

'This timely and beautiful story reveals the invisible lines of kindness that connect us all.'

SALLY RIPPIN

# THE YEAR

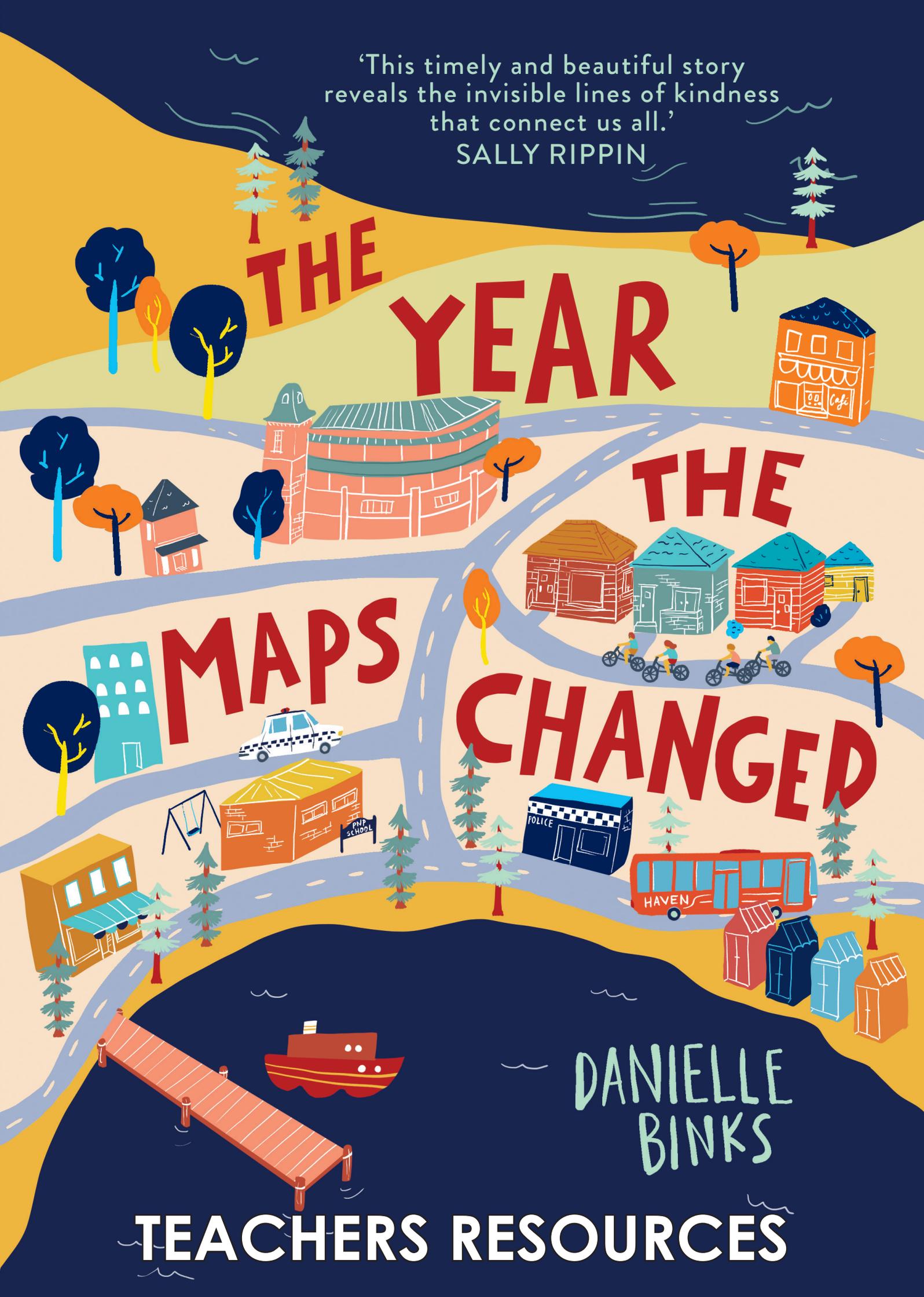
# THE

# MAPS

# CHANGED

DANIELLE  
BINKS

TEACHERS RESOURCES



# THE YEAR THE MAPS CHANGED

DANIELLE BINKS

## Teachers Resources by Robyn Sheahan-Bright

Introduction	3
Before & After Reading the Novel	4
Themes & Curriculum	4
SOSE	
English Language & Literacy	
Further Quotes for Discussion	13
Further Activities	14
Conclusion	14
About the Author	15
About the Author of the Notes	15
Bibliography	16

# INTRODUCTION

'Maps lie.

