

9780734409492 | PB

I SAW NOTHING TEACHERS' GUIDE

I Saw Nothing Gary Crew and Mark Wilson

Introduction

This compelling story is told by Rosie, who saw the last thylacine following its capture and after it had been put in the Hobart Zoo.

Gary Crew tells the story in a comprehensible way so that the reader can easily understand what lead to the extinction of this animal. By allowing us to see the reactions and behaviour of a child who saw the last living thylacine, the reader can understand how we can all be responsible for preventing the extinction of a species. The message of responsibility and doing something are carried in a subtle manner by the text.

I Saw Nothing is beautifully designed, and Mark Wilson's illustrations provide a good deal to the meaning of the text and interpretation of the story.

This picture book can be appreciated by very young students as well as those at secondary levels, as like Gary Crew's other picture books, it contains much food for thought whilst being an interesting story in its own right.

The first book in the *Extinct Series*, *I Saw Nothing: The Extinction of the Thylacine* introduces a wonderful sense of intrigue and dilemma that the upcoming *I Said Nothing: The Extinction of the Paradise Parrot* and *I Did Nothing: The Extinction of the Gastric Brooding Frog* will explore with classic Crew style and authenticity.

Reading

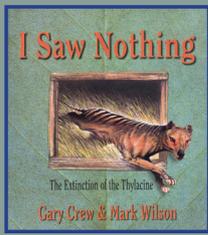
- Who tells the story?
- How is the story related?
- Where is the story set?
- When is the story set?
- Comment on the cover.
- What is the significance of the title?
- Comment on the title
- What do trappers do for a living?
- What did Rosie think of Elias Churchill?
- What does 'cured' mean in the context of leather?
- What was Rosie's reaction when she saw the tiger-wolf?
- Why?

- Make comments on the tone of the story
- Talk about the style in which *I Saw Nothing* is told.

- What does Churchill come to Rosie's place for?
- What is a bounty?
- Why was it offered?
- By whom was it offered?
- How did the bounty system work?

- Why does Rosie say *I was sorry that I ever saw it?*

- Why does Rosie say: *Well, life goes on, as they say?*



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- What did Rosie see at the Hobart Zoo?
- Whom did she meet there?
- What does Rosie learn?
- What does Rosie think of the tiger-wolf?
- Who was Alison Reid?
- What were the modes of transport at the time the story was written?
- What was the fate of Rosie's thylacine?
- What is irony?
- Find instances of it from the text.
- Why are thylacines extinct?

Viewing

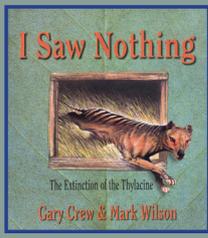
- How does Mark Wilson portray the thylacine?
- Consider how it is shown, living and dead.
- How does Mark Wilson portray the bush?
- How does he depict the terrible reality of the story?
- Look at the illustrations in detail and make some observations about how Mark Wilson has portrayed Gary Crew's words.
- Look at each page and make comments. Put these ideas up on a board and have a class discussion about points that are made.
- Look particularly at the artist's techniques and the effect of these.

Activities

- Choose one page or a double page spread and write about the impact it had on you.
- Suppose you have been asked to illustrate *I Saw Nothing: The Extinction of the Thylacine* by Gary Crew. Jot down a list of ideas on how you would go about interpreting and illustrating Gary Crew's words.

Writing

- Put yourself in Rosie's place and write a paragraph about your life.
- Pretend you are Elias Churchill. Write the story of your life, telling how you live, what you do to make money.
- Describe the Hobart Zoo at the time the story was written.
- As Rosie, write about your tiger-wolf.



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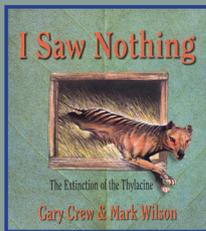
Speaking/Listening

In the context of our responsibility for the natural world, talk about:

- responsibilities
 - feelings
 - regrets
 - bounties
 - freedom
 - zoos
 - caring
 - dilemmas
- How people cope when they are faced with something that makes them uneasy.
 - Tell the story in your own words.
 - Present the story:
 - from Elias Churchill's point – of view
 - from Rosie's dad's point of view
 - from Rosie mother's point of view

Activities

- Find out more about the thylacine.
 - Discover more about how creatures become extinct.
 - Think about what you can do to change things.
 - Do some research and ask any old people you know about The Depression and what life was like during this period.
- What does the reader learn about the tiger-wolf from the story?
 - Look at how you know these things and how they were conveyed by the author and the illustrator.



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About the author

Gary Crew has an outstanding reputation as a writer of Young Adult fiction and innovative picture books. His numerous prizes and awards include *CBC Book of the Year: Older Readers* for ***Strange Objects*** and ***Angel's Gate*** (1991 and 1994) which also received widespread international recognition; *CBC Honour Book for Memorial* (2000), *CBC Picture Book of the Year for First Light* (1994); *CBC Picture Book of the Year* for ***The Watertower*** (1995); ***The Lost Diamonds of Killiecrankie*** was a notable book in 1996. He is also the author of ***The Viewer*** and ***Mama's Babies***, which were *CBC Notable Books* for 1998 and 1999 respectively. Gary is editor of the *After Dark* series and author of the picture books ***Bright Star***, ***Troy Thompson's Excellent Poetry Book***, ***Troy Thompson's Radical Prose Folio***, ***Leo The Lion Tamer*** and ***Valley of Bones*** and ***The Rainbow***. Other Lothian YA Fiction titles are ***Dear Venny***, ***Dear Saffron*** with Libby Hathorn and ***Edward Britton*** with Philip Neilsen and ***Gothic Hospital***.

He has also written the charming historical picture book, ***Quetta***, illustrated by Bruce Whatley, which Lothian released in February 2002.

Gary lives in Maleny, Queensland.

About the illustrator

Melbourne artist Mark Wilson has illustrated a number of educational and trade children's books, including the picture book ***Penguin Shore*** by Tim O'Brien. His previous Lothian Books are: ***Valley of Bones***, also with Gary Crew, and ***The Giant Spiders***, ***The Wombat King*** and ***The Lie*** in the *After Dark* Series.

Mark lives in Frankston, Victoria.

Teachers' notes written by Nancy Mortimer.