

## From *Cliffhanger* by Jacqueline Wilson

"Theresa's drowning!" Kelly sobbed.

"Where? Which canoe? There isn't a Theresa on the course! Kelly, who's Theresa?" they shouted urgently, Jake jumping up to dive to the rescue.

"She's her stupid Troll doll," Giles said disgustedly, as the mighty Panthers raced past towards the winning post.

Jake sat down again, and he and Sally waved their hands and went Phew!

"Please, Jake! Can't you dive in and look for her?" Kelly yelled. "Oh, Theresa. Where are you?"

"Hey!" said Biscuits, his eyes beady. "Look, Theresa's just bobbing past!"

I looked – and saw a little purple blob floating off towards the bank.

"It is Theresa! It's OK, Kelly," I shouted. "We've spotted her, Biscuits and me. We'll get her."

"Yeah, we'll get her out for you, Kelly," said Biscuits. "Er ... how do we get the canoe to go sideways, Tim?"



"Like this? Mmm. No. Like this?"

Our canoe wobbled dramatically as we experimented.

"What are you two playing at?" Giles yelled. "Finish the race first. We've all got to finish or we won't get any points. You can go back for her doll afterwards."

"She can't wait!" said Kelly.

"Come on, Biscuits," I said. "Before she gets swallowed up by a fish or something."

We made for the bank as best we could.

"You berks!" Giles yelled in disgust. "You weedy nerdy little cissies."

"I wish he'd get swallowed up by a fish," said Biscuits. "A socking great shark."

"He's going to get us later," I said.

Read the text, then answer the questions.

1. What activity are the children doing? Which words in the text tell you this?

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2. Why didn't Jake dive in to find Theresa? Why did Jake and Sally say "Phew!"?

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3. Why do Tim and Biscuits want to rescue Theresa straightaway? Tick **true** or **false** for each of the following reasons.

	True	False
So she doesn't get lost.		
So she doesn't drown.		
So she doesn't get eaten by a fish.		
Because Kelly was upset.		

4. What sort of personality does Giles have? Find as many words and phrases from the text as you can to support your answer and write them below.

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5. What does Tim think Giles will do later? How do you think Tim feels about Giles?

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6. Think about what you would do if you were Tim or Biscuits. On a separate piece of paper, write a paragraph to say what you think Tim and Biscuits should have done and give reasons for your answer. Try to include evidence from the text to support your reasons.

## What to expect

- 1. What activity are the children doing? Which words in the text tell you this?** (2c)

Children working towards the expected standard are likely to identify the word "canoe". Most other children may refer to "the winning post" and "finish the race first" as telling them it is a canoe race.
- 2. Why didn't Jake dive in to find Theresa? Why did Jake and Sally say "Phew!"?** (2d)

Most children will identify that Theresa was a doll. Some children working at greater depth within the expected standard may also suggest that Jake didn't dive in because he realised it wasn't a child and a doll can't drown. They will suggest that Jake and Sally were relieved.
- 3. Why do Tim and Biscuits want to rescue Theresa straightaway? Tick true or false for each of the following reasons.** (2c)

Most children should be able to answer correctly. Children working towards the expected standard may incorrectly answer the first two options, thereby demonstrating a lack of understanding that a doll cannot drown but can still get lost.
- 4. What sort of personality does Giles have? Find as many words and phrases from the text as you can to support your answer and write them below.** (2g)

Children working towards the expected standard will use words from their own knowledge to describe Giles, such as "mean" or "bad-tempered", and will give an example from the text to show this, e.g. "he calls Tim and Biscuits nasty names". Other children may also say he wanted to win the race and didn't care about the others. Children working at greater depth within the expected standard may suggest he was a bully and quote Tim saying "He's going to get us later".
- 5. What does Tim think Giles will do later? How do you think Tim feels about Giles?** (2d)

Children working towards the expected standard will identify Tim's words, "He's going to get us later", with no explanation of meaning. Children working at the expected standard will explain that Tim thinks Giles will be angry or bully him. These children are likely to give a personal response to how Tim feels about Giles, e.g. "he's frightened of him" or they may use textual clues to infer Tim's feelings, e.g. "Tim thinks Giles is a bully but he still doesn't do what he wants on the river, so Tim doesn't give in to the bullying".
- 6. Think about what you would do if you were Tim or Biscuits. On a separate piece of paper, write a paragraph to say what you think Tim and Biscuits should have done and give reasons for your answer. Try to include evidence from the text to support your reasons.** (2d)

Children working towards the expected standard may give their opinion and support it with evidence based on one factor, such as how Kelly left and how they wanted to help her, or that they would have lost the race so shouldn't have stopped. Other children will expand their answer with more than one reason, suggesting that they should not let the team down; that winning was more important than a doll; or that friendship was more important than winning.