

I ESCAPED PRISON ISLAND
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STUDY GUIDE

READING COMPREHENSION

Chapter 1

Why are the police chasing Thomas and Jem?

Chapter 2

Did Thomas get a chance to explain his situation to the judge?

Chapter 3

Why was Jem locked in the solitary box?

Chapter 4

Why did Thomas decide he needed to escape the ship?

Chapter 5

Why did Thomas's escape attempt fail?

Chapter 6

Why have bullies Blackburn and Chalky become friendlier to Thomas?

Chapter 7

Why, in your opinion, do the boys choose Stinky to bully?

Chapter 8

Why do the older boys choose Thomas to crown the overseer? What do they want Thomas to do?

Chapter 9

Why do you think Blackburn is proud to get ten cuts from the schoolmaster?

Chapter 10

What makes Thomas decide to escape?

Chapter 11

What are some of the dangers of trying to cross from Eaglehawk Neck to the mainland?

Chapter 12

How do the boys find clothes and supplies?

Chapter 13

Why is Thomas so angry at Blackburn?

Chapter 14

How does Thomas scare the wild animals away?

Chapter 15

Why does Thomas feel he can't trust the bushrangers? Why does Blackburn feel differently?

Chapter 16

Why was Stinky sent to Van Diemen's land?

Chapter 17

Why do the two doctors decide the boys should be pardoned?

Chapter 18

How does Dr. Nesbitt help Thomas and Jem?

Chapter 19

How are the brothers' lives going to change?

CAUSE AND EFFECT

1. Cause: Jem stole a handkerchief from a gentleman.
Effect:
2. Thomas and Jem hid in a barrel, trying to escape from the ship.
Effect:

EFFECT AND CAUSE

1. Cause:
Effect: The overseer punishes all the boys by making them take cold ocean baths and taking away their meals for the day.
2. Cause:
Effect: Thomas decides it's not safe to stay with Jem at Point Puer and runs away.

VISUALIZATION

Choose one of the following pictures to draw:

A sea-monster
A Tasmanian Tiger
Jacko the monkey stealing an orange
Crowning the overseer
A Tasmanian Devil

I ESCAPED THE PRISON ISLAND WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Past: You haven't had a proper meal for days, then you see a wealthy woman has left her expensive gloves on a park bench. You know you could sell them for money. What do you do?

Present: You forgot your school lunch. Someone in the cafeteria has dropped five dollars by accident. Do you pick it up and buy lunch or do you try to find the owner?

Past: One of the boys who no one likes wants to join your game of marbles. Do you invite him to play, or do you ignore him?

Present: A new kid who is dressed in a dorky outfit has no one to sit with in the cafeteria. Do you invite him to sit with you?

Past: Even though you know that Bushrangers are bad men you like the ones you've met, and you think that they can teach you how to survive in the bush. Do you join their group, or do you look for another option?

Present: A group of popular kids who are often in trouble at school, ask you to join them. You'd like to be popular and they're nice to you, but what if they expect you to do things that make you uncomfortable?

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MAKING INFERENCES

Everyone respected Chalky. It was rumored he'd stolen a horse from a fancy estate. Most of the others had merely thieved food or easy things to steal like a wallet or handkerchief

What do these lines say about the convict boys? What type of boy is admired?

Thomas didn't know what to say. Dr. Nesbitt's idea of Van Diemen's land as a place where one could learn and turn one's life around was very different from Chalky's account of a wild, savage land of desperate prisoners, where danger awaited at every corner.

Why was a boys' prison like Point Puer built for convict boys? Why do you think the adults in charge have such a different opinion of it than street kids like Chalky?

On the beach a group of ragtag boys appeared, watching the newcomers. Their faces were dark, like sailors'. They squinted at the new arrivals, unsmiling.

What kind of experience are the newcomers likely to have? How easy/ difficult will it be to fit into the Point Puer community. Why?

An older Point Puer boy with longish greasy hair laughed. He watched Stinky with the intensity of a hawk hunting a field mouse.

What kind of experience is Stinky likely to have at Point Puer. Why?

*Thomas took a step back- the wind seemed to push him toward the edge. The sheer height of the cliffs made him dizzy. A hand clapped hard on his back and he lurched forward.
"Watch your step," Sparks laughed.*

What type of friends are Thomas's new friends Devlin and Sparks? Can he trust them? Why? Why not?

DISCUSSION TOPICS

Imagine you lived in the poor areas of east end of London in 1836. What is your home like? What is daily life like? What do you enjoy? What are you afraid of?

How were poor children in England treated differently than children today?

How does peer pressure affect Thomas's decisions? How is Thomas different than Jem? How is he similar?

Why does Jem admire bullies like Blackburn and outlaws like the bushranger gang?

If it weren't for Dr Nesbitt, what do you think would have happened to Thomas and Jem on their return to England? What would their life be like?

CRAFTS and OTHER IDEAS

When convicts left England, many made tokens for their loved one to remember them by.
Make your own token:

<https://sydneylivingmuseums.com.au/convict-sydney/what-are-convict-love-tokens>

Create your own Cockney rhyming slang!

<https://teachifyapp.com/en/cockney-rhyming-slang/>

Design a convict tattoo.

<https://sydneylivingmuseums.com.au/convict-sydney/tattoos>

More about Bushrangers:

http://myplace.edu.au/teaching_activities/1878_-_before_time/1838/2/the_bushranger.html?tabRank=2&idSubtheme=

Imagine you're a bushranger who has been caught. Write a testimony of why you turned to crime and why it wasn't all your fault.