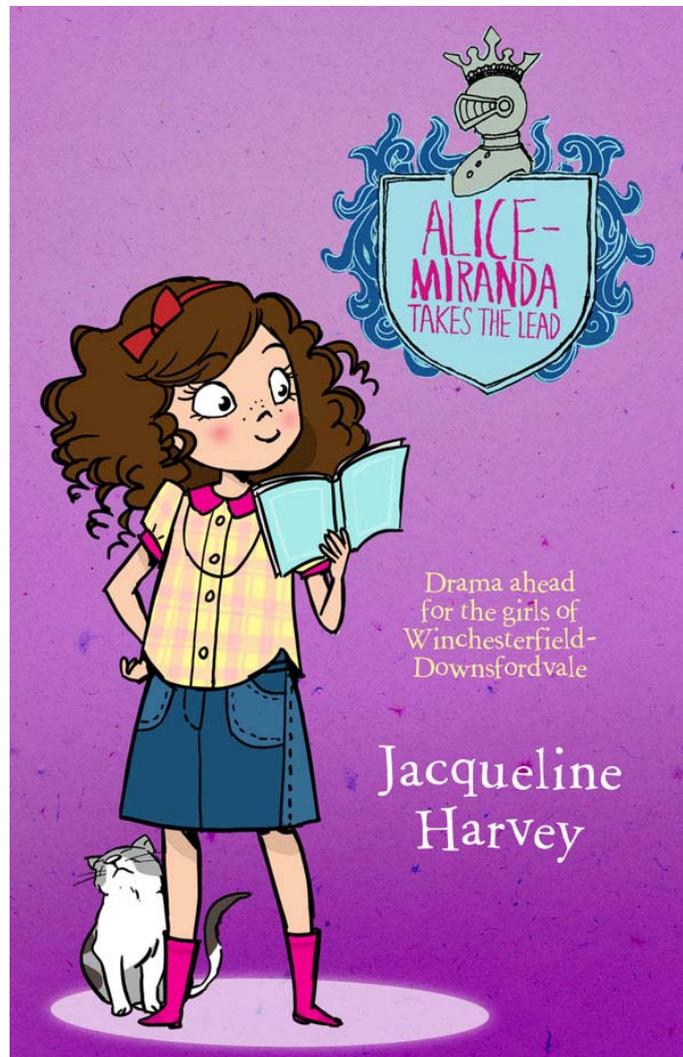


Alice-Miranda Takes the Lead

Jacqueline Harvey



TEACHING SUPPORT KIT

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Teaching Support Kit

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1. BLURB

Alice-Miranda is thrilled to be back at school, where the girls are preparing a play with the neighbouring boys' school. But it's not all glitter and stage lights: there are rumours of a witch in the woods, and Jacinta and Millie are clashing with a rude new student, Sloane, and her pushy mother, September. September Sykes wants to win her family the fortune she's sure it deserves, but her scheme could end in disaster. When Alice-Miranda learns of the plot, she knows just how to set things right.

2. ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jacqueline Harvey has combined a successful career in education with her love of a good story. She has been a teacher and Deputy Headmistress her whole working life but has recently taken on the position of Director of Development at Abbotsleigh, the girls' boarding school where she had been Deputy Head of Junior School for a number of years. Her new role was described to her by one of her students as being 'in charge of all the parties' – but she's quite certain there's a bit more to it than that! Jacqueline is pleased to say that she has never yet encountered a headmistress like Miss Grimm, but she has come across quite a few girls who remind her a little of Alice-Miranda. She particularly loves to teach writing and has conducted many workshops for aspiring primary-aged writers.

Alice-Miranda Takes the Lead is Jacqueline's sixth published book and the third in the Alice-Miranda series. The first book, *Alice-Miranda at School*, will be published in the United States in 2011, fulfilling a lifelong dream for the author.

A passionate advocate for Indigenous education, Jacqueline learned as an adult that her maternal great-grandmother (who the family had always thought to be from New Zealand) was in fact a Wiradjuri woman who was born on the banks of the Bogan River in Peak Hill. She works closely with Yalari – an organisation providing scholarship opportunities to Indigenous students.

Jacqueline's first picture book, *The Sound of the Sea*, was awarded Honour Book in the 2006 CBC Awards. She lives on the Upper North Shore of Sydney with her husband Ian. Jacqueline is currently working on Alice-Miranda's next adventure.

3. AUTHOR'S INSPIRATION

In the author's own words . . .

Alice-Miranda has really grown into herself as a character. Now in her third adventure, she continues to change the world around her, while remaining the same perpetually positive little girl that she's always been. Her 'can do' approach to life makes me want to write more of her stories and I know many girls who have told me that they would love to be her or at the very least be friends with her. Me included!

Alice-Miranda is kind and wise beyond her seven and a half years. She likes to think the best of people and even when they don't behave exactly as expected, Alice-Miranda takes the time to try and understand what the circumstances that contributed to the behaviour really are.

