

The Sugar Glider

Rod Neilsen

Before Reading

1. Look at the cover and read the back cover blurb. What is the *Sugar Glider*?
2. Read the characters on page 4. Who do you think are the good guys or bad guys?
3. Look at the map on page 5. What do you already know about Australia?
4. Read the contents on page 3. What events will you read about in the story?
5. If you have the cassette, listen to Chapter 1.

Check your reading

PROLOGUE

1. 'Another surprise . . .' (page 8). What are the two things that surprised Copeman?

CHAPTER 1

1. Look at the words in italics. Who or what is *them*, *her*, *I* etc.?
 - a . . . it had hurt *them* to see Don leave his wife Sylvia . . .
 - b Don was missing *her* growing up.
 - c He was sorry things had got so bad between *them*.
 - d *I* want you to help me fly that DC4 to Melbourne.
 - e *It's* going to the Melbourne Air Museum – its last flight . . .
 - f And when would *he* get another chance like this?

CHAPTER 2

1. Who . . .
 - a looked nervous?
 - b was like a favourite uncle to Judy?
 - c were demonstrating about land rights?
 - d didn't want to return to Paul's house?
 - e had learnt to ride?
 - f bought Judy some perfume?

CHAPTER 3

1. Put these sentences about the history of the *Sugar Glider* in order.
 - a It was used to carry coffee from South America.
 - b It was sold to a museum.
 - c It was used for carrying soldiers in the Second World War.
 - d There was a war so it was flown to safety in Australia.
 - e It went to an Asian country and became a president's plane.

CHAPTER 4

1. Are these sentences True (T) or False (F)?
 - a Don was pleased that Patrick gave Judy presents.
 - b Sylvia felt Don was still putting work before family.
 - c Sylvia agreed to marry Patrick.
 - d Don understood why he and Sylvia had got divorced.
 - e Judy was delighted about the trip in the *Sugar Glider*.
 - f Don told Sylvia he was taking Judy on a trip.

CHAPTER 5

1. Put the events in order.
 - a Don found some useful equipment on the plane.
 - b The *Sugar Glider* had to land west of the airfield.
 - c Judy asked Don why he had left her mother.
 - d Judy had a nightmare about the plane.
 - e The Murri people were demonstrating outside Warrangi mine.
 - f Paul was nervous and in a hurry.

CHAPTER 6

1. Match questions to the answers.
 - 1 'How soon can we get the stuff and move on?'
 - 2 'Ah, what do you know about it?'
 - 3 'What are we carrying, exactly?'
 - 4 'Is this job safe? I bought Judy along, remember?'
 - 5 'You don't look too good, Paul. Are you OK?'
 - a 'I'm fine. It's just the heat.'
 - b 'There'll be a bit of a delay.'
 - c 'I live on a farm . . . I understand how important land is to you.'
 - d 'I told you yesterday. It's equipment and chemicals.'
 - e 'Of course it's safe.'

CHAPTER 7

1. Match the beginnings and endings to make sentences.
 - 1 Don changed course
 - 2 After Don switched tanks
 - 3 Something was wrong with the radio
 - 4 The plane crash landed
 - 5 Paul admitted the plane was carrying uranium
 - a so Don couldn't report their position.
 - b in order to make up time.
 - c and said the crash was no accident.
 - d the engines coughed again.
 - e in a group of trees.

CHAPTER 8

1. Complete the summary.

Paul died from a ^a..... but Don and Judy were OK. Don realised ^b..... fuel had been put in the tank on ^c....., and the ^d..... had been damaged. Someone at the ^e..... had wanted to bring the plane down. Don had changed ^f..... and the plane was ^g..... by trees, so ^h..... or the people who wanted the ⁱ..... would not be able to find them.

CHAPTER 9

1. Find six mistakes in the paragraph and correct them.

Before leaving, Don buried Paul's body. The people in the plane couldn't be rescuers because the *Sugar Glider* was not expected in Sydney yet. One of the men was carrying a gun and shot at the cows at the creek. Don thought he had seen the man at Everett's Field. Dan and Judy decided to head east in the morning.

