

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.

The Kootenay Kidnapper 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.

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.

This novel could be easily integrated into the social studies program. Students could further explore the history of the mining era and its impact on the settlement of British Columbia and the Yukon Territory. The development of the transcontinental railway could also be explored.

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

The Kootenay Kidnapper
Eric Wilson

Setting



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

1. Tom came to _____ for a holiday with his friend, Dietmar Oban.
2. Tattoo took Tom on the ferry across _____ to the logger sports competition at _____.
3. All of the guests at Shirleen's Place went on a driving tour to the ghost towns of _____ and _____.
4. Kendall Steele invited Tom to go spelunking at the _____.
5. On the way home, they stopped and relaxed in the hot springs at _____.

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

Characters from The Kootenay Kidnapper

Security Guard _____ _____ _____ _____	Theolonius T. Judd _____ _____ _____ _____
Tattoo _____ _____ _____ _____	Simon _____ _____ _____ _____
Shirleen _____ _____ _____ _____	Kendall Steele _____ _____ _____ _____
Brandi _____ _____ _____ _____	Burton Donco _____ _____ _____ _____

Tom Austen
Dietmar Oban

Character Summary of Tom Austen

APPEARANCE

ACTIONS, FEELINGS, THOUGHTS AND WORDS

CHARACTER TRAITS

Chapter Questions

Chapter 1



1. Why was Tom suspicious of the security guard?

2. a) Why was the taxi unable to continue following the security guard's car?

b) Who was responsible for this action?

Chapter 3



1. Two different coaching styles were seen at the hockey game. Complete the following chart.

	Tumbler Ridge Team	Nelson Home Team
Coach's Name		
Coach's Dress		
Coach's Response to Play		
Coach's Reaction at end of Game		

2. Why did Tom not ride with the two journalists to take them to City Hall?

Chapter 5



1. a) Explain the term "ghost town".

b) List three interesting details of life during this time period.

2. How did Tattoo and Brandi treat one another?

3. The local people believed there was a fortune in silver bars at the bottom of Slocan Lake.

a) How did the silver bars come to be at the bottom of the lake?

b) Why had they not been recovered?

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

Imagine you are Tom Austen. Write a letter to your sister, Liz, telling her about your adventure on this case. Remember to keep the events in chronological order. Use the friendly letter format.

3. Map Activity

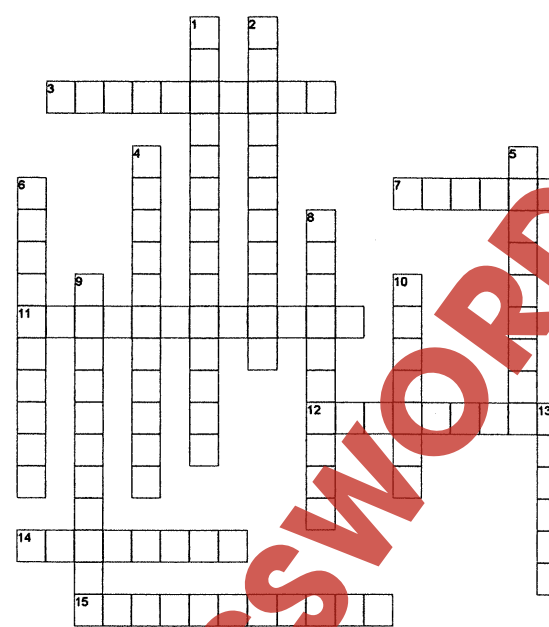
On your classroom map of Canada, mark and label the main setting of this novel.

4. Illustration

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

5. Vocabulary

Complete the following crossword.



ACROSS

- 3. Substitute bathroom (2 words)(p.48)
- 7. A chunk of solid gold (p.13)
- 11. Root beer drink (p.49)
- 12. Person who takes kids (p.85)
- 14. Indian word meaning water people (p.12)
- 15. Crystal growth coming down from the ceiling (p.63)

DOWN

- 1. Papers stating who a person is (p.2)
- 2. Body temperature too low (p.61)
- 4. Newspaper writers (p.25)
- 5. Something easily remembered (p.53)
- 6. Unusual tourist attraction made from embalming fluid bottles (2 words)(p.10)
- 8. Cave exploring (p.38)
- 9. Men who searched for valuable minerals (p.40)
- 10. Type of salmon (p.12)
- 13. Money demanded by a kidnapper (p.50)

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



Chapter 8

1. As they talked together, Tom and Tattoo believed they knew the whereabouts of the missing children. Explain their theory.

2. a) The drink offered by Kendall Steele tasted odd to Tom. What effect did this drink have on Tom?

b) Kendall Steele offered Tom some green pills to help him feel better. Why did Tom not swallow these pills?

3. Who did Tom meet in the mine shaft?

e) Why did Tom try to escape from Tattoo?

Tom tried to escape from Tattoo because Tattoo was drunk and Tom knew that it is not safe to drive with a person who has been drinking alcohol.

Chapter 8

As they talked together, Tom and Tattoo believed they knew the whereabouts of the missing children. Explain their theory.

Tom wondered if the kidnapper had built or renovated a cabin somewhere in the woods and was holding the children there. Tattoo remembered that up near Cody Caves, some old mine buildings were being fixed up. Together they arrived at the conclusion that the children were being held in one of these old buildings near Cody Caves.

a) The drink offered by Kendall Steele tasted odd to Tom. What effect did this drink have on Tom?

After finishing his drink, Tom felt his face go numb and his thinking became disoriented.

b) Kendall Steele offered Tom some green pills to help him feel better. Why did Tom not swallow these pills?

Tom realized that these pills were drugs which were intended to sedate him.

Who did Tom meet in the mine shaft?

Tom met Tattoo in the mine shaft.

Chapter 9

a) Who was the kidnapper?

Kendall Steele was the kidnapper.

ANSWER KEY