

The Ring

By

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A teacher's resource

prepared by the author

This resource is designed to be used with Year 9 -11 English classes. The novel can be studied as part of a junior English programme or, in Year 11, as a text for Achievement Standard 1.3 (Read, study and show understanding of extended written text(s)). It links with the following English Curriculum Strands and Achievement Objectives at levels five and six:

• **Written Language: Reading:**

Personal Reading

Close Reading

• **Written Language: Writing:**

Poetic Writing

Expressive/Personal Writing

Formal Writing

• **Oral Language: speaking and listening**

Interpersonal speaking

Interpersonal listening

• **Visual Language: presenting and viewing**

• **Language Process:**

exploring language

thinking critically

processing information

Reading Comprehension:

After you have read the novel, work through these questions which will check that you have understood the key events and ideas of the story. The questions are organised chronologically.

1. What is 'the arrangement' Nadine talks about in Chapter One?
2. What is Ted's reputation around the district?
3. List the reasons why Nadine hates living in the country.
4. What does Hawkeye find in the bush?
5. What does Nadine do wrong and what is her punishment?
6. What does she learn about Ted?
7. Describe the Great Bamford Rescue Mission.
8. Describe what Nadine finds at Warren Grimshaw's place.
9. Why does her plan fail?
10. What does Marion discover on Daniel shirt and what explanation does Nadine first give her?
11. What does Nadine tell her mother about Ted?
12. What evidence is there to prove it?

13. How does Nadine end up at the dog fighting?
14. How does Ted react when he discovers her?
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15. What has happened to Hawkeye?
16. Who shoots the dog?
17. Why are the police looking for Ted?
18. What are Hawkeye's injuries?
19. What are Marion's reasons for staying on the farm?
20. What are two 'good' things Ted does at the end of the book?

Characterisation

Using examples from the novel and with explanations, do the following:

1. Describe the character of **Nadine** at: the start of the story
the end of the story
2. Describe the changes which have occurred and list the events which caused these changes?
3. Explain why these changes are significant.
4. Describe the character of **Ted** at: the start of the story
the end of the story
5. Describe any changes which have occurred and list the events which caused these changes?
6. Explain why these changes are significant.
7. Describe the relationship between **Nadine and Uncle Ted** at:
the start of the book
the end of the book
8. Explain why their relationship is an important one.
9. For each of the following:

Daniel Marion Martin

- Write a short description of the person.
- Explain the significance of the person to our understanding of what is happening to Nadine.
- Describe the relationship between the character and Nadine. Include whether there are changes in the relationship and/or whether Nadine learns important information from her relationship with the character.
- Either draw or cut out a picture from a magazine which you believe best represents the character.
- Explain what you think might happen to the character after the novel ends.
- Describe the relationship between **Nadine and Hawkeye**. Why is this relationship an important one?

10. The back cover of the blurb says:

Nadine knew her stepfather was brutal but the truth behind where he went with her brothers and why his truck was always covered in blood only becomes clear when she accidentally stumbles on to The Ring. Describe the power Ted has over the lives of the characters in the story.

Style and Comprehension

1. *The Ring* is written in an interesting way because:

- it makes us think;
- it has some very descriptive passages;
- it is very realistic;
- the story ends abruptly;

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- the third person narration is limited to Nadine's point of view.
- each chapter is short and ends at an important moment.
- it is set in New Zealand and mentions places we might know.

Choose **two** of the above and in about one paragraph for each statement, explain, giving details and examples from the story, how it is true for the novel.

2. Look closely at pages 16 through to 18 and answer the following:

- 'Martin froze' (line 3) is an example of:

- a) fear
- b) a metaphor
- c) assonance
- d) personification

- In your own words, describe how Martin is feeling.
- Comment on the effect of the last three sentences of paragraph two.
- What is Nadine's mother doing?

- Chores (line 17) means:

- a) homework
- b) singing practice
- c) assigned jobs
- d) washing.

- In your own words, explain why Nadine decides not to invite Martin to come with her.

- Explain the effect of the commas in the last sentence of the passage.
- Why has the author used an exclamation mark for the word "Sit!" on page 18?
- From the passage, write down ONE word which is distinctly New Zealand.

Explain what the word means.

- From reading the passage we can tell that Nadine's dog is

- a) injured
- b) young
- c) unruly
- d) fun.

3. Explain, providing detailed examples, how the author uses **sentence variation and punctuation** to make this passage realistic.

4. Identify **two sound techniques** used in this passage and explain the effects of them.

5. Identify **two examples of poetic techniques** used in the passage and discuss their effectiveness.

6. **Word Bank:**

Use a dictionary to find the definitions of the words listed below:

ashen clambered contrite conviction

countered defensive dissuade emerged

executed (pg38) ferocious frantically frenzied

furtive hobo illegal instinctively
intense lumbering mongrel opponent
paspalum prehistoric privilege protruded
ruttled subconscious

7. For **ten** of the above, write a sentence of your own using the new word.

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Themes

1. Write your own definition for the following words:

brutality powerlessness friendship family

2. Then, write down the dictionary definition for each word.

3. Either on your own, in pairs or in a small group, display your definitions. You can use magazine pictures, words, symbols, illustrations, collage.