Or at least, they don't always tell the truth.

They're like us humans that way.' (p ix)

Eleven-year-old Winifred (Fred/Winnie/Freddo) Owen-Ricci has lived with her stepfather Luca Ricci, and her maternal grandfather, Pop (Jeff) Owen since her mother Maria's death when she was six. When the novel opens Fred is still grappling with the loss of her mother, and with her pop's sudden admission to hospital, as well as the fact that Anika Murray, her stepfather's new partner, and Anika's son, Sam, have recently moved in. Fred's jealousy of Sam is compounded by the recently acquired knowledge that Anika is to have another child. Her friends, Jed Tr an and Aidan McMillan, try to cheer her up, but Fred is really struggling with her feelings. Then, into all their lives comes a dramatic new development which will both overturn many of their previous assumptions and distract them from their own personal issues.

'Operation Save Haven' was the Australian government's response to the plight of Kosovar refugees during the Kosovo War (1998–9). When the Australian government decided to accept several thousand refugees from the war and to offer them 'temporary' asylum in eight Haven Centres in five States around the country, including at Point Nepean in Victoria, an isolated part of the Mornington Peninsula near Fred's home, suddenly the entire community is thrown into disarray. Some wish to help the 400 refugees brought to Point Nepean; some resent them being there at all; and the refugees themselves are thrust into a bewildering and stressful situation. They are housed in an old quarantine station which is inadequate for their needs, especially for the elderly, infirm, children or pregnant mothers amongst them. Mr Khouri, Fred's teacher, tries to explain to the children in his class the need for empathy but he is hampered in his efforts by the prejudice of people like Bill McMillan, Aidan's father. Fred's stepfather, a local policeman, volunteers to assist the refugees. But in the midst of all this Anika is hospitalised early in her pregnancy and Fred meets a pregnant refugee named Nora Ramusa, whose plight brings home to her the human cost of such government interventions. When Anika loses the baby it seems that their world has come crashing down. But love conquers all and, strangely enough, the desperate plight of the refugees puts their own world into perspective.

This novel is set in 1999, just over 20 years ago. The author has noted that:

- In May 1999, the first instalment in the Star Wars prequel trilogy premiered – *Star Wars: Episode I – The Phantom Menace*. It is fitting, that in late 2019 the last instalment of the latest trilogy concluded *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker*.
- A referendum on Australia becoming a Republic was held unsuccessfully.
- John Howard was still in his first term as Australian Prime Minister.
- The year before, in December 1998, Bill Clinton became the second American president to be impeached. A trial began in January 1999, but by February 12, Clinton was acquitted. (Now another President has been impeached and acquitted. Some things change and some stay the same!)
- The Y2K or 'Millennium Bug' was widely anticipated as a major technical glitch that would disable computers worldwide (p 153).

So this novel also references recent history. Fred's story is one of grief, loss and love. It's also the story of the Kosovar refugees whose arrival changes Fred's outlook on life forever.

# BEFORE & AFTER READING THE NOVEL

- Examine the cover of the novel. What does it suggest about the novel's themes?
- After you have read the novel, examine the cover again: what does it suggest to you now?
- After you have read the novel, read about it in reviews and articles and use the notes below to examine the text more closely.

## THEMES & CURRICULUM TOPICS

Several themes relevant to curriculum topics (Studies of Society and Environment, and English Language and Literacy) might be identified in this novel:

### STUDIES OF SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT (SOSE)

#### KOSOVO WAR REFUGEES

**KEY QUOTE:** 'Which just made me think how wars sounded like someone was always trying to cut countries into pieces, and people were fighting over who got the biggest slices.' (p 89)

