



The Doolally Kid

by Wendy Milton

TEACHER'S RESOURCE

Using this resource

This teacher resource is designed to be used as students read each chapter. Each section of this resource focuses on one chapter, and is divided into the following sections:

Vocabulary

This section highlights some of the trickier words or phrases that students will find in this chapter. Work through the list, or pick out a few words of interest, and ask students about each word using these questions:

- What is another word the author could have used instead of _____?
- What does the word _____ mean?
- Can you find the word _____ in a dictionary?
- Can you think of another word that means the same as _____?
- What is a _____?
- What does the author mean by _____?

Comprehension

This section includes questions to help gauge your students' understanding of the text. Some questions can be answered by a straightforward reading of the text, while others may involve students drawing on prior information or drawing conclusions.

Conversation

This section includes questions of a more interpretive, open-ended nature to encourage higher-order thinking. Questions may ask students to make predictions, use their imaginations and draw upon personal experiences.

Worksheets

Worksheets are included for some chapters.

Before you begin

Looking at the cover image, encourage students to work out the meaning of the word 'doolally'. Then, research the term. What does it mean and where does it originate? Were any students correct?

Chapter 1

Pages 1-9

Vocabulary

limply	p.1
cringed	p.2
contemplate	p.3
made light of	p.5
eccentric	p.5
spirited	p.8
ominous	p.8

Comprehension

- Where does Billy go to school?
- Who has Aunt Addie written letters to?
- What happened to Uncle Wally?
- What does Billy's mother do?
- Why does Billy think Mr Crabtree is spying on them?
- Who is the first person to applaud Aunt Addie's performance? Why?

Conversation

The author provides a detailed description of Billy on page 1. How do you picture Billy to look based on this description?

What are your other impressions about Billy's character from Chapter 1?



Worksheet 1 TR page 12

Draw a picture of Aunt Addie at the school Parent-Teacher Evening, and describe her in your own words.

Chapter 2

Pages 10-19

Vocabulary

trigger	p.10
evasively	p.11
atmosphere	p.12
impeccable	p.13
contorted	p.14
heirlooms	p.18

Comprehension

- What is the latest thing that Billy's mother has bought for him?
- What is a séance?
- What does Aunt Addie think is the cause of Billy's mother's emotional state?
- Who put Australian painting on the map? Have you heard of any of these names?
- Where will Earl be playing that night?

Conversation

Is there something that you want to be really good at but your attempts so far haven't gone so well? How does it make you feel?

What do you predict will happen in Chapter 3? Why?

Chapter 3

Pages 20–28

Vocabulary

defiant	p.20
gusto	p.21
abnormal	p.21
adorning	p.24
pandemonium	p.25
sole	p.28
gratitude	p.28

Comprehension

- What is the name of Earl's band?
- Why does Billy think of himself as 'abnormal'?
- Who can make things disappear?
- Does Aunt Addie follow Billy into the space below the stage?
- Who is Aunt Addie channelling when she speaks to the sergeant in a deep, breathy voice?

Conversation

Was your prediction about Chapter 3 correct? Why or why not?

What does the first line of Chapter 3 imply happened between the end of Chapter 2 and the start of Chapter 3? How do you imagine this missing scene?

Chapter 4

Pages 29–36

Vocabulary

suspicious	p.31
inconclusive	p.31
downcast	p.33
ordeal	p.34
defects	p.36

Comprehension

- Why does Earl ask if Billy is psychic too?
- For whom does Aunt Addie 'put on a show'?
- What does the keyboard box look like to Mr Crabtree?
- Mr Crabtree says 'I know what I'm going to do.' What does he do?
- Who opens the box from the back of the hearse?

Conversation

In your own words, how do Earl and Mick make a fool of Sergeant Dickerson? Use the words: 'first', 'next', and 'in the end'.



Worksheet 2 TR page 13

From this chapter, choose a sentence that you were able to vividly imagine. Describe what you imagined.

