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Teacher's Guide

word study & questions

Taffy of Torpedo Junction

Enjoy reading the timeless book *Taffy of Torpedo Junction* with your students. Choose among the words and phrases and questions chosen for this study guide to support your study.

This teacher's guide includes definitions and explanations of words and phrases and answers to most of the questions, but many students will find other, more elaborate ways to define the words and phrases and answer the questions. The teacher's guide does not provide answers to questions that ask students to produce illustrations, make connections, comment on events or characters or evaluate the text because students' answers to those questions vary widely.

Scroll to the end of this teacher's guide to identify the sources and reference materials used to derive the meaning of the words and phrases and explain the history and culture of the Outer Banks.

Review and choose graphic organizers for students to use in keeping track of events, people and ideas explored in the text.

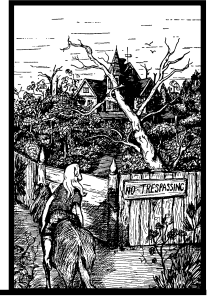
Through their reading, students enhance their language skills. They get to know Taffy and her Gramp and learn about their relationship, discover words and phrases used on the Outer Banks in the 1940s, and hear the "brogue" spoken in that area of the state. Integrate geography, history and science by having students focus on the maps and photos, articles about World War II and photos of plant life on the beach. Look for maps, photos and articles on the Web site, www.ncnewspapersineducation.org, and use those to carry you and your students to the Outer Banks during the 1930s and 1940s and make this story come alive.

Special thanks to UNC Press for allowing North Carolina newspapers to serialize and publish the story through their Newspaper in Education programs.

chapter
1
Teacher's Guide

A Call in the Night!, part one

Taffy of Torpedo Junction



Word Study

1. **stipend** – a fixed sum of money paid periodically for services or to defray expenses.
2. **sprightly** – energetically, quickly, with spirit, light on feet.
3. **chipper** – briskly, lively, with energy.
4. **crotchety** – irritable, bad-tempered, cranky, disagreeable or grumpy.
5. **rations** – the amounts of certain types of food that you were allowed.

"Rationing insured that each person could get their fair share of the items that were in short supply due to the war effort and import reductions. By the end of the war, over a hundred million of each ration book were printed. The Office of Price Administration (OPA) was in charge of rationing consumer goods such as sugar, coffee, shoes, household appliances, and other goods during World War II. The OPA accepted ration book applications and issued ration books, from which consumers tore out stamps in order to purchase food and other supplies at grocery stores."

www.scc.rutgers.edu/njwomenshistory/Period_5/ration.htm
www.genealogytoday.com/guide/war-ration-books.html

6. **fondlin' or foundlin' home** – a home established for children whose parents or other family members could not take care of them.

What do the following expressions mean?

Draw a picture to illustrate each expression.

1. **plum mad all over** – consumed with anger, totally angry.
2. **soft in the head** – not thinking clearly, unwise.
3. **took sand fences like a bird on the wing** – jumped fence easily, flew or floated over, as a bird.
4. **hair spreading out behind her like a sail** – hair caught by the wind, pushed back as she rides, as a sail is pushed by the wind.

Before rereading the passages that include these verbs/adverbs, write down what you think they mean. Reread the passages substituting words and phrases similar in meaning. Do the sentences make sense with the new words? Do you prefer the words chosen by the author? Why?

1. **ducked** – moved suddenly aside or to and fro.
2. **snorted** – forced air violently through the nose, making a rough harsh sound.
3. **said meekly** – way of responding that shows submission or patience, without resentment, often in response to injury.
4. **hollered back** – yelled or shouted back, answered with a shout.
5. **snapped** – uttered sharp biting words; barked out irritable retort or reply.

Find other strong verbs in Chapter One and figure out their meanings from the context.

Background

1. **What is the pony called a "Banks pony?"** "Banker ponies were on the Outer Banks when settlers arrived in the early 1700s. Because horses aren't indigenous to the Americas, there are many theories as to how the ponies came to the islands. The most widely accepted is that some were brought and left behind by early explorers and others swam ashore from ships that sunk in the Graveyard of the Atlantic. Banker ponies that once were found in large numbers on Hatteras and Ocracoke islands are a different breed than those found on Shackleford Banks to the south and those now roaming north of Corolla on the northern banks. Banker ponies, now found only on Ocracoke where they are penned and cared for by the National Park Service, have a different number of vertebrae and ribs than other horses. They also have a slightly different shape, color, size and weight than other wild horses found along North Carolina's coast. The ponies have become part of the area's history. In the early 1900s, the US Life Saving Service used the ponies for beach patrols and to haul equipment. During WWII, the Coast Guard also used them for patrolling along the shore." -Sandy Semans, editor, Outer Banks Sentinel

2. **Find Buxton Woods and the Outer Banks on the map of North Carolina's coast, posted on the Web site.**

3. **What is meant by "Barbary ancestors"?** Read the summary above about differences between Banker and Shackleford ponies. To learn about claims that English colonists sent by Sir Walter Raleigh brought ancestors of present-day Shackleford ponies to North Carolina, read: www.shacklefordhorses.org/timeline.htm#1

