

TEACHERS' NOTES

THE EJ12 GIRL HERO SERIES BY SUSANNAH MCFARLANE

INTRODUCTION

Emma Jacks is your average ten-year-old girl. Her favourite colour is aqua blue, she is on the school gym team and her favourite subjects are Maths and Art. Emma loves animals and chocolate and spending time with her friends. What is not so average about Emma is the fact that she is also a secret agent. She is EJ12, a field agent and code-cracker with **SHINE**, a secret agency that protects the world from evil-doers.

HEROES

A hero is defined as a main character in a fictional plot, a person of distinguished courage or performance, a remarkably brave person and somebody who is admired. EJ12 fits this description of a heroine. Male heroes, both boys and men, have dominated children's books in the past, with the occasional female as the sidekick or helper. The EJ12 series sets out to change this stereotype. These books have a female hero - a ten-year-old girl for other girls to relate to and look up to. Her name is Emma Jacks.

SECRET IDENTITY

Emma Jacks has a secret life as a spy. She is EJ12, special agent and code-cracker. She is in the top 5 in the **SHINE** Spy of the Year competition. In her 'normal' life she is Emma Jacks, sister of an annoying brother, animal lover and a very ten-year-old girl.

BEING 10 YEARS OLD

EJ12 is a confident spy who faces difficult, often scary challenges. In real life however Emma tends to be a worrier and can lack confidence. Jumping high on the gymnastics beam, playing soccer, singing on stage, cooking cupcakes, the dark, and deep water all make Emma shiver in her shoes. Her secret spy missions help her to overcome many of these fears as she challenges herself to achieve above and beyond the call of duty in her endeavour to save the world from evil.

SHINE

SHINE is a secret organisation that protects the world from evil-doers. It is headed up by A1. The main enemy of **SHINE** is **SHADOW**.

Members of **SHADOW** work for evil while **SHINE** agents work for good. Emma's secret agent name EJ12 uses letters and numbers - her initials EJ and the number 12 for being in the under 12 division of the **SHINE** agency.



Other characters in the stories have names with secret meanings to puzzle out including Madame Ombre - Ombre being French for shadow, FI5H – the 5 looking like the letter S, and Ms Tenga, her name being an anagram of 'agent' and Nema is an anagram of mean. **SHINE** allows its agents a CHARM bracelet and a BESTie to contact when the agent needs some help or encouragement. CHARM stands for Clever Hidden Accessories with Release Mechanism and BEST is an acronym for Brains, Expertise, Support, and Tips

SECRET CODES

Emma Jacks is chosen by **SHINE** due to her excellent Maths achievements. She is clever at cracking codes and deciphering patterns. The EJ12 series contain many challenging codes for EJ and the reader to crack. There is also opportunity for readers to write and problem solve their own codes and patterns and those of their classmates.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

The activities for EJ12 are designed to bring maximum enjoyment and learning from the series. Each activity set contains a synopsis of the story and 5 or 6 ideas for classroom activities. These are aimed to promote discussion and learning. The activities are linked to the curriculum under the curriculum links ...

ENGLISH: Reading, Writing, Talking, Listening, Grammar, Vocabulary

MATHEMATICS: Problem Solving, Patterns, Number, Mapping, Measurement, Graphs

SCIENCE: Communication, Using Technology, Design and Make, The Earth and its Surroundings

HEALTH/PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT: Decision Making, Interpersonal Relationships

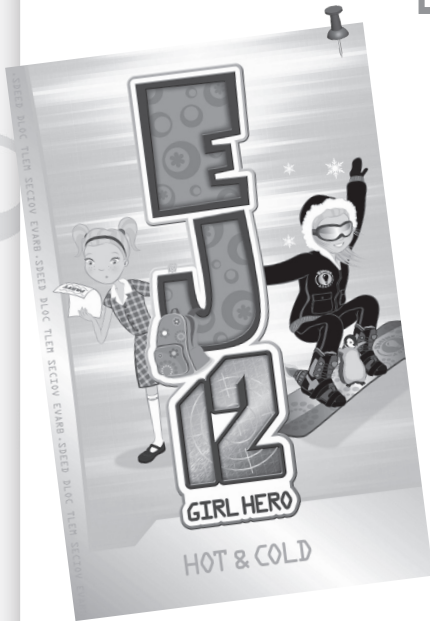
HSIS/SOSE: Significant Places

CREATIVE AND PERFORMING ARTS: Drama, Music, Performance



MFU UIF GVO CFHJO
(LET THE FUN BEGIN)

