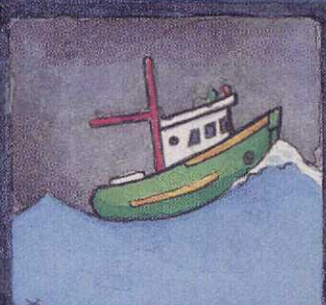


THE Reluctant Deckhand



Teacher's Guide



THE **Reluctant Deckhand**



Teacher's Guide
for the Novel & Film



Contents

The Reluctant Deckhand – Novel published by Pacific Educational Press

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The Reluctant Deckhand: Teacher's Guide for the Novel and Film

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Teachers may photocopy any part or all of this Guide for classroom use.

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The Reluctant Deckhand package consists of:

- a 33-minute animation film in six episodes
- a 13-minute documentary
- a 128-page novel
- this Teacher's Guide.

The filmmaker, Jan Padgett, also wrote the novel. Amanda Forbis created the film's animation as well as the book's illustrations. Both the film and the novel are recommended for children eight to twelve years old.

SYNOPSIS

Tess is ten years old – old enough, now, to join her mother, Sue, for a summer on the *Henry Bay*, Sue's fishing boat. Sue wants Tess to fish for cod with her in the northern waters off Vancouver Island, but Tess fears what might happen in places like Blackfish Sound, Scarlett Point, and Alert Bay. Tess doesn't want to go, and she doesn't want to spend the summer so far away from her best friend, Candice.

But Tess does go, and over the summer the reluctant deckhand becomes a resourceful fisher and a skillful crew member. She rises to the challenge of tidal currents and storms, and thrills in the summer's unexpected pleasures – sighting dolphins, coming breathtakingly close to orcas, exploring the deserted Native village of Memcwmlees.

Tess has a companion on her expedition, Maa-mou the cat, a good-bye present from Candice. Maa-mou's curiosity gets them both into trouble but the cat's playfulness helps them solve dilemmas too. A more mature Tess is eventually capable of what she once would have thought impossible – taking the wheel of the *Henry Bay* while her mother helps a boat in distress.

APPROACHES TO READING AND VIEWING

Either the film or the novel can be enjoyed independently, and many of the activities suggested in this guide can be used with either form. However, studying both the film and novel, which were created by the same person, affords an opportunity for students to explore the characteristics of each medium.

The story invites students to make their own personal and relevant responses. These may be expressed in many different forms, for example through talk, art, diagrams, writing, dramatization or music. It is important to encourage and allow a variety of responses so that students can demonstrate their thinking in ways that capitalize upon their strengths and help them develop new skills.

THEMES AND BIG IDEAS IN THIS GUIDE

Both the film and novel are full of possibilities. For this Teacher's Guide, we have developed activities within the themes of Relationships, Stewardship of the Earth, Life on the Coast and The Storyteller's Art.

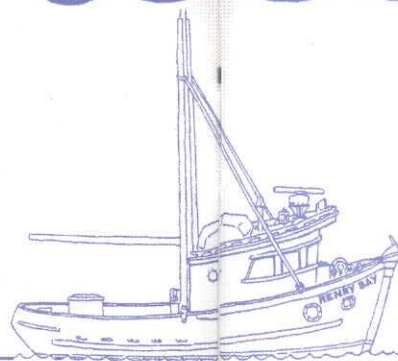
Threaded throughout the story are big ideas such as:

- meeting challenges, and changing and growing as a result;
- the relationship between feelings and actions;
- dealing with conflict and solving problems;
- the beauty and fragility of the natural environment;
- the effects of changing technology and making conscious choices about how you live and interact with your community and environment.

Throughout this guide, we have developed activities to explore these themes and ideas. Students and teachers will find many more avenues for their own explorations.

Curriculum Connections

Both the film and novel integrate naturally into many curriculum areas:



LANGUAGE ARTS

- reading
- writing
- listening
- speaking
- viewing
- representing
- critical thinking

SOCIAL STUDIES

- mapping
- exploring regions of Canada through literature and film
- studying the art, work and lives of First Nations peoples, using the basket as a starting point
- exploring historical aspects of life and work on the West Coast and the effects of technology
- examining relationships, interactions, and families

THE ARTS

- observing and sketching
- watercolour painting
- weaving
- animation
- noticing and using design, pattern, and line
- dramatization and role playing
- creating songs and sound effects
- representing responses
- making models and three-dimensional representations

SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS

- studying the environment
- studying the ocean including researching life-cycles and habitats of marine life, and tides and currents
- studying weather
- observing, comparing, classifying
- graphing and charting
- navigating and orienteering

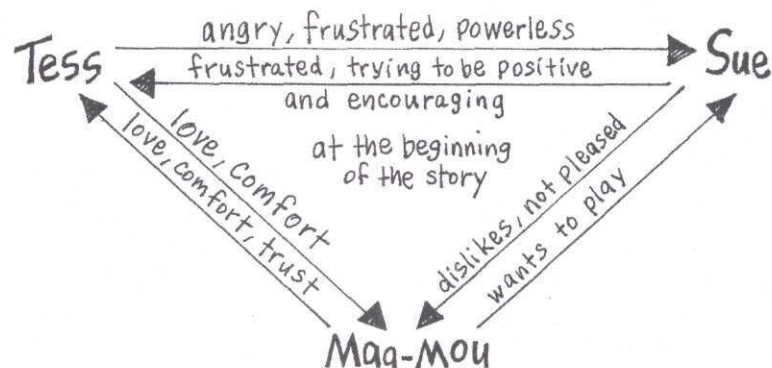
EXPLORING CAREERS AND PERSONAL PLANNING

- exploring relationships and feelings
- exploring and recognizing personal growth and change
- noticing and practising conflict resolution and problem-solving
- goal-setting and decision-making
- studying the work and lifestyles of various people
- developing an awareness of the changing roles of women and men in our society

Relationships

Tess and her mother grow in their understanding of each other as a result of spending the summer together. As well, Tess and Candice maintain a long-distance friendship by exchanging postcards until they are able to meet in Alert Bay with Candice's Auntie Betty, an Elder who begins to share her knowledge about the cedar tree and basket weaving with them. These activities examine relationships and provide opportunities for students to make connections with their own experiences.