4. Explain which word is the most important quality to achieve and why.

5. Using examples from the novel, describe the lesson or lessons we learn from reading this story and explain why the might be considered important.

6. Below are a list of **key quotations** from the novel. For each of the following quotations explain:

what is happening at that moment in the story;

the importance/significance of the statement;

your personal response to the statement.

a) *Her dog. her buddy. Seemingly the only one in the whole world who loved her completely. Who made demands on her....pg 8*

b) *Nadine had learnt early on it was useless to fight this man. Pg 9*

c) *This was her new life and she was stuck with it. Pg 10*

d) *He had brought them out here eighteen months ago, said the country was the only place to bring up children. pg12*

e) *"You are only a child and you do not know what's best." pg 32*

f) *He had changed their mother. pg 32*

g) *Sometimes her anger was so intense, she felt like she had acid inside her. pg 40*

h) *"You're not our father; you can't tell us what to do. Not any more. We hate you." pg 72*

i) *It was a choice of two bad things as far as Nadine was concerned. pg 87*

j) *Why couldn't it just all go away? All the bad stuff? They had got the bad man. Now their lives should be okay again. But, it didn't look like it was going to be that way. pg 88*

k) *She didn't need to be afraid of him any longer. pg 90*

Written Language: Writing

1. Poetic Writing:

a) Write an **epilogue** for *The Ring*. It should be no more than a page.

b) Write an experience of seeing the dog fighting from Daniel or Martin's point of view.

2. Expressive/Personal Writing:

a) Imagine you are Nadine or one of her brothers. Write a series of diary entries which record some of the things which happen on the farm and how you feel about your situation.

b) Write a letter of advice to Nadine.

c) Write a letter to the author Tania Kelly Roxborough saying what you think of the novel. She can be contacted at: New House Publishers Ltd, PO Box 33-376, Auckland, New Zealand or email: tania@roxborough.com

3. Formal Writing:

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a) Write a formal book review for the novel. Include comments on the language used, the treatment of the topics and the appropriateness of the novel for teenagers.

b) Write a news story or the police report of the arrests made at the dog fighting ring.

c) Write a formal essay on one of the ideas presented in the statements in the theme section.

Visual Language: Static Images

A static image is an image that does not move. When you create a static image you need to consider these questions:

- why do you want to make this static image? (the purpose);
- what do you want to say? (the message);
- who do you want to say it to? (the audience);
- and, how will you get it across? (techniques).

The last question is divided into two sections:

The visual techniques, for example:

colour dominant image layout symbol contrast
font or lettering logo

And language techniques, for example:

alliteration rhyme pun cliché hyperbole simile
listing imperatives jargon rhetorical question metaphor slogan

A static image is successful if it achieves its purpose.

TASK ONE:

Look at the cover (back and front) of *The Ring*.

- 1) What is its **purpose**?
- 2) What is the **message**?
- 3) Who is the image aimed at? (the **audience**)
- 4) What visual techniques are used to get the reader's attention?
- 5) How effective is the cover? Give reasons for your answer.

TASK TWO:

Design your own front cover for the book and explain your answers to 1 to 4 above. Ensure you give detailed reasons for your choice of visual and verbal techniques.

Drama:

Drama and role-play can be a useful way of looking at some of the ideas and characters in a story, helping us to better understand some of the issues.

In a small group: Stage one of the following and perform to the rest of the class:

- when Nadine learns about the dog fighting: pages 24 through to 30.
- the argument with Ted and Daniel pages 71 through to the top of 75.
- Or, select your own.

In pairs: Re-work one of the following and perform to the rest of the class:

- Nadine's fight with her mother: pages 31 to 34
- When Nadine tells her mother about the dog fighting: pages 49 to 56

- Or, select your own.
- Write your own short play dealing with some of the issues presented in this novel. Remember to keep the staging simple and the performances real.

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Or, try this out:

In a group, imagine you are putting on a television talk show. One of you is the interviewer and the others act the roles of Nadine, Marion, Ted, Daniel, Martin. You could make it that bit harder if the interviewer is the only one who knows what questions are going to be asked.

Essay Topics

1. Describe the setting of the novel and explain, using detailed examples and explanations, why this setting is important to the story.
2. Describe an important moment in the novel and explain the significance of that moment to those characters involved and to the rest of the story.
3. Explain how and why the beginning or end of the novel is effective.
4. Describe a problem a character has and how he or she tried to overcome the problem.
5. Explain, giving detailed reasons and explanations, why the title of the novel is appropriate for the story.
6. Describe a relationship one important character has with another. Why is this relationship important?
7. Explain, using detailed examples and explanations why other teenagers should read this novel.