

Introduction

Eric Wilson novels excite the imagination of young readers in grades 4-6. Appealing to children's inherent keen interest in mystery, Eric Wilson has skilfully woven accurate Canadian geographic and historic information into his writing. He also touches on current Canadian social and political issues in many of his novels. As such, these novels lend themselves to the integrated study of the mystery genre with Canadian geography topics in social studies and investigation units in science.

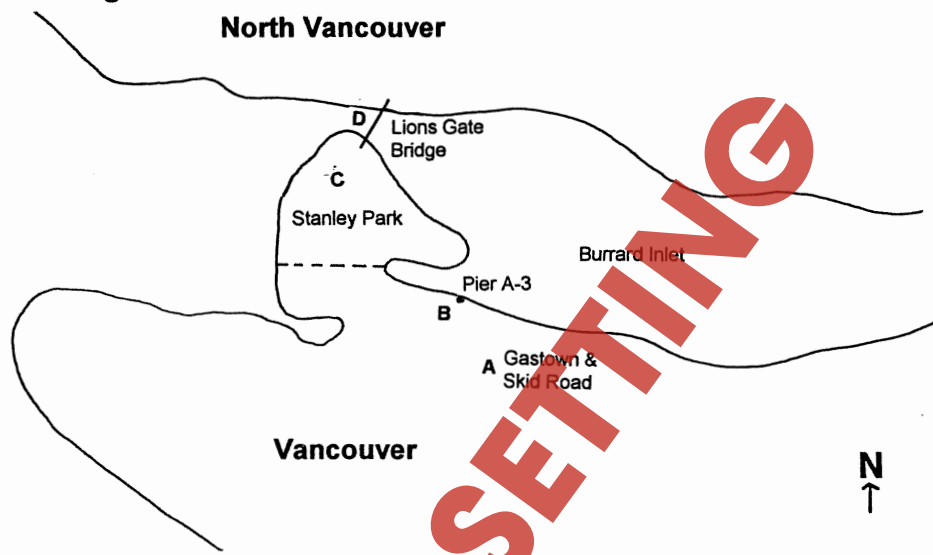
Vancouver Nightmare provides rich material for the study of setting, characterization and plot development. It can be used independently or as an introduction to the other novels in the series, thereby providing a national setting within which the regional stories come together to make a whole. The varying levels of difficulty in the novels provide opportunity to accommodate individual student ability, experience and interests. Vancouver Nightmare is one of the shorter, easier to read novels in the series.

Students can supplement the package with meaningful research which will strengthen the impact of their work. They will take great delight in finding information on the Internet that directly links to the places or events in the novels. Every province, territory and most cities have up to date information available on an Internet website. An interesting research topic might be ancient Chinese medicine. This novel could be easily integrated into the health curriculum in the area of drug awareness.

Through the internet, students can be introduced to the author, Eric Wilson. His website address is www.ericwilson.com.

Vancouver Nightmare
Eric Wilson

Setting



Referring to the map above, fill in the blanks as you read the story.

- A. Tom met _____ and began working for him. He later encountered _____ and his boss. They were in the _____ business.
- B. At Pier A-3, a _____ was found washed ashore.
- C. In Stanley Park, Tom telephoned _____ and _____ for help.
- D. At Lions Gate Bridge, Tom discovered that _____ was the boss.

As you read the story, add information about the characters identified in the character web.

Inspector Mort _____

Harrison Walsh _____

The Scratcher _____

Bud _____

Spider _____

ZeeZee _____

Angel _____

Leo _____

Tom Austen

Dietmar: Nanny & Grumps

Characters from Vancouver Nightmare

Character Summary of Tom Austen

APPEARANCE

ACTIONS, FEELINGS, THOUGHTS AND WORDS

CHARACTER TRAITS

Chapter Questions

Answer in full sentences.



Chapters 1 & 2

1. While dining in a restaurant Tom thought he spotted a crook. Who was the man?

2. Scratcher appeared to be a drug user. List the evidence to support this.

3. a) What was Harrison Walsh's former job?

 b) What was his next job?

4. a) What happened at Pier A-3?

 b) What was believed to be the motive for his death?



1. a) Why did Tom choose to search for Spider instead of going to the police for help?

- b) Why did Tom ask ZeeZee to go with him to search for Spider?

2. List the evidence found at the scene where Spider was beaten.

3. Why was Spider beaten?

4. Tom ran away at the sound of the police siren. Do you believe he made a good choice? Give reasons for your answer.



1. How was Harrison able to get inside information from the police?

2. How do you think Tom's parents will react when they hear of his adventure in Vancouver?

Final Projects

1. Characterization

Use the items you have recorded on your character summary to write a one paragraph character sketch of Tom Austen. Your paragraph should include the following:

- a) a brief description of the character's appearance
- b) five (5) character traits, supported with information from the story
- c) a topic and concluding sentence.

