive but they fear the new unknown even more. As they fly towards New City in an army chopper, they are confronted by the extent of the destruction left by the Floods.
3. An Unexpected Welcome	New City is a glittering city full of tightly packed houses and a strong military presence. The children are greeted by the menacing soldiers of the Garrison.
4. A Bad Omen	The children are given ID cards and weather detectors by a cheery Corporal Smith and are warned to carry them at all times due to the unpredictable weather. They are led into the Garrison building and told the city has become the most efficient, safe and eco-friendly city in the world (p. 31). This, apparently, is all thanks to Major General Grimes, who stopped the Chaos and restored peace and safety. At an open window, Fly is greeted by a Golden Eagle called Charlie, who instantly takes to her. The children are disconcerted to see a series of buildings that look like a prison but which, they are told, simply houses people taken in from the Floodzones.
5. A Whispered Warning	Cadet Smith shows them to their rooms, complete with wardrobes full of new clothes. Soon after she leaves, Isabella is startled by a hand on her shoulder. She pulls a knife from her belt only to realise it is the cook, Mrs Gooding. They discuss dinner before Mrs Gooding whispers to Isabella to be careful.
6. Newly Made Heroes	The children are interviewed about their experiences and survival. Xavier tries to take the credit, but Isabella and Griffin insist that the key to their survival was that they had each other.
7. New City	They are taken on a tour of the city in a weather-proof vehicle called an Armavan. Corporal Smith explains she joined the Garrison to help others and make her father proud. The town centre is bustling with people watching a huge video wall that shows a battle between two opponents called, Citizen Combat. They witness a man being hustled into an Armavan, while screaming his innocence. Isabella realises someone has stolen her knife.
8. A Surprising Encounter	At the City Library, Jeremiah discovers his predictions about the Floods had been correct and much of the world has been lost to floods. Corporal Smith assures him that the government is paying attention now. She begins the process of making them citizens, when Isabella sees the boy who stole her knife.
9. Meeting a Mooch	Isabella, Griffin and Xavier discreetly confront the thief. He returns the knife and tells them he is from the camp and that he would be punished if the Garrison found him. He happily risks visiting the library because books are more important than anything. The boy, Vijay, tells them about the poor conditions in the secret camps. He also tells them the Major General has banned teaching and books as they encourage people to think for themselves, and quickly silences anyone who speaks out against him. Vijay asks Isabella to come to the camp to see for herself.



10. The Major General	The children finally meet the Major General at dinner. They are surprised to see a small man who walks with the aid of a cane and is constantly accompanied by a black panther, which almost attacks Xavier. He assigns the children to different areas of the Garrison to take advantage of their intelligence. Jeremiah asks if he can adopt the children but is told they first need to exhaust all searches for their real parents. This causes a ripple of hope that their parents may still be alive.
11. A Terrible Cry	Bea is worried that she won't recognise her parents or that they will no longer want them. Isabella and Griffin use the computer to learn more about the camps and the world since the floods. Raffy's fear results in a terrible nightmare.
12. A Late Night Rendezvous	Isabella can't sleep and discovers that Mrs Gooding is secretly smuggling parcels of food to the children in the camp. She explains that not everyone agrees with the camp and this is one small way she can help. They talk about Frederick, the man taken away in the square for trying to publish a blog about the camp.
13. Jeremiah's House	The children discover that due to extreme weather, all activities are now carried out indoors in huge Recreation Halls and crops are grown in Food Domes. They narrowly escape being caught in an ice tornado before driving on to find Jeremiah's house. It is still standing and can be repaired to be the children's new home.
14. Citizen Combat	Isabella excels at citizen combat training, easily defeating Sergeant Brown, who is twice her size.
15. Some Startling News	Fly discovers that her parents have been located and are coming to New City to collect her and take her home.
16. Learning to Fly	Fly's skills with animals allow her to connect with Charlie, the Golden Eagle. Xavier steals an ornithopter from the transport division and Isabella prepares to fly to the camp.
17. A Sneaky Visit	At the camp, Isabella discovers hundreds of children dressed in grey clothes and boots with shaved heads who are forced to carry out hard labour. Vijay takes her to the underground tunnel they have dug that allows them to leave the camp to steal food or to access the goods that Mr Finch, Mrs Gooding and the others have gathered for them. Vijay tells Isabella of his wish to find his little brother from whom he was separated in the Chaos after the Floods. He also introduces her to Samira, whose health is rapidly deteriorating from the poor conditions in the camp and the lack of medical attention.
18. The Grand Tour	Isabella is horrified by the bleakness of the camp, with not a blade of grass to be seen and its electric fence. She meets Franco, a prison guard who is actually supportive of the children, having decided that he could help them more by working on the inside (and being paid by the government to do it). Despite spending their days working in the Food Domes, the children have very little food as all the good food is sold. Vijay tells Isabella that rebellion is not the answer but that <i>in a gentle way we can shake the world</i> (p. 151). Vijay tells Isabella that he plans to film the children and the camp, knowing the importance of telling this story to ensure it never happens again. As Isabella leaves there is a weather warning and she flies into a severe blizzard.
19. A Frantic Search	When Isabella fails to return, the children fear the worst. Cadet Smith asks to see her and is furious to discover Isabella has left the building unaccompanied. Charlie, Fly's rescue eagle, finds her buried beneath a pile of snow. The Major General is disappointed she stole the Ornithopter and delivers sad news about Isabella's dad.