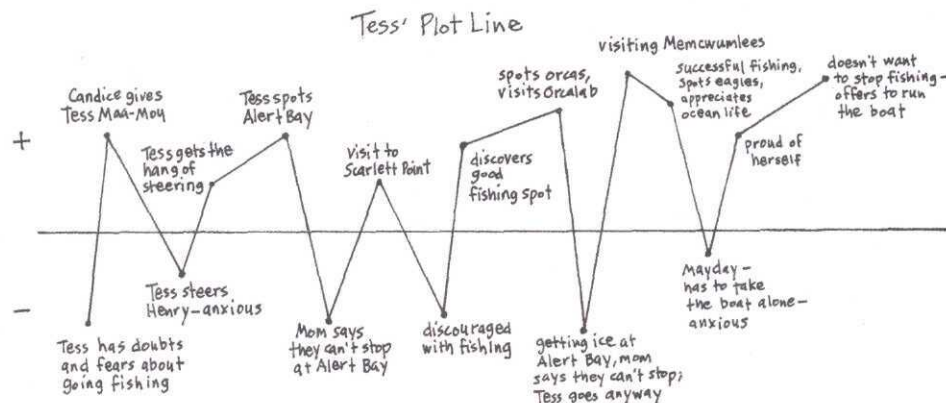
- Create a sociogram showing the relationships among the characters of the story. This sociogram could be developed at the beginning of the story, then again at the end. For example:



- Keep an ongoing record of the challenges Tess faces and their outcomes. Have students connect Tess' challenges with challenges they have faced. Some connections for students might include:
 - Think of a time when you left your friends to go away with your family.
 - Think of a time when you had to do something challenging and met with success.

Challenges	Tess	Outcomes	Challenges	Me	Outcomes

- Throughout the reading/viewing, plot out the key events, along with Tess' feelings, on a graph. A similar plot line could be developed for Sue. If these plot lines are recorded on overhead transparencies using a different colour for each, they can be superimposed and compared. For example:



- Using events identified on the plot line, have students choose one in which a character may be feeling/thinking something different from what they're saying. Have students illustrate this using talk balloons and thought bubbles. For example:



- Have the students develop character profiles of Sue and Tess at the beginning of the story, then again at the end. Include descriptions of behaviour, motivations and feelings, as well as physical appearance. For example:

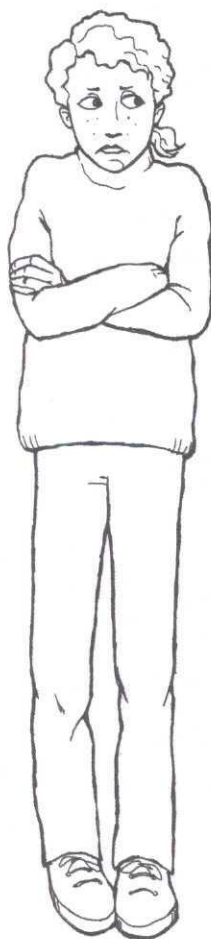
Tess at the beginning of the story

motives

doesn't want to leave her friend,
doesn't want to miss the weaving contest,
worried about getting seasick,
worried about being so far from help,
worried about rough seas

feelings

anxious	powerless
worried	scared
unhappy	lonely
bored	confined



appearance

slumped, downcast,
hunched shoulders,
frowning,
angry eyes,
glaring

behaviour

pouty,
complaining,
uncooperative

- Notice how Sue and Tess deal with conflict. List the kinds of actions they take to prevent a "blow-up". Some things the students might notice are: moving to another space, coming back to apologize, putting feelings into words, and seeking comfort from pets or through writing. Have the students role-play problematic situations from home or school using some of these strategies to resolve the situation.



- Have students notice the characteristics of Tess' family – its composition, pets, responsibilities of family members, and so forth. Then have them compare this family with their own, charting likenesses and differences. This could be developed to compare likenesses and differences among families in the class.
- Discuss the money Tess is earning by helping her mother during the summer, how her mother wants a say in how the money will be spent, and what Tess decides she would like to buy. The students might like to share how they earn money, how they spend it, and what their financial goals are.
- In the novel, Auntie Betty teaches Candice about making baskets and hands down traditions and responsibilities, as does Sue to Tess. Have the students create a skit in which an older family member or friend teaches a young person. These skits may be based upon the students' personal experiences of learning from "Elders" in their families.
- Have students reflect on the friendship of Tess and Candice, and identify the qualities that make them such good friends. Then have them reflect on their own friendships. From these reflections and discussions, try to develop a profile of a good friend, and strategies people use to develop and sustain friendships.



- There are many other ways in which students might wish to represent their responses to the characters in the story. For example, they might write a journal from Tess' point of view, write postcards from Tess and Candice, or act out scenes from this story or from imagined future adventures of Sue and Tess aboard the *Henry Bay*. As well, they might like to keep personal journals, or write postcards to their own friends.

Life on the Coast



In addition to the main characters Sue and Tess, we are introduced to other interesting characters who have chosen and maintained a way of life for themselves on the coast, in the presence of many challenges. This section invites students to choose a character and compare that character's community and lifestyle with their own.