For more background on Sir Walter Raleigh's discoveries in Africa, along the Barbary coast visit: <http://raleigh.classicauthors.net/DiscoveryOfGuiana/DiscoveryOfGuiana1.html>

4. **Who is Sir Walter Raleigh? Who are his colonists?** Sandy Semans, editor, Outer Banks Sentinel explains: Sir Walter Raleigh never came to the settlement, although he wanted to. Queen Elizabeth wouldn't let him. Raleigh came up with the plan to start the colony, arranged the funding and arranged to send John White as the governor. Often folks refer to where they built the first settlement as Fort Raleigh, but actually that name was not in existence until the 1930's when the federal government created the park on the site. The home of the colonists who disappeared was called the 'Cittie of Raleigh'. It is now known as the Lost Colony.

For more information, visit www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/raleigh_walters.shtml and www.lib.unc.edu/ncc/ref/swr/swr.html.

5. **What does "Portugee sailor" refer to?** Portuguese sailors who set down on North Carolina coast, brought horses, reportedly. To learn more about those claims, visit this Web site: <http://www.shacklefordhorses.org/timeline.htm>.

6. **Taffy thinks of "Bluebeard lurking somewhere close by to snatch her." Who is Bluebeard?** A fairy tale character who preyed on young women. This Web site tells the story and describes it as a horror story, not recommended for children: <http://www.endicott-studio.com/rdrm/forblue.html>.

7. **Why does Miz Oden speak differently than Taffy? Why does the writer use non-standard spellings?** In this chapter, Miz Oden speaks in dialect known as the "hoi toide" brogue. As you continue reading the book, you will find that Gramp Morgan, one of the main characters, uses the brogue.

To learn more about this way of speaking, visit: www.language magazine.com/inter- netedition/nd2000/wolfram.html. Also, read HOI TOIDE ON THE OUTER BANKS: THE STORY OF THE OCRACOKE BROGUE by Walt Wolfram and Natalie Schilling-Estes, available through UNC Press.

Thinking skills

1. **How does the writer let you know the story takes place in a coastal area?** The author refers to the beach, sandy trail, sandfiddler, subtropical climate, vegetation common to beach; she also cites the history of Outer Banks with references to Sir Walter Raleigh's colonizing and the Banks pony.

2. **What does Miz Oden do that upsets Taffy?** Miz Oden makes Taffy wait on her mail and criticizes Gramp for raising Taffy after her parents' deaths and allowing her so much freedom.

How does the author let you know Taffy is upset? Taffy grits her teeth, an indication that she is trying to control her anger. She says for Miz Oden to "leave my Gramp alone" and holds back tears until she is out of sight of store. The story says the wind dries her tears. Also, Taffy flees the store, "grabbing the mail" and running to her horse.

Does the author paint a picture and not simply tell you how Taffy feels? Taffy does not say directly that Miz Oden makes her angry, but Taffy's actions and words show her feelings.

Draw a picture or choose a photo that shows the way Taffy feels.

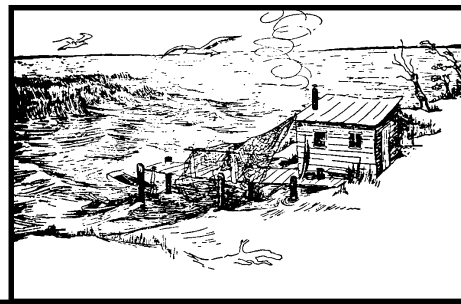
3. **How well do you think Taffy handles the conversation with Miz Oden? Why do you think she acts as she does? If you were Taffy, would you do anything differently in response to Miz Oden's comments?**

4. **This chapter is the first of three parts titled "Call in the Night." You'll find out more about the "call in the night" in chapters three and four. Think of another title for this chapter, part one of "Call in the Night." Also, predict who or what makes the "call in the night" and why.**



chapter
2
Teacher's Guide
A Call in the Night!, part two

Taffy of Torpedo Junction



Word study

1. **blue fishing** – For a picture and descriptions of blue fish, visit: <http://indian-river.fl.us/fishing/fish/bluefish.html>.
2. **cantankerous** – difficult or irritating to deal with; having or showing a habitually bad temper.
3. **lard tin** – the metal container for lard, a soft white solid or semi-solid fat obtained by rendering fatty pork.
4. **lean-to** – a structure with a single-pitch roof that is attached to the side of a building as an extension.
5. **blackout** – the extinguishing or concealment of all visible lights in a designated area, usually as a precaution against air raids.
6. **mullet** – a lean marine fish with a spindle-shaped body. Visit this Web site for a description of mullet: <http://indian-river.fl.us/fishing/fish/mullstri.html>.

What do the following expressions mean?

