

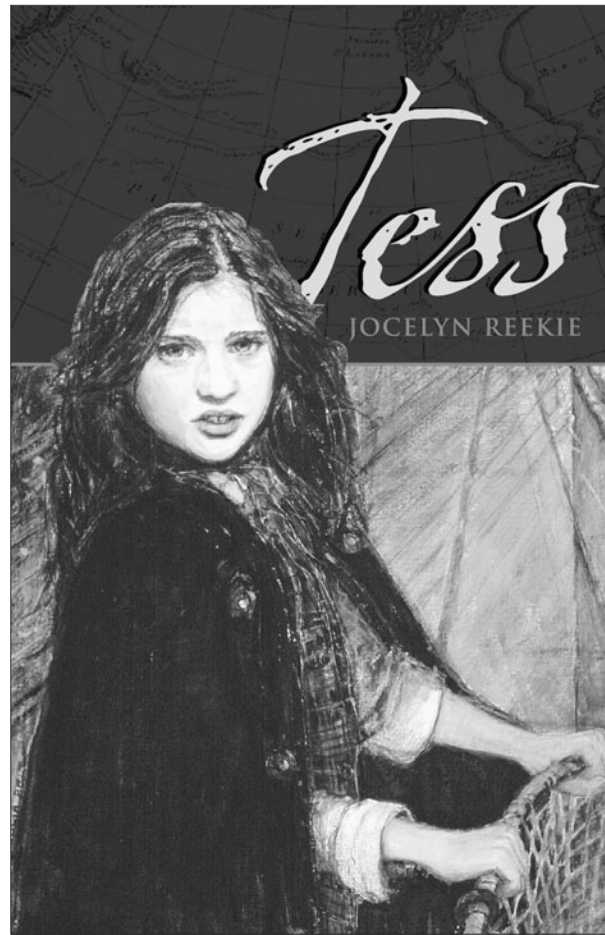
Tess

by Jocelyn Reekie

AGES 12 AND UP • GRADE LEVEL 5 TO 9

ABOUT THE BOOK

In 1857, thirteen-year-old Tess Macqueen is faced with dramatic life changes when her mother dies and a new landlord forces Tess and her father off the land where they've lived in Scotland for generations. They are given passage to the New World aboard the *Borealis*, a ship bound for Vancouver Island. From here, everything in Tess' previously settled life changes. On board ship Tess meets girls of her own age who are too poor to ride above deck, and a fascinating Gold Rush prospector named Jock. On Vancouver Island, she and her father struggle to make a new home in a strange, sometimes forbidding, sometimes exotic world. In gripping detail, *Tess* tells the dramatic story of one young woman's journey to a new land — and towards adulthood.



1-55192-471-4 • \$12.95 CDN/\$7.95 US • 296 PP

YOUNG ADULT FICTION



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jocelyn Reekie lives on Quadra Island where she is at work on a third novel. She has extensive experience storytelling, reading to and working with children. She has taught gifted children's writing and writing workshops for young authors in the Quadra school district.



BEFORE THE BOOK • Words You Need to Know

offal	cacophony	pinnacle	perversion	clemency	grievances
impetuousness	undulating	ricochet	leniency	exorbitant	cholera
contagion	ominous	decorum	propriety	cantankerous	patrimony
tirade	apprehension	aggregate	prattling	arbitrating	emigrant

• Activities

1. If you are not First Nations, find out how your family came to the New World. On a world map show your country of origin. Prepare to tell the most interesting parts of your family story. If you are First Nations prepare to tell any stories your family might have about early associations with European settlers.
2. This story takes place in 1857-1858. What was happening in the world? Describe what you think life was like in British Columbia at that time.

EXPLORING THE BOOK • Chapter Questions and Activities

CHAPTERS ONE AND TWO

1. Use four or five words to describe Tess' character.
2. What do you think Mother means when she says she is "beyond that"? (p.4)
3. What is the meaning of primogenitor inheritance laws?
4. What are lucifers?
5. What precious things does Tess pack to take with her to the New World?
6. Begin keeping a mini-dictionary of words in the Scottish dialect used in the text and their meanings. Add to it as you come across new words in the text.

CHAPTERS THREE AND FOUR

1. Begin a glossary of nautical terms and add to it as you read the book.
2. Why does Jock need to beware of being hanged?
3. What do you think Mr. Rake means when he says, "There's more than one deserter in this room"? (p.27)
4. Draw a comic strip of either the incident with the dog and the goat or the one with the dog and the pig.
5. Who do you think the women on the orlop deck are?

CHAPTERS FIVE AND SIX

1. Draw a sketch of the layout of the ship.

2. Why do the other women not speak to Tess?
3. What was the attitude of most people towards bathing and hair washing?
4. What is the plan Tess finally works out with Mr. Samuel?