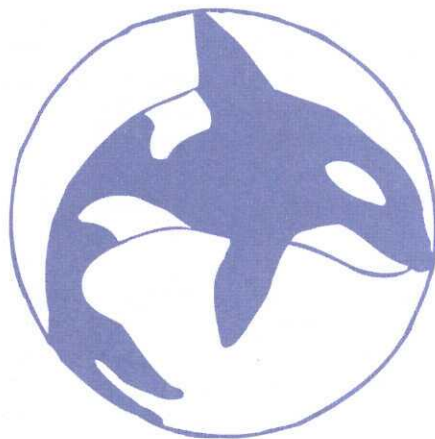
- In order to investigate a particular way of life in more detail, have students choose a character whose lifestyle they find interesting. Students might team up with classmates who have chosen the same character. Have them re-read or re-view pertinent sections of the novel or film to notice and record:
 - where their focus character lives
 - what the surrounding environment is like
 - what this person does to sustain him/herself
 - who this person relies on
 - this person's relationship to the environment
 - how this person's work and life have changed over time.
- Have students compile a list of questions they might want to ask of their character. Possible questions are: "What do you enjoy most about your life on the coast?", "What problems and risks do you face?", "What do you do for fun?", "What issues affect your life?" Then, either by direct interview or through a computer network, find someone who lives as this character does and who would be willing to respond to questions. More information could be found in newspapers, books, and other media.

- Have students explore different ways of representing their character's life with, for example, a "filmstrip" sequence of illustrations; cartoons; a poster with labelled charts or maps (see pages 26-29 of this Guide); a diorama or mural; or role plays. The ship's log on pages 30-31 is also a useful model for student writing.
- Both the novel and the film raise many issues that affect the lives of the characters. Ask students to reflect on one of these issues (e.g., automated lighthouses, diminishing fish stocks, use versus misuse of resources) and to develop their own positions. These positions can then be used in debates with other students, in comparison with issues in their own communities, or as motivation for some personal goal-setting and action.
- Have students reflect upon the life of the character they studied, and upon their own life, by asking questions such as:
 - What about this person's lifestyle appeals to you?
 - If you could design your own lifestyle, what would it be like?
 - If you could live anywhere or any way that you wanted, what would your life be like?
- With teacher and parent support, help students pursue first-hand experiences related to the lives of characters in this story (for example, learning to weave, kayak, take photos, or fish with an expert; visiting a fisher, biologist, or search and rescue expert at their workplace).



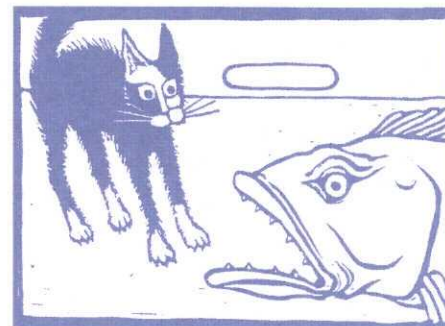
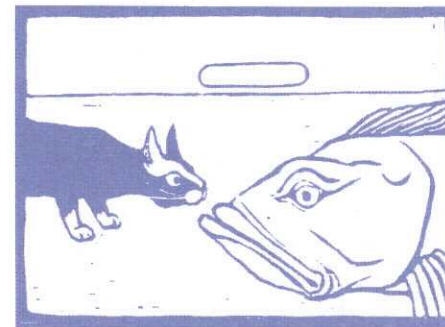
Stewardship of the Earth

This novel and film offer a glimpse of the beauty and inter-connectedness of people, animals, land, sea and weather. In this section, students are given opportunities to observe their own environment more carefully, to research animals and the impact humans have on their habitats, and to understand how some human activities threaten this fragile web while others protect and enhance it.



- Discuss with students aspects of the coastal environment that stood out for them in the film or the novel. Use this list to help them create a class mural complete with features of the land and seascape, animals, weather conditions, and impact by humans.
- Create a corresponding list and mural illustrating their own community's environment.
- Have individuals or small groups of students choose and research an animal from the novel or film, or from their own environment. Encourage them to learn about its habitat, its diet, conditions for survival, place in the food chain and how it protects itself. Explore ways in which humans affect its life and what can be done to protect it. The students' findings might be presented to the class as a report, a captioned painting, a story, an "interview" with the animal or in other forms.

- In the story, Sue comments upon the presence of fish farms and clearcuts. Ask students to choose one or both of these as issues to investigate further. Suggest that they ask questions such as: What are the effects on the environment? What concerns do you think Sue has? What other practices might be more environmentally sound? What are your opinions?
- In response to Tess' interest in the ocean, Sue comments, "Yes, it's another world under there. And one we'd better take care of. It's all connected — land, ocean, air." Invite the students to discuss what they think Sue means by this, and begin to talk about ways they can take care of where they live. Have them make a list of actions they could take in their own school or community.
- Explore the ways in which teachers, administrators and students are, or are not, taking care of their school's environment. Have students design a class project that enhances the environment of their classroom, school or neighbourhood.
- Re-read or re-view the section of the story where Candice, Auntie Betty, Tess and Sue visit Memcwumlees to gather cedar for making baskets. Notice how the cedar trees are respected and cared for, and how anything that is taken is used completely. Talk about why that might have been important. With the support of other resources, have the students illustrate and explain how the cedar tree (or some other natural resource) has traditionally been used by First Nations people.



- Discuss the importance to the *Henry Bay* of tide, current and weather information. Find out if there are people in your community whose livelihoods are affected by weather, for example: farmers, loggers, fishers or utility workers. What is the typical weather pattern in your community? How does it affect your work and play?
- Visit a beach or other natural location in your community before and after a storm to notice the effects of weather on the land. Then re-view sections of the film to see the artist's technique in depicting different weather conditions. Have students draw or paint calm or stormy seascapes, or have them illustrate their findings by creating three-dimensional scenes before and after a storm.
- Heighten awareness of the sounds of the weather, the water and the beach by reviewing the storm section of the film without sound. Have the students create their own soundscape to perform with this part of the film. Then watch this section with the sound turned on and have the students compare their sounds to those in the film. Students may also wish to make a soundscape specific to their area.