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Research the origins and outcomes of the Kosovo War. Mr Khouri explains the origin of the war (pp 86–9). It lasted from February 1998 until 11 June 1999. At the height of the crisis came the unsanctioned NATO (The North Atlantic Treaty Organization) bombing campaign; from 24 March to 11 June 1999. The conflict in Kosovo killed about 13,000 people, most of them ethnic Albanians. By the time the war came to an end after 78 days of NATO air strikes, which drove out Milosevic's military, police and paramilitary forces, an estimated 4,500 people were missing.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Research the origins and outcomes of what was known as 'Operation Safe Haven' during which 4,000 Kosovar-Albanian (the majority of whom were Muslim) refugees were flown into Australia and housed at eight disused army bases around the country. (In the US it was called 'Operation Provide Refuge'.) In Australia it is considered one of the largest humanitarian exercises ever undertaken by a government agency. 'Operation Safe Haven' had an enormous impact on Australian immigration policies. It laid the blueprint for how our Government still treats refugees to this day – it signalled the switch from offering 'permanent protection' and resettlement, to 'temporary asylum' and conditional aid. After Kosovo, the East Timor Crisis would escalate, and in August 2001 the Tampa Affair would forever cement this new hostility and treatment of refugees and asylum seekers in the Australian psyche. The horrific events of September 11 would come the following month and Australia's path towards a more inhumane treatment and "othering" of refugees subsequently would be enacted in a most atrocious way, drawing ongoing international criticism, including from the United Nations organisations responsible for refugees and human rights. Discuss Australia's immigration policies.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Jed's Vietnamese family is reminded by the arrival of the refugees of their own escape from a war-torn country (pp 50–1) and they are disappointed that the government isn't doing more. What Australian immigration policy changes have occurred since the boat arrivals of the 1970s?

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Mr Khouri and his students discuss the Australian National Anthem (p 53). Discuss the words of the anthem with your students.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** 'Haven, refuge and sanctuary' are synonyms discussed in Mr Khouri's class (p 86) and the origin of the word 'refugee' is linked to the word 'refuge'. Later in the novel, we read: 'The place is no longer a safe haven. It's a detention centre now.' (p 248) Language is important. At one time we referred to such places as 'refugee centres' but the change to using the words 'detention centres' in our recent history implies that inmates are criminals being jailed as a punishment, although no charges are laid. The word 'refugees' has been replaced by derogatory words such as 'illegal arrivals' or colloquialisms such as 'queue jumpers'. Discuss with students the meaning of the word 'refugee' in the context of the *UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*. <<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/StatusOfRefugees.aspx>>. Do you think Australia is fulfilling its role in relation to this Convention?

**DISCUSSION POINT:** The newspaper article headed 'Kosovars Trample on Hospitality' (pp 95–98) which contained prejudiced local people's responses to the arrival of the refugees constitutes 'fake news'. Platitudes such as 'Charity begins at home' (p 169) are thinly veiled further examples of such prejudices. 'Non-experts' are often interviewed, and their emotive responses are presented as facts (as they are in the article referenced on p 95 in this novel). Read actual newspaper articles about refugees and consider the language used in comparison to this section of the novel.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** The refugees are housed at an abandoned quarantine station (p 157); the facilities are old and inadequate and the place is isolated. It had also once been used as an army training base so that it was littered with disused military paraphernalia and was therefore not a very sensitively selected site for people escaping a war zone. Discuss the metaphorical significance in the novel of refugees being treated like those with deadly diseases by being isolated in a place with such a history.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Later in the novel, Luca observes the constant messages transmitted to the Kosovars by government that they should sign forms and return home: 'They want them gone.' (p 222) The government's policy of deporting those who have either come by boats illegally or by plane but have only temporary visas like Merjeme and Arta and their mother and aunt who are sent home (p 245) doesn't take into account the situation they might confront at home or why they left their homes in the first place. Why do you think the government was so keen to return these people to such danger and uncertainty?

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Nora Ramusa and Ferman Khouri speak out about refugee rights and the trauma experienced by children in detention (p 226). Compare this to more recent media reports of children self-harming and becoming physically and mentally ill in such camps.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Jed explains his Vietnamese parents' conflicted feelings as immigrants to Australia: 'Home wasn't safe anymore, but it was still *their* home, y'know?' (p 253) Jed's parents are refugees from an earlier war. Research how Vietnamese immigrants have settled in Australia.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Nora's outburst when Fred's family are facing the difficult decision whether to hide her, outlines her desperation: 'None of this is what I want, but it is where I am – I have nothing to go back to, and if it was just me ...' (pp 273–4) Her frustration with people who presume she has a 'choice' in resolving her situation is plain. Does Nora have any other choices open to her in this situation?

