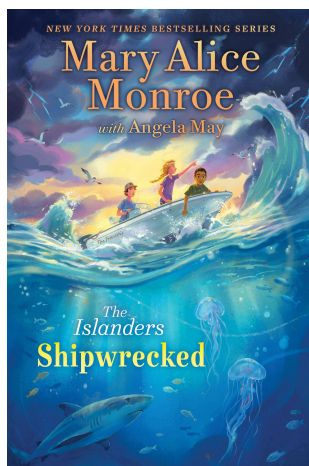


A Curriculum Guide for

Shipwrecked

by Mary Alice Monroe and Angela May



About the Book

Jake, Macon, and Lovie are about to embark on a summer they'll never forget. These three friends, known as The Islanders, are back on Dewees Island to explore and experience the joys of yet another summer. Jake has a dream of owning a boat, and he will do just about anything to make it happen. With the help of his friends, his dream comes true. However, the dream becomes a nightmare when they are caught in a storm while on a boating trip. With no technology to help them get in touch with their families, they are on their own. To make matters worse, the Islanders become stranded on an island with no inhabitants and little food and fresh water. They must use their knowledge, strength, and courage to get through. As Jake, Macon, and Lovie already have their own inner struggles to deal with, this hardship will certainly test their patience and friendship. Will this be the end of the Islanders and their last summer together, or will they survive their own fates?

Discussion Questions

1. *Shipwrecked* begins with a prologue, which is defined as an introduction to a literary work that gives background information about the story or its characters. This prologue entices the reader with an

apology note that sets the tone of the story. What do you think is the reason for this apology, and who wrote the note?

2. Jake, Lovie, and Macon are like the Three Musketeers, but they call themselves the Islanders. Even though they are best friends, they have different personalities. Describe their character traits and how their relationships differ among one another. Do they feel the same for each friend, or is there a closer bond between two of them? Do you think it's harder to be best friends in a threesome than in a pair? Explain.

3. The protagonist, Jake, and his two sidekicks, Macon and Lovie, all have complicated relationships with their dads, who disappoint their children in different ways. Lovie states, “Parents. They are so difficult sometimes . . .” (Chapter seven) Notice when this disappointment arises. What happens, and how do the characters feel when it does occur?

4. At multiple times in the book, we see the power of persuasion at play. To be able to convince others to adopt your point of view is a practiced skill. Notice and discuss when the characters try to persuade others to embrace their ideas. What is the situation? What do the characters say, and how is the idea presented? What is the result? Have you ever been in a situation where you needed the power of persuasion? Explain.

5. In books, authors introduce secondary characters who could be advisors to the protagonist. Honey, Dad, Mom, and Scary Harry are some of these characters. What “life tips” do these secondary characters share with Jake and the others? Which tip do you think pertains most to you, and how would you use it to enhance your life?

6. Jake is dreaming about getting his own boat and living the good life with his friends. He needs to earn money fast to buy a boat from Oysterman Ollie. What is his plan? What would be your go-to plan if you needed to earn money fast? Explain your method and how you would go about it.

7. As Jake is working hard to earn money to buy a boat, Honey says, “I’m really proud of all the work you’re doing. And how the neighbors are willing to find you jobs. Shows you the spirit of Dewees Island.” (Chapter five) With all this community support, one can’t help but wonder who is helping who. Are the members of the community helping Jake, or is his service helping them? Can it be both? Discuss your thoughts, citing evidence from the text.

8. Macon is spending much of the summer studying for an acceptance into boarding school. Why is this important to his family? How does Macon feel about it? Would you consider making a life change to make your family happy, even if it's not what you want? Why or why not?
9. Throughout the story, we see how Jake, Lovie, and Macon's relationship strengthens. They are supportive friends, even when they don't always agree. Jake states, "Even though we couldn't be more different . . . we *got* each other." (Chapter five) Notice and discuss how and when the friends support one another. How do they encourage each other? Do you think it's always easy to support your family or friends? Explain.
10. During tough times, people often rely on objects to make them feel better. Jake's treasure is his dad's nature journals. He says that he is comforted and inspired by them. Dad is comforted by the letters Jake sends him when he is in the hospital. At what other points are characters soothed by objects? What thing comforts you? Where did you get it, and why does it make you feel good?
11. Lovie shares a secret with Jake but is hiding it from her mom. What is this secret, and why does she decide not to tell her mother this significant news? Do you think Lovie is doing the right thing in this situation? Is it morally acceptable to hide important information from your parents? What would you do?
12. Jake, Lovie, and Macon are having a splash in the creek and laughing up a storm. Jake thinks they are "free from parents' expectations and disappointments. Free from work and studying . . . this is the way summer should be." (Chapter seven) Describe your perfect summer. Who would you spend it with, where would you be, and what would you be doing? Why are these things important to you?
13. As we get to know the characters, we learn how they develop and change. Dad is one of these characters. For a year after his amputation from a war injury, he doesn't show anyone his prosthetic leg. "Kids stared, whispering, and pointing." (Chapter nine) Mom says that people mean no harm and are just "uninformed." Describe Jake's dad now and how he is coping with his new reality.
14. Jake is the happiest he's ever been when he's ready to sail the seas with his friends; that is, until they find themselves "lost at sea" with no way to contact home. Describe what happened and how it all took place. Give specific evidence on how Macon, Lovie, and Jake react and what their roles are now to help save themselves. How would you react if you were on the boat with them?
15. On July 25, Lost: Day 1, Jake is in survival mode. He remembers when his dad insisted that he memorize eight basic rules, which spell the word survival. "'Son, emergencies happen. All the time. Not just in combat. Anywhere. To anyone. Adults and kids. These tips can help you.'" (Chapter fifteen) What

do the letters stand for in the acronym SURVIVAL? Explain what they mean and which letter you think is most important.

