

Al Capone Does My Shirts

Lit Link

Grades 4-6

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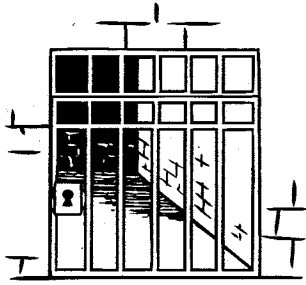
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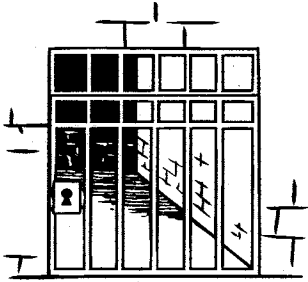
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Name: _____



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Chapters 1 – 2

Before you read the chapters:

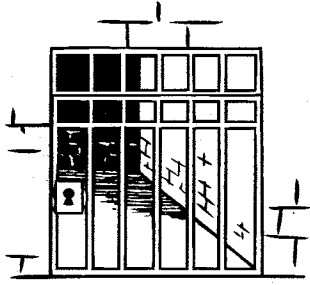
Al Capone Does My Shirts has a very unique setting: Alcatraz Prison. What would be two other unusual places for a kid to grow up?

Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

smithereens	felon	circuits	embezzler	tantrums
buoy	stilts	apparent	picky	affliction

1. An _____ is usually a person who steals funds from the company he or she works for.
2. My sister is a very _____ eater.
3. It was very _____ that someone had spilled mustard on the carpet.
4. The car was smashed to _____ at the crash-up derby.
5. The speedboat accidentally ran over the _____ close to the beach.
6. By using a pair of _____ he was able to see over the fence and into the ballpark.
7. His uncle, Jack, is a convicted _____, who spent time in Alcatraz.
8. All of the electrical _____ in the old house needed replacing.
9. A case of measles was the latest _____ that my little sister had to endure.
10. By the time he was four years old, he had finally stopped having temper _____.



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Questions:

1. a) Reread the first paragraph of Chapter 1. What question comes to mind when you read this paragraph?

- b) With what impression of Alcatraz does this paragraph leave you?

- c) The setting of a story includes not only the place (Alcatraz Island in this novel), but also the time. When did this story take place?

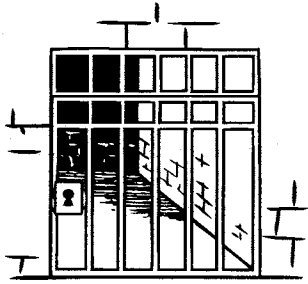
2. How did Moose and Natalie come to live on Alcatraz Island?

3. What do you think Moose means when he says that the kids at Esther P. Marinoff School have macaroni salad in their hair and wear their clothes inside out?

4. Why didn't the guards at Alcatraz, except for those stationed high in the towers or catwalks, carry guns?

5. What is unusual about Natalie?

6. When Moose talks about how he got his nickname, what do you think he means by saying, "I started growing to fit the name that very day"?



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7. What precautions did Moose take on his first night at Alcatraz? Do you think these precautions were necessary? Explain your answer.

8. Briefly describe Theresa Mattaman. Be sure to include her personality as well as her general appearance.

Language Activities:

1. Eleanor Roosevelt is mentioned in Chapter 2. Who was this woman? List one of her many accomplishments.

2. The author enjoys using **similes** in this novel. A simile is a comparison between two things using the words **like** or **as**. An example is found in Chapter 1: “there’s water all around, black and shiny like tar.”

In this example, **water** is compared to _____.

Use **similes** to compare the following:

- a) A vegetable to an iceberg: _____
- b) Thunder to (your choice): _____
- c) The surface of a lake to (your choice): _____

3. Another literary device the author enjoys using is **exaggeration**. An example of this is found in the following description: “it sounds like dozens of mice are dying an ugly death.” Find another example of exaggeration from the first two chapters.