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Mr Khouri demands that Luca agree to the plan to hide Nora: 'You should know as well as anyone that morality doesn't always equal legality.' (p 274) But Luca's job as a policeman and his ability to support his family will be put at risk if he does. Discuss the moral dilemma he faces here.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** 'We do; hiding is not living, and it is no way to make a home.' (p 293) Discuss Nora's statement.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** *Migrations Open Hearts Open Borders* Edited by the International Centre for the Picture Book in Society (Otter-Barry Books, 2019) is a book of images from an exhibition entitled 'Migrations' which includes Shaun Tan's quote 'All migration is an act of imagination, a flight of imagination.' (p 8) Share these images and words with your students and discuss the illustrators' responses to refugee issues. [See also **Further Activities** below.]

## KINDNESS AND EMPATHY

**KEY QUOTE:** 'And what I think is very important, and truly rare, is to try to gain a different point of view ... a little more perspective of the world, which usually entails stepping out from your little corner of it, and seeing through someone else's eyes.' (p 299)

**DISCUSSION POINT:** At its heart, this novel is about being able to see things from someone else's perspective. Prejudice and cruelty stem from a lack of empathy. On a 'micro' scale this causes family tensions such as those which Fred experiences. On a 'macro' scale it causes wars, and associated atrocities, such as the mistreatment of refugees. Which characters in the novel do you think learn to overcome their prejudices and see things from others' perspectives?

**DISCUSSION POINT:** What examples of empathy did you observe in this novel?

**DISCUSSION POINT:** The cover features Sally Rippin's words: 'This timely and beautiful story reveals the invisible lines of kindness that connect us all.' Discuss this quote in relation to the novel.

## MAPS, GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

**KEY QUOTE:** 'Sometimes maps are used to take power away from people, along with their land and language. And sometimes they help to change history – or erase it.' (p 31)

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Maps in this novel offer a sort of metaphor for life. Fred writes at one point: 'Cartographers from long ago used to draw dragons, sea monsters and other made-up creatures in the unexplored territories on maps. It was their way of warning that there could be danger in the unknown, and it's where the phrase "here be dragons" came from.'

If this story was a map, this is where the dragons would go. Because after Anika and Drumlin went into hospital and we didn't know when they'd be back, it felt a little like we were off the map, in uncharted waters.' (p 119) Discuss this statement in relation to what you have read in this novel.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** 'Animals don't need maps, but they follow them anyway – even if they don't know it. They go where they need to eat and breed, chasing the seasons. And even though they don't follow any direction that's written down, they know the way – called migratory patterns – and they never change.'

Humans do the same I guess – except we call repeated movement 'routine', which is what Luca, Sam and I had over those holidays.' (p 145)

Discuss the notion that human observance of 'routine' is simply a process by which we follow 'invisible maps'.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** The importance of maps in a nation's history is discussed by Sam and Fred: 'And because maybe if we were completely independent, we could go back to calling things what they were meant to be.'

'Like what?' Sam asked.

'Like Uluru instead of Ayers Rock, and Wango for Arthurs Seat... and all the other places that got renamed just because certain people controlled all the maps around here.' (pp 249–250)

Discuss with students the legacy of Australia's colonial heritage and the notion of our country becoming a republic and whether that would lead to changes in our culture and in our maps.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Not only can place names on maps be misleading, but also names for people can be used to erase cultural identity. For example, Jed's name evolved from a family Star Wars joke nickname (p 27) and all his family members use Anglicised names instead of their Vietnamese names (p 49). Many people of different ethnic origins have come to Australia and changed their names to make it 'easier' for people to pronounce them, or in order to avoid prejudice. Are people from other cultures generally accepted in Australian society?

**DISCUSSION POINT:** 'Maps are designed to appeal to our human nature. The Earth is imperfect. It's not even a perfect sphere, it's all lumpy landmasses and constantly moving oceans and atmosphere. It's impossible to capture all that on a map, so we lie and simplify, and have been for hundreds of years.'... Mr Khouri says: 'People lie, which is why geography is such an interesting study of them, of us.' (p 298)

Discuss with students the fact that maps rely on the perspective of the mapmaker for their accuracy and that maps can be drawn in different ways according to who draws them.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** 'Geography is not just about flags, maps and compasses, or naming capital cities ... What geography is really about is human beings, and how we spread across the Earth's surface. How what we do affects the physical features of the planet and its atmosphere, and how the Earth affects us too.' (p 34) Discuss with students the relationship between geography and human endeavours.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** 'We don't rely on maps to tell us where we're going, so much as where we've been. Because where we live has such an impact on who we are, and who we will be, that it may well be the thing that defines us more than any other.' (p 36) Discuss with students the impact that place has on each of our lives.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** '*Not all those who wander are lost*' (p 53). What does Mr Khouri mean by writing this on the blackboard?

