



“Island Sting is a fast-paced, environmental thriller that teens will tear into. Once you start reading, you’ll find yourself flipping pages as fast as you can, eager to find out what happens next. Great action, great characters, and a message that will resonate with readers of all ages.”

Frances O’Roark Dowell, Edgar-award-winning author of *Dovey Coe*, *Chicken Boy*, *The Secret Language of Girls*, and *Shooting the Moon*

Visit www.BonnieDoerrBooks.com for detailed lesson plans, answer keys, resources, and curriculum connections.

Examine the cover of *Island Sting*.

- What elements are incorporated in the design? (bullet holes, skid marks, road sign, words of warning, hoof prints, etc.).
- What feeling might the cover convey to a reader?
- Using different sources (several dictionaries, including Encarta, web searches, etc.), What usages and meanings for the word “sting” can you find?
- Which definition, or definitions, do you think most appropriate to *Island Sting*? Explain your reasoning.
- Do you think *Island Sting* is a good title for the book? Why or why not?
- Do you think yellow and black are appropriate colors for the cover? Why or why not?

Bonus: The title is used in conversation in the text of *Island Sting*. Which character uses the words “island sting”? What does the character mean by these words?

2. Imagine that you live in a wildlife refuge. What would be the advantages to living in such an area? What would be the disadvantages?
3. If you could help protect an endangered species, which one would it be? Are there any established organizations to protect the species you choose? Besides sending the organization money, what specific actions could you take to help?
4. Kenzie and Angelo work to decrease litter pollution on their island. Why is decreasing litter important? What could you do to decrease litter on school property?
5. In the story, Angelo apologizes to a character.
 - To whom does he make an apology and why?
 - Recall a time in your life when you owed someone an apology. Were you able to say you were sorry?
 - If so, how did you feel before and after?

- How did the person respond to your apology?
 - If you chose not to apologize, explain why and describe how you feel about that decision.
6. Angelo's friends call him by a name that's close to his given name, but different. How did his nickname come about?
 7. In the story the author chose to have Mr. Sanchez use Angelo's given name and its Spanish pronunciation. Why do you think the author did that? Would anything about the story have felt different if Mr. Sanchez called Angelo by his nickname?
 8. What elements of the story would be different if Fisher spoke with the same rhythm, style, and vocabulary as everyone else on the island? Do you think Fisher's speech pattern and mannerisms enhance or weaken his character?
 9. Throughout the book, Kenzie does not have a cell phone. Why doesn't she? If you had to go without a cell phone, how would your days change?
 10. In the last chapter, Kenzie receives a pendant that represents her key to the island. Do you think this is an appropriate gift for her? Why or why not?
 11. If Angelo and Kenzie had first met in the flea market's book tent and not in the combined rescue of Molly, how might their relationship have been different?
 12. Both Kenzie and Angelo kept their hunt for the poacher a secret from their family. Do you agree with that decision? Would you have done the same? Why or why not?
 13. In one scene where Angelo and Kenzie misunderstand each other, Angelo is sure he is correct when he says:

"It's called turtle grass because... It's like dog chow. Get it? Think. Chow for dogs—dog chow. Grass for turtles—turtle grass. Sea turtles are herbivores."

Kenzie replies, "Are you sure that's true of all sea turtles?"

Angelo retorts, "That's what I said, didn't I?"

The story continues by explaining that:

"Kenzie's encyclopedic knowledge of sea turtles was about to explode. If she opened her mouth now, her words would torch him like dragon fire."

In the above scene Kenzie is aware of how much more she actually knows about a subject than Angelo, and Angelo is sure he knows more than Kenzie. Have you ever been in a similar position as Angelo or Kenzie? How did you respond?
 14. If Mr. Sanchez and Ms. Ryan had each learned of what Kenzie and Angelo were up to, how you think they would have responded. In what ways do you think Mr. Sanchez' response would be similar to Ms. Ryan's? How might their responses have differed?

15. Kenzie refuses to speak to her father as in the following scene.

“You handle it, Mom. I don’t want to talk to him.”

“Kenzie, we’ve been over this. Your dad loves you. He cares about what’s going on in your life.”

“If he cares so much, why’d he leave?”

“He didn’t leave because he doesn’t care about you. What happened was between—”

“Mom, I know what happened. I don’t want to talk to him.”

Have you refused to talk to someone? If so, did you ever get over it? What do you think caused Kenzie’s change of heart? Why do you think she finally called her father?

16. At the end of the book, in addition to the silver key pendant, Kenzie is given a puppy. What significance do you think that gift holds? Why do you think the author chose to have Angelo present her with the puppy?

17. Angelo and Kenzie both receive reward money. Do you agree with how Angelo plans to use his money? Kenzie doesn’t make it clear how she will use hers. How do you think she will spend it?

18. The author never reveals the amount of money they receive. How much do you think a reward for catching the poacher would be?

19. If you received a reward of five hundred dollars, how would you use the funds?

Activities

1. Social Studies/ Math - Kenzie moves from New York City to Big Pine Key, Florida.

- On a map of the Eastern United States, trace two different routes her mom could have driven—a scenic route and a direct route.
- Identify at least five stops along each route. Explain your rationale for choosing these stops.
- Which route would you choose? Why would you prefer that route?
- In order, north to south, name the states your preferred route would pass through.
- Estimate your trip's total mileage.
- Assuming you average a speed of sixty miles per hour, estimate the time your trip would take allowing for stops. Be sure to consider the time you’d expect each stop to require.
- If your gas tank holds fifteen gallons of gas. How much gas would you estimate your trip would require?

2. Art -
 - Design a key, pendant, or a coat of arms-like logo for the city, town, or neighborhood in which you live. Explain why you chose the elements incorporated in your design.
 - Design a logo for the Keys Teens Care group or design one for your own Green Teens organization. Explain why your logo is appropriate.
3. Language Arts - Pretend you are a character in *Island Sting*. Describe your character and your purpose in the story. Choose a scene and rewrite it with you in it.
4. Graphic Organizer - Compare and contrast your summer vacation days to those of Angelo and Kenzie. Consider such points as activities (alone and with friends), entertainment, experiences. Chart your results on a Venn Diagram.
5. Graphic Organizer - As Kenzie becomes involved with catching the poacher and working with other teens on the island, what does she learn about herself?
 - Create a three column chart of her personality traits and/or behavioral characteristics in the beginning of the book, the middle, and at the end.
 - Include any people and/or events that serve as catalysts to her growth.
 - Repeat the process for Angelo.
6. Science - When the term “endangered species” is heard, most people think of animals. Research and then list both the plants and animals that are threatened or endangered in your state, providence, or country. Explain the difference between “threatened” and “endangered.”