EJ12 GIRL HERO 1 HOT AND COLD



SYNOPSIS

EJ12s mission in **Hot and Cold** is to crack tricky codes and save the world from Dr C. Hill, who is trying to melt the polar ice cap. Her mission at school is to deal with a bully and stand up for her friends.

✓ CODE BREAKERS

The author's name and the book dedication are written in code. Invite the students to look at these codes and ask the students to guess what the codes mean. Encourage the students to write their own name and book dedication using the same code pattern.

✓ CLASS DEBATE

A theme in the story is water and how precious water is. Invite the class to sit in a large circle. Present them with the topic, 'Water is more precious than gold.' Go around the circle and ask the students to say 'Yes' if they agree with the topic or 'No' if they disagree. Go around the circle again asking them to give a reason for their answer. Keep going around the circle with students adding new ideas.

✓ PALINDROMES

Palindromes are words that are spelt the same backwards and forwards. Encourage the students to find and list palindromes in the story and to write down any other palindromes they know.

✓ WHAT IS A FRIEND?

Divide the class into small groups. Ask each group to discuss and list the characteristics of a good friend. Encourage the groups to talk about bullying and why they think people become bullies. Guide a class discussion on how to have a bully-free school.

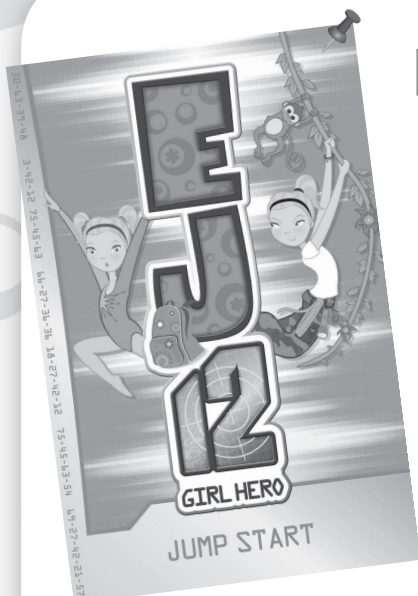
✓ MAPPING TIME

Provide the students with a stencil of a world map. Ask them to mark and label Australia, Antarctica and the South Pole on the map. Use Google Earth to show the students a real view of Antarctica and the South Pole. Ask the students to calculate the distance in kilometres from different cities in Australia to the South Pole.

✓ EMPEROR PENGUINS

Invite the students to use books and the Internet to find some facts about Emperor penguins. Encourage them to include some of the following ... a physical description, habitat, diet, breeding, predators, interesting facts, pictures and photos.





EJ12 GIRL HERO 2 JUMP START

SYNOPSIS

In **Jump Start** EJ's mission is to find out what **SHADOW** is doing in the middle of the rainforest and to stop their evil plans. Her job is to help the endangered animals and save the beautiful, natural rainforest habitats. Her mission at school is to overcome her fear of high jumps on the beam in her gymnastics competition.

✓ TIMES TABLE FUN

EJ has to crack a code that uses the 3 times table (page 109). Encourage the students to use their favourite times table above the number 3 to write a secret message for others to solve.

✓ CRACK THE CODE

Show the students the number codes on pages 3 and 5 of Jump Start. Encourage them to try and crack these codes. When they have cracked the codes ask the students to make up their own number codes with secret messages for fellow classmates to solve.

✓ WHAT MAKES YOU AFRAID?

Emma easily conquers **SHADOW** in the forest but is terrified of her high jumps on the beam at school. Break the class into small groups. Ask each group to discuss how Emma overcomes her fear to jump in the rainforest and how this helps her in the gymnastics competition. Encourage the students to share things they are scared of or have trouble trying to get past. Invite the students to problem solve strategies to help one another overcome their fears.

