



# TEACHERS' RESOURCES

## RECOMMENDED FOR

Lower and upper primary  
(ages 8–11; years 3 to 6)

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## KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **Learning areas:** English, Mathematics, History, Geography
- **General capabilities:** Literacy, Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capability

## REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

- Enjoying a fast-paced mystery with great characters
- As an example of character development and world building
- To discuss new experiences in unfamiliar environments

## THEMES

- Family
- New experiences
- Truth and lies
- Codes and code-breaking
- Opposites
- History
- Geography

## PREPARED BY

Penguin Random House Australia

## BOOK 1 PUBLICATION DETAILS

ISBN: 9780143780656 (paperback);  
9780143780649 (ebook)  
9780143792376 (audio)

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## Kensy and Max 1: Breaking News

## Kensy and Max 2: Disappearing Act

Jacqueline Harvey

**Introducing Kensy and Max – an action-packed spy-adventure series for girls and boys from bestselling author Jacqueline Harvey!**

## BOOK 1 PLOT SUMMARY

What would you do if you woke up in a strange place? If your whole life changed in the blink of an eye and you had no idea what was going on?

Twins Kensy and Max Grey's lives are turned upside down when they are whisked off to London, and discover their parents are missing. As the situation unfolds, so many things don't add up: their strange new school, the bizarre grannies on their street, the coded messages they keep finding and the feeling that, all around them, adults are keeping secrets . . .

Things can never go back to the way they were, but the twins are determined to uncover the truth!

## BOOK 2 PLOT SUMMARY

What if you knew your missing parents were alive, but you couldn't tell anyone? How would you find them and who would you trust?

Kensy and Max are now agents-in-training at Pharos, a covert international spy network. Christmas break sees the twins back at Alexandria for training and a celebration like no other, but where are their parents and why can't they come home?

Thankfully, a school trip to Rome provides a welcome distraction. Amid the history and culture of Italy's capital, they discover a runaway boy and whisperings of Mafia involvement. It looks like Kensy and Max's harmless excursion may just turn into their very first mission.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jacqueline Harvey is one of Australia's most popular authors for children, having sold over a million copies of her Alice-Miranda and Clementine Rose series' in Australia alone. The first book in her brand-new spy series, *Kensy and Max: Breaking News*, is thrilling young readers with drama, action and loads of fun and was recently voted at number 25 on the Dymocks Top 51 Children's Books for 2018 and number 5 on the Better Reading Kids' Top 50 Children's Books for 2018. The second book *Kensy and Max: Disappearing Act* was released in September 2018.

Jacqueline has received numerous short-listings and awards while her picture book, *The Sound of the Sea* was a CBCA Honour Book. A highly experienced teacher and presenter, she has delivered thousands of talks and workshops at schools and festivals around the world. Jacqueline is currently working on new adventures for Alice-Miranda, Clementine Rose and Kensy and Max.

[www.jacquelineharvey.com.au](http://www.jacquelineharvey.com.au)

## AUTHOR'S INSPIRATION

Jacqueline says:

I always knew I wanted to write about a brother and sister next – twins, in fact. Kensy would be feisty and impulsive, often a little impetuous and prone to getting herself into trouble. Max, on the other hand, would be more measured and perceptive, though by no means dull. They'd both be smart, athletic and more than a tad competitive, especially between themselves. And they would be faced with a unique set of circumstances that would prove both challenging and defining. Yet, while the characters were clear in my head, I was still in search of the right setting in which to bring them to life. I eventually found it, in the shape of an unassuming pub called The Morpeth Arms in Millbank, London.

Those of you who've met me will know I don't mind a chat, and so, over time, I've had numerous conversations with Gary, the fellow who runs the pub.

He was the one who told me that the pub's cellars were once temporary prison cells from a time when the pub was a favoured watering hole of local soldiers from the Millbank Prison. Apparently, tunnels beneath the roadways linked prison and pub, and convicts were often held in the cells downstairs before being transported to Australia. This story fascinated me, as I come from convict stock.

The pub's upstairs restaurant also happened to sit across the river from MI6. Gary told me that in the 16 years he'd worked in the pub, he'd seen the lights and computers go on and off, people standing outside, but he had never seen a soul in the buildings. Whether that's true or not, it got me wondering: why would you tell the world the exact location of your central spy agency? What if MI6 was just a PR company and the real spies were somewhere you'd never find them? Like under a school just around the corner . . .