Chapter 5

Pages 37-44

Vocabulary

fretting	p.37
tentatively	p.39
flaunt	p.42
hollow	p.43

Comprehension

- Where is Billy when the lightning strikes?
- Why does Billy decide not to tell anyone about his new talent?
- How and why do Billy's feelings change between pages 41-44?

Conversation

If you could conjure up a spirit from the past to help you acquire a talent, whose spirit would it be, and what sort of talent would you like to acquire?

Chapter 6

Pages 45-52

Vocabulary

poise	p.45
prodigy	p.50
attentive	p.50
deftly	p.51
retaliated	p.52

Comprehension

- Which of Billy's new skills is he best at?
- Aunt Addie explains the word 'anachronism'. Can you define it in your own words?
- Who starts the fight at school?

Conversation

In Chapter 6, we discover that Billy has changed. How? What does the author mean by "Confidence was the culprit"?

Chapter 7

Pages 53-62

Vocabulary

stature	p.53
limelight	p.55
relished	p.56
turmoil	p.58
posse	p.59

Comprehension

- What does Billy daydream about?
- If Miss Missenden hadn't asked Billy whether he'd read Chopin's biography, what would have happened?
- Do you think Billy really feels sick?

Conversation

At the end of Chapter 7, the author writes that "Billy's happiness was complete." Do you predict it will stay this way? Why?

Chapter 8

Pages 63–71

Vocabulary

routinely	p.64
loitering	p.64
interrogated	p.64
intoxicating	p.65
mimed	p.67
wistfully	p.70

Comprehension

- Why doesn't Billy want Mrs Preston to talk to his mother?
- What does Dennis mean by acquiring a new skill 'the hard way'?
- What does Aunt Addie tell the principal about Billy's behaviour?
- What is Billy's mother's reaction to his paintings?
- Why does Billy's mother behave coldly towards Earl?

Conversation

In Chapter 8, Billy's attitude towards Aunt Addie has changed. How?

Have you ever let something 'go to your head'? How did you feel? And how do you think others felt about you?

Chapter 9

Pages 72–78

Vocabulary

harassment	p.72
ungracious	p.75
grudgingly	p.76
withdraw	p.76
edgy	p.78
foresee	p.78

Comprehension

- How much time has passed between the end of Chapter 8 and the beginning of Chapter 9?
- Do we discover why there was an ambulance at Mr Crabtree's house?
- Why can't Billy sign his own name on the paintings?
- Why is Aunt Addie 'edgy'?

Conversation

Can you think of another way that Billy, Aunt Addie and Billy's mother may have been able to get Mr Crabtree to drop his charges?



Worksheet 3 TR page 14

Make connections between excerpts from Chapter 10 and your own experiences, the text so far, or the wider world.

Chapter 10

Pages 79–86

Vocabulary

curator	p.79
flourishing	p.80
postponed	p.80
pacify	p.81
palpable	p.82
adjudicate	p.82

Comprehension

- How many paintings are stolen from the National Gallery?
- What is *Top Tots & Teens*?
- Why does Billy need to find a dead rapper?

Conversation

What do you predict will happen when police try to track down the missing paintings? Give reasons from the text to support your prediction.

Chapter 11

Pages 87–99

Vocabulary

hazard	p.87
pompous	p.89
mortification	p.92
palpitated	p.97

Comprehension

- What is Big Dog's real name?
- What funny coincidences happen at the séance?
- After Big Dog, whom do you think Aunt Addie channels?

Conversation

How does the author use language to help us form an image of Big Dog? What conclusions do you draw from her language?

Chapter 12

Pages 100–110

Vocabulary

heist	p.100
determine	p.103
modesty	p.104
conservative	p.106
anthem	p.109

Comprehension

- What does Billy know about the Crabtrees' paintings that Aunt Addie doesn't know?
- What does the author mean by 'permanent disappearance' in relation to Pooper?

Conversation

Do you predict that Billy will beat Helen Schumacker in the talent contest? Why?