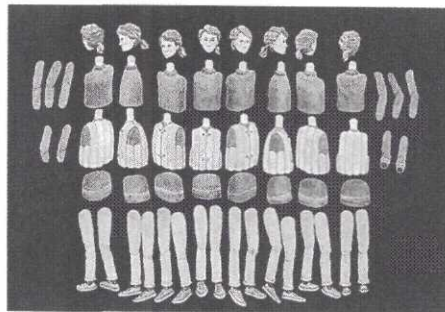
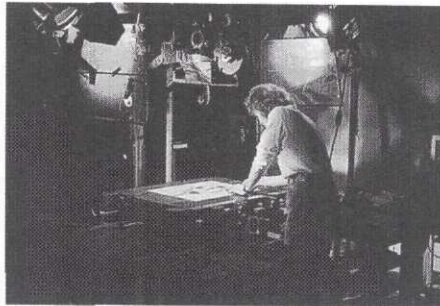


- Every culture has accumulated observations about weather which are often expressed as "sayings". Examples of this are: "Red sky in the morning, sailors take warning; red sky at night, sailors' delight" and "When the days begin to lengthen, the cold begins to strengthen." What examples of such lore do students know? Suggest that they ask some of the older members of their families or communities what weather sayings they learned when they were young. What modern practices have reduced our reliance on such observations?
- When the *Henry Bay* visits the lighthouse at Scarlett Point, Tess learns a little about the modern innovations that have made lighthouses more efficient and effective. Ask students to think of other modern inventions that make our lives easier and safer, for example sonar or radar. Help students create a list of devices that make their community or neighbourhood a safer and easier place to live.

Exploring the Storyteller's Art

The interpretation of this film into a novel, and the additional documentary on the process of creating these two versions of The Reluctant Deckhand, provide an opportunity to learn more about the art of storytelling.

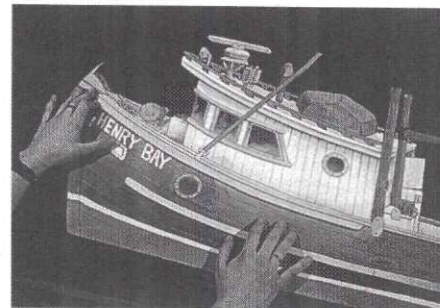
- View the documentary in which author and director Jan Padgett and animator Amanda Forbis talk about the process of creating this film script, animation film, and novel. Invite the students to share their thoughts and reactions, and from this discussion, develop a profile of the qualities they think writers and animators might need. As well, draw and label the time line for this whole process of development.
- Show students the sample storyboard (pages 20-21) for the film *The Reluctant Deckhand*. Notice how the storyboard captures the key elements or main ideas of the story, then have the students write captions for each picture.
- Invite students to create their own storyboard for a story of their own, or perhaps for another episode from the film, using the blank storyboard blackline master (pages 22-23). Encourage them to use a combination of distant and close-up shots, and to include labels and dialogue.
- Explore the idea of animation by having students create a flip book in the corner of a notebook, drawing one simple image at the top corner (e.g., seagull, Maa-mou, fish) and changing the drawing very slightly from one page to the next. Further understanding about animation could be developed using the NFB film *Animando* or the book *Flipbook Animation and Other Ways to Make Cartoons Move*.



- View a section of the film to notice how feelings are shown in this animation. Draw the students' attention to how eyebrows, mouths, and hands change to represent different emotions.



- Using the blackline master "Animate Tess" on pages 24-25, have students cut out the eyebrows, eyes, and mouths and move them around the face to show a range of feelings.
- Using the blackline master on pages 24-25 as a reference, have students create their own characters and animate the faces.



- View one section of the film again, this time with the sound turned off. Discuss the effect of this experience. Then re-view with the sound turned on and list all the sound effects. Discuss the effect of the sounds and music on the story. In the documentary about the making of the film, view the musicians creating the musical accompaniment. Students may wish to create their own retelling of another story using musical accompaniment and sound effects.
- To compare the ways in which a writer and a filmmaker may treat a moment in a story, choose a special event in the plot (for example, when Tess sees the orcas swimming beneath her kayak) or a mood (for example, Tess' frustration with her mother). Notice how the novel uses words to create a picture of the scene for our imaginations. Then notice how the film uses sound, music, and image to present the story.

A Storyboard Page

22



TESS: Aw, mom!

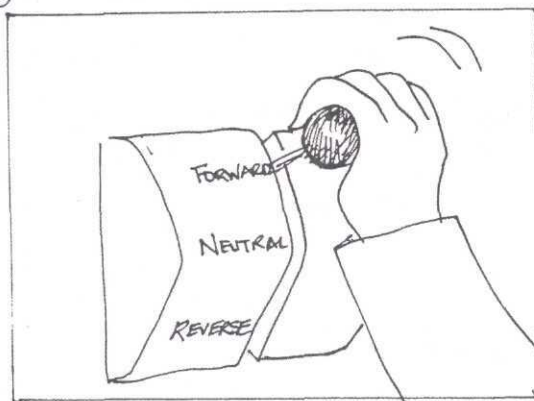
SUE: What are we going to do with a kitten?

TESS: Mom, I'll take care of it-

SUE: Tess!

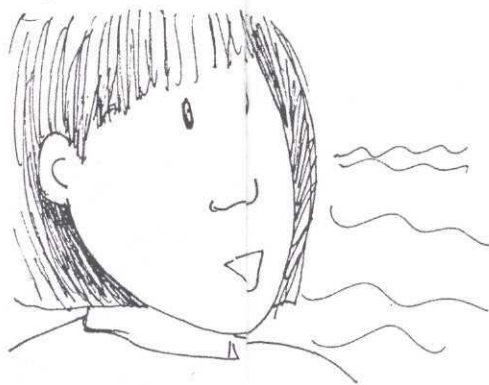
TESS: I promise. Please?