From these beginnings, the series was born. *Kensy and Max: Breaking News* is packed with mystery, intrigue, strange happenings, and a twin brother and sister who find themselves in a completely bizarre situation. I have had so much fun creating the characters and the world they live in. As I've written the story, I've fallen more and more in love with them both – their vulnerabilities and gentler sides as well as their toughness and determination. I can't wait to share them with the world, and hope you enjoy meeting them.

### Questions

1. Can you think of any other books or movies that have featured twins? What do you know about the different types of twins?
2. Do you know the name of Australia's spy organisation? Apart from MI6, do you know the names of any other international spy organisations?

### Activities

1. Write a list of any other books or movies you know of that have a spy theme. What are some common elements of a spy story? For example, spy stories often contain mysteries.
2. Create short character profiles for a set of twins who are completely different to each other.

## PRE-READING QUESTIONS

1. Look at the cover of the book and discuss what you think might happen in the story.
2. Have you read any other books by Jacqueline Harvey? If so, how do you think Kensy and Max might be different?



## WRITING STYLE

Kensy and Max is written in third person with a mix of vivid description and lively dialogue.

Descriptive techniques such as similes and metaphors are used frequently throughout the story to create a strong sense of place and character.

*The boy peered out at the jewel box of stars in the clearing night sky.* (p. 1 *Breaking News*)

Various characters' dialogue and style of speech is often quite unique, which serves to indicate their background and to further emphasise their personalities.

*You'd better not be fillin' your pockets, like all the other little snots round 'ere.* (Wanda Grigsby p.141 *Breaking News*)

*Confucious says choose a job you love and you will never have to work a day in your life.* (Song p. 33 *Breaking News*)

As a mystery/spy story, Jacqueline employs various devices to create tension and a 'page-turning' feeling. The novel begins with a strong hook with the main characters faced with an immediate problem – their parents are missing and they are in an unfamiliar location. As the story continues, the plot progresses quickly and the well-structured chapters containing small tidbits of information encourage active reader involvement.

### Questions

1. Do you know what the difference between a simile and a metaphor is?
2. Does this story make you want to keep reading? What do you think it is about the writing or action that makes you feel this way?
3. Did you work anything out in terms of the various mysteries or secrets in the story before Kensy & Max did?

### Activities

1. Pick two characters from the book – who aren't Kensy or Max – and, using the descriptions of them, draw what they might look like.

## DISCUSSION TOPICS AND ACTIVITIES

### Family

Family is a central theme of the story and the topic is introduced at the very start of the novel when Kensy and Max discover their parents are missing. Soon after, they discover that their family isn't what or even who

they thought they were. Kensy and Max need to quickly adjust to life without their parents and find a way to build relationships with the new faces around them.

### Questions

1. Are there people in your life that are not related to you, but are still considered as part of the family?
2. Why do you think family is so important?

### Activities

1. Create a family tree for Kensy and Max.
2. Create your own family tree.

### New experiences

Throughout the books, Kensy and Max are faced with many new experiences. They are in a new country, without their parents, without Fitz and then have to go live in a new house and attend a new school. These new experiences help to keep the story interesting, they provide cause for action and they move the plot forward.

### Questions

1. What are some new experiences that most humans go through?
2. What are some of the emotions that might accompany a new experience? For example, how did Kensy and Max feel when they first woke up at Alexandria?
3. Have you gone through a big change in your life? What did you do to help overcome any obstacles?

### Truth and lies

As the plot unfolds, Kensy and Max get the sense that they are not being told the whole story about their parents' disappearance, along with many other things. Strange occurrences and behaviour suggest they are being lied to by the adults around them. Kensy and Max become determined to uncover the truth and find out what is really going on.

### Questions

1. Have you ever told a lie? If so, how did it make you feel?
2. Do you think it is okay to lie if you are trying to protect someone's feelings?
3. Have you ever found the truth about something hard to handle?

### Activities

1. Divide a sheet of paper into two columns with the headings Truth and Lies. In the Lies column write down the mistruths that Kensy and Max are told throughout the course of the books. In the Truth



column write down the facts that Kensy and Max discover.