Chapter 13

Pages 111-120

Vocabulary

amidst	p.111
rebellious	p.112
enthraling	p.112
coherent	p.112
intervened	p.113
impersonation	p.114
aghast	p.118

Comprehension

- What doesn't Mrs Gillespie like about Billy's rap?
- Who is the first character to suggest calling the police?
- How does Billy know what Aunt Addie was trying to tell him over the phone?
- Why is Billy 'having trouble speaking' to Harry and his wife at the Pig & Whistle?

Conversation

What do you think is the message or main point behind the lyrics of the 'Cool Cat Rap'?

How do you think Billy feels now that Dennis knows the full truth behind his new talents? Why?



Worksheet 4 TR page 15

Write a six-line rhyming verse of rap about a topic you feel strongly about. When you're finished, perform the rap!

Chapter 14

Pages 121-131

Vocabulary

pear-shaped	p.123
hideout	p.125
muffled	p.127
quandary	p.127
emerged	p.129
rehearsing	p.130

Comprehension

- What 'trade' is the undertaker talking about when he asks about Billy's dad?
- To whom does the 'huge, hairy hand' belong?
- With whom does Dennis drive to the warehouse?
- What does Sergeant Dickerson mean when he says to Aunt Addie, 'pull the other one'?

Conversation

What does the illustration on page 128 help you understand about the scene?

What do you predict will happen in Chapter 15? Why?

Chapter 15

Pages 132–140

Vocabulary

fair dinkum	p.132
forgeries	p.133
indignant	p.135
accused	p.137
sordid	p.138
accosted	p.139

Comprehension

- How does Dennis's mum react to the events of the previous night?
- Who told the criminals that Billy could copy Conder's signature?
- What colours are the roses Aunt Addie receives?

Conversation

Who do you think the roses, chocolates and the bicycle are from? Why?

Chapter 16

Pages 141–147

Vocabulary

differ	p.141
deduction	p.142
surveillance	p.143
summons	p.147

Comprehension

- What is the Undertaker's real name?
- How does Orville want Aunt Addie to 'get in touch' with Doggie?
- Why does Aunt Addie have to wait to exorcise Big Dog?

Conversation

What does the author mean when she says: "The lines between good and bad were becoming blurred?"

Chapter 17

Pages 148–160

Vocabulary

defective	p.148
under oath	p.151
objection	p.154
alleged	p.157
overruled	p.158
alias	p.159

Comprehension

- At the court, Aunt Addie looks like 'she'd been doing this all her life.' What is the real reason she's so comfortable in court?
- What does Mr Tweedly say that hurts Aunt Addie's case?

Conversation

If you were a juror in the courtroom, whom do you think has the stronger case at this point in the trial? Why?

Chapter 18

Pages 161–169

Vocabulary

consistent	p.162
gavel	p.163
subduing	p.164
plotted	p.166
testimony	p.169

Comprehension

- Who is the second person to be questioned in court, after lunch?
- Why is the first question that Aunt Addie asks Mrs Crabtree important?
- When will the trial resume?

Conversation

Who has the upper-hand in the trial now?

Why does Billy begin to paint a picture of the courthouse?

Chapter 19

Pages 170–178

Vocabulary

verdict	p.170
frenzied	p.170
torrent	p.171
patronising	p.172
detoured	p.174
adrenalin	p.177

Comprehension

- Why does Aunt Addie assume that Billy's mother must have missed the news?
- What does Aunt Addie mean by 'the price of popularity'?
- What do you think the 'goosey note' in Mr Morrison's voice means?

Conversation

After the court victory, a newspaper runs the headline 'Clairvoyant Cleared in Court Coup'. Can you think of another headline that explains the win using alliteration?

Chapter 20

Pages 179–188

Vocabulary

intricacy	p.180
eerie	p.182
uncanny	p.185
awash	p.187
vultures	p.188

Comprehension

- What is a 'loose cannon'? Who, according to Aunt Addie, is a loose cannon?
- What schoolyard rumours spread after the newspaper article comes out?

Conversation

How would you feel if you were suddenly thrust into the public spotlight, like Billy?