1. **pantin' to make** – eager to make; cannot wait to make.
2. **adder's venom and carboic acid** – poison from bite of snake and carboic acid is one antidote, mentioned as "old remedy."
*Note: On Outer Banks, "adder" refers to snakes in general, sometimes poisonous but mostly not poisonous. A true "adder" can probably be found in Europe where the word originated—Sandy Semans, Editor, Outer Banks Sentinel.
*To find out about the adder snake and its venom, visit: www.bbc.co.uk/nature/wildfacts/factfiles/279.shtml
*To find out about carboic acid and other "old remedies," scroll down on this site: www.worldwideschool.org/library/books/lit/newage/MiracleMongers/chap10.html

3. **learn your grandma how to suck eggs** – don't offer advice to someone who is older and more experienced. It's an old phrase and is included in John Steven's translation of Quevedo's Comical Works, 1707: "You would have me teach my Grandame to suck Eggs." According to Reader's Digest (but not proven), Mark Twain expressed the same thought this way: "When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years."

Why this analogy? One source says that perhaps grandmothers, being elderly, are forced to suck soft-boiled eggs because they have no - or few - teeth. (based on results from yahoo search using "grandma and sucks eggs")

4. **piece of my mind** – straight talk or speaking out, directly or candidly, often to express disagreement or anger.

Compare the meaning of the phrase "peace of mind" with the meaning of "piece of my mind." "Peace of mind" refers to contentment, and a "piece of my mind" refers to open disagreement.

Background:

1. **Where is Hatteras?** Hatteras Island is located on the southern Outer Banks of Dare County, a northeastern county on the NC map. Hatteras Island was a local name. During the 1940s, many outside the area including the federal government called it Chicamacomico Island. To find out more about the area during the 1930s, view the photos and maps posted on the Web site.
2. **Why is it called the Graveyard of the Atlantic?** The ragged, irregular coastline caused shipwrecks. Hatteras Lighthouse directed ships away from the dangerous shoreline. See photos of that famous lighthouse and a shipwreck on the NC NIE Web site.
3. **What do you learn about World War I from Gramp's conversation with Big Jens?** WWI occurred 25 years before WWII. Government prohibited night fishing during WWI and WWII. Big Jens says that during WWII, the enemy is bolder.

Thinking skills

1. **Explain why Taffy lives with Gramp.** Her parents drowned in a boating accident caused by a sudden, unexpected storm. Jane, her mom and Gramp's daughter, asked Gramp to watch after Taffy while they were on the trip. Gramp continues to love and care for his granddaughter.
2. **In your own words, describe how Gramp feels about Taffy?** Gramp is proud of her independence and willingness to work....
3. **Do you know someone or have you read about a young person who is like Taffy, "independent and unafraid" or "free as the birds"? How are they like Taffy? How are they different?**
4. **Why does Big Jens, also called the "Skipper", insist on the blackout? What may happen if the windows go uncovered?** Lights onshore enable enemy ships and submarines to locate targets.
5. **What part of this chapter is real? Which part, make believe?** WWII is real. German U-boats attacked ships off the coast of North Carolina. Taffy, Gramp and her friends are fictional characters. The author lived on the Outer Banks during the war and drew on those experiences; she modeled Taffy after a young girl named Carol Dillon, daughter of the person who owned the boarding house where the author lived. The author earned her living as a 7th grade teacher. See the link on Web site to the interview about Taffy of Torpedo Junction on the State of Things. The interview includes Carol Dillon and the author's daughter.
6. **This chapter is the second of three parts titled "Call in the Night." You'll find out more about the call in the night in chapters three and four. Think of another title for this chapter, part two of "Call in the Night." Does this chapter offer any clues as to what the call might be? Predict who or what made the "call in the night" and explain your thinking.**



A Call in the Night!, part three

Taffy of Torpedo Junction



Word study

1. **northeaster or nor'easter** – For more about a nor'easter, visit the Web site: <http://science.howstuffworks.com/question595.htm>.

*"Nor'easters can occur in the eastern United States any time between October and April, when moisture and cold air are plentiful. They are known for dumping heavy amounts of rain and snow, producing hurricane-force winds, and creating high surfs that cause severe beach erosion and coastal flooding. A Nor'easter is named for the winds that blow in from the northeast and drive the storm up the east coast along the Gulf Stream, a band of warm water that lies off the Atlantic coast."

2. **gale** – a strong wind with speeds of from 32 to 63 miles (51 to 102 kilometers) per hour, moving 45-90 knots with force of 7 to 10 on the Beaufort scale.

3. **Providence** – a religious reference to God or nature who foresees events and acts as caring force.

What do the following expressions mean? Draw an illustration for one expression.

1. **tinkles of danger** – shudder or prickly feeling or other sensation felt when threatened or fearful.
2. **a frettin'** – worrying or agitated over something of concern.

Background

1. **What do you learn about World War II from the opening paragraph of this chapter?** Nazis and Fascists overran countries in Europe and abused prisoners.

What more do you know about World War II? See the NC NIE Web site for links to sites that offer background information about North Carolina during WWII, particularly. <http://ncmuseumofhistory.org/workshops/WWII/Session5.htm#torpedo>

2. **What do you learn about Cape Hatteras?** Storms brew along the coast. Cape Hatteras is a "lonely island off the Graveyard of the Atlantic-Diamond Shoals." "Graveyard" refers to crews who were lost or "buried" under water when ships sank off the shore.