CHAPTERS SEVEN AND EIGHT

1. What is your reaction to Mr. Samuel's comments about women and people of colour?
2. What things does Gabby hide in her plaid?

CHAPTER NINE

1. What is a bluenose man?
2. How does Tess help out during the storms around the Horn?
3. What is the effect of the storms on food and clothing?
4. Why is Father so angry with Tess for going swimming?

CHAPTERS TEN AND ELEVEN

1. What does Tess discover when she visits Gabby?
2. What had Mrs. Motherwell and Mr. Samuel done to cause the dreadful situation on the orlop deck?
3. What was Mr. Samuel's punishment?
4. Explain the system of indentured servants.
5. How is the ship prepared for arrival in Esquimalt?
6. What is Mr. Rake's accusation?

CHAPTERS TWELVE AND THIRTEEN

1. With four other students, prepare a reader's theatre presentation of the breakfast scene at Mrs. Trump's boarding house on pages 94-96. Read the words spoken by each of the characters and have a narrator fill in the rest.
2. What is the charge against Tess's father?
3. What kind of man is Mr. Rake?
4. Why is Father released?
5. What is Jock's sentence?

CHAPTERS FOURTEEN AND FIFTEEN

1. What is Uncle Hammond's opinion of Captain Allen?
2. What is Uncle Hammond's opinion of Tess?
3. Draw a picture of either Fort Victoria or the Indian village.

CHAPTERS SIXTEEN AND SEVENTEEN

1. How does Tess pass her days in the colony?
2. Why does the letter from Jock cause Tess to worry about an Indian uprising on Vancouver Island?
3. What does Tess learn about Gabby's fate?
4. Draw and label a sketch of the inside of the O'Reilly house.
5. Why does Uncle Hammond insist Tess take a purge?
6. What is Tess's punishment for defying her uncle?

BEYOND THE BOOK • Activities

1. On a world map trace the route of *The Borealis* and label all the major ports of call.
2. Use a Venn diagram to compare life in the New World colony with that in the old country. Draw two overlapping circles. In one circle write words to describe the New World, in the other write words to describe life in the old world. Where the circles overlap write words that describe both societies.
3. Tess left a diary for her father to read. Write the entries she might have made for the days she was imprisoned by her uncle.
4. Create an illustrated dictionary of nautical terms from the glossary you kept. Be sure to use correct alphabetical order.
5. How does the use of Scottish dialect affect your understanding and enjoyment of the story?

CHAPTERS EIGHTEEN AND NINETEEN

1. How long has Tess been locked up before she finally escapes?
2. Why does Tess think she will have to rely on the Indians for help to get to Nanaimo?
3. Sketch the route Tess takes as she escapes.
4. How does Tess pay the young Indian to take her to Nanaimo?

CHAPTERS TWENTY AND TWENTY-ONE

1. How does Young Seal prove his skill in paddling a canoe?
2. Why do the Haida leave Tess and Young Seal alone instead of capturing them as slaves?
3. Why is Young Seal living among the white men?
4. How is Young Seal treated after bringing Tess safely to Nanaimo?
5. Why is Tess sent back to Edinburgh?

EPILOGUE

1. How does the epilogue foreshadow improvement for women in the New World?
2. What do you think Amor de Cosmos would write about the natural resources of Vancouver Island today?



• **Curriculum Extensions**

SOCIAL STUDIES *British Columbia History* • On a map of B.C. indicate the major centers of gold rush activity and the trade routes that linked them. Indicate the methods of transportation that would be used to bring supplies to each location.

Write a brief report on the effects of the gold rush of 1858 on the development of British Columbia.

Write a biography of Amor de Cosmos including how he started *The Colonist* newspaper.

Write a biography of Robert Dunsmuir outlining his influence on the development of Nanaimo and Victoria.

What treaties and land claims agreements have been made with the First Nations people of southern Vancouver Island?

Create a timeline of important events in the history of the Hudson's Bay Company on Vancouver Island.

World History • Draw and colour a world map to show the extent of the British Empire in 1858. Write an essay explaining the basic political and economic motives for building the Empire.


Write a report outlining the causes and events of The Indian Mutiny of 1857-8.

SCIENCE *Weather / Ocean Studies* • On a world map show the direction of the prevailing winds and the major ocean currents that would be encountered on a trip from England around Cape Horn to Victoria, B.C.

TRANSPORTATION *Nautical Studies* • Draw and label a diagram of a sailing ship such as *The Borealis*.

CAPP *Women's Rights* • Write a report on the "Famous Five" women who won the legal challenge known as the "Person's Case" acknowledging women as persons.



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Tess Teacher's Guide (1-55192-589-3) and other learning resources for Raincoast titles are also available at www.raincoast.com. Many of these activities are inspired by the Reading 44 document published by the North Vancouver School District. Raincoast Books grants teachers permission to photocopy this guide for classroom use.

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