### Codes and code-breaking

Throughout the books, various types of codes are introduced – there is Morse code, which Kensy and Max’s parents use to communicate through their watches and the Caesar cipher in *Breaking News*, the pigpen cipher in *Disappearing Act*. One of Max’s key skills is his code-breaking ability. It is also suggested that codes are placed in the *Beacon* newspaper as a means of secret communication between Pharos agents.

#### Questions

1. Do you know of any other codes?

#### Activities

1. Using the key for the codes featured in each book, decode the chapter headings!
2. Pick either the Caesar cipher or the pigpen cipher and write a short message for one of your classmates to decode.
3. Create your own code by making up symbols or shapes for each letter of the alphabet.

### Opposites

Kensy and Max are twins who, in many ways, are complete opposites. Kensy is messy, impulsive and outgoing while Max is clean, considered and quiet. However, they do also share similar characteristics – they are both very smart, sporty and often sense something at the same time as each other.

#### Questions

1. Do you know any twins (or triplets)? Are they very alike or quite different?
2. Are you similar or different to your siblings or family members?

#### Activities

1. Divide a sheet of paper into two columns with the headings Similarities and Differences. Fill in the two columns with what you know about Kensy and Max.
2. Imagine that Kensy and Max were actually triplets! Create a character that could be their brother or sister. Write a short character description and explain how they are similar or different to Kensy and Max.

### History

Throughout the books, various historical events and sites are mentioned. Kensy and Max’s history teacher,

Monty Reffell, also plays a significant part in the stories and brings history and historical characters to the fore. Jacqueline Harvey’s inspiration for the series also come from a historical discovery.

#### Questions

1. Had you previously heard of any of the historical sites mentioned in the books? For example: the sites of Rome.

#### Activities

1. Choose between Millbank Prison, Tate Gallery, Mi6 and do some research on the history of the buildings and their current uses. Write at least one to two paragraphs in your report.
2. In *Disappearing Act* the children go to Rome. Research one of the ancient Roman sites featured in the story.

### Geography

Geography plays a significant part in the stories as the major events of each book all take place within very contained areas. The books contain maps at the beginning to help readers familiarise themselves with the key locations. Jacqueline Harvey also uses tools like Google Streetview to help plan out where the action in her stories will take place.

#### Questions

1. What tools do you or your family use to find your way to, or around, new locations?
2. Before the internet, how would people have found their way to new locations?
3. Different types of maps have different names – can you name any?

#### Activities

1. Do some research about the different types of maps that people use or create. Make a list of all that you find and include short descriptions of each.





## FURTHER READING FROM PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA

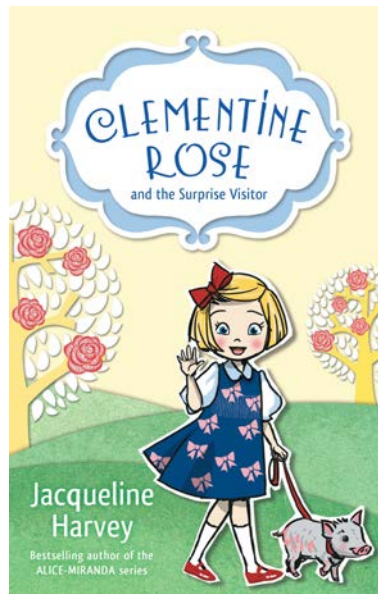


*Alice-Miranda at School*  
by Jacqueline Harvey

**Why this story?** Read it as another example of Jacqueline Harvey's writing.

Can one tiny girl change a very big school? Alice-Miranda Highton-Smith-Kennington-Jones is waving goodbye to her weeping parents and starting her first day at boarding school. But something is wrong at Winchesterfield-Downsfordvale Academy for Proper Young Ladies. The headmistress, Miss Grimm, hasn't been seen for ten years. The prize-winning flowers are gone. And a mysterious stranger is camping in the greenhouse. Alice-Miranda must complete a series of impossible tests. Can she really beat the meanest, most spoilt girl at school in a solo sailing mission? Could she camp in the forest all on her own for five whole days and nights? Well, of course. This is Alice-Miranda, after all.

