

# New Windmills

2003

## support sheets

by Alan Pearce

The following pages consist of teacher's notes and classroom support sheets for *Jake's Tower* by Elizabeth Laird. These pages can be downloaded and printed out as required.

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# Jake's Tower

## by Elizabeth Laird

### Synopsis

Marie Lindsay and Danny Judd have a baby when they are only sixteen years' old. Danny joins the army and leaves Marie and their son, Jake. The mother's and son's lives are made miserable by Marie's violent boyfriend, and eventually Marie seeks refuge at Danny's mother's house. During their stay with Mrs. Judd, Marie and Jake come face to face with Danny.

The novel deals sensitively with Jake's misery, and the tension Marie faces trying to reconcile her feelings for her son and her boyfriend. In addition, Mrs. Judd's and Danny's guilt are explored. Finally, Jake and Marie are helped to escape the cycle of violence that has blighted their lives.

### Prior learning

The novel does not take any easy options. It deals with the paradox of the beaten mother wanting to return to her boyfriend. It also deals with the guilt felt by the victims of domestic violence. It might be helpful for the pupils to read some background information on the subject of domestic violence, and the available support for victims. The issue is covered on many websites. The issue is covered on many websites including: [www.ddvf.org/index.htm](http://www.ddvf.org/index.htm)  
[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/cpd/cpsu/domestic.htm](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/cpd/cpsu/domestic.htm)

### Study areas

Some children may find the subject of this novel very difficult to deal with, although for many children the novel will allow them to share experiences that would otherwise have been kept hidden. However, even children with contented lives will be encouraged to think about the nature of family life.

Possible areas for study include:

- **Author's craft:** Consider the advantages and disadvantages of writing in the first person (Author's craft: Yr7, R12; Yr8, R10; Yr9, R9)
- **Sentence choice:** Compare the short sentences of the opening page with longer sentences to describe the movement of the monkeys on p14 (Writer's style: Yr7, R14; Yr8, S2; Yr9, R9)
- **Persuasive writing:** Persuade Steve that his behaviour is wrong and should change (Persuasive writing: Yr7, W15; Yr8, W13; Yr9, W13)
- **Independent research/information writing:** Produce a leaflet for teenagers providing information about what they can do if they are faced with domestic violence (Independent research: Yr7, R1, W10; Yr8 R2, W10; Yr9, R2, W9)
- **Personal view:** Do you think Marie is a good mother? (Writing reflectively: Yr7, W19; Yr8, W16; Yr9, W13)

- **Group discussion:** Imagine you are a member of the Social Service's Child Protection Unit.
  - Explain what Steve has done wrong.
  - Try to explain why he has behaved like this.
  - Decide what should happen to Steve.
 (Group discussion: **Yr7**, S&L12; **Yr8**, S&L10; **Yr9**, S&L10)
- **Collaborative Drama:** Dramatise significant scenes from the novel:
  - The first meeting between Mrs. Judd and Marie
  - The first meeting between Danny and Jake
  - The meeting between Danny and Steve.
 (Group discussion: **Yr7**, S&L16; **Yr8**, S&L16; **Yr9**, S&L14)

(Based on the National Literacy Strategy Framework objectives for Years 7, 8 and 9:  
W = Word level; S= Sentence level; R = Reading; Wr = Writing; S&L = Speaking & Listening)

## Teacher guidance

### Support Sheet 1

This support sheet helps pupils collect information from the novel in order to explore key aspects of Jake's life. To give this exploration some context the pupils are asked to write a letter from Jake to Danny, explaining how he feels about the events and relationships in his life. A Word Bank is offered to encourage the pupils to extend their vocabulary.

#### Literacy Framework Objectives

**Year 7:** **S15** Varying the formality of language; **R6** Actively reading for information; **R8** inferring and deducing information; **R16** Distinguishing between the attitudes of characters and author; **W6** Portraying character through writing.

**Year 8:** **S12** Varying the formality of language; **R4** Reading actively for meaning; **W6** conveying a sense of character in writing; **W7** Creating tone in writing.

**Year 9:** **S9** Varying the formality of writing; **W16** Writing to analyse.

### Support Sheet 2

This support sheet helps pupils to select relevant information from the text to write a piece of formal analytical writing. They are asked to select relevant information about the teachers' engagement with Jake. They are then asked to use this information to write a Social Worker's report within a given template. A Word bank is offered to encourage the pupils to extend their vocabulary.

**Year 7:** **S15** Varying the formality of writing; **R7** Identifying the main points; **R16** Distinguishing between the attitudes of characters and author; **W10** Organising a piece of writing appropriately.

**Year 8:** **S12** Varying the formality of language; **R8** Presenting information in different ways; **W10** Organising and presenting information.

**Year 9:** **S9** Varying the formality of writing; **R1** Extracting appropriate information; **W9** Integrating a range of information.