25



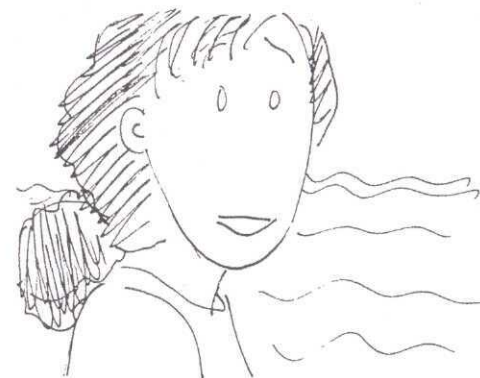
... Anyway, it's time to go.
(SUE STARTS THE ENGINE)

23



CANDICE: His name is Maman.
That's Scottish for cat.

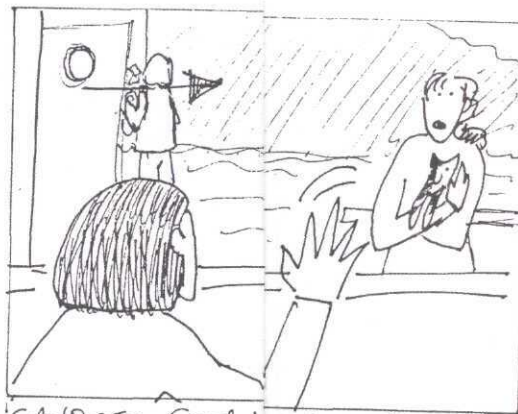
24



TESS: Please mom?

SUE: Alright, alright. But there'll be trouble over this one.

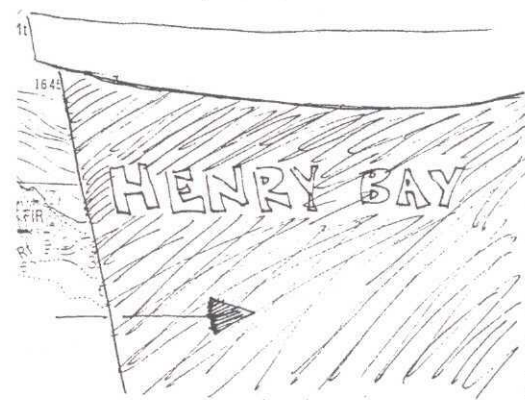
26



CANDICE: Good luck! And go see Auntie.

TESS: Thanks! Bye
(HENRY BAY STARTS TO PULL AWAY.)

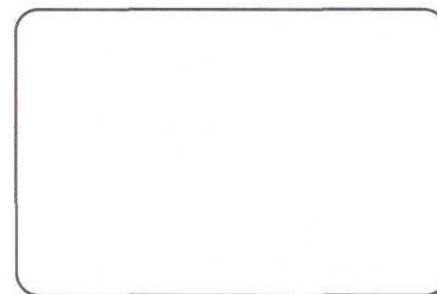
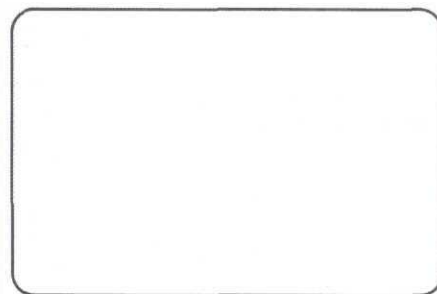
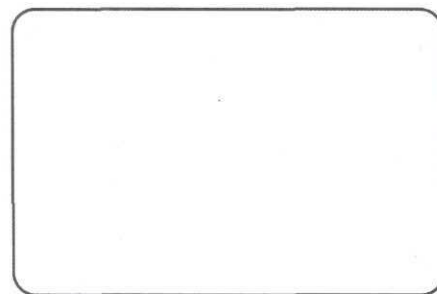
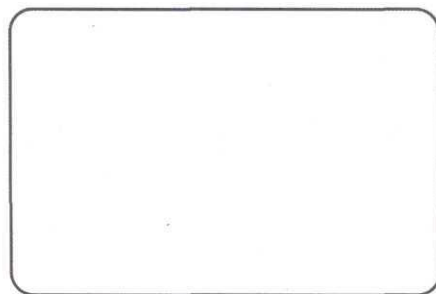
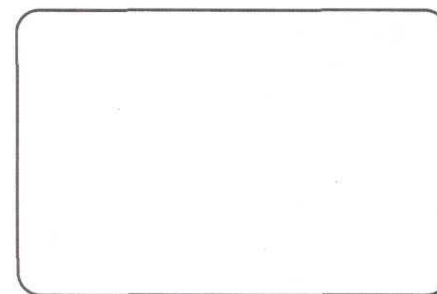
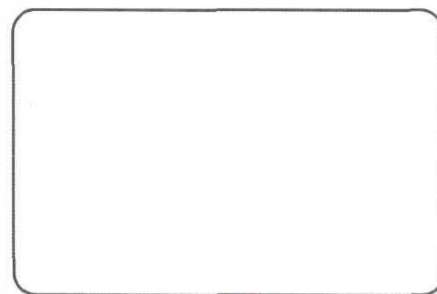
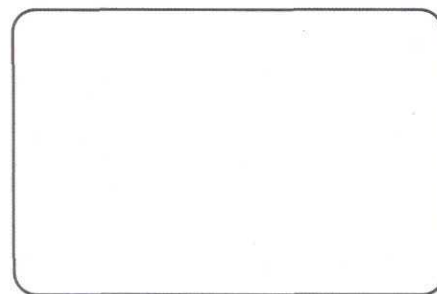
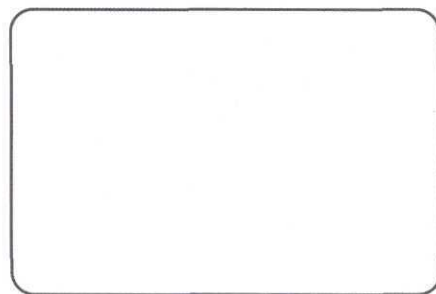
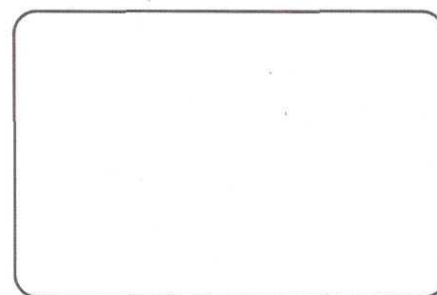
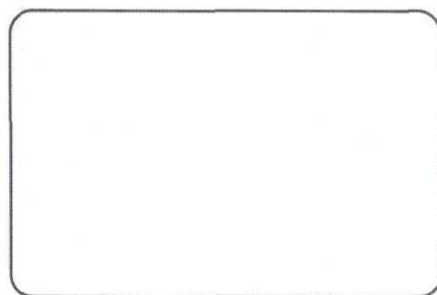
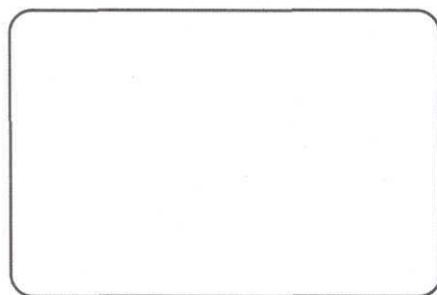
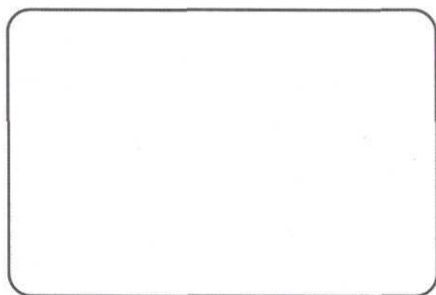
27