*Teachers' resources available.*



*Clementine Rose and the Surprise Visitor*  
by Jacqueline Harvey

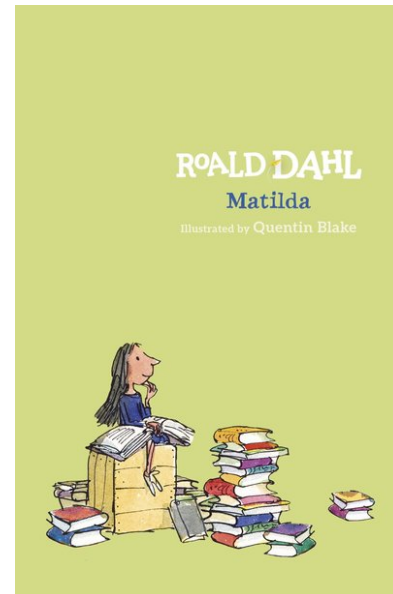
**Why this story?** Read it as another example of Jacqueline Harvey's writing.

Clementine Rose was delivered not in the usual way, at a hospital, but in the back of a mini-van, in a basket of dinner rolls.

So begins the story of a lovely little girl who lives in Penberthy Floss in a large ramshackle house with her mother, Lady Clarissa, Digby Pertwhistle the butler and a very sweet teacup pig called Lavender.

When her scary Aunt Violet arrives unexpectedly, the household is thrown into disarray. What is it that Aunt Violet really wants and what is she carrying in her mysterious black bag?

*Teachers' resources available.*



*Matilda*  
by Roald Dahl

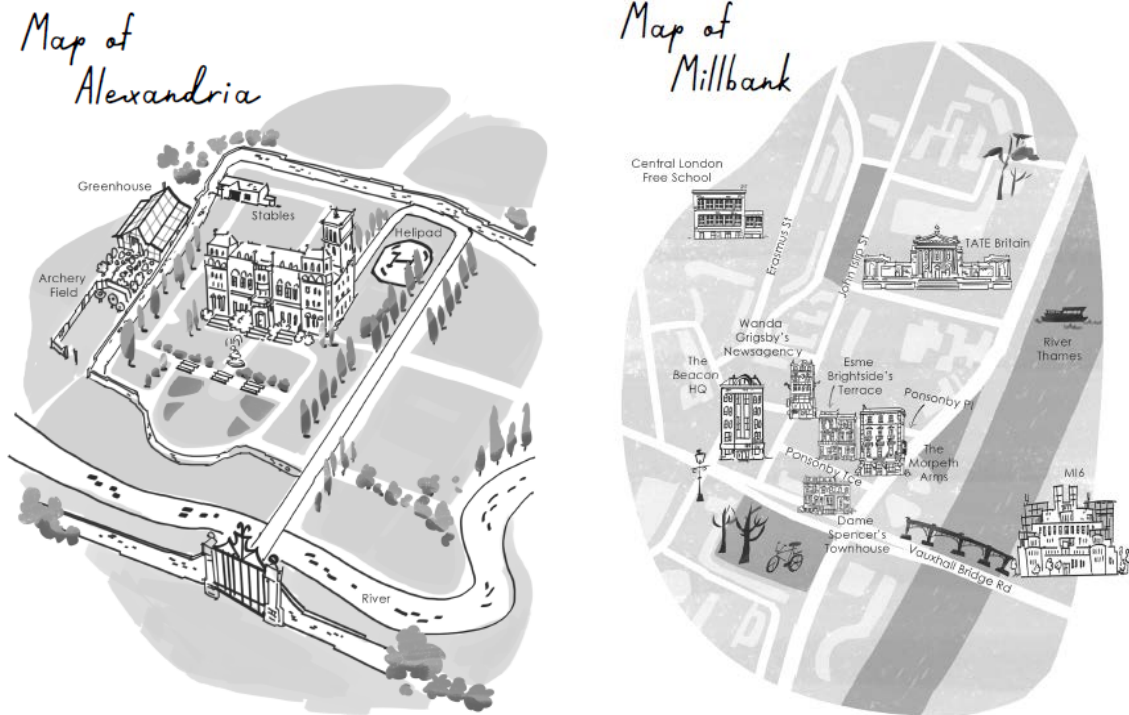
**Why this story?** Read it as another example of a strong main character.

Matilda Wormwood's father thinks she's a little scab. Matilda's mother spends all afternoon playing bingo. And Matilda's headmistress Miss Trunchbull? Well, she's the worst of all. She is a big bully, who thinks all her pupils are rotten and locks them in the dreaded Chokey. As for Matilda, she's an extraordinary little girl with a magical mind - and now she's had enough.

