

TEACHERS' RESOURCE KIT

Longacre Press NZ Young Adult Fiction

from the author of the international bestseller *GENESIS*

bernard beckett

JOLT

'A damn fine thriller, and a real gem of a book.'

The challenge of the Coast to Coast was for the whole PE class to get itself from one side of the island to the other in under six days.

'Where to?'

'The bush,' I croaked. 'Hide.'

We cut back to the right, down off the track, crashing through the undergrowth and sliding down steep slopes. After a couple of minutes we stumbled to a stop, pressed in close ... we waited and listened, the others with their heads bursting with questions, mine spinning with answers I didn't want to believe.

Marko surfaces from a drug induced haze to find himself hidden from the world in a psychiatric ward. He is certain the 'Doctor' means to kill him, but he in turn has vengeful plans of his own.

Who are these people and what happened to the others? Who can Marko trust and how much time does he have?

Time enough to write it all down, his story of a coast to coast trip and the earthquake which ripped his world apart.

A 'top-notch thriller'.



SPECIFICATIONS:

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Extent: 176pp

Readership: 12 to 17 years

Funny, raw, fantastic... The most exciting Young Adult writer writing in this country.

Kate De Goldi on Radio New Zealand

Resource Kit contains:

- Language exercises
- Character analysis, and
- Creative responses & research topics

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BERNARD BECKETT has a degree in Economics, and has taught in the Wellington region for several years. He has published a book of non-fiction (*Falling for Science: Asking the Big Questions* (2007)), and eight novels, for which he and has won many awards.

His novel *Genesis* (2006), which won the Young Adult Category in the 2007 NZ Post Book Awards, made publishing history in 2008 when UK publisher Quercus Books offered the largest advance ever put forward for a young adult novel in New Zealand. The novel is to be released in the UK as two separate editions: adult and young adult, and is to be published – at this date – in over 20 countries.

Bernard currently lives in Wellington with his wife, Clare Knighton (his co-author on *Deep Fried*).

BACKLIST TITLES:

Lester, Red Cliff, No Alarms, Home Boys, Malcolm and Juliet, Deep Fried, Genesis, Falling for Science, Acid Song.

Before Reading:

1. What does the cover picture indicate that the book is about?
2. When and where might the story be set?
3. What do you think they could be running from?
4. What does the title suggest to you?

Language

1. Figurative language is used to convey ideas that might otherwise be difficult to express. Two examples of figurative language are metaphors and similes. Examples of these are, 'Along the corridors, lapping the ward.' (p. 12) and 'The words caught in my throat, like a car coughing to life on a cold morning.' (p. 106) Find more examples of each type of figurative language from the book.
2. What do you think is the genre of this book? List the aspects that are indicative of this genre.
3. The author uses personification to help describe inanimate objects. For example, '... the dark green on the Tararuas' spreading fingers touched the farmlands of the plains.' (p. 42) Write a poem or paragraph about the landscape in your local area using personification.
4. Describe in a paragraph how the tension builds and falls away during the novel. Find a passage in the novel that is high intensity, and another which is low intensity. Copy both out and compare the language used (choice of words, length of sentences, the pace at which details are revealed). How is language used to create intensity?
5. The author uses italics for some chapters. What do these italics tell the reader about the narrative?

6. The story is told in the past and present tenses. Why do you think the author chose to do this? Was it effective? Choose one of the passages in the past tense and rewrite it in the present tense.
 7. Find definitions for the following words which are taken from the novel and write one sentence for each:
 - indefatigable (p. 30)
 - exasperated (p. 31)
 - complacently (p. 57)
 - careered (p. 108)
 - methodically (p. 142)
 8. Marko wears Mr Smith's RSA blazer (p. 103). What does RSA stand for? What kind of figure of speech is this – alliteration, acronym or anagram? Can you think of five more examples from the media and other organisations?
 9. Marko's hunger and tiredness leads to his experiencing surreal hallucinations (p. 139). What is the literary definition of 'surrealism'? Choose a sequence from the novel and rewrite it as a surrealist episode.
 10. Note the structure of the novel. How many parts is the novel divided into? How are these parts differentiated by the author?
- has changed in the novel. What effects do the changes have on themselves and others around them? What is their new closeness based on? Do you see a future for their attraction? How does it differ from the relationship between Jonathan and Rebecca?
 7. Write a character summary of one of the following characters:
 - Jonathan
 - Rebecca
 - Lisa
 - Ms Jenkins
 - Andrew
 8. The author describes Mr Camden (p. 10). Draw a picture of him based on this description.
 9. Marko describes his group (pp. 19–22). Which character in the group do you identify with and why?
 10. The disaster brings out the personality traits of each member of Marko's group. Describe the strongest and weakest traits of each.
 11. Of which characters in the hospital is Marko most suspicious? Are his suspicions justified?

Characters:

1. How old was Marko when he first wagged school (p. 7)?
2. How old is Marko now?
3. List the qualities of Marko's personality and find examples of him displaying each of these qualities.
4. How has Marko changed and developed by the end of the book?
5. Think of three adjectives to describe Marko.
6. What does the novel say about how relationships change during difficult times? List examples of how Marko and Lisa's relationship

Creative responses & research topics:

1. The events of the novel take place over a short period of time. Write out a timeline and summary of events. How does this illustrate the structure of the novel and how the story itself unfolds?
2. Marko was sent to a child psychologist when he was younger (p. 7). Why did he have to see the psychologist? What does a psychologist's job entail?
3. Mr Camden's PE class is to participate in a Coast to Coast expedition (p. 10). On a map of New Zealand draw the course Marko's group was to take and note the stages of the trip compared to the planned itinerary (p. 16).

