



Sophie's Return

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

Encourage students to recall the characters they met in *Angel of Fire*, Book One of Zach's Story, by reading *The Story So Far...* on pages v and vi. Who, do they predict, are the two characters pictured on the cover of *Sophie's Return*?

Chapter 1

Pages 1-2

Vocabulary

artless	p.1
involuntary	p.2
nonsense	p.2

Comprehension

- Why can't Zach's mother wake him?
- What do Zach and Augustus Bear have in common?

Conversation

How has the relationship between Zach's mother and father changed since the beginning of Book 1?

Chapter 2

Pages 3-9

Vocabulary

loathsome	p.4
register	p.7
ignition	p.8
levitated	p.8

Comprehension

- On what 'case' are Zach, Sophie, Astra and the twins working?
- What is Edwina's plan and how is it foiled?
- What blocks Edwina's exit?

Conversation

In this chapter we meet Natalie and her evil stepmother, Edwina. What other stories do you know with an evil stepmother?

Chapter 3

Pages 10-17

Vocabulary

avengers	p.10
literally	p.15
metaphorically	p.15
bunker	p.17

Comprehension

- What details will confuse the police when they investigate Natalie's case more deeply?
- How do the five avengers plan to find their next case?
- What does the metaphor 'keeping your ear to the ground' mean?

Conversation

What other common metaphors can you think of that often come up in conversation?

Chapter 4

Pages 18-23

Vocabulary

naive	p.18
thwart	p.19
withdrawn	p.19
demoted	p.20

Comprehension

- Zach's mother says Zach's father has become 'otherworldly'? What does she mean?
- Does Zach's mother believe what Zach tells her?
- Why has Zach decided he won't get married?
- Why does Zach's mother say there's no point in winning the Phoenix Centre's lottery?

Conversation

Imagine you had, with your parents, the same conversation Zach had with his mother. How do you think they would react?

If your best friend had the same conversation with you, how would you react?

Chapter 5

Pages 24-31

Vocabulary

wistfully	p.25
resourceful	p.26
double-edged	p.26
decibels	p.26
graffiti	p.27
premonition	p.29

Comprehension

- What is CEYA?
- How does the author describe Miranda Parker?
- What does Sophie point out about the soldier who wrote the message?
- What is the high point of the excursion?
- Who was Eric?

Conversation

What attitude are Zach and Astra taking towards Sophie? Does Sophie deserve this?



Worksheet 1 TR page 12

Bottleneck Bay is based on the city of Sydney. Watch a video about Sydney's underground and answer the questions.

Chapter 6

Pages 32–43

Vocabulary

feeble	p.32
oblivious	p.35
intrepid	p.39
marginally	p.39
entombed	p.42
evacuated	p.42

Comprehension

- Why does Milly say: 'The Phoenix Centre has done it again'?
- Why is Billy jealous?
- Why does Zach's father think Sophie could have a career in journalism?

Conversation

Imagine you had lived another life before your current one. How would you convince people that you had been here before?

Chapter 7

Pages 44–59

Vocabulary

drawbacks	p.44
dread	p.47
substantial	p.52
immersed	p.54
congealed	p.55
raucous	p.57

Comprehension

- Why isn't Zach keen to go with Astra?
- What 'job' would Benny like Zach to do?
- 'Why don't you quit while you're a head' makes the ghosts laugh. Why?

Conversation

How does the illustration on page 51 indicate that some of the figures are ghosts? How do you think you would draw a ghost?

Chapter 8

Pages 60–70

Vocabulary

substitute	p.61
lecture	p.62
mournful	p.64
dubious	p.67

Comprehension

- What does Sophie mean when she says Zach's mother isn't 'a believer'?
- What causes the argument between Zach and Sophie?

Conversation

'United we stand; divided we fall.' How does this saying relate to the five avengers in Chapter 8?