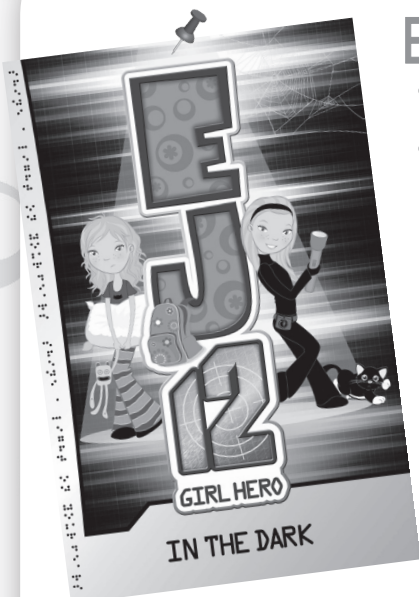
✓ SAVE THE RAINFOREST

Discuss with the class how to write an exposition. Invite the students to research rainforests then encourage them to write an exposition to convince others to help save our rainforests.

✓ WORLD HERITAGE SITES

Use books and the Internet to find out about World Heritage sites. Have the students make a list of different World Heritage sites they are interested in. Ask them to select one World Heritage site and find out why it was chosen and where it is, plus some other interesting facts. Encourage the students to present their findings using PowerPoint or a similar computer programme.





EJ12 GIRL HERO 3 IN THE DARK

SYNOPSIS

Emma Jacks is scared of the dark. Her mission in **In The Dark** however is to find her way underground in darkness, and work out how to stop **SHADOW** turning the lights out on the **SHINE** power supply. She must overcome this fear of the dark to stop the threat **SHINE** is facing. On the home front Emma faces her fears of Hannah's spooky slumber party.

✓ PARTY GAMES

The girls are planning to play 'Murder in the Dark' at Hannah's slumber party (page 20). Revisit the features of a procedure with the students. Invite the students to write the procedure for 'How to play Murder in the Dark'. Encourage them to include a section for 'What you need' and a section for 'What to do'.

✓ BRAILLE

When EJ receives the secret code from **SHINE** she discovers it is in Braille (page 32). Invite the students to use books and the Internet to learn more about Braille as a form of communication. Have them find out who invented it, why, when and where, as well as the Braille alphabet. Encourage the students to write and solve their own messages in Braille.

✓ CHARM

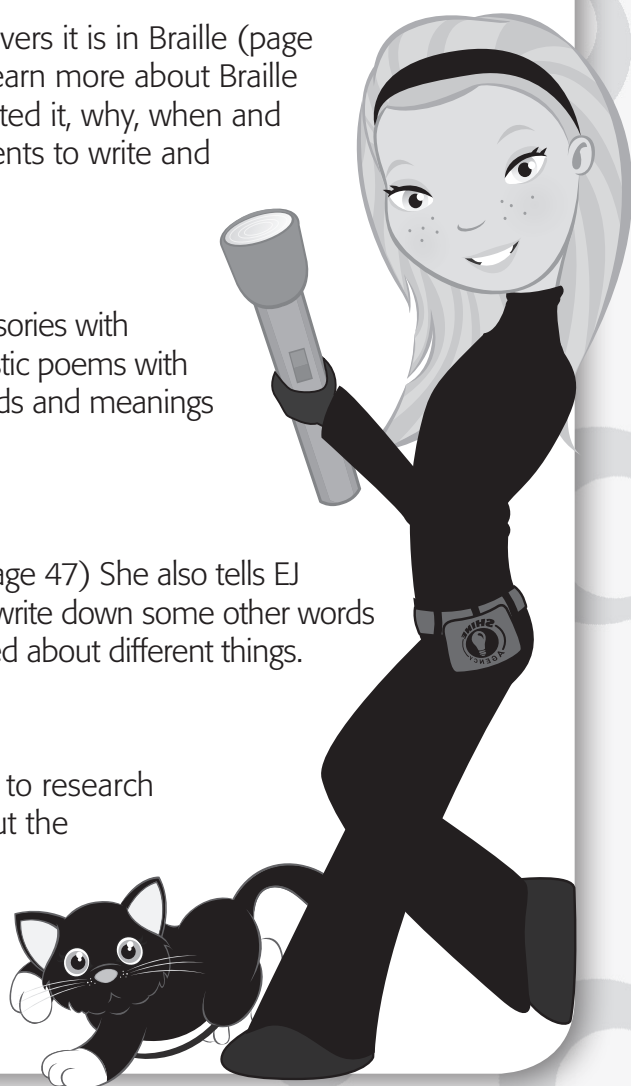
The letters CHARM are an acronym for Clever Hidden Accessories with Release Mechanism (page 48). Discuss acronyms and acrostic poems with the class. Invite the students to create their own acrostic words and meanings as well as an acrostic poem about SHINE or SHADOW.

