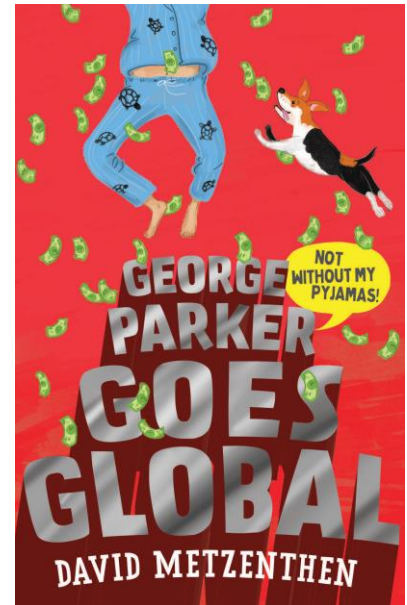


George Parker goes Global

By David Metzenthen

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Recommended for 10-14-year olds



Summary

What could go wrong when cautious, scientific, singlet-wearing George Parker and reckless rich-kid Chase Landon-Bond take off on a global rescue mission? Just about everything!

There are private jets, troublesome pets, crazed criminals, treacherous trips, chaos, too much coffee, and 250 million missing dollars. There are close calls, ridiculous disguises, accidental haircuts, and that's just the first bit!

Are George and Chase doomed?

Will friendship and silly ideas save the day?

Does wearing a cape make you brave?

Get in planes, trains, taxis, and a big black ship with George and Chase...and HOLD ON TIGHT!

About his book, David Metzenthen says:

'*George Parker Goes Global* is escapism in all senses of the word, on a grand scale, but it also has a truth to it that I think is important – about people's actions and attitudes to the world's problems. While Chase spends money as if it is endless, George is always trying to help kids in Africa, the environment, and science in general.

'The boys problem-solve using the tools they have at hand (in this case a private jet and a Parisian barge to name just two) but the enlightenment of what they discover in each other makes for a joyful and hopefully hilarious book! A book to take kids away from bad news in the world to things that matter – and a happy ending!'

Use in the curriculum

George Parker Goes Global is a great book for reluctant readers and readers who love funny books. In addition to the English curriculum, the book aligns with the Australian Curriculum for Health & Physical Education (Personal, Social and Community Health) at upper primary and lower secondary levels.

Themes

- comedy
- adventure
- friendship
- 'It takes all sorts!'

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Comprehension Questions

Chapter One

- Why does George describe his face as being like 'an uncooked gingerbread man'? (p. 1)
- What is the name of the school that George attends? (p. 1)
- Why is George's haircut only half-finished? (p. 2)
- Why is George likely to be spending his summer holidays at school? (p. 4)
- Apart from his haircut, what else about George impresses Chase? (p. 5)
- What do you think Chase means when he says, 'It's time to stop watching the world from an upstairs window. You've got to be a player not a prune.'? (p. 7)

Chapter Two

- Read the first paragraph and in your own words describe George's school. (p. 8)
- What do the Prince and Count Luciano have planned for their holidays? (pp. 10-11)
- What did George do in the sandpit when he was in kindergarten? (p. 11)
- What do the watches that George and Chase wear tell us about each boy? (p. 12)
- If you were George, would you agree to go on an adventure with Chase? Why?

Chapters Three & Four

- Why does George think stars are like people? (p. 13)
- What does George want his talents to be? (p. 14)
- What two-toned moon does George NOT want to be like and why? (p. 14)
- What does the headmaster's German Shepherd wear? (p. 15)
- What is the only sign of life in the school grounds at nine in the morning? (p. 16)
- What style of swimming stroke does George favour? (p. 19)
- What was George's greatest moment of leadership BEFORE he saved the dog in the water? (p. 22)
- Why did George's parents call him George? (p. 23)
- Why did George invent the *Parker Sneezzer Wheezer Appeaser*? (p. 24)

Discussion questions

Characterisation Part 1

Make a list of words or phrases to describe George and Chase. Find quotes from the book that made you think this about them. For instance, you might say that George is precise, serious and cautious because he doesn't do anything without thinking it through carefully. 'A great plan is a very good idea...', he says. Chase is exactly the opposite: wild, not serious and very happy to do things on a whim. 'Well, I don't have *anything* planned *exactly*...As planning *exactly* is a waste of time. Because we both know the universe has something in mind that will test us out to the *max*.' (p. 9)

Humour

When Tapley Grammar is mentioned in the early part of the book it is usually because of its *unbelievable* facilities and *uber-wealthy* students. List three things about the school that you think are funny and explain in your own words why they made you laugh.

Theme

David Metzenthen has said that he wanted the story to teach readers that we can all learn something from people who are very different to us. In your own words explain how Chase has learned generosity and thinking about others from George, and George has learned bravery and taking risks from Chase. Give specific examples of things both characters do in the book.

Grammar

Read the following paragraph in Chapter Thirty-Five and find examples of verbs, nouns, adverbs and adjectives. Can you also find an example of a simile?

'And there I am, wallowing in the bath like a happy dugong off Hayman Island...., which I now feel is perhaps a little drawn-out for such an emergency.' (p. 215)

Characterisation Part 2

Go back to the list of words students used to describe George and Chase earlier in the unit of work. Do these words still describe both characters? Are there new words you would like to add? What happened in the story that made you want to add these words?

The author

David Metzenthen lives in Melbourne with his family and pets. He loves writing for young readers and has written more than forty books, some very short, some rather long. He has won five Premier's Literary Awards, a Prime Minister's Award, and a Children's Book Council of Australia Book of the Year Award.

He hopes you enjoy George Parker's story as much as he enjoyed creating the incredible young George!



Author's inspiration

'I was sitting in a psychologist's waiting room, and had just finished writing *Dreaming the Enemy*, a raw book about post-traumatic stress in soldiers, drawing on the Australian experience in the Vietnam conflict. While waiting I read a quote from an author who said, 'Life just keeps on getting stranger every day,' and I immediately thought I could write a book about a boy whose life does just that...where just about anything and everything can happen, and does...

'I wanted the story to be funny, for my own sanity, and for the kids who read it...and George Parker just seemed to me the greatest kid on earth... I felt he was brilliant... he's so old-fashioned, so relentlessly honest...a kid who takes online self-defence lessons and extols the virtues of home-knitted woollen bathers. In counter-point, Chase is a golden child (I've seen them around) rich and wild, but wildly different to George, with talents and courage and mega bucks.'