Chapter 9

Pages 71–76

Vocabulary

crude	p.72
crisis	p.74
sheepish	p.74
blurted	p.75

Comprehension

- Why does Astra apologise to Sophie?
- What does Milly mean when she says Billy should 'pull his head in'?
- What does Billy mean by 'piece of cake'?
- What could make Hank 'snap out' of his necronesia?
- What does Zach mean when he tells Sophie she 'can't go back'?

Conversation

How do you predict Sophie will act when she finally gets to speak with Hank? How do you think Hank will act?

Chapter 10

Pages 77–90

Vocabulary

cavity	p.77
ventriloquist	p.79
contradict	p.81
appalled	p.81
disheartened	p.83
musty	p.85
bolthole	p.87
allies	p.89

Comprehension

- Why is Zach's body a problem?
- Why does Zach yell 'ouch'?
- Why doesn't Billy want the handsome figure to be Hank's?
- What's Hank's full name and military rank?
- What things do Zach, Astra and Billy find in the war rooms?

Conversation

What do the items on and around Hank's desk tell you about the sort of person he was and what he valued?

Do you think Hank is a good person?



Worksheet 2 TR page 13

Chapter 13 is very descriptive about the war rooms and Hank's space within them. Draw the space as you imagine it to look and annotate your drawing to point out specific details from the book.

Chapter 11

Pages 91–98

Vocabulary

jostling	p.91
hubbub	p.93
myopically	p.97

Comprehension

- Why are the railway ghosts arguing, at the beginning of Chapter 11?
- Why is Billy's modesty ('I didn't do much') uncharacteristic?
- What is happening to Sophie at the end of Chapter 11?

Conversation

Imagine many people are all competing for your attention, like the railway ghosts compete for the attention of the five avengers. How would you bring these people to order?

Chapter 12

Pages 99–105

Vocabulary

phonograph	p.100
sepia tint	p.102
oppressively	p.102

Comprehension

- What does Zach see, in his dream, that makes him gasp?
- Where does Hank take Zach and what does Zach see?
- When Hank says he 'might as well be dead', why does Zach see this as 'an opportunity'?

Conversation

'Dream sequences' – scenes that play out the contents of a character's dream – are often used in films and books. Why is this?

Chapter 13

Pages 106–113

Vocabulary

materialised	p.107
mugged	p.109
hothead	p.109
blustered	p.112

Comprehension

- How does Billy praise Astra?
- How does Lucinda's fiancé react to the avengers' visit?
- Richard McGuinness's home is filled with china and glassware. Why does this please Milly?

Conversation

If your friend gave you a pencil case that you really loved, but you then found out that your friend had stolen it, would you still want it?

Chapter 14

Pages 114–119

Vocabulary

snitching	p.114
proceeds	p.115
tabloids	p.115
obsessed	p.117

Comprehension

- Why do the children decide not to help Benny?
- What does Milly mean by 'swoppitying'?

Conversation

Do you agree with Milly when she says, 'Sometimes people can be funny on the outside and miserable on the inside'?

Chapter 15

Pages 120–128

Vocabulary

modified	p.120
bedraggled	p.121
guillotine	p.123
eccentric	p.124
in cahoots	p.127
precautions	p.127

Comprehension

- When Zach sees Sophie being Abby, what does he try to do?
- What does Mr Waverley think Sophie is doing, at first?
- What does Mr Waverley conclude after talking with Sophie?
- What does Zach find himself agreeing to do?

Conversation

On page 121 we read that other kids 'flung' questions at Zach after he talked to Sophie/ Abby. What were these questions, do you imagine? What would you ask Zach?

Chapter 16

Pages 129–134

Vocabulary

priorities	p.131
consciously	p.133
airhead	p.134

Comprehension

- Does Sophie remember the things she says and does while she's being Abby?
- What is the difference between 'multiple' and 'dual'?

Conversation

In your own words, why is it difficult to get Hank's evidence out of the war rooms?

Chapter 17

Pages 135–142

Vocabulary

levitated	p.137
trafficking	p.138
gangway	p.138
vicinity	p.138
time warp	p.140

Comprehension

- What evidence does Zach find?
- At first, Sophie suggests using the railway authorities or the police. When Zach finds the evidence, however, she tells him that bringing it out is pointless. Why?
- Why does Sophie need to speak with Hank?
- Why is Sophie relieved when the bell rings?