20. A Dangerous Idea	Isabella realises that like many of the security devices in New City, the Golden Eagles are not only used for surveillance, but to hunt down people who refuse to do as they are told. She is surprised to find a new camera in the kitchen when she goes to see Mrs Gooding. Mrs Gooding tells Isabella that she is going to visit her mother, but Isabella suspects that there is more to her visit than she claims.
21. A Narrow Escape	Isabella and Griffin follow Mrs Gooding and discovers that there are other concerned people in the city who smuggle goods to the children and try to smuggle the children out of the camp. The adults tell the children that by working together they hope to make others brave enough to do the same. On returning to the Garrison their movements are caught by one of the Major General's cameras.
22. A Devastating Discovery	Isabella and Griffin return home to discover that Bea is missing. A ransom note demanding \$50,000 is sent from the camp, suggesting that they are in fact dangerous people with no morals.
23. An Unusual Outburst	A storm has raged all night and Bea is finally found with the help of Charlie. The Major General appears relieved but quietly warns Isabella that she would be best to stay friends with him. Isabella realises he was behind Bea's disappearance as punishment for Isabella's disobedience. Isabella continues in her plan to help the kids in the camp, but Griffin refuses, especially as it means risking the safety of Bea, Raffy and Fly.
24. A Long Awaited Reunion	Fly returns to her parents, a little fearful that things will be different. They take her home to their house in the hills, far away from the sea, and promise that they will never let her go again. The children discover that Fly's real name is Audrey and that she has a new baby sister, April.
25. A Sad Farewell	With Fly leaving, Griffin realises the importance of hope and unity and agrees to help Isabella rescue the children from the camp.
26. A Plan Unfolds	Isabella sneaks back into the camp by hiding in amongst a delivery of fish. She records the kids being as cute as possible and plans to show the City the truth about the refugee camp.
27. A Panicked Interruption	Griffin prepares to use the Garrison's broadcast system to play Isabella's footage throughout New City but is interrupted by the Major General, who delivers his announcement that the tunnel at the camp has been bulldozed and Mr Finch and Vijay hauled away.
28. Traitors in Our Midst	The Major General visits Vijay in prison. He makes it clear that the kids are imprisoned in the camp due to the actions of their parents. He wants to weaken Vijay by telling him that his parents were bad as well. They had the opportunity to rescue him, but chose not to.
29. A Dark Secret	Isabella is devastated, believing it was her interference that caused Vijay and Mr Finch to be arrested and the tunnels to be destroyed.
30. A Desperate Plea	In desperation, Isabella turns to Corporal Smith for support, but the Corporal dismisses her claims and remains loyal to the Major General.
31. A Chilling Victory Speech	The Major General addresses his people telling them that we all have choices and that the refugees should be grateful to him as they had nothing when they first arrived and he has given them more than they could ever have hoped for. When Isabella confronts him, he tells her that they are very similar people and gloats that he has won the battle and the children will soon no longer be his problem. He locks Isabella in a cage to stop her interfering with the final part of his plan.



32. An Uneasy Feeling	Isabella manages to escape with the help of her knife skills and Charlie. She heads to the camp to warn the children that something bad is about to happen. When she arrives, she is surprised to find that all the adult guards have left, until an explosion rocks the buildings and she realises the camp is being destroyed. She helps the kids escape before Vijay tells her to leave so that their story can be told.
33. A Cruel March	The children are marched through the streets, while the Major General demands that everyone else stay indoors. Corporal Smith realises the truth and supports Isabella, telling her that only a coward could watch a child in pain and do nothing about it.
34. The End of the Line	As Amy plays Isabella's footage from the camp, the people of New City realise what has been happening and, in defiance of the Major General, come out of their houses to take the children in and care for them. As predicted, non-violent civil disobedience wins out.
35. Coming Home	Now civilian, Hayley Smith takes the children to Jeremiah's restored house, where they are able to be together.