Thinking skills

1. **What's the purpose of the DF Station, according to Gramps?** The men at DF Station direct ships away from the dangerous shoreline and warn of other threats to safety.

Why might the enemy want to "put it out of commission"? Enemies want to stop shipments to British and halt other support for Allied forces. They want to discourage involvement by the United States on behalf of the Allies.

2. **How does Taffy feel about the sea?** Taffy loves and respects the ocean but is not afraid of it.

3. **How does Taffy respond to the "cry of distress"?** Taffy shows curiosity and eagerness to offer assistance, running to the window and pulling aside the window shade to look outside. The text says she is excited and follows her Gramp outside.

How else might someone respond? Why? Someone else might be fearful and resist going outside or might follow behind or hang back because of the fierce storm and attacks off shore....



Shipwreck

Taffy of Torpedo Junction



Word study

1. **gibberish** – meaningless or unintelligible talk or writing.
2. **shoals** – A submerged mound or ridge of sediment in a body of shallow water.

What do these words mean? What do they describe? Does the context help you determine the correct meaning of words?

1. **frenzied** – wild, violent or raging.
2. **strangled** – choked or gagged.
3. **chattering** – click quickly and repeatedly.
4. **nearly-frozen** – to die or be injured because of extreme cold.
5. **half-drowned** – almost killed by submerging and suffocating in water.
6. **surefooted and true** – not likely to stumble, slip, or fall.
7. **brave** – confident or daring in the face of threats or difficulties.

1. **frenzied** – wind
2. **strangled** – scream
3. **chattering** – teeth
4. **nearly-frozen** –
5. **half-drowned** – sailor
6. **surefooted and true** – little Banks pony
7. **brave girl** – Taffy

What is the part of speech for words that describe?
adjective

What do the following expressions mean? Have you ever used one of these expressions or heard someone else use one?

1. **in a jiffy** – soon, in a short while.
2. **worth every grain of your salt** – highly valued, even to the smallest particle.
3. **pounding a mad tattoo** – beating a drum, as shown in photo of woman beating a drum on the Web site www.ncnewspapersineducation.org under *Old Christmas*.

Background

1. What is Gramp referring to when he quotes the Book and says, 'We pulled our neighbor's ox aout the ditch'? This is a reference to the Bible (Luke 14:1-6) that is widely interpreted as support for aiding those in need on Sabbath, a day that otherwise may be set aside for rest.

Thinking skills

1. **When you read that the man is buried up to his neck, what do you think has happened and why? Later in the chapter, what explanation does Gramp give?** The man buried himself to keep from freezing.
2. **Did that reason occur to you when you first read that the sailor is buried in the sand?**
3. **What details do you learn about the man buried in the sand, after Big Jens arrives?** A Greek ship carrying tires had radioed a distress signal to DF Station the night before.

Taffy of Torpedo Junction



Word study

- suspenders** – adjustable straps or bands worn over the shoulders with the ends buttoned or clipped to the waistband of a pair of trousers or a skirt to support it.
- snuffed out** – extinguished, done away with or eliminated as blowing out or smothering a light.
- mope** – to be gloomy or dejected, brood or sulk.
- treachery** – willful betrayal of trust or confidence, scheming against someone or something.
- civilians** – individuals who are not active members of the military or police.

What do they think the following expressions mean? Check whether your predictions fit the story. Find the expressions in the story and figure out the meaning from the way each is used.

- perishing to get out** – wanting badly to go outside.
- wearing my coattails out** – punishing by spanking.

Background

- What tools for communication does the chapter mention?** This chapter mentions radios and walkie-talkies.

Are those tools used today? What tools today serve the same or similar function?

- What do Taffy and Gramp learn from the radio?** Gramp and Taffy learn about the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor.

What do you learn about the involvement of the United States in World War II? The United States has been supporting the British.

Thinking skills

- Why is Gramp upset about waking up late?** As a result, Gramp and Taffy miss Sunday worship.

What does his reaction tell you about him? He wants Taffy to receive religious instruction.

- What do you learn about the weather on the Cape, in Gramp's words?** Gramp describes "...the old Cape as old Stormalong one day and a paradise the next."

In your own words? Weather changes quickly from storm to calm and clear.

- Why do you think Taffy starts talking about the surf, after her friend Lorrie says her father is on a destroyer?** She changes the subject to keep from calling more attention to the risks her friend's father faces onboard the destroyer. His ship may have been hit by bomb.

- What do the girls see washing up on shore?** They see a window frame with something hanging on it.

- What does it mean to think a "powerful lot" about someone or something?** That means to care deeply for someone or something, to make special effort to protect or care for someone or something.

Why does the man on patrol for the coast guard think that "somebody thought a powerful lot" of the dog? In a crisis, somebody took time and made the effort to tie the dog to the window frame, hoping that the ocean current would carry the animal ashore, to safety.