2. Letter

Inspector Mort had a poor opinion of young people because he regularly dealt with those in trouble with the law. He forgot that he dealt only with a minority. Write a letter to Inspector Mort, telling him about some positive things in which youth in your community have been involved.

3. Map Activity

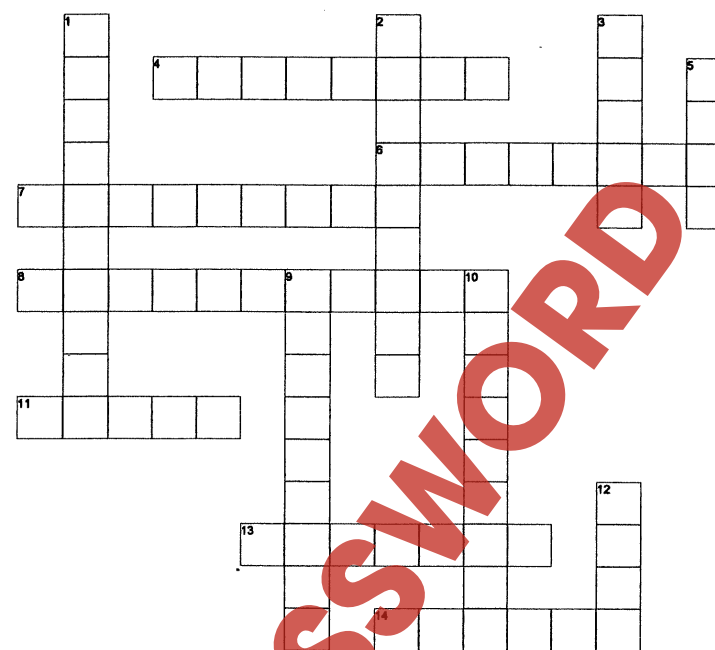
On your classroom map of Canada, mark and label the main setting of this novel.

4. Illustration

On the front cover, illustrate your favourite scene from the story.

5. Vocabulary

Complete the following crossword.



ACROSS

4. Poor part of town (2 words)(p.3)
6. Round, steel Oriental weapon (p.18)
7. Free meals for needy people (p.3)
8. Trick or fool someone (p.35)(2 words)
11. Needle mark on an addict (p.26)
13. Person who delivers packages (p.37)
14. Person who sells illegal drugs (p.16)

DOWN

1. In disguise (p.27)
2. Floating residence (p.32)
3. Undercover informer for the police (slang)(p.63)
5. Step on a ladder (p.86)
9. Area in city with many Chinese businesses (p.46)
10. People who bring goods into the country illegally (p.96)
12. _____ A-3, dock where Brian Atkinson was found (p.20)

NOTE: Page numbers are from the 1996 edition of this novel.

Chapter 6



1. How did Tom arrange some time away where no one would be looking for him?

2. a) Who was the first visitor that evening to ZeeZee's apartment?

b) When had Tom seen this person before?

3. a) Tom was surprised by the number of visitors that came to ZeeZee's apartment looking for Spider. What was ZeeZee's role?

b) What was ZeeZee's opinion about Spider's callers?

4. a) Who was the third visitor?

Chapter 6

How did Tom arrange some time away where no one would be looking for him?

Tom phoned Gramps and asked permission to spend the night with Dietmar, knowing that Gramps would not call to check on his whereabouts.

a) Who was the first visitor that evening to ZeeZee's apartment?

Angel was sitting on the bed in ZeeZee's apartment when Tom returned after making the phone call.

b) When had Tom seen this person before?

Tom had seen Angel at the Shell station. Harrison identified her as one of his customers.

a) Tom was surprised by the number of visitors that came to ZeeZee's apartment looking for Spider. What was ZeeZee's role?

ZeeZee was Spider's messenger. She was asked to tell people to wait or she to take a message for Spider.

b) What was ZeeZee's opinion about Spider's callers?

ZeeZee did not consider these callers to be friends.

a) Who was the third visitor?

The third visitor was a man named Leo, another friend of Spider.

b) How did he treat both Tom and ZeeZee?

Leo physically abused both Tom and ZeeZee. Leo shoved Tom, causing him to fall and then ordered him to remain there. Leo slapped ZeeZee across the face so hard that she fell against the wall, spilling hot tea on herself.

c) How did they react to Leo's behaviour?

Tom felt powerless to help or comfort ZeeZee. When she finally stopped crying, ZeeZee remained silent.

ANSWER KEY