## GRIEF AND LOSS

**KEY QUOTE:** 'I wanted to say that sometimes trying to remember her was like following a map without a compass: you're bound to get lost.' (p 77)

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Fred and Sam's feelings about her mother's death and their baby brother's death (pp 199–203) are a complex mixture of grief and guilt over their insecurities about their family's love for them. Discuss the feelings expressed in these pages.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Anika discusses with Fred her grief over the loss of her baby: 'I'd rather be reminded and think about Drumlin, than forget him, y'know?' (p 289) The refugees are also dealing with their own griefs. Discuss the ways characters deal with grief in the novel.

## COMING OF AGE & RITE OF PASSAGE

**KEY QUOTE:** 'It's weird, knowing that your parents are wrong about some stuff, hey?' (p 171)

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Aidan disagrees with his father Bill McMillan's prejudiced comments in the press and the attitudes he expresses (p 96). He defies him when he goes to the soccer match: 'He has no idea but he acts like what he thinks is right just because he says so!' (p 171) How difficult is it to defend your own principles when parental authority is against you?

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Fred and her friend Keira drift apart during this momentous year: 'It wasn't just because we probably wouldn't go to the same high school next year. It felt like the chasm between us had turned into a gorge.' (p 227) Discuss the notion that as we age we sometimes shift allegiances and find new friends as we grow apart

from old friends.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Finding her 'moral compass' (p 188 and p 260) is a huge part of Fred's development. Learning what is right and wrong and when to break a rule in order to stand up for truth is a big part of growing up. What are the signs in the novel that Fred has undergone emotional growth?

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Reading Ruth Park's *Playing Beatie Bow* (p 123) reminds Fred of her own situation: 'I thought I knew how she felt, having her world turned upside down and inside out like that.' (p 123) Discuss this quote in relation to the events which shake up Fred's world.

## LOVE AND THE BONDS OF FAMILY

**KEY QUOTE:** 'There's no more or less about it, there's only love – do you hear me?' (p 242)

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Fred's jealousy of Sam almost causes an accident on the chairlift and he does lose his glasses (pp 14–15). This sort of sibling rivalry sometimes has disastrous consequences. How did the novel portray the tensions and divided loyalties that can occur in blended families?

**DISCUSSION POINT:** 'Luca has kept telling me to be on my best behaviour. He'd say I had to mind my manners and be extra polite and welcoming because we're a family now. Which really didn't sound like any family I'd ever been part of. It wasn't the way we used to be when it was just Pop, Luca and me.' (pp 6–7) Fred's blended family is founded on both grief and love. She, Pop and Luca have lost Maria, their mother, wife and daughter. Anika and Sam have survived divorce, and Sam has virtually lost his father to his new family. Discuss how love finds a way to heal each of them.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Fred finally confesses her love for Sam (p 267). Her jealousy of him has been transcended by her growing appreciation of his qualities and acceptance that he is now her brother, despite the fact that they don't have a biological parent in common. Are families always about genetic ties? Can we love someone as a brother even if we are not related?

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Fred and Luca discover that Pop (Jeff) has researched a retirement village (pp 166–7); not because he wants to leave them but presumably because he fears he may be a burden and that they will need the space when the baby arrives. Why do you think Fred and Luca are angry at Pop about this? Do you think they misunderstand his motives?

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Jed's feelings for Fred are awkwardly expressed (p 285); does he see her as more than a friend?

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LITERACY

Study the writing style employed in this narrative, and examine the following sub-topics:

### **NARRATIVE PERSON, NARRATIVE PERSPECTIVE & TENSE**

**DISCUSSION POINT:** The story is told in first person, from Fred's perspective, largely in past tense with a Prologue in mixed tenses. How might the story have been told if written from more than one perspective? Try to write about an incident from Sam's perspective, for instance.