Taffy of Torpedo Junction



Word study

1. **sand fences** – mesh fencing used along shoreline to stabilize or nourish dunes. Sandy Semans, editor of Outer Banks Sentinel provides this history about sand fences:

*"In the 1930's, as part of the New Deal, Works Progress (later changed to Projects) Administration workers created more than 100 miles of dunes along the Outer Banks in an effort to protect the islands from further erosion. In addition to the dunes, the workers planted grasses and installed sand fences which were designed to catch and trap sand and thus nourish the dunes. In addition to helping to protect the beaches, the project furnished work for thousands of men who were out of work as a result of the Great Depression. One of the unanticipated hazards that had to be overcome came from the livestock that roamed mostly free, particularly on Hatteras Island. The cattle and horses took a liking to the newly-planted sea grasses."

How does substituting words or phrases that have the same or similar meaning for these expressions change the story?

1. **quiet as the grave** – extreme quiet.
2. **chewin' the fat** – having a conversation, lengthy and engaged or involved.
3. **tongue was a waggin'** – talking a lot.
4. **now, can you beat that?** – amazing or "can you believe that?"
5. **curiosity will get me in Dutch** – being overly interested or curious will get a person into trouble.

What do exclamations, such as "in tarnation," "gee whil-likens" and "gosh, all hemlock" add to the dialogue?

Each exclamation adds emphasis or underscores what the person says, and the exclamations show how people of that time and place spoke.

Background

What is Gramp referring to when he says, "The good Lord knows even when a sparrow falls..."?"

This is another biblical, New Testament reference, to verses that show God as caring for even the smallest animals and therefore attending even more to human concerns. Example is Matthew 10: 29-31.

Thinking skills

1. **Why does Taffy call her dog Brandy?** The dog's color resembles the color of a brandywine camphor bottle.

*Sandy Semans, editor, Outer Banks Sentinel explains the brandywine camphor bottle: Brandywine camphor bottle probably refers to a Dupont product made back then. Brandywine is part of the name of this and other products because they were made at the company's plant in the Brandywine River Basin. The content was probably just camphor, a medicinal product.

As you learn more about the dog, think of other, good names for the dog and explain your choices.

2. **Why does Taffy think Gramp will allow her to keep the dog?**

Taffy says that Gramp gave her Sailor, the pony she rides, so she thinks he'll allow her another animal/pet.

3. **How does the writer let you know that Gramp is disturbed about what was discussed at Sam Miller's house?** Gramp doesn't talk about fishing during the meal; he appears deep in thought.

What do you learn from the passage about the discussion?

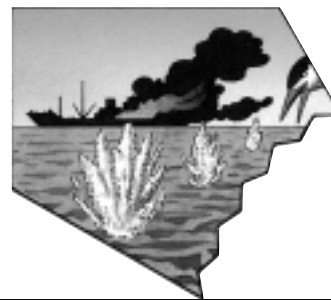
Gramp says folks discuss the bombing of Pearl Harbor and mention the Snyder house.

What else may the townspeople have discussed at Sam Miller's?



Seven-Ash Cans and Broken Glass

Taffy of Torpedo Junction



Word study

1. **rampant** – widespread, unrestrained, extending unchecked.
2. **exodus** – a going out; leaving or a departure.
3. **goood up** – covered by or tangled in a thick or sticky substance.
4. **torpedoed** – attacked, hit, damaged or destroyed by torpedoes which are self-propelled, cigar-shaped missiles containing explosives and often equipped with a homing devices, launched from a submarine or other warship, for destroying surface vessels or other submarines.
5. **loons** – any of several fish-eating, diving birds having short tails, webbed feet and a laughlike cry.
6. **conscience** – inner sense of what is right or wrong.
7. **chided** – expressed disapproval of; scolded; held in reproach.
8. **ash can** – according to the story, it is an explosive packed in a container that looks something like a garbage tin.

How may the above words be categorized? (number of syllables, action words, naming or describing words, familiar/unfamiliar words, etc.)

What do the expressions mean? Think literally and figuratively. What do you know that draws flies? How fast is lightning?

1. **draw submarines like flies** – flies swarm, so this means attracting submarines.
2. **streaked out like a bolt of lightning** – moving quickly as lightning does.

Background

1. **This chapter says that Christmas passed without the usual festive events. What festive events characterize Old Christmas on the Outer Banks?** Sandy Semans, editor, Outer Banks Sentinel, describes "Old Christmas"; also see the photos about "Old Christmas" on the NC NIE Web site.

*"Old Christmas could be explained by saying Julius Caesar slept here! About four decades before Christ was born, Caesar developed the Julian calendar, basis of the Gregorian calendar now used around the world. The Julian was a vast improvement over other calendars, but there was a miscalculation in the number of leap years needed to coordinate the calendar with the seasons. In 1582, in an effort to correspond it with the seasons, Pope Gregory XIII dropped 10 days, changed leap year so that it didn't occur in each year ending in 00 and changed the beginning of the year to Jan. 1 from March 25.

