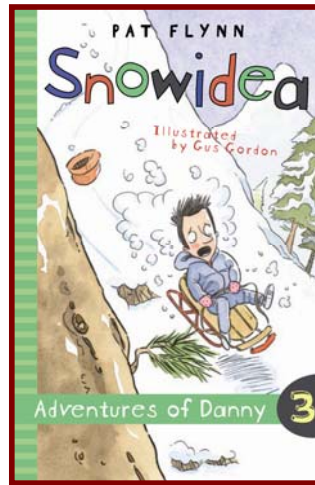


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SNOWIDEA

Pat Flynn



Teachers' Notes

Written by Pat Flynn

ISBN: 978 07022 3648 8/ AU\$14.95

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SYNOPSIS:

Like the other books in the *Adventures of Danny* series, *Snowidea* consists of a number of linked 'mini-novels' for 7-12 year-olds. Stories can be read either independently or sequentially to make up a larger narrative. The book begins with Danny's family leaving Australia on a six-month exchange to California. In America, Danny feels like a fish out of water as he tries to fit in to a new school and deal with a strange new species – girls! Each story is based on a real event from author Pat Flynn's life, and out of all his books he says that these are the most autobiographical.

This is what Pat says about *Snowidea*:

'When I was 10 my Dad arrived home from work and told us he'd organised an exchange with a family from California for six months. Mum wasn't happy but off we went, an Australian family in America, and that's how *Snowidea* came about.

'When I sat down to write the book I found much of the overseas experience still fresh in my mind – my first plane trip, going to a school where the Year 6's seemed a lot more mature than me, my first rolling skating party with girls. To help me even more I uncovered an old diary and an audio tape of a 10-year-old me describing life in California. For a writer it was like finding gold.

'Danny is growing up in *Snowidea*. His Dad gives him a talk about the birds and the bees, he starts to notice girls, and he finds he has talents that he never knew about. Hopefully children can recognise the truth in these stories as well as having a laugh at the way Danny deals with some of his dilemmas. Happy reading!'

THEMES:

- Growing up
- Boy/girl relations
- Family relations

WRITING STYLE:

- Realistic comedy
- Short Stories
- Easy-to-read style which makes it great as a read aloud

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Discussion/Activities:

- Look at point-of-view. Each of the stories in *Snowidea* is told from Danny's point of view. Rewrite the first story, *On a Plane*, through the eyes of either Tommy or Katy.
- In *School*, Mr Carillo plays a coin game with the students to show them the power of the mind. Play the same game in a small or large group, and chart the results. Does it work? Invent your own game to show the power of the mind.
- In *The Snow*, Danny's family goes on a road trip. Write about a time your family went somewhere by car. Have a chapter about the trip there and another chapter about what happened once you got there. Illustrate it like Gus Gordon has in *Adventures of Danny*.
- In groups of 4-6, act out the scene in *Skating With Girls* where Danny's family and Kim are in the campervan on their way to the mall (page 82-85). Add more lines to make it longer, and change some lines if you want. Write it in script form like this:
Dad: Is it hard having two dads, Kim?
Kim: Sometimes. But the best part is I get three presents for my birthday. One from Mum, one from my stepdad and one from my real dad.
Katy: What's a stepdad?
- Like in Chapter 1 of *Tennis With Tommy*, do a role-play where one person tries to sell something to another person. Have the seller use techniques such as exaggeration and the buyer use bartering skills to get the best price.
- Make up listening comprehension questions to go with certain chapters of the book and test other members of your class or group.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Pat Flynn grew up in Jimboomba, Queensland, before moving to the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra on a tennis scholarship. After playing and coaching on the professional circuit he became a teacher, where his observations of young people – their interests and stories – led to the highly praised *Alex Jackson* series. Two of his books for primary school readers, *To the Light*, and *The Tuckshop Kid*, have been shortlisted for the CBCA Book of the Year Awards, with *The Tuckshop Kid* taking out an Honour Book Award. In 2008, Pat and his sister Liz adapted *Beeware* for the stage and performed the play at the Out Of The Box festival in Brisbane. Flynn now lives on the Sunshine Coast where he writes, surfs, and plays tennis in his spare time. He also runs workshops encouraging young people to read and write. For more information about Pat and his books visit his website: www.patflynnwriter.com

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Commendations for *Adventures of Danny Series*:

- *Beeware* is shortlisted for the Australian Speech Pathologists' Book of the Year Awards 2008 – Lower Primary
- *Beeware* made the Victorian CBCA Clayton's shortlist for 2008 Book of the Year Awards
- *Beeware* and *Treeified* recommended by Paul Jennings in the new *Reading Bug*
- Both books on the Tasmanian Premier's Reading Challenge Booklist
- *Beeware* the play was seen by over 2000 children at the Out of the Box Festival at the Queensland State Library in 2008