FURTHER READING FROM RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA



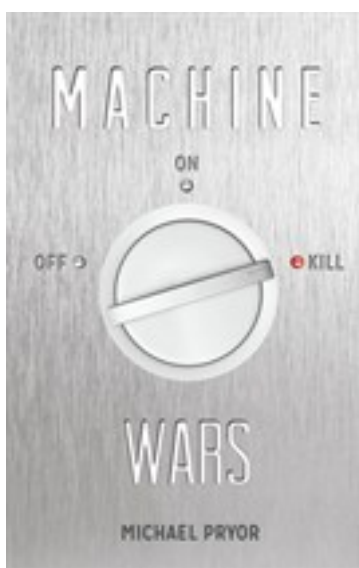
Grimsdon by Deborah Abela

Bestselling author Deborah Abela brings us a heroine to love and a great deal of danger to overcome in this thrilling novel set in a post-apocalyptic, flooded world.

Grimsdon is in ruins. Three years ago a massive wave broke its barriers and the sea flooded this grand city. Most were saved, some were lost – and some were left behind.

Isabella Charm and her best friend, Griffin, live with three other children in the top of an opulent mansion. They've survived with the help of Griffin's brilliant inventions, Isabella's fighting skills and their vow to look after each other.

[Teachers' resources available.](#)



Machine Wars by Michael Pryor

The Bourne Identity meets *The Terminator* in this fast-paced techno-thriller for readers aged 10 to 14, which, like *New City*, explores how technology could shape our lives in the future.

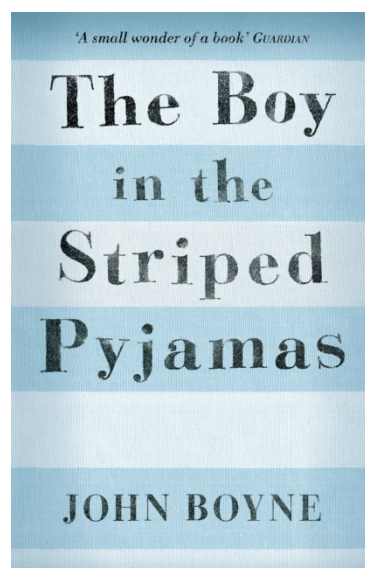
It was only a matter of time until one escaped.

Bram just wasn't expecting it to be today.

In the sky, drones are hunting him. On every corner, machines are waiting to kill him.

But Bram has a plan. First, scatter and hide. Then, with his best friend and wise-cracking robo-duck, help to save the world.

[Teachers' resources available.](#)



The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas by John Boyne

Lines may divide us, but hope will unite us . . . Nine-year-old Bruno knows nothing of the Final Solution and the Holocaust. He is oblivious to the appalling cruelties being inflicted on the people of Europe by his country. All he knows is that he has been moved from a comfortable home in Berlin to a house in a desolate area where there is nothing to do and no one to play with.

Until he meets Shmuel, a boy who lives a strange parallel existence on the other side of the adjoining wire fence and who, like the other people there, wears a uniform of striped pyjamas.

Bruno's friendship with Shmuel will take him from innocence to revelation. And in exploring what he is unwittingly a part of, he will inevitably become subsumed by the terrible process.

[Teachers' resources available.](#)



WORKSHEET 1: Propaganda

Read the Major General's speech in *New City* (pp. 233–236):

'We interrupt your viewing for this very important announcement. We have traitors in our midst.'

'Traitors who have threatened the security of our town.'

'For years we have been helping those affected by Floods and the changing weather patterns by offering them a home in our city. An offer, I'm sad to say, that has been thrown back in our faces.'

'Not happy with all we give them,' the Major General continued, 'they have built a tunnel from the camp to smuggle in even more. We cannot simply stand by while this blatant disrespect for our generosity goes on.'

'So we have ended it.'

'It led from the camp to this shed. From there they snuck into our city and our houses to steal from us.'

'The owner of the shed has been taken in for questioning.'

'We have captured rogue elements within the camp who have been using the tunnel for their own gain.'

'We have evidence of this boy stealing food and books, breaking into homes and even attacking an old woman.'