Catholic countries adopted the new version because the Pope's word was law. But in Britain, the Catholic Church no longer ruled so the change wasn't made there until 1752 when that country removed 11 days from the Julian calendar and hence forth adopted the full use of the Gregorian calendar. By dropping the 11 days, Christmas Day moved from Jan. 5 to Dec. 25. Most accepted the changed date but there were holdouts. On Hatteras Island, the Chicamacomico area -- now Rodanthe, Waves and Salvo -- held on to the old date and continued to celebrate it as Old Christmas. Over the years, it evolved so that the religious holiday was observed on Dec. 25 and Jan. 5 became a secular holiday. Old Christmas was celebrated with revelers going house to house for food and drink. Although it is unclear when it began, "Old Buck" became the mascot of the celebration. A bovine head was stuck on a pole and carried around during the merry-making. Old Buck's origin isn't known for certain but some think it may have been an African custom that came across the Atlantic Ocean with slaves and eventually was embraced by the local whites. Old Christmas is still celebrated in Rodanthe."

2. **What do you learn about the relationship between Great Britain and the United States during World War II?** Great Britain kept sea lanes so that the United States could deliver supplies. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the declaration of war by United States, keeping those lanes open will be more difficult.

3. **How does submarine warfare change from World War I to World War II?** Submarines can travel greater distances during WWII.

Look for more information in coming chapters.

Thinking skills

1. **Why do the children appreciate Miss White?** Miss White keeps them informed, doesn't hold back information. (The author of Taffy of Torpedo Junction worked as a teacher on the Outer Banks.)

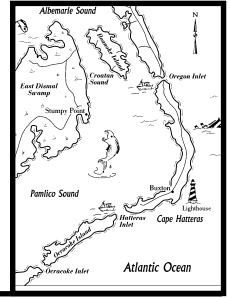
Do you agree that her approach appeals to students?

2. **In your own words, explain how the war changes life on the island.** People on the island experience blackouts, patrols, explosions, concern for family members who are soldiers

3. **How did the oil get on the beach?** Text presents two possibilities; a British or German ship has been sunk.

4. **Do you think Taffy takes too great a risk by riding Sailor on the beach? Does Taffy take too many risks? Do you think taking chances will get her into trouble?**

Taffy of Torpedo Junction



Word study

1. **boomed** – gave off a deep resonant and loud sound.
2. **rocked** – caused to shake or sway violently.
3. **rattled** – caused repeated knocking or a rapid succession of short, sharp sounds.
4. **shuddered** – shivered, as from fear.
5. **whimpered** – cried softly.
6. **sighed** – exhaled air in a long deep breath, in weariness or longing.
7. **balled the twine** – wrapped thick thread/thin rope into ball.

Just by looking at the verbs above, what do you think happens in this chapter? How do the words add to the mood and tone of this chapter? "Boomed, rocked, rattled, shuddered" suggest that torpedoes explode.

What other stories or topics are likely to use those action words?

Background

1. According to Gramp, is the United States prepared for war? Gramp says that the United States is not prepared for the war.

Do you know if that is the true? Conduct research to find out whether the United States was prepared for the war.

2. How does the United States support Great Britain? The United States helps the British keep open the sea lanes.

Conduct research to find out more about United States and British cooperation during World War II.

3. What more do you learn about submarine warfare during World War II? How do the submarines obtain fuel sufficient to remain on the North Carolina coast? Big Jens talks to Gramp about the "mother submarine" that rests on the bottom of the ocean, waiting for darkness when she comes up and recharges batteries. The submarine supplies fuel to several smaller submarines that are hard to locate.

Thinking skills

1. What rules does Gramp set for Taffy as more ships explode and burn off shore?

Taffy is forbidden to go out at night. She does not ride on beach as often as before.

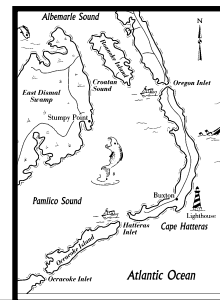
2. In your own words, explain why Cape Hatteras becomes known as "Torpedo Junction". By end of January 1942, a dozen ships sink to the bottom of ocean. In February nearly a dozen more sink. Freighters, cargo vessels, oil tankers, passenger lines—all go down from submarine attacks. U-boats rest off shore, waiting to torpedo all types of vessels coming in and going out of the area.

3. How does the content of this chapter differ from the first seven chapters? Chapter 8 provides more background about the war and its effects on the Outer Banks. Other chapters offer more about the characters and their circumstances.



Torpedo Junction, part two

Taffy of Torpedo Junction



Word study

- 1. censored** – examined for possible removal; eliminated or held back or suppressed information.
- 2. trawlers** – boats in which fishermen drag nets along the sea bottom to catch the fish living there.
- 3. plying/plied** – passing along or passed shore on a regular basis.
- 4. anchorage** – area around harbor set aside for ships to stay by putting or throwing down anchor .
- 5. convoys** – accompanying and protecting force, as of ships or troops; a group, as of ships or motor vehicles, traveling together with a protective escort or for safety or convenience.
- 6. silhouetted** – outline or general shape of something caused by light and shadow.