### **SYMBOLISM**

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Maps are tropes or symbols referred to throughout this novel. Discuss any passage where maps are referred to in this way.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** What other symbolism did you notice in this novel?

### **LITERARY DEVICES**

**ACTIVITY:** Find examples of the use of literary devices in this novel, using the table below to identify examples.

<b>Simile</b>	
<b>Metaphors</b>	
<b>Personification</b>	
<b>Other</b>	

## HUMOUR

**ACTIVITY:** Identify techniques by which humour is provoked. Add quotes to the following table:

<b>Sarcasm</b>	
<b>Irony</b>	
<b>Exaggeration</b>	
<b>Black Humour</b>	
<b>Other</b>	

## STRUCTURE

The structure of the story can be analysed in terms of key narrative features used to engage the reader's attention and to shape the work:

**a) Strong beginnings and endings** to chapters are one way of structuring a narrative, for example:

Beginning: 'I can hardly remember that last week of August.' (p 207)

Ending: 'The baby's coming,' he said.' (p 190)

Which other opening or closing sentence was particularly gripping, in your opinion, and why?

**b) Suspense** is the key to any narrative's structure. What incidents in this novel add to the suspense conveyed in its structure?

**c) Using a 'framing story or idea'** makes a narrative more cohesive. For example, the idea of maps is not simply symbolic but relates to thematic aspects throughout the entire narrative. Are there other framing ideas or stories in the novel?

**d) Mirroring in parallel plots/characters** also cements the structure, themes and plot of a narrative. eg Fred and Sam take the same chairlift ride at the beginning and end of the novel, but their reactions are different and determined by what has occurred between the two events. What other parallels did you find in this novel?

## SETTING

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Description in setting can be evoked via a complex range of literary devices. Choose a passage in this novel and analyse how it works.

**ACTIVITY:** The map at the beginning of the book gives the reader a further idea of the setting. Invite students to draw a map of the streets and landmarks in Sorrento where Fred lives, and which are important to her, based on her descriptions in this novel.

## CHARACTERS

**Major Characters:** Fred (Winifred/Winnie/Freddo) Owen-Ricci; Luca Ricci, Fred's stepdad; Anika Murray, Luca's partner; Sam Murray, Anika's son; Pop (Jeff) Owen, Fred's maternal grandfather; Jed (Trung Vãn) Fred's best friend and neighbour; Mr Ferman Khouri, Fred's teacher; Nora Ramusa, a pregnant Kosovar refugee; Aidan McMillan, one of Fred's close friends; Penny McNeal, Luca's police partner.

**Minor Characters:** Mrs (Vi) and Mr Khoa Trãn, Jed's parents; Lily (Ngoc Huê), Jed's sister; Bill McMillan, Aidan's dad; Keira, a former best friend of Fred's; the principal; Dorothea, one of the 'grandma volunteers' at the refugee centre; Merjeme and Artã and their mother and aunt, Kosovar refugees.

**ACTIVITY:** Draw up a character chart and find key quotes which give a clear picture of any of these characters, and isolate events that demonstrate their natures. Then write a brief character study of the person using the quotes and events to illustrate the points made in your summary.

**QUESTION:** Which character was most intriguing and why? Which character would you like to have heard more about?

## WRITING TASKS

**ACTIVITY:** Write a diary entry as if by Merjeme in the lead-up to her being trapped by the tide on Sphinx Rock.

**ACTIVITY:** Read the newspaper article (p 301) about Nora's case, and its relationship to similar cases today. Choose a contemporary case of people seeking permanent asylum in Australia, research it and then write a draft newspaper article about their case. eg The Tamil family from Biloela seeking an injunction against deportation to Sri Lanka. [See (Tan 2019) in the **Bibliography**.]

**ACTIVITY:** Write a letter from Sam to his dad about his new life.

**ACTIVITY:** The chapter titles in this novel are very evocative, eg Littlest Ridge. Use one of them as a title for a poem written in response to the novel.