So all these grown-ups had better watch out, because Matilda is going to teach them a lesson they'll never forget.

## MAP MAKING (CARTOGRAPHY)

At the beginning of *Kensy and Max: Breaking News* are two maps – one of Alexandria, Cordelia Spencer's estate, and one of the Millbank area, where most of the action in London takes place. These maps are drawn in a topographic style with 3D elements. Taking inspiration from the style of these maps, draw a map of either your school or home area. Make sure to draw important buildings and give them labels.

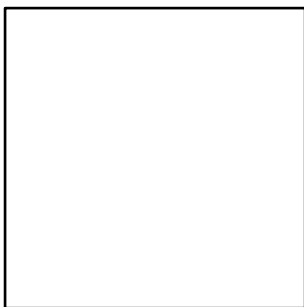


Map of: \_\_\_\_\_

## SPY CHARACTER PROFILES

On the back cover of *Kensy and Max: Breaking News* are short character profiles for both Kensy and Max. Using these as inspiration, create a spy character profile for yourself. After doing that, create a profile for a fictional spy!

### YOUR SPY PROFILE



Draw or stick a picture here

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Full name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Known to be:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

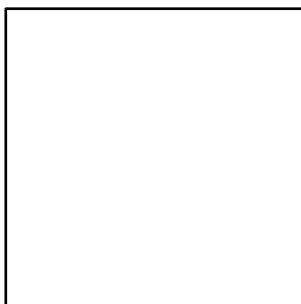
**Skills:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### FICTIONAL SPY PROFILE



Draw or stick a picture here

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Full name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Known to be:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Skills:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## WORKSHEET: CREATE YOUR OWN SPY AGENCY

Every good spy organisation needs a name – what will you call yours? After deciding on the name, draw a logo or crest for your spy agency in the box below. Here are some examples of famous logos or crests.



**SECRET  
INTELLIGENCE  
SERVICE** MI6



UNITED NATIONS



My spy agency is called: \_\_\_\_\_



## CRACK THE CODE

Each of the Kensy and Max books have coded chapter headings. Use the Caesar cipher to decode the sentence below.

Named after Roman Emperor Julius Caesar, the Caesar cipher is a basic method for encrypting and decoding text. It involves moving the letters of the alphabet up or down by a fixed number of positions. The word 'cipher' refers to a secret or disguised way of writing – a code of sorts. For example, Julius Caesar shifted each letter of the text down by three positions and used this code in private correspondence. In this case, the letter A would become X, B becomes Y, C becomes Z and so on.

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

TBIZLJB QL MEXOLP –

WEL

QEB TLOIA'P JLPO

PBZOBQ XKA PFDKFCFZXKQ

PMV LODXKFPXQFLK



## ORDER FORM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	YEAR	RRP	QTY	TOTAL
<b>Kensy and Max 1: Breaking News</b>	<b>Jacqueline Harvey</b>	<b>9780143780656</b>	<b>3-6</b>	<b>\$16.99</b>		
<i>Kensy and Max 2: Disappearing Act</i>	Jacqueline Harvey	9780143780632	3-6	\$16.99		
<i>Alice-Miranda at School</i>	Jacqueline Harvey	9781741664515	3-6	\$16.99		
<i>Alice-Miranda on Holiday</i>	Jacqueline Harvey	9781864719840	3-6	\$16.99		
<i>Alice-Miranda Takes The Lead</i>	Jacqueline Harvey	9781864718492	3-6	\$16.99		
<i>Alice-Miranda at Sea</i>	Jacqueline Harvey	9781864718485	3-6	\$16.99		
<i>Alice-Miranda in New York</i>	Jacqueline Harvey	9781742751146	3-6	\$16.99		
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<i>Alice-Miranda to the Rescue</i>	Jacqueline Harvey	9780857985224	3-6	\$16.99		
<i>Alice-Miranda in China</i>	Jacqueline Harvey	9780857985200	3-6	\$16.99		
<i>Alice-Miranda Holds the Key</i>	Jacqueline Harvey	9780143780700	3-6	\$16.99		
<i>Alice-Miranda in Hollywood</i>	Jacqueline Harvey	9780143780618	3-6	\$16.99		
<i>Alice-Miranda in Scotland</i>	Jacqueline Harvey	9780143786016	3-6	\$16.99		
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