Which of the above words relate to ships and harbors?

Background

What more do you learn about efforts by the United States and Great Britain to secure the coast? British arm fishing boats and join American patrols and aircraft in efforts to track down U-boats.

Thinking skills

1. What do you learn about Brandy in this chapter? Brandy has been trained to attack on cue.

What does Brandy do when Kenny pretends to hit Taffy? Brandy growls, then knocks down and holds Kenny until Taffy commands the dog to turn him lose.

Do you think Taffy chooses the best way to show Brandy's skills to Kenny? Describe another way. She may tell Kenny about Brandy's training or warn Kenny before Brandy jumps him....

Why do you think the author includes Brandy's attack in the story? Brandy will defend and/or attack someone later in the story—a foreshadowing.

2. Why do you think the young people talk among themselves about the Snyder house but don't talk as openly with their parents and other adults? Young people do not think adults will listen. The young people living on the Outer Banks at that time may worry that adults will limit their ability to move around the island or forbid them to see each other....

Is their failure to talk openly with adults realistic and true-to-life or not? Is it wise?

3. What security measures do Taffy, George Miller and Ben Gaskins discuss? Taffy purchases black shades for windows designed to block out light. Light reveals outlines of ships and exposes ships to attack. Taffy and others in the store discuss that weather reports will be censored, to keep useful information from their enemies.

Does the conversation make you more fearful for Taffy, Gramp and their friends?

Taffy of Torpedo Junction



Word study

1. **sound shore** – shoreline along a passage of water between mainland and an island. The Pamlico Sound spans more than 30 miles from the mainland to Hatteras.
2. **palmettos** – Any of several small, mostly tropical palms having fan-shaped leaves.
3. **cat-footed** – walking as a cat, characterized by quiet, stealthy steps as to remain undetected.
4. **saboteur** – spy or enemy agent; someone plotting destruction, creating fear or terror.

What visual images do the words above create? Draw a picture for one or more.

Today, you won't often hear the word "saboteur" used. What word would be used instead? Terrorist and others.

Thinking skills

1. **What does Gramp forbid Taffy to do?** Gramp cautions Taffy to stay off the beach and forbids her going on the back road by the boarded-up Snyder's house. Gramp doesn't want her looking at the ocean at night out of her window.
2. **List the events that lead Taffy and her friend Malene to sneak out to the beach.** They talk about Gramp not wanting Taffy on the beach at night and his not wanting her to peep out of the window. Taffy and Malene talk about the view from Taffy's window and Malene asks to look out. Malene faces the window and spots a light. Taffy says it's probably one of patrols. Malene says the light is on water. Both girls look for the light through the screen and see it over ocean. They decide to dress and sneak out on beach to see what the light is, after Taffy debates with her conscience. She leashes Brandy to take her with them. Gramp snores as they leave. The girls take the flashlight. They see the light again. A jeep (patrol) passes. They hear something being dragged. Brandy growls. They see a man dragging something from the waterline. They hear a faraway sound like a bell. Brandy pulls away and growls louder. Malene says they should leave. Taffy refuses to leave without her dog and calls for Brandy.
3. **How does the author build a "sense of excitement"?** At each point in story outlined in the answer to the question above, readers ask what Taffy and Malene will do next and what will happen to them and the dog.

Taffy of Torpedo Junction



Word study

1. **sprawling** – spread out in a straggling or disordered fashion.
2. **blood-curdling** – extremely alarming, nightmarish, hair raising.
3. **guttural** – harsh sound coming from throat or back of the mouth.

What does each word above describe? sprawling man, blood-curdling yell and guttural sound.

Take out each word from the story. Is any word not missed? Are the words important to the meaning and/or impact of the story?

What do these expressions mean? Have you used or have you ever heard any of the following expressions?

1. **jiminy gosh** – exclamation that emphasizes surprise or dismay.
2. **as slick as grease** – difficult to capture, slippery.
3. **nigh on to thirty years** – nearly or about thirty years.
4. **whale the daylights out of me** – punish by spanking.

Thinking skills

1. **Pretend Brandy can talk. How does she describe what happens?**
2. **What clues does the author give you to the identity of the man caught on the shore and to his plans?**
The man speaks in low, guttural voice, unintelligibly (German). Big Jens calls him "one of them" and later calls him an enemy agent. He says that Taffy and Malene might have been shot.
3. **Draw a picture of Taffy "sobbing softly in her nervousness." What might she say to explain her crying?**
She's excited, afraid, relieved, anxious about what happened and what might happen next....
4. **Big Jens, the skipper, says "Things I've been wondering about are beginning...." and then he stops speaking. What is he thinking, in your opinion? Complete his thoughts. Check your predictions in the next chapters.**
5. **How does Big Jens view what happens that night? What does he say and do to let you know his thinking?**
His response is a mix of praise and scolding or warning. He says he has never experienced anything like that night. Two young girls and a dog capture an enemy spy. He acknowledges the risk the girls took by saying they might have been shot. Big Jens tells the girls he is proud of them....
6. **Pretend you are Taffy telling Gramp about the capture of the enemy agent. What do you say? Pretend you are Malene telling your mother about what happened. Is your account the same or different for Taffy and Malene? How do you expect Gramp and Malene's mother to respond? Find out how they respond by reading the next chapters.**



Word study

1. **lopsidedly** – leaning to one side.
2. **severely** – unsparing, harsh, or strict, unyielding.
3. **knowingly** – with full knowledge, on purpose, deliberately.
4. **dejectedly** – discouraged, despondent, dispirited, down-hearted, unhappy, miserable.
5. **sharply** – abruptly, suddenly or quickly.