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CHAPTER 10

- Write adjectives from the story describing how Don felt about . . .
 - Judy growing into a strong clever girl?
 - leaving Sylvia?
 - Judy taking the risk of catching a brumby?
 - how Judy handled the horse?
 - being on horseback again?

CHAPTER 11

- What was Sylvia sure or unsure about? Write Sure (S) or Unsure (U) after the sentences.
 - Getting married to Patrick.
 - Patrick would be a good father to Judy.
 - Her relationship with Don.
 - Judy was at Warrangi.
 - Judy and Don were alive.
 - Coming to the Gold Coast.

CHAPTER 12

- Match the questions to the answers.
 - What did flying mean to Don?
 - What would Don do if they got back?
 - Why hadn't they seen any search planes?
 - Why did Judy continue alone?
 - What did Judy see?
 - Talk to Sylvia.
 - A windmill in the distance.
 - It was a very big area.
 - Don was injured.
 - Freedom.

CHAPTER 13

- Complete the paragraph with names of people or organisations.

At Tarong Station, ^a..... explained to ^b..... that she had been in a plane crash. She thought he was phoning ^c..... but in fact he was phoning the 'men from the ^d.....' who had called earlier, looking for her. Before she could phone her ^e....., a helicopter arrived with three men. She recognised the ^f..... of the mechanic from Warrangi.

CHAPTER 14

- Which character is speaking?
 - 'They might just kill me too, if I take them to the plane.'
 - 'I made a mistake calling those people.'
 - '... make it look like an accident... get the stuff at all costs... don't touch the girl...'
 - 'We've got to get to my dad.'
 - 'It's a door... a trapdoor.'
 - 'They'll see me here; I've got to get away.'

CHAPTER 15

- Answer these questions.
 - How did Joe know that Judy was at Tarong Station?
 - Why is Warrangi so special for the Murri people?
 - How could Judy delay Petersen and company?
 - What did Joe take with him?

CHAPTER 16

- Answer these questions.
 - Who do you think is Petersen's boss?
 - What do you think will happen to Judy now?
 - Where do you think Joe is?

CHAPTER 17

- Tick (✓) what Berjenka agrees to do.
 - Leave Australia immediately if nothing happened.
 - Not to involve his boss if anything went wrong.
 - Pay more money for the uranium.
 - Go to the mountains by helicopter.
- Who do you think Berjenka was speaking to?

CHAPTER 18

- Complete the sentences with the names of characters.
 - and the pilot removed the uranium from the *Sugar Glider*.
 - Judy saw do something to the helicopter fuel tank.
 - Patrick was shocked to see
 - demanded to know what Joe had been doing.
 - Patrick shot in the arm and in the chest.
 - blinded Patrick with a jet of perfume.
 - died when the helicopter exploded in flames.
 - Judy realised that was alive after all.

CHAPTER 19

- Tick (✓) what was reported in the local newspaper.
 - The closing of the Warrangi mine.
 - The discovery of the *Sugar Glider* and pilot.
 - Land rights given to Murri people.
 - Patrick Forsha's business problems.
 - Uranium and foreign governments.

After reading

Choose some of these activities.

- Have you, like Paul Copeman, ever agreed to do something that you knew was wrong?
- Would you like to work as a pilot? Why or why not?
- Who was your favourite character in the story? Write a list of adjectives to describe him/her.
- What extra information have you learnt about life in Australia from the story?
- Judy loved living on a farm in the countryside. Would you enjoy this lifestyle?
- Here are the two headlines from Judy's newspaper (page 96):
MINE CLOSES. WARRANGI PEOPLE GIVEN LAND RIGHTS
PILOT FOUND ALIVE.
Choose a headline and write the full story.
- Make your own activities for other students to do. e.g. Put the events in the right order.