'Do not underestimate how dangerous these people are to us, to our children and to our future. If it wasn't for us, they would have nothing, and yet like leeches they take what isn't theirs with no regard for how hard you have worked, for the sacrifices you have made and for the generosity you have shown in letting them live in your city.'

'Rest assured, this will end. We've fought hard to make this city safe, and while I am your leader it will never be allowed to slip into chaos again.'

Now consider the following statements about propaganda:

'If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it. The lie can be maintained only for such time as the State can shield the people from the political, economic and/or military consequences of the lie. It thus becomes vitally important for the State to use all of its powers to repress dissent, for the truth is the mortal enemy of the lie, and thus by extension, the truth is the greatest enemy of the State.' Joseph Goebbels (originally from Nietzsche)

'Propaganda is to a democracy what the bludgeon is to a totalitarian state.' Noam Chomsky

'Through clever and constant application of propaganda, people can be made to see paradise as hell, and also the other way round, to consider the most wretched sort of life as paradise.' Adolf Hitler

'The goal of modern propaganda is no longer to transform opinion but to arouse an active and mythical belief' Jacques Ellul

'Democracy means simply the bludgeoning of the people by the people for the people.' Oscar Wilde

Activities

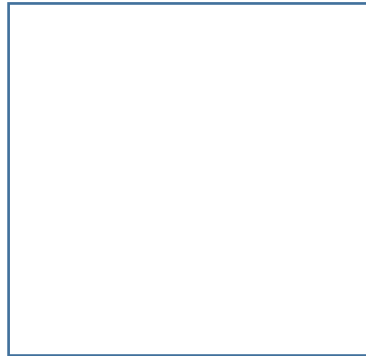
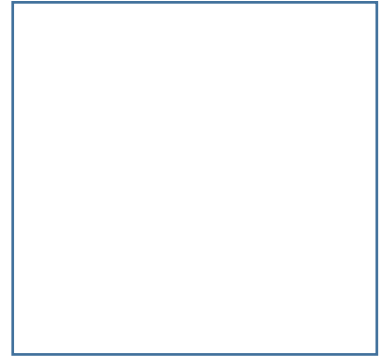
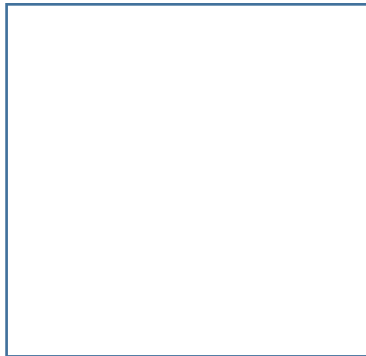
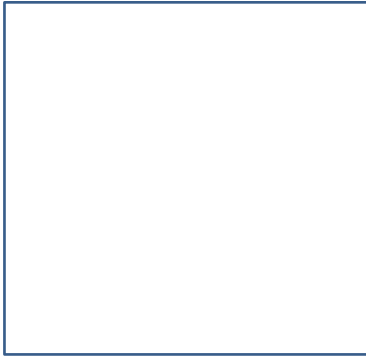
1. Highlight the high modality words in the Major General's speech.
2. Identify any propaganda techniques used by the Major General to convince his people.
3. Create your own statement about propaganda and how it is used.



WORKSHEET 2: Creating a storyboard

The writing in *New City* is very descriptive, creating strong images or word pictures. It is almost written in such a way that each chapter is a little scene in its own right, as it would be in a film.

Imagine that you are the director of the film version of this novel. Choose which chapter you would like to concentrate on and design the storyboard for that chapter. In each frame, consider what the key image needs to be to convey the real meaning in that chapter.



WORKSHEET 3:

Using the Frayer model to define courage

<p><u>DEFINITION</u></p>	<p><u>FACTS/CHARACTERISTICS</u></p>
<p><u>COURAGE</u></p>	
<p><u>EXAMPLES</u></p>	<p><u>NON EXAMPLES</u></p>



ORDER FORM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	SCHOOL YEAR	RRP	QUANTITY	TOTAL
New City	Deborah Abela	9781742758558	4-6	16.99		
Grimsdon	Deborah Abela	9780857983220	4-6	16.99		
The Remarkable Secret of Aurelie Bonhoffen	Deborah Abela	9781742757438	4-6	9.99		
Jasper Zammit Bindup (3 books in 1)	Deborah Abela	9780857983206	3-5	19.99		
Ghost Club 1: The New Kid	Deborah Abela	9781742750804	4-6	15.99		
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