4. Make a list of what you would pack for a three day hike in the New Zealand bush. Divide the list into two categories of essential supplies and luxury items (pp. 30–31).
5. A cyclist from the Commonwealth Games comes to speak to Marko’s class (p. 35). Research when and where the next Commonwealth Games are to take place and the events that will be included.
6. Marko describes the psychiatric hospital (p. 12). Draw a floor plan of Ward 10.
7. Marko’s group decides to go against the safety guidelines (p. 41). Design a pamphlet outlining camp safety.
8. Marko’s group stays the second night in Cone Hut (p. 47). Find on a map of New Zealand which National Park is closest to where you live. How many DOC cabins are in the park and where are they located?
9. The first hut Marko’s group stays in is made out of slabs of totara tree (p. 47). Find two other native trees or plants that are mentioned in the book. Find out where they belong in the New Zealand bush infrastructure and draw a diagram of each plant.
10. After the earthquake, the news reports incidents of looting, gas explosions and a badly organised clean-up (pp. 49–50). Compare and contrast this unsuccessful disaster management with another major international natural disaster from the last decade. For example, Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, USA, the Sichuan earthquake in China, etc.
11. Marko and his group come across some rats while staying in the bush (p. 55). Research the damage these pests do to New Zealand bush and wildlife. What other pests are found in the New Zealand bush? How are they being dealt with?
12. Ms Jenkins points out the Southern Cross to Marko’s group (p. 65). What other star constellations do you know? Research and draw the major constellations seen in the Southern Hemisphere.
13. In the novel, Wellington is struck by a major earthquake (pp. 65–67). On a map of New Zealand draw the major fault lines.
14. Research any other major earthquakes that have hit New Zealand and the effect they had on the area in which they struck.
15. Imagine you are a journalist. Write a newspaper report about the Wellington earthquake in the novel.
16. Describe what you would include in an earthquake safety kit to be used in homes.
17. Marko mentions that he has watched a mountain safety video at school (p. 75). Find and watch a video on mountain safety. List the main safety points mentioned in the video.
18. Marko lists his hobbies (p. 83). Take a survey of hobbies of your class members.
19. Jonathan chooses to use the call of the morepork as a signal (p. 93). Find out the names of five other New Zealand native birds. Research and write a report on their habitats, food, calls, mating rituals, etc.
20. Marko’s group discusses whether they should wait in the hut for the Search and Rescue organisation (p. 94). Research New Zealand’s Search and Rescue organisation. Are they in your local area? Interview a member of the organisation.
21. Marko writes a list of all the things he’s never done (p. 121). Imagine if you were in his position. Write down all the things you would like to do.
22. Imagine you are the doctor. Write his psychological profile of Marko.

23. Marko had been a member of his local surf club where he learnt about water safety (p. 131). Design a poster or web page to help recruit new teenage members to a New Zealand surf club.
24. Lisa's mother wants her to see a grief counsellor to help deal with her brother's death (p. 168). What support agencies exist in New Zealand to help people suffering from grief? Does your school offer grief counselling services?
25. Imagine if Marko didn't accept Lisa's advice after they talked at the graveyard (pp. 166–173). Write a dramatic monologue from Marko's point of view explaining again to Lisa why the doctor should be left to die.
26. The final page of the novel features a clipping from a newspaper about how the doctor was found alive (p. 175). Rewrite this paper report as if the doctor was already dead when he was discovered.
27. Divide into two teams and debate the topic: 'Revenge is always amoral or immoral'.
28. Imagine if the psychiatric hospital laid charges against Marko for harming the doctor. Role-play a court case. Choose class members to be the defence and prosecution lawyers, the judge and/or jury and the witnesses to try the case. Witnesses could include students from Mr Camden's class, Marko's group, Ms Jenkins' family, the police, Marko, the doctor, etc.
29. Choose one of the descriptive passages in the novel which you find particularly effective and use it to set the scene or the mood for your own passage. Quote the passage as the epigraph for your work (i.e. clearly state the source: title, author, publisher, date, chapter, page number).
30. Write a diary entry about one of the main events in the book by one of the following characters:
- Rebecca
 - Jonathan
 - Marko's Mum
 - the doctor
 - Mr Camden
31. Rewrite one of the climactic scenes as a video script. (If your school has filming equipment, produce your scene.)
32. Design your own cover for the novel.
33. Marko writes a diary while in hospital. Imagine he expressed himself through visual art instead. Create a work which expresses Marko's internal world while he is in the hospital.
34. Do you think the novel could be made into a dramatic film or TV programme? Write a letter in support of the film for possible investors and design a poster advertising the movie/TV version of the novel. Think about which actors you would like to portray the book characters and why.
35. Devise a soundtrack for the film version of the novel. Choose at least five tracks to give the flavour of the characters, pace, and settings. Explain your choices and how they reflect the themes in the novel.
36. Write a review of the book, aiming it at the readership of your favourite magazine or newspaper.
37. Write your own version of the back cover blurb.
38. Find other books where a character has wrongly been incarcerated in a mental hospital or has survived a natural disaster. Write a comparative review – where you compare and contrast *Jolt* with at least one other novel which deals with one of these themes.