Chapter 21

Pages 189–200

Vocabulary

backlash	p.190
precisely	p.191
raspy	p.192
derelict	p.193
trespassing	p.197
haul	p.200

Comprehension

- What effect does Billy's withdrawal from the competition initially have on public opinion?
- Does this change after Mrs Preston's letter is published?
- How did the police find out the group was going to the cemetery?
- What does Sergeant Dickerson agree to do in order to guarantee a positive news headline?

Conversation

Why do you think the author chose to write Doggie's speech in rhyme?

Do you think that Doggie wanted the trunk to be found? Why or why not?

Chapter 22

Pages 201–212

Vocabulary

sinister	p.201
schemes	p.202
uprooted	p.204
primed	p.207
superb	p.208
audible	p.210

Comprehension

- Why does Billy's mother say he has no choice but to move to Sydney?
- Why doesn't Aunt Addie want to fight with her sister over where Billy lives?
- On what date do welfare officers visit Aunt Addie and Billy?
- Why does Aunt Addie encourage Billy to play piano for the welfare officers?

Conversation

How different do you think Billy's life would have been if he'd moved in with his mother? Do you think she'd have given him a 'normal environment'?

What do you predict will be the outcome of the welfare assessment?



Worksheet 4 TR page 16

Complete a 4-square grid about the positives and negatives of Billy staying with Aunt Addie versus moving to Sydney.

Chapter 23

Pages 213–220

Vocabulary

domestic	p.213
bribes	p.215
parole	p.216
beneficiaries	p.220

Comprehension

- How did Sergeant Dickerson help Con Marchant, also known as Stammers?
- Why does Aunt Addie think that Billy's mother's separation from Wallace has something to do with his name?
- What sort of 'business associate' does Earl meet outside the Pig & Whistle?
- Where does Billy's mother get a job?

Conversation

Was your prediction at the end of Chapter 22 correct?

Why do you think the author chose to write the last chapter as a series of articles, letters and documents? Was it effective?

After you finish

What do you think Billy would be thinking if he read the news article from the year 2050?

Write a letter to add to Chapter 23, sent in the year 2035. It could be from between Dennis and Billy, Aunt Addie and Billy, Earl and Billy, or between any other characters! How has life changed for the character writing the letter since the events in the book?

Do you think Aunt Addie is 'doolally'? What about Billy? Why or why not?

Debate the topic 'Being different always ends in misery' using evidence from the book.

Name: _____

Making Connections

Make connections between excerpts from Chapter 10 and your own experiences, other books you have read, or the wider world.

Types of Connections

Text-to-self

Does the excerpt remind you of something that has happened to you?
Can you relate directly to the text?

Text-to-text

Does the excerpt remind you of something else that you have read?
Are the characters similar?
Do the plots have similarities?

Text-to-world

Does the excerpt make you think of something you have seen on the news, or something that has happened in the past?

The headline read, 'Billion-dollar Art Theft. Break-in at National Gallery'.

My connection is:

'I've never seen Charles's paintings. I wanted to see the real ones an' now they're not there!'

My connection is:

Mr Nostrum has agreed to adjudicate the final and present the winner, on air, with a cup.

My connection is:

Name: _____

Write a Rap

Write a six-line rhyming verse of rap about a topic you feel strongly about.
When you're finished, perform the rap!

Example:

Cool cats walk to a different

beat,

Line 1 final word
Rhymes with
▼

Ain't no rules in Cool Cat

Street.

Line 2 final word

My rap:

Line 1 final word

Rhymes with
▼

Line 2 final word

Line 3 final word

Rhymes with
▼

Line 4 final word

Line 5 final word

Rhymes with
▼

Line 6 final word

Name: _____

Positives and Negatives 4-Square

Complete a 4-square grid about the positives and negatives of Billy staying with Aunt Addie versus moving to Sydney.

<p>Positives of staying with Aunt Addie</p> <p>Billy would still have Dennis</p>	<p>Negatives of staying with Aunt Addie</p>
<p>Positives of moving to Sydney</p> <p>Billy could 'start afresh'</p>	<p>Negatives of moving to Sydney</p>