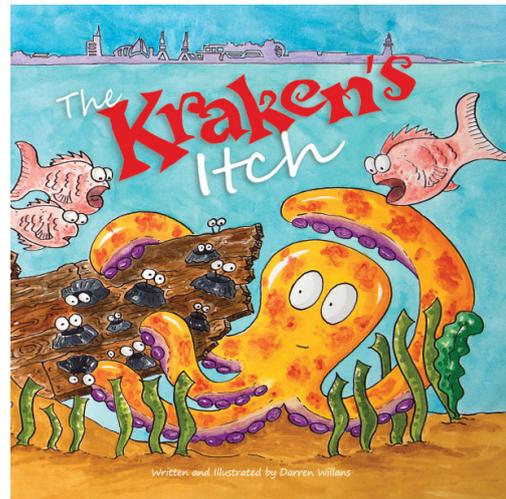


The Kraken's Itch

Synopsis

The Kraken's Itch follows the fantastical classic tale of the terrifying legendary sea monster.

In this children's book adaptation the Kraken still attacks ships and strikes fear into sailors but this Kraken does so for a different reason. Kraken's motive is not to get to the sailors but to relieve a persistent itch he is bothered by.



As the story progresses Kraken explores ways to rid himself of this affliction deciding finally that barnacles on the hulls of ships be the best remedy. This results in disaster for sailors and their ships.

Captain John and the crew of the cargo ship 'The Jenny' hatch a plan to solve the Kraken's itch once and for all.

Antics follow and the Kraken's itch is resolved with the application of lemon water via scrubbing brushes thus giving way to safely deliver the cargo and enjoy a great celebration.

Using traditional watercolour and ink on paper, this brightly coloured picture book is set mostly at sea and underwater and features recognisable icons of the coastal town of Fremantle, Western Australia throughout the book.

Intended readership and description

The Kraken's Itch is a children's picture book for primary school children between the ages of 4 and 7. It takes what is a familiar story for adults and parents and turns it into a story and character younger children can enjoy.

The Kraken experiences a range of emotions that children will identify with and readers will see that what is happening on face value isn't always what it may seem. Problem-solving in creative ways is also explored in the way Captain John ultimately solves the Kraken's problem. We gain sentiment for the Kraken as his vulnerability is exposed when the ship brakes and he is scared. Ultimately helping people and animals along with teamwork is featured right through the book.

The Kraken's Itch includes some iconic places from in and around Fremantle giving the book a sense of place. The lighthouses on the North and South Moles, the historic A Shed on the wharf, the Port Coogee snorkel trail and ship wreck Omeo all feature. A visit to these places by visitors or locals would give anyone a real feel for the history of Fremantle and its close connection with the sea.

Themes

Belief
Fear
Teamwork
Leadership
Bravery
Vulnerability

Discussion questions

- 1.** Kraken is perceived as being big and scary but turns out he just has an itch and he does not realise he is frightening the sailors. Can you think of something that you have been afraid of when there has been no need to be?
- 2.** Kraken displays a range of emotions in his adventure through the book. How does the illustrator convey the characters' thoughts and feelings? Find a page in the book where Kraken looks, happy, sad, frightened, crazy, blissful and vulnerable.
- 3.** In the book, the sailors talk about wild stories of sea monsters from the deep and tales of faraway places with strange animals. As a class, have each student create and draw an imaginary creature or plant.
- 4.** The sailors are told to make the lemon water by squashing lemons. They do this in some silly ways. What are some of the methods the sailors use to squash the lemons? Get the class to invent some other silly ways to squash lemons.
- 5.** What style has the illustrator used to draw the characters in the book? Are they realistic or cartoon? What do you like about the illustrator's style?