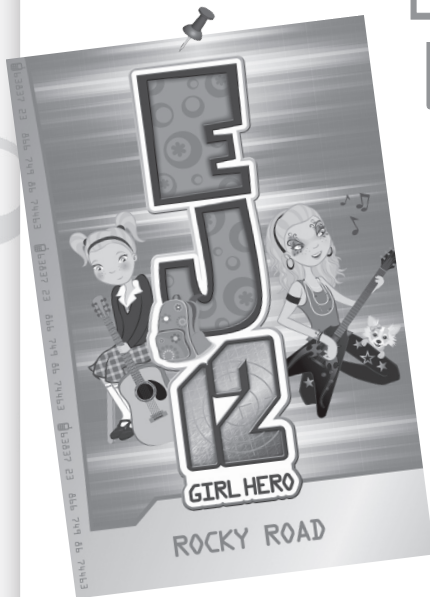
✓ WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

A1 tells EJ 'don't let your imagination run away from you' (page 47) She also tells EJ the motto 'shine a light on your fears'. Invite the students to write down some other words of encouragement for friends who might be anxious or scared about different things.

✓ SOLAR POWER

Solar power is a theme in In The Dark. Invite the students to research how solar power works. Encourage the students to find out the benefits, costs, advantages and disadvantages of using solar power. Ask the students to list places they have seen that use solar panels and power.





EJ12 GIRL HERO 4 ROCKY ROAD

SYNOPSIS

In **Rocky Road** Emma and her friends are excited about a school talent competition and a concert by their favourite band, The Pink Shadows. EJ finds herself on a secret mission to intercept messages from **SHADOW** and ends up on stage as the lead singer at the Pink Shadows concert. EJ doesn't miss a beat and once again saves the world from the evil plans of **SHADOW**. She also overcomes her stage fright and sings at the school talent competition.

✓ YOU'VE GOT TALENT

Break the class into groups and ask them to prepare, rehearse and perform an act for a You've Got Talent class concert. They may choose to perform a song or dance, recite a poem or act out a drama piece.

✓ PHONE CODE

Invite the students to use the message on page 30 as an example to make their own secret message using a phone keypad. Discuss whether there can be more than one word for each number/letter combination and why.

✓ GOOD OR BAD

On page 35 A1 says, 'There is always something good that comes from bad things'. Ask half the class to list arguments 'for' the topic and the other half to write arguments 'against' the topic giving examples to support their ideas. Hold a class debate.

✓ FUNNY PUNS

On page 45 Emma says 'I have seen the light on being scared of the dark'. This type of expression is a pun or a play on words. Discuss puns and encourage the students to make up some puns of their own.

✓ JUMBLED WORDS

Invite the class to write some interesting sentences then to jumble up the words. Have the students unjumble each other's sentences. (page 73)

✓ POSTER FUN

Have the students design and make posters advertising a talent quest at their school. Ask them to include times and dates as well as a catchy slogan and graphics.





EJ12 GIRL HERO 5 CHOC SHOCK

SYNOPSIS

In **Choc Shock** EJ is sent to Madame Ombre's Junior Choc Chef's cooking final with the aim of stopping **SHADOW** sending out a new code machine. Madame Ombre, the world's best chocolate chef, has been stealing gold flakes from the Institute of Cookery and EJ must get them back. EJ must stay calm and with the aid of her spy equipment she helps **SHINE** stop **SHADOW** from cooking up trouble. Back home, Emma relaxes and cooks some magnificent cupcakes and raises money to save the local animal shelter.

