



Lightning Strikes: I Dare You Aleesah Darlison

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Themes:

- bullying
- family relationships
- change
- courage

Synopsis

It's not easy being the new kid at school. Especially when the local bully has it in for you. And when you're challenged to do a stack of stupid dares. Can life get any worse?

Author Focus

Aleesah Darlison writes picture books and novels for children and reviews books for The Sun Herald. Aleesah has always loved unicorns and as a child she has collected unicorn figurines. Writing the *The Unicorn Riders* series has been a dream of Aleesah's for a long time and she is excited for modern readers fall in love with unicorns too. When Aleesah isn't chasing her writing rainbow, she's usually looking after her three very energetic children and her two dogs, Buck and Floyd.

Activity Ideas

- Before reading the book, look at the chapter titles and try to predict what the story might be about. Share your predictions with a classmate.
- Who are the main characters? Who are the secondary characters? Scan the text and try to find as much information as possible about each character. Create character profiles for Ben, Joey, Marty and Astrid. Which character do you like the best? Why?
- Identify the orientation, complication and resolution of *I Dare You*.
- In Chapters 8 and 9 Ben captures a frog for one of the dares. Read the description of how he does this. What are the main steps? List the procedure that Ben used to capture the frog, take it to school and release it in the classroom.

Activity Ideas cont.

- Write an extra chapter for *I Dare You* about Marty daring Ben to pull another prank.
- In Chapter 6, Ben tries to tip snails on Muriel's head. Rewrite this scene from Muriel's perspective. What would she have been thinking and feeling at this time?
- Research different kinds of frogs. Create a poster with all the information you can find out about frogs, such as where they live, what they eat, what size and colour they are etc.
- Write a book review of *I Dare You*. Include information about the storyline, what you liked and the major themes/issues in the book.

Find out more about Aleesah Darlison at
www.aleesahdarlison.com

Bullying

- "Bullying" is a prominent theme in this book. What does it mean to be a bully?
- How do Marty and his friends bully Ben?
- Ask students to think of words that might be associated with a bully and a bullying victim.
- What are your school's rules about bullying? Can you think of any ways to improve these rules?
- Have a class discussion on bullying, including these questions:
 - » Can someone be a bully without meaning to be?
 - » What is the difference between bullying and just fooling around?
 - » What would you do if you saw someone else being bullied?
 - » What would you do if you were being bullied?
 - » What are some possible reasons a person might be a bully?