Conversation

Have you heard the saying that someone is 'living in the past'? What does this saying mean? Is it the same as Hank being 'stuck' in 1942?

Chapter 18

Pages 143–150

Vocabulary

divert	p.143
dissociate	p.144
relevant	p.144
psychologist	p.148
obligingly	p.150
cynic	p.150

Comprehension

- How does Sophie divert Mr Waverley's attention?
- Do members of Zach's class believe Sophie?
- Why is Zach angry with his mother?
- Can Zach's mother control her disbelief?

Conversation

'If I'd decided to invent another personality, don't you think I'd have chosen someone smarter than Abby? (p.146) Do you find Sophie's argument convincing? Why?



Worksheet 3 TR page 14

Fill in the blanks using words to describe *how* each character speaks. Be as descriptive as possible and try not to use the word 'said'.

Chapter 19

Pages 151-161

Vocabulary

khaki	p.152
tendrils	p.152
distraught	p.155
fathoming	p.156
commuters	p.157
incredulous	p.158

Comprehension

- Why does Sophie wish to speak to Hank?
- Why is Zach angry with Astra?
- What does Zach 'see' in his dream, and how does it affect him?
- What effect does Astra's smile have on Zach?

Conversation

The author blends two words together to make up words like 'loaming' and 'blurgling'. Can you make up a word in the same way? What does it mean?

Chapter 20

Pages 162-164

Vocabulary

intruding	p.163
relapsed	p.163
beckoning	p.164

Comprehension

- Why is Zach's mother panicking?
- Why does Zach's father remain calm?
- What do the Brinkley's neighbours fear has happened?

Conversation

Can you explain the line 'In her present state, one uniform looked much the same as another'?

Chapter 21

Pages 165-171

Vocabulary

enveloping	p.165
bluffing	p.166
demonic	p.166
sassy	p.166

Comprehension

- How does Astra protect Zach?
- How do Astra and Zach manage to cure Hank of his necronesia?
- Is Hank happy to be cured?

Conversation

Have you heard the sayings: 'The truth hurts' and 'Ignorance is bliss'? Are we sometimes happier not knowing the truth?

Chapter 22

Pages 172-176

Vocabulary

routine	p.173
bizarre	p.173
versatile	p.173
mundane	p.173
dysfunction	p.175
stimulants	p.175
groggy	p.176

Comprehension

- What is the young doctor's response when Zach's father says Zach is loaming?
- What does the young doctor mean by, 'We have to rule out the more mundane possibilities'?
- Doctor Plumber diagnoses KLS. What do the initials KLS stand for?

Conversation

What do you predict will happen in the final three chapters of the book. What 'loose ends' need to be tied up and do you think they will be?

Chapter 23

Pages 177-186

Vocabulary

dully	p.177
harrowing	p.180
ricocheted	p.180
posse	p.181
obnoxious	p.182
copious	p.182

Comprehension

- Why does Hank blame himself?
- What 'deal' does Benny try to make with Abby?
- What is 'a double whammy'?
- How do the four avengers get Sophie to shore?
- How does Milly resuscitate Sophie?

Conversation

Do you think Zach's father minds that people assume he is crazy? Would you mind if people thought that about you?



Worksheet 4 TR page 15

How has Zach's attitude towards Sophie changed since the start of the book. Choose three key moments to illustrate the change.

Chapter 24

Pages 187–196

Vocabulary

disoriented	p.187
on cue	p.188
tentatively	p.190
internship	p.191

Comprehension

- 'Something inside Zach's mother snapped.' What does this mean?
- How does Zach prove to Dr Plumber that he can loan?
- Is Dr Plumber keen to share what happened to Zach with others? What tells you this?

Conversation

What would you have done, in Zach's situation, to prove that you could loan?