✓ PET SURVEY

Emma loves animals (page 8) and wants to save the local animal shelter. Survey the class to find out everyone's pets. Discuss how to turn these results into a simple graph showing 'Our Class Pets'.

✓ HOW TO LOOK AFTER A PET

Encourage the students to choose their favourite pet and to write a procedure on how to look after it. Encourage them to include a section for 'What you need' and a section for 'What to do'.

✓ KNOCK KNOCK

The story contains several Knock Knock jokes. Encourage the students to make up and tell their own Knock Knock jokes. (page 18/19)

✓ BAKING TIME

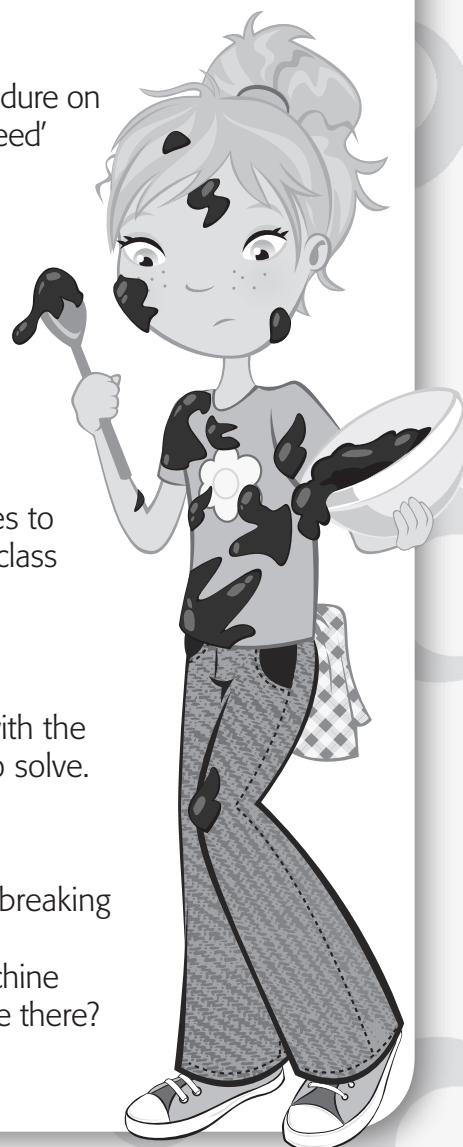
Invite the students to bring in their favourite cup cake recipes to swap and bake. Arrange a day for the students to bring in and sell their cakes to raise money for a charity. Have the students write their recipes into a class cupcake recipe book.

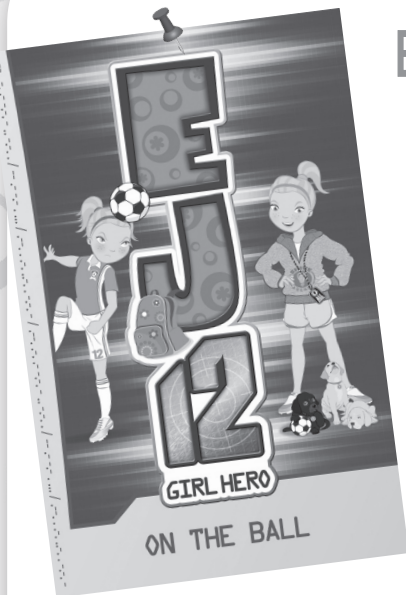
✓ AMAZING ANAGRAMS

Some of the codes in Choc Shock are anagrams. Discuss anagrams with the class and encourage the students to write their own for a classmate to solve.

✓ ENIGMA MACHINE

The Enigma Machine mentioned in the story was a code making and breaking machine from World War 2. Watch the youtube clip <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DnBsndE1IkA> Discuss how the machine works and what it was used for. How many combinations of letters were there?





