**TEACHERS’ RESOURCE KIT**

**KEA : Curiouser and Curiouser**

**Annemarie Florian & Alistair Hughes**

This is a snapshot introduction to the life and history of the kea, told in 3-part harmony – kea monologue, artwork and supporting information. The story reveals a sociable, extraordinarily intelligent and curious bird with a great love of novelty.

Parrots are arguably the most intelligent group of birds. As the only known alpine parrot, evolving in a very inhospitable climate and terrain, the kea has further developed remarkable skills and inquisitiveness. The story gives an opportunity to reflect on the evolution of the kea as an impressively sophisticated and investigative species, one whose nature now consistently brings it into direct and indirect conflict with human needs and habitats.

Kea are open to change and thrive on new experiences. In an ambiguous environment, they show that having the right skills is sometimes more a matter of trying out everything in their skills toolbox. Written for upper primary plus, the book will trigger discussion around how we define intelligence; and what might constitute intelligence in different circumstances.

Annemarie Florian has worked as an academic librarian, curriculum designer and children’s bookseller. Her work *KIWI : the real story* was named as a Storylines Notable Book; short-listed for the LIANZA Russell Clark Award; and won the Children’s Choice Non-Fiction Award in the New Zealand Post Children’s Book Awards 2013.

**BOOK SPECIFICATIONS:**

Imprint: New Holland Publishers (NZ) Ltd

Classification: Narrative Non-Fiction Picture Book

Publication: 2019

ISBN: 9781869665111

Price: $26.99

Pages: 32

Readership: 7+

**This Resource Kit contains the following sections:**

* Before Reading
* Close reading
* Image and Style
* Further Research Activities and Creative Responses

**Before Reading**

1. What does the cover picture indicate about the book’s content? How does it make you feel?
2. Are you familiar with kea or other types of parrots? What impressions did they make on you?
3. Read the quote at the very beginning of the book. Are you curious? If you are curious about something, how do you respond?
4. The next spread shows some very high rocky mountains below a crisp blue sky. Do you think you’d like to climb such mountains? What clothing or equipment might you need for that?

**Close Reading**

1. Name the other native parrots that are found in Aotearoa/New Zealand.
2. What does ‘tenacious’ mean?
3. How large is the average kea egg? Compare it with a chicken egg? Duck egg?
4. What are the main threats to young kea as they grow?

**Image and style**

1. What are ‘thermals of the high atmosphere’?
2. ‘Zygodactyl toes operate like crampons’. What does ‘zygodactyl’ mean? Can you show this in a drawing of a kea’s foot? What else do you notice about it – skin texture, talons, strength, flexibility?
3. What body parts do you use to unclip washing from a clothesline? How do you think the kea does this?
4. What does the motto “Finders keepers, losers weepers” mean for you? Have you ever used it? Was it applicable?

**Further Research Activities and Creative Responses**

1. Kea are physically active birds and have shown themselves to be very capable. We know that regular exercise is good for the human body too. Research the mental and emotional benefits linked to exercise.
2. Kea are agile learners, good at solving problems by trying out any and all possibilities. Can you think of a time when you have faced a physical problem and have tried different solutions?
3. Find a partner to role-play with. Together, and assuming the posture of the birds, show how kea start ‘dating’.
4. From 1860 to 1970 kea were intentionally hunted. Research why they were thought to be a pest species.