## VISUAL LITERACY

**ACTIVITY:** Create a graphic novel interpretation of an incident in the novel. [See **Bibliography.**]

**ACTIVITY:** Design a new cover for this book.

**ACTIVITY:** Photos can offer immediate insight into how lives are lived in vastly different circumstances. 'In school Mr Khouri had said *a picture is worth a thousand words*, but I didn't think it could equal so many questions too.' (pp 44–5) On p 41 a photo of a baby on barbed wire' is referred to and on pp 306–7 it is explained that an image of a baby being passed over barbed wire was taken by Carol Guzy on 3 March 1999, and published in *The Washington Post*. In the author's acknowledgements she notes: 'Photographer Emmanuel Santos ... documented the lives of Kosovar refugees seeking temporary asylum in Australia, and kindly chatted to me about his time spent with the refugees at Point Nepean that resulted in some beautiful and empathetic photographs.' (p 306) Invite students to locate photos of the Kosovo War refugees and discuss what they reveal about them.

**ACTIVITY:** Create a book trailer for this novel. [See **Bibliography.**]

## FURTHER QUOTES FOR DISCUSSION

1. Read the quote by Ursula K. Le Guin at the beginning of the book and discuss its meaning.
2. 'I have decided that memories are a little like mountains. You need to hike to the top and get some height – what Mr Khouri calls perspective – so you can look down at how far you've come, and see all the people and choices that make up the map of your life.' (p 4)
3. 'Fred, you should know that it's very easy to be both happy and sad at the same time, and it's possible to love two people at once, and miss someone so much even while you move on without them,' (p 24).
4. 'Africa is often drawn to look smaller, or roughly the same size as North America, when it is in fact *three times* the size...' (p 30)
5. 'Though sometimes I wonder if the hand we use to help others moves a bit slower and with a little less purpose than the one we use to help ourselves.' (p 84)
6. 'And it made perfect sense to me that we can't see what keeps the world turning. And that maybe we would never know why, if one day it all just stopped.' (p 189)
7. They may not be here anymore, your mum and the baby, but the love for them still is. That's just how it is, Fred – and I tend to think that's probably what heaven is ... we go on loving them, even after they're gone.' (p 243)
8. 'And I was just about to learn that something could be both illegal and the right thing to do at the same time.' (p 254)

9. 'This is how the world heals, I think. One small act at a time.' (p 286)

10. ' "I was thinking to give her a place," Nora said, and then she whispered her name, and the baby stirred.

"Rose," I repeated, and just then she opened her little mouth to make a soft, whimpering sound.

"For Rosebud," Nora explained, and that made me smile.' (p 292)

## FURTHER ACTIVITIES

1. **Compare this novel to other young adult novels** which deal with the issue of refugees, such as *The Bone Sparrow* by Zana Fraillon (2016) or *Between Us* by Clare Atkins (2018). You might also read picture books such as Shaun Tan's *The Arrival* (2006), or Armin Greder's *The Island* (2007) or *The Mediterranean* (2018), or *Illegal* by Eoin Colfer and Andrew Donkin with art by Giovanni Ritano (2017) to stimulate discussion. Memoirs of refugees such as *The Happiest Refugee* by Anh Do (2010) could also be compared to this novel. [See **Bibliography**.]

2. **Design a poster to advertise this book.**

3. The **title of this book** refers to maps. What other title might the book have had?

4. **Debate any of the topics** covered in these notes, or suggested by the novel.

5. Locate and study **poetry** which explores similar themes.

## CONCLUSION

This novel is an extremely moving account of the personal journey of Winifred Owen-Ricci and of the parallel journey of the Kosovar people who are forced to leave their homeland in order to escape war and dispossession. Both are simply seeking a home – a place where they can feel loved and valued.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Danielle Binks** lives on the Mornington Peninsula, where her novel is set. She is a writer, reviewer, agent and book blogger. In 2017, she edited and contributed to *Begin, End, Begin*, an anthology of new Australian young adult writing inspired by the #LoveOzYA movement, which won the ABIA Book of the Year for Older Children (Ages 13+) and was shortlisted in the 2018 Gold Inky Awards. *The Year the Maps Changed* is Danielle's debut middle-grade novel. For further information see: [daniellebinks.com](http://daniellebinks.com)

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF THE NOTES

**Dr Robyn Sheahan-Bright** operates *justified text* writing and publishing consultancy services, and is widely published on children's literature, publishing history and Australian fiction. Her publications include *Paper Empires: A History of the Book in Australia 1946–2005* (co-edited with Craig Munro) (UQP, 2006). In 2011 she was recipient of the CBCA (Qld) Dame Annabelle Rankin Award, in 2012, of the CBCA Nan Chauncy Award for Outstanding Services to Children's Literature, and in 2014, the QWC's Johnno Award.

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