EJ12 GIRL HERO 5 ON THE BALL

SYNOPSIS

In **On The Ball** Emma's boring weekend turns into a great adventure when she receives the call from **SHINE** to attend a training camp. She meets some agents, CC12 and KM12, and together they halt the evil plans of **SHADOW** while learning new skills and training the cute new puppies. EJ uses her newly acquired skills to help the girl's soccer team beat the boys.

✓ DON'T WORRY, BE HAPPY

Emma's friend Isi is an optimist (page 12). Encourage the students to list the characteristics of an optimist. Challenge the students to look at life with an optimistic view.

✓ WING-DING-A-LING

A font is a type, size and style of lettering. EJ has to crack a code using the Wingding font (page 20). Provide the students with computers and ask them to write their own secret messages using the wingding font. Encourage them to give their secret code messages to a classmate to crack.

✓ ODD ONE OUT

At training camp EJ and her Under 12 friends have to find a series of objects that don't belong (page 50). Invite the students to invent their own games where friends have to work out what does not belong. Their game may include naming, writing, drawing or finding objects.

✓ TREE HOUSE DESIGN

At the camp the Under 12 girls find a tree house lookout being used by a SHADOW spy. Encourage the students to design and label their own tree house lookout. Invite them to include secret trapdoors, slides, secret rooms and other spy equipment in their lookout.

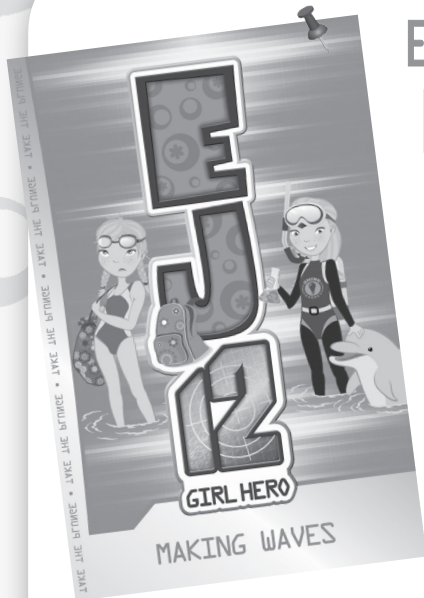
✓ DOTS AND DASHES

EJ has to crack a code using Morse Code (page 84). Provide the students with copies of Morse Code. Find a dark space and let the students practise using torches to flash messages back and forth. Have them start by flashing the letters of their name.

✓ TIMETABLE

Invite the students to write a timetable for a fun day at a school camp. Encourage them to plan activities, meal times, free time, games and bedtime.





EJ12 GIRL HERO 6 MAKING WAVES

SYNOPSIS

The Great Barrier Reef is in deep trouble and **SHINE** needs EJ12's help. A1's evil twin sister AX is changing the balance of the water in her attempt to steal precious black coral. Although EJ feels out of her depth she knows she must overcome her fear of deep water to save the reef from **SHADOW**'s evil schemes. EJ must locate AX and A-Sub to prevent her coral harvest. Her mission at home is to help her school swimming team win the relay.

✓ MIRROR MIRROR

Ask the students to work in pairs and to use pages 13 and 14 to write a message in mirror code.

✓ THAT'S COMPLICATED

Narratives contain many complications to make the story more interesting (page 26). Invite the students to list the complications in *Making Waves*. Have them list how each complication is resolved. Ask the students to add two more complications of their own to build the story's suspense.

✓ FACT FINDER

Invite the students to use books and the Internet to find facts about the Great Barrier Reef (page 41). Encourage them to present their findings to the class in a creative way. Use Google Earth to look at the Reef and try to locate the heart-shaped reef.

✓ HOMOPHONES

Two words are homophones if they are pronounced the same way but differ in meaning or spelling or both. For example 'C, see and sea'. (page 74). Discuss homophones with the class and ask the students to come up with their own lists of homophones.

✓ FOOD CHAINS

Encourage the students to research food chains in the ocean. Invite them to draw a diagram of the food chain mentioned on page 43. Ask the students to label their diagrams and include pictures.

✓ WHAT'S IN A WORD?

The Latin word for water is aqua (page 62). Encourage the students to find out the words for water in different languages. Have them include aboriginal words for water.