While it's undeniable that Alice-Miranda is not like most children in terms of her outrageously wealthy background and the fact that she's blissfully unaware of her quite remarkable situation in life, she treats everyone the same, no matter who they are or what they do.

Writing Alice-Miranda gives me immense pleasure. I feel as though this delightful, precocious child sits just over my left shoulder telling me her stories, which I obediently type into the computer. Having been a teacher for such a big part of my life, she is so many children I have adored. Children who have made me laugh and cry and who have continually surprised and inspired me with their determination, their humility, generosity and humour.

Alice-Miranda Highton-Smith-Kennington-Jones is a powerhouse of positive thinking, a problem solver and friend to all, and quite simply unstoppable. I am really thrilled that there will be many more adventures in the future.

4. CHARACTERS

Alice-Miranda Highton-Smith-Kennington-Jones

Despite being only seven and a half years old Alice-Miranda has a life experience that would rival many adults. She is the height of positive thinking. Although she comes from enormous wealth she doesn't use it to show off or big-note herself. She is genuinely concerned for others and is an avid problem solver – although some problems take a lot longer to sort out than others (and then there are those that no amount of energy can repair). She's always up for an adventure and isn't afraid of anything or anyone.

Millicent Jane McLoughlin-McTavish-McNoughton-McGill

Millie is Alice-Miranda's roommate and best friend despite being almost three years older. Millie is brave and funny but doesn't always think before she acts.

Jacinta Headlington-Bear

Jacinta was previously known as the school's second best tantrum thrower. She is a talented gymnast but her parents appear far too busy to be bothered much with her.

Sloane Sykes

A new student to the school with very pushy parents, particularly her mother September, Sloane finds it difficult to settle in.

Sep Sykes

Sloane's older brother. He feels like the odd one out in his family and is delighted when he gets to attend Fayle School for Boys.

Lucas Nixon

Lucas has recently learned the identity of his father, the world famous movie star, Lawrence Ridley. His father recently became engaged to Alice-Miranda's aunt Charlotte. Lucas is enjoying getting to know Lawrence and has just started at Fayle School for Boys.

Miss Ophelia Grimm

Miss Grimm is the headmistress at Winchesterfield-Downsfordvale Academy for Proper Young Ladies. Until she met Alice-Miranda she hadn't been seen by anyone other than her Personal Assistant Mrs Derby (nee Higgins) for over ten years. She has recently married her long-lost love Aldous Grump and is now very much in charge of her school, and enjoying spending time with the girls and staff.

Cook (Mrs Doreen Smith)

Mrs Smith is the long-time cook at Winchesterfield-Downsfordvale Academy for Proper Young Ladies. She has changed enormously since Alice-Miranda first met her and is now quite the gourmet, delighting girls and staff alike with her tempting recipes.

Mr Charles Weatherly

Mr Charles is the head gardener at Winchesterfield-Downsfordvale, as his father was before him.

Wally Whitstable

Wally is a young village lad who has taken up a position assisting Mr Charles in the stables during the term.

Mrs Livinia Derby (nee Higgins)

Miss Higgins is Miss Grimm's exceptional Personal Assistant.

Miss Louella Reedy

Miss Reedy is the school's English teacher, and has a formidable reputation for being very strict and bossy. Alice-Miranda discovers a much softer side to her.

Professor Wallace Winterbottom

Professor Wallace Winterbottom is the long-standing Headmaster at Fayle School for Boys.

Professor Herman Pluss

Professor Pluss has been the Mathematics teacher at Fayle School for Boys for many years and prides himself on his students' outstanding results.

Mr Harold Lipp

Mr Lipp is the English and Drama teacher at Fayle School for Boys. He and Miss Reedy organise for the students at both schools to team up and put on a play. During rehearsals Mr Lipp develops a bit of a crush on Miss Reedy.

September Sykes

In her younger days, September was a famous model. Now mother to Septimus and Sloane, she couldn't be happier to have her children away at boarding school. September is obsessed with her looks and aspires to being very wealthy.

Smedley Sykes

Smedley Sykes is September's husband and father of Sloane and Septimus. He sells vacuum cleaners on the home shopping channel. A handsome man, his wife is very disappointed in his career and thinks that that he hasn't amounted to much. She encourages him in his new business venture, offshore property developing. He is blissfully unaware of his wife's nastier side.

Cecelia Highton-Smith

Cecelia is Alice-Miranda's doting mother. She loves her daughter dearly but accepts that she wants to be at boarding school.

Hugh Kennington-Jones

Hugh is Alice-Miranda's father. He adores his daughter but is realistic about her ability to look after herself.