**Support Sheet 3**

This support sheet helps the pupils to transform an extract of dialogue into a drama script. They are encouraged to use a range of script writing conventions.

**Literacy Framework Objectives**

**Year 7: S&L13** Working together to solve problems; **S&L16** Devising and presenting scripted drama.

**Year 8: S&L10** Using talk to solve problems; **S&L16** Devising and presenting scripted drama;

**Year 9: S&L10** Working together to solve problems; **S&L14** Conveying character through scripted drama.

# 1 Writing a letter

## Introduction

After Danny has helped Marie and Jake move back into their flat, he has to go back to work. Imagine that Jake writes a letter to Danny, trying to explain what his life has been like. In the letter, Jake talks about: how Steve has treated him; the relationship between Steve and Marie; his dream house.

*Your task is to write Jake's letter to Danny. The letter will be written in the first person, but will be written in a formal style. In the letter, Jake will take every opportunity to explain how he feels about the events and relationships in his life.*

## Planning

Fill in the table to collect the details you will need for the letter. Once you have all of the relevant information, decide how much you will include in the letter.

Details	Page	Your notes
How Steve treated Jake		
1 The first mention of Steve's violence	p.4	
2 After the visit to the zoo	p.17	
The relationship between Steve and Marie		
1 Marie's response to Steve's violence	p.4	
2 The visit to the zoo	p.13	
3 After the visit to the zoo	p.25	
4 Marie defends Steve	p.38/39	
5 Jake talks to Mrs. Judd	p.44	
6 Steve turns up at Mrs. Judd's house	p.61-4	
7 Marie defends Steve again	p.76	
Jake's dream house		
1 A dream house	p.2	
2 A lookout tower	p.9	
3 Changes to the dream house	p.60	

You might want to use some of these words in your letter:

violent, cruel, brutal, furious, aggressive, vicious, frightened, terrified, grateful, loyal, trapped, desperate, escape, security, distraction

# 2 A social worker's report

## Introduction

Two of Jake's teachers are shocked by the injuries he has, and the school contacts the Social Services. As a consequence the Child Protection Team launch an investigation into Jake's family life.

The first stage of the Child Protection Team's investigation is to talk to Mrs. McLeish, Jake's English teacher, and Mr. Grossman, Jake's PE teacher. Imagine that you were the social worker who interviewed these two teachers.

*Your task is to write the report you would have written immediately after interviewing the two teachers. Your report will be written in a formal style, and will be written in the past tense. Do not include any direct speech in your report.*

## Planning

Copy the template below into your exercise book and use it to write your report. The report should be about 250 words long so leave enough space in your template.

Child Protection Team	
Child being investigated:	Social Worker:
Report:	
Recommendations:	
Signed:	Date:

**Notes:** The following page references will provide you with important information for the report:

- Mrs. McLeish talks to Jake pp 55–7
- Mr. Grossman talks to Jake pp 68–72
- Both teachers witness Steve talking to Jake outside the school pp 57–9.

You might like to use some of the following words in your report:

concerned, anxious, alarmed, disturbed, serious, critical, life-threatening, scared, timid, nervous, terrified, violent, aggressive, brutal, vicious, safe, secure, protected

# 3 A drama script

## Introduction

Many of the scenes in *Jake's Tower* are very dramatic and it easy to imagine them being dramatised on the stage. Imagine that Heinemann has asked you to write the drama script of *Jake's Tower*. However, to see whether your creative skills are good enough, the English Editor has asked you first to write one scene – the first meeting between Jake, Marie and Mrs. Judd. The conversation appears on p30–1 of the novel.

## Task

Write the drama script of the first conversation between Marie and Mrs. Judd on pages 30 and 31 of the Heinemann New Windmill edition of *Jake's Tower*. The opening two lines of the script have been completed for you. Continue the script until the line spoken by Marie: '*...and I thought at least you ... that you might ...*'

### Dramatisation of Jake's Tower by Elizabeth Laird

#### Scene 14: On Mrs. Judd's front doorstep

*Mrs. Judd is standing in the doorway of her house, a light shining behind her. She seems to fill the doorway. Her body language shows that she is angry.*

Mrs. Judd: (*angry*) Can't you read the sign?  
*She stabs her finger at a sticker on the doorpost.*  
 We do not buy or sell at the door.

Marie: (*nervous*) We haven't come to buy or sell anything Mrs. Judd.

## Things to notice

- The play script has been set out so that each speaker starts a new piece of speech on a new line.
- The way that the characters speak their lines has been placed in brackets immediately after their names; this information appears in italics. Notice that these pieces of information are written in the present tense.
- It is possible to give the actors instructions about the way they should act. These instructions appear after the words that they speak, and are written in italics. Notice that these instructions are written in the present tense.
- The words that the actors speak have been taken straight from the novel.