16. On the second night adrift on the boat, Lovie says softly, ““Have you ever . . . done something you regret?”” (Chapter seventeen) They let out a bitter laugh, but then Jake’s emotions take over, and he apologizes for this disaster as tears flow down his cheeks. What do you think Lovie and Macon are regretting? Based on your life, think about how you would answer Lovie’s question. Explain if you are comfortable sharing.

17. As time passes, the friends need to be there to watch out for each other. Their relationships change in a positive way, but sometimes in a negative way. Describe the changes you see, specifically the changes between Jake and Lovie. What is happening to their friendship? In addition, describe, using text evidence, any changes you see in Macon and Jake’s relationship.

18. The climax of a story is an intense and major turning point in the plot. Chapter 19, Lost: Night 3, changes the course of the narrative. As a thunderstorm hits the boat, the author uses specific descriptive language to help the reader visualize the scene. Retell the action as if it were a movie. How did the characters act? How would you?

19. While on the island, the friends realize that to survive they each must focus on what they do best to help one another. Jake, Macon, and Lovie each have their own gifts to help them survive on the island. Describe, and explain with textual evidence, what each character can offer. What would be your gift for island survival?

20. After being lost for days, the Islanders talk about how much they miss their families. Lovie recalls writing a note to her mom about how much she hates her and thinks how sorry she is for thinking these thoughts. ““But that’s the thing about saying mean things. You can say you’re sorry, but it doesn’t take away the hurt.”” (Chapter twenty-six) What lesson can we learn by this statement? Have you ever been the one to say mean things, or have you been on the receiving end? How did it make you feel?

21. As the Islanders continue to survive on the island, they know they need to keep the fire they built lit. Macon’s idea is to throw his workbooks in the fire. When he gets back home, he wants to stand up to his dad and tell him, ““I want to walk my own path, not [yours].”” (Chapter twenty-six) Would you stand up for something you believe in even if it’s not a popular decision? What do Jake and Lovie want to do when they get back home? Will any of these conversations be easy? Why do you think the Islanders are being so reflective now?

22. There have been many scary, frustrating, worrisome moments on the island. However, there have been some happy times too. What joyful moments did the characters experience while being stranded? Do you think joy can be found in most situations? Explain. Describe a time when you had to find the good in a difficult situation.

23. An omen is an event or happening that you take as a sign of something to come. When the word *FRIENDSHIP*, from the boat, comes to shore, the Islanders begin to reminisce and discuss their luck. Jake says, “I think luck has nothing to do with omens. . . . Luck, good or bad, is what you make for yourself.” (Chapter thirty-one) Explain what Jake means by this. Do you agree with him? Why or why not?

24. After the Islanders are rescued, they have the opportunity to share the wishes they made on the island by being honest with others. When the community wants to celebrate their return, Jake explains, “I don’t feel like celebrating. The whole thing was all my fault. . . .” Honey says, “We all make mistakes . . . throughout life we have to also forgive. Forgive others . . . forgive yourself.” (Chapter thirty-two) What powerful message is Honey helping Jake understand? Do you believe it is easy to do? Share a moment when you found yourself in a situation similar to Jake’s, in which forgiveness played a significant role.

25. Jake ends his story with an entry in his journal. In one line he expresses, “I know the greatest treasure I found was my friendship.” (Chapter thirty-two) How does this sum up Jake’s summer? What has he learned?

Extension Activities

1. Mary Alice Monroe and Angela May write *Shipwrecked* in the form of an epistolary. Look up the definition of *epistolary* and cite evidence of the author’s style. Why do you think she chooses this style of writing for this narrative? Is it effective? Make a list of other books you know written in the same manner. Consider creating a pro-con list about the benefits and drawbacks of writing a story as an epistolary.

2. The author includes proverbs in her writing. Proverbs are short, well-known sayings that express a truth or piece of wisdom based on common sense or experience. For example, “One man’s trash is another man’s treasure” and “If you’re not early, then you’re late.” What other proverbs can you find in this book? Make a list and add others that come to mind.

3. Honey gives Jake, Lovie, and Macon black-and-white composition notebooks as nature journals. They find them very useful, while adding their own creative touches to them: drawings, writings, photos.

Design the cover of your own journal, and write your daily events, thoughts, or adventures in it. What topics would you choose? How would you design it to represent you? Be creative.

4. We are introduced to acronyms when Oysterman Ollie shares the price of his boat as \$3000 “OBO.” (Chapter seven) What does OBO stand for? With a partner or group, make a list, ASAP, of acronyms used in everyday language. How many can you come up with?
5. Macon, Lovie, and Jake are intrigued by heroes and famous people in history. Research and learn more about Jane Goodall, Amelia Earhart, the United States Navy Blue Angels, or Blackbeard the pirate. How do you think their experiences and achievements, either positive or negative, have inspired others or influenced history?
6. Spending time on Dewees Island gives the Islanders the opportunity to learn about animals through observation in nature. Research the Atlantic bottlenose dolphin, leatherback sea turtles, and Atlantic blacktip sharks. Compare their habitats, behaviors, and diets. What are their similarities and differences? Which one interests you most? Explain why.

Further Resources

Visit the Prosthetic Foundation website to gain awareness and learn more about how we can help change the lives of amputees. “Every day, more than 500 people in the US lose a limb, and it is estimated that, by 2050, the number of people living with limb loss will nearly double. There are over 2.1 million people in the United States living with limb loss or limb difference. Another 28 million people in our country are at risk for amputation.” AMPUTEE COALITION. See how you can help.

<https://www.theprotheticfoundation.org/>

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