5. THEMES AND ACTIVITIES

Theme 1: Boarding School Life

Over the years boarding schools have featured in many stories for children – from *Tom Brown's School Days* to *A Little Princess*, *Madeline* and *Harry Potter*. Alice-Miranda attends a boarding school for primary school aged children – Winchesterfield-Downsfordvale Academy for Proper Young Ladies. In this book we are introduced to Fayle School for Boys. Fayle was established according to a charter governing the way the school operates.

Research/Reflect

- Use the Internet to find out what a 'charter' is. List some organisations that have a charter.

Evaluate

- List at least five differences between Fayle and Winchesterfield-Downsfordvale.

Create

- Write a charter for your own school.
- Imagine you are a student at Fayle School for Boys. Write a letter to your parents telling them that the school is closing and why. **(Use BLM 1)**

Debate topic

'It's better to go to school with girls and boys than only girls or boys'

Theme 2: Drama, Drama

There is drama at school and drama on stage. Alice-Miranda and her friends find drama with Sloane and her mother and also perform Miss Reedy's version of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*.

Research/Reflect

- *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* is a fairytale. List other fairytales you know. What are some of the features of fairytales?
- What is a 'fractured fairytale?'

Evaluate

- Find a copy of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* – read through and write a Book Review about the story.

Create

- Write your own version of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (as a fractured fairytale) and perform with some classmates. **(Use BLM 2)**

Debate topic

'Villains can change for the better'

Theme 3: Horsing Around

Alice-Miranda loves her naughty pony Bonaparte. She is a skilled rider and enjoys spending time out riding with her family and friends. When Alice-Miranda invites Sloane to go riding, Millie suspects that Sloane has limited experience. The girls use some specific horse riding terminology and Sloane seems confused.

Research/Reflect

- Research a range of horse related terminology **(Use BLM 3)**
- What are the Spanish Dancing Horses?
- What is the difference between a pony and a horse?
- How are horses measured?
- What is the difference between walking, trotting, cantering and galloping?

Create

- Design your own perfect stable block.
 - Draw a plan, draw what it looks like and if you have time, create a model.

Debate topic

'Horses make great pets'

Theme 4: Food, Glorious Food!

Food plays a big role in the Alice-Miranda books. Mrs Smith, the cook at Winchesterfield-Downsfordvale Academy for Proper Young Ladies, is always trying new recipes. She has decided to introduce dishes from around the world during the term.

Research/Reflect

- What are the Indian dishes Mrs Smith cooks?
- Find a recipe for Gulab Jamun (the dish Sloane tips over Millie's head).

Create

- Create a menu for the school for a week using themes from different countries **(Use BLM 4)**.

Debate topic

'Cooking should be taught at school'

Theme 5: Don't Judge a Book by its Cover

Alice-Miranda meets the 'witch in the woods'. Hephzibah has a terrible secret that has affected her life for many years and sparked many rumours.

Research/Reflect

- What is a proverb?
- What is the meant by the proverb 'Don't judge a book by its cover?'
- Are there any other sayings/proverbs that mean the same thing or similar?

Create

- Make a list of your favourite proverbs and their meanings **(Use BLM 5)**.
- Use magazine cuttings and drawings to design a poster representing your favourite proverb.

Debate topic

'You should never judge a book by its cover'

Theme 6: Courage

Alice-Miranda demonstrates great courage, particularly when she gets lost and first meets Miss Hephzibah. She isn't afraid of anything or anyone – at least not that she lets on to others.

Research/Reflect

- What is the definition of courage?
- Give examples of where Alice-Miranda has shown courage.
- Put yourself in Alice-Miranda's shoes and write about meeting Hephzibah for the first time.

Create

- Write a poem about Hephzibah **(Use BLM 6)**.

Debate topic

'Fortune favours the brave'

6. BLACKLINE MASTERS

BLM 1: Letter

BLM 2: Fractured Fairytale

BLM 3: Horsing Around

BLM 4: Menu Planner

BLM 5: Proverbs

BLM 6: Poem

BLM 1

FAYLE SCHOOL FOR BOYS

Dear Mum and Dad,

I have some interesting news ...

BLM 2

My Fractured Fairytale

Based on:

BLM 3

Horsing Around!

Look up and write in the meanings of these horse-related words.

bit	
bridle	
saddle	
reins	
girth strap	
near side of the horse	
withers	
fetlock	
hands	
stablehand	
lucerne	
molasses	
mare	
filly	
stallion	
thoroughbred	

BLM 4

Menu Planner

Help Mrs Smith to plan a menu from around the world for the week. Make sure there's a different theme each night (e.g. Monday: China)

Monday	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Theme:			
Tuesday	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Theme:			
Wednesday	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Theme:			
Thursday	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Theme:			
Friday	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Theme:			
Saturday	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Theme:			
Sunday	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Theme:			

BLM 5

Proverbs

Create a list of your favourite proverbs and their meanings

Proverb	Meaning



Hephzibah

Ideas and images

Poem