(HENRY BAY BOW PULLS OUT TO REVEAL CHART UNDERNEATH.)

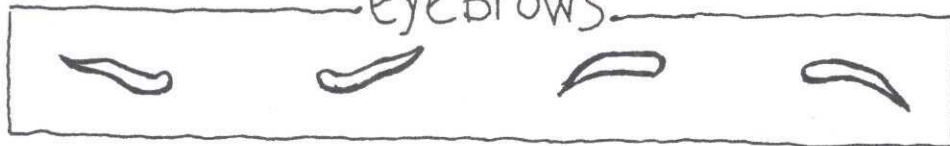
E1/P6

Create Your Own Storyboard

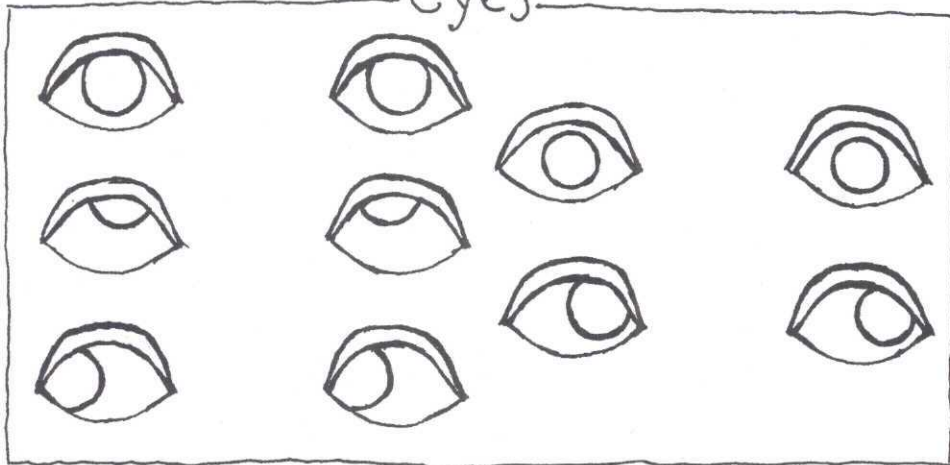


Animate Tess

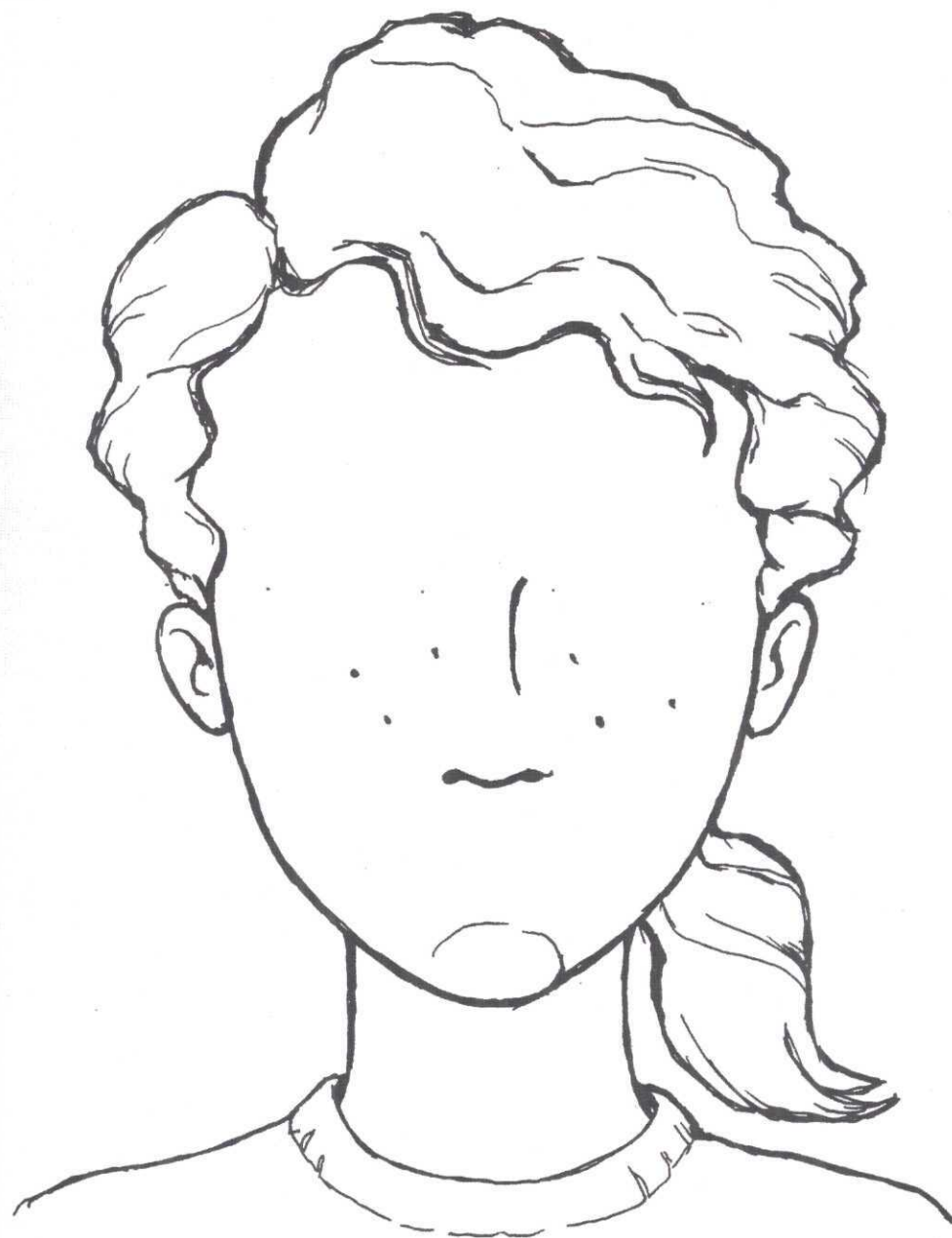
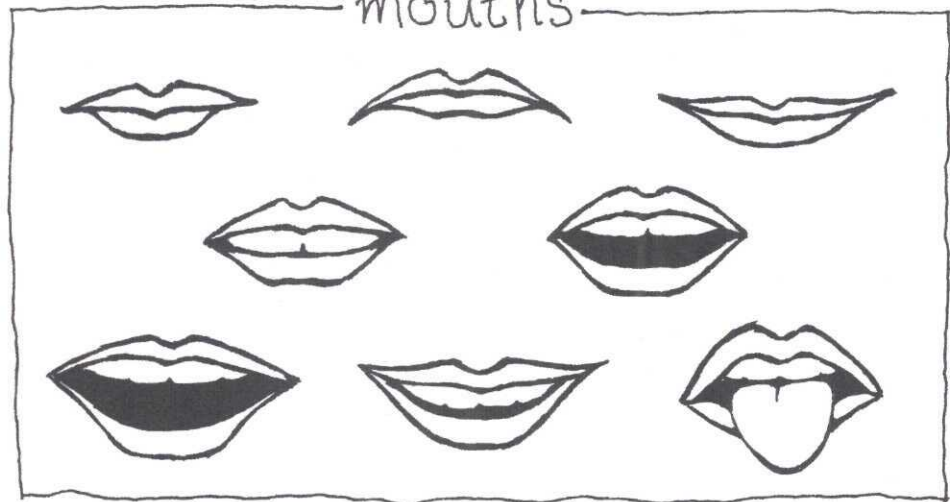
eyebrows