Chapter 25

Pages 197–201

Vocabulary

delirious	p.194
neurotic	p.201

Comprehension

- Why does Zach's mother cry?
- What effect does the floating tissue box have?

Conversation

Do you like the ending to this story? How does it make you feel?

After you finish

Think about the title of the book, *Sophie's Return*. How do you interpret it now that you have finished reading?

Write a letter from Zach to Sophie as she recovers in hospital.

Make a list of all the ways a psychic ability could be used for good. Could it also be used for bad?

Debate the topic: 'The truth is always stranger than fiction', using evidence from the book.



Worksheet 5 TR page 16

Complete a wordsearch for the names of the characters that appeared in this book.

Name: _____

Subterranean Sydney

Bottleneck Bay is based on the city of Sydney. Watch a video about Sydney's underground and answer the questions.

VIDEO:

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/subterranean-sydney-the-citys-secret-life-below-the-surface-20151202-gldgqs.html>

What is the name of the train station that has disused platforms and tunnels?

What is the first indication that there were air-raid shelters there?

What natural feature can be seen in the tunnel that indicates there is a park above it?

Why would it have been so difficult to dismantle the air-raid shelters?

How did the speaker come to know the tunnels?

How deep is the lake in some parts?

Extension Question: Do some further research about Sydney's underground tunnels online. Can you find any reference to 'Eric the eel' that Sophie referred to during the excursion?

Name: _____

Picture This

Chapter 13 is very descriptive about the war rooms and Hank's space within them. Draw the space as you imagine it to look and annotate your drawing to point out specific details from the book.



Name: _____

Instead of said...

Fill in the blanks using words to describe *how* each character speaks. Be as descriptive as possible and try not to use the word 'said'.

Pages 144-145

'The real platform or the ghost platform?' Luke asked suspiciously

'The real platform,' Sophie _____

'Why weren't people running around and screaming?' _____ Miranda.

'Not everyone is into screaming,' _____ Sophie. 'Anyway, they either couldn't see him or, if they could see him, they didn't *realise* he was a ghost. He looked as solid and alive as you do.'

'Could I see him?' Miranda

'Only if you're a channeller.' _____ Sophie.

Page 149

'Sophie hasn't got a disorder – she's *swopoppitying*,' Zach _____

'There's no such word!' Zach's mother _____

'*There is!*' _____ Zach.

Stop shouting at your mother, Zach. We can't possibly know for sure, can we? You might have to face the fact that there are qualified people out there who know more about Sophie's condition than you do,' Zach's father _____

'They don't, and neither do you! Zach _____ . I thought you believed me!

Name: _____

Attitude Tracker

How has Zach's attitude towards Sophie changed since the start of the book. Choose three key moments to illustrate the change.





Name: _____

Sophie's Return Wordsearch

Complete a wordsearch for the names of the characters that appeared in this book.

U	N	C	M	Y	X	L	Y	E	C	S	L	M
D	T	X	B	A	S	T	R	A	V	O	R	A
J	X	U	M	R	K	D	Z	W	M	P	G	C
Q	W	Z	I	E	G	T	O	A	R	H	Z	U
B	D	A	R	B	Z	H	L	P	W	I	W	B
I	P	C	A	M	M	Z	T	W	A	E	X	I
P	A	H	N	U	Q	M	X	H	V	F	J	L
P	T	B	D	L	P	L	A	P	E	E	F	L
O	C	R	A	P	Y	N	R	D	R	R	H	Y
S	H	I	P	R	K	Z	A	Y	L	G	N	W
R	E	N	A	D	V	R	B	L	E	U	X	D
B	S	K	R	L	C	B	B	L	Y	S	W	D
Y	F	L	K	T	A	A	Y	I	I	O	B	J
X	T	E	E	H	M	O	J	M	A	N	O	E
R	I	Y	R	U	B	S	A	P	N	Y	G	B

ZACH BRINKLEY

SOPHIE FERGUSON

BILLY

MILLY

ASTRA

ABBY

HANK

PATCHES

MR WAVERLEY

MIRANDA PARKER

DR PLUMBER