eyes

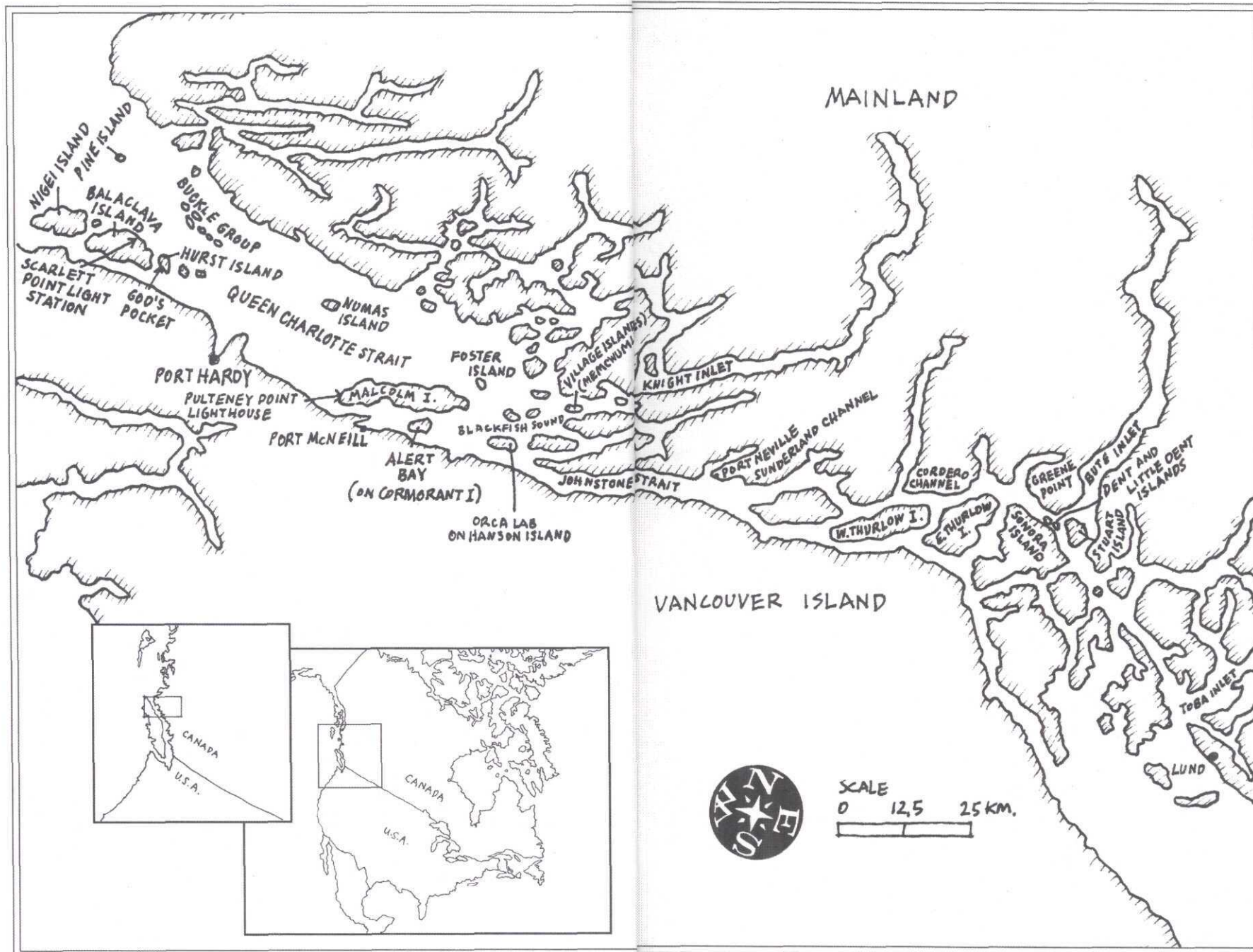


mouths

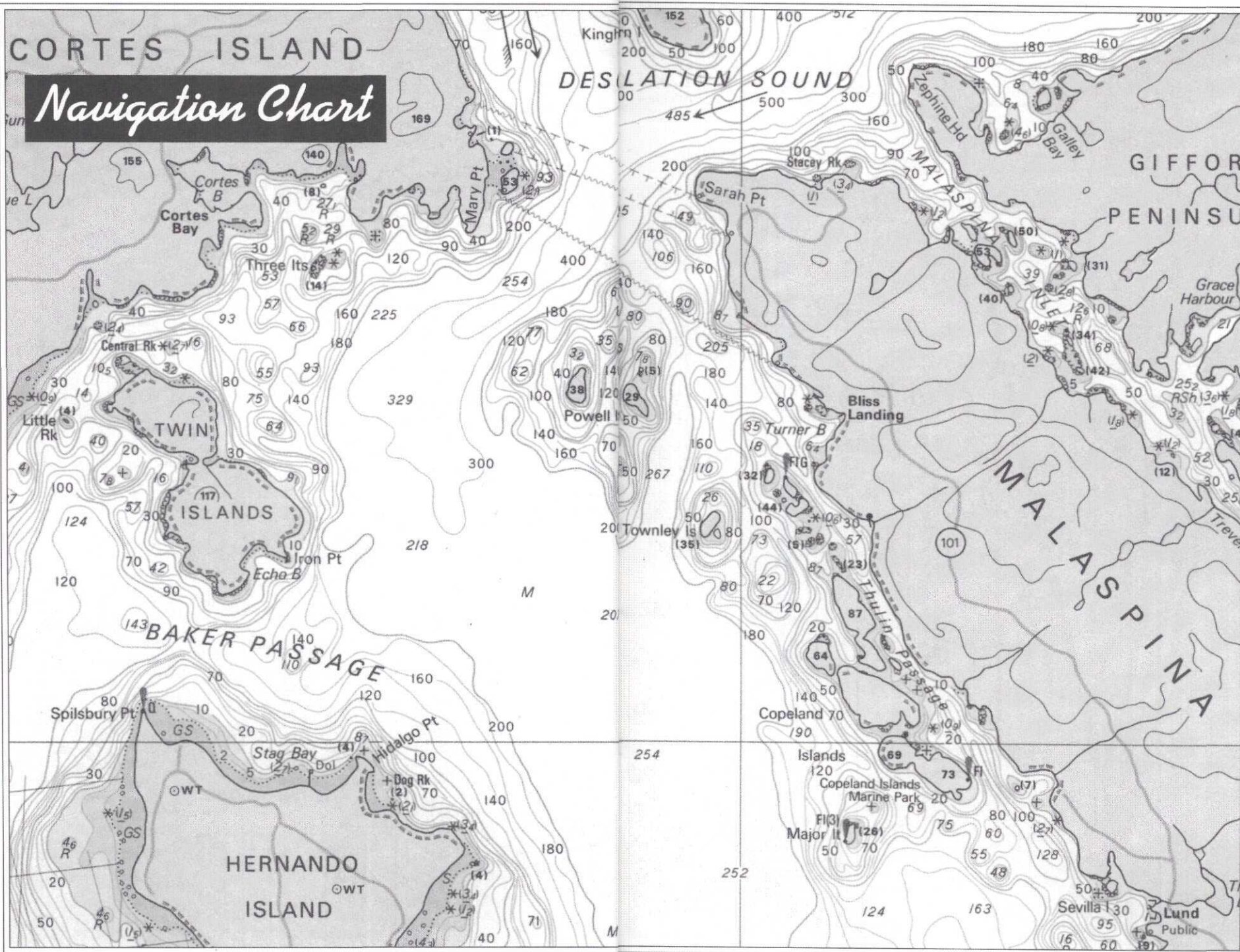


Map of Georgia Strait

Adapted from original map by Warren Clark



Navigation Chart



A Page from the Henry Bay's Log

Thursday, July 17

Sunny with cloudy periods
wind = N.W. 10-15, light chop
low N.W. swells
backing to S.W. 10-15 late afternoon

6:30 Browning Pass

8:35 Cardigan Rocks ——— good

11:50 Hunt Rock ——— lots of red snapper, china rocks,
quillbacks

17:15 Bates Passage ——— caught 1 halibut — dinner tonight!
reds and big rockfish at mouth
of Bates @ 60-80 metres

17:40 ——— sighted one minke whale on surface,
headed W.

81 rocks	150'bs
20 reds	115'bs
4 lings	38'bs

Resource Materials

Books for Children

- Andrews, Jan. Illustrated by Ian Wallace. *Very Last First Time*. Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre, 1985.
- Bouchard, David. Illustrated by Henry Ripplinger. *If You're Not from the Prairies*. Vancouver, BC: Raincoast Books and Summerwild Productions, 1993.
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- Distant Islands* (0181 052). Dir. Bettina Maylone, 1981, 6 min.
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