Locate the above words in the story and identify the action words that they modify.

1. **grinned** lopsidedly
2. **looked** severely
3. **looked** knowingly
4. **nodded** dejectedly
5. **looking up** sharply

How do the words affect the meaning of the passage? The words add force, show emotion or mood of person taking the action.

What is the part of speech? adverb

In the remaining chapters, look for and add to this list of "ly" words, and focus on the meanings of the words and the action words they modify or change.

What do the expressions mean? Why use them? Take them out and read the passage. What difference do they make? Why does the author include them?

1. **what in thunder** – surprise, implying what, how or why.
2. **what in blazes** – surprise, implying what, how or why.
3. **golly Moses** – surprise, shock.
4. **blow us to kingdom come** – destroy.
5. **scares me plum to death** – extremely frightened.

Thinking skills

1. How does Gramp Morgan respond to the news about Taffy's role in the capture of the agent? Gramp is stunned or surprised and then gives the girls a severe or disapproving look. He says later their actions frighten him (scares me plum to death).

Do you think you'd respond in the same way if you were Taffy's grandfather?

2. What uses for the dynamite do Big Jens and Gramp discuss?

Dynamite might be used to knock out government installation or dynamite someplace else. They say it might have been brought to shore for someone else to use.

3. Why do you think Big Jens is more scared than ever? He understands that enemy agents are on land and sea, working together, and more harm will be done if explosives get through.

4. Why does Gramp keep Brandy with him? Gramp says he wants to take Brandy fishing.

What difference do you think that will make to the story? Taffy may need Brandy's protection and not have it.

5. What plans do Malene and Taffy make for the rest of the day?

Malene and Taffy discuss picnics, crabbing, clamming, scalloping and other fun in the Cape woods and on Sound side of island, away from the beach.

What do you think "the end of the day" will bring?

Taffy of Torpedo Junction



Word study

1. **serpentine** – a winding course, as a road; twisting as a snake.

2. **naïve as a baby** – innocent, unsuspecting; accepting or failing to question.

What or who do the word and phrase above describe? serpentine tracks; Big Jens describes himself as naïve as a baby.

What do the following expressions mean? What are literal meanings? What are the figurative meanings? Draw a picture to show both the literal and figurative meaning of one expression.

1. **popping in his mind** – coming up with lots of ideas.

2. **loose ends tied up** – taking care of unfinished matters or business.

3. **blind as a bat** – not understanding or seeing what's happening.

4. **other birds to pluck** – in context, other birds refer to people and plucking means picking off, catching or capturing those people or the enemy agents.

Background

1. **What's the significance of the black swastika?** The swastika is the symbol of Nazi German state.

2. **How do people respond to that symbol today?** The swastika is associated with mass murders carried out by Hitler's regime, hatred and violence....

Thinking skills

1. **What does Big Jens conclude?** Someone is operating under cover, supplying information to the enemy.

What further evidence does Bill offer him? Bill reports that Johansen picked up a peculiar kind of signal, not a distress signal. The island has no working ham operation. Big Jens realizes that messages are passing between ship and shore.

2. **What's one use for yaupon?** Yaupon is used to make tea.

3. **After he studies the Snyder house, Big Jens draws more conclusions. What are they, and what does he intend to do next?** The Snyder house contains a short wave radio. He plans to call for support and go after anyone working in the Snyder house.

4. **Does the story feel as if it is moving faster or slower in this chapter?**

Taffy of Torpedo Junction



Word study

1. **petrified** – stopped or frozen with fear, surprise or other strong emotion.
2. **scurried** – moved quickly or in haste.
3. **wormed** – elicited or obtained information or other item by artful or devious means.

Are the above words action words in the context of the chapter? If so, tell the person, place or thing committing each action.

1. Nazi was petrified...
2. Two dark figures scurried...
3. The navy wormed...

Write your own sentences in which each word is used as the action word or verb in the sentence.

What does "like a sack of meal" mean? Pick up a bag as if it were a sack of meal and imagine carrying Taffy in that way.

Thinking skills

1. **What does the text say about Taffy's feeling uneasy?** She wonders what Big Jens is up to, and she hears a noise caused by breaking bushes in the woods.

Why do you think she feels uneasy?

2. **What contributes to her wanting to get home quickly?** It's almost dark and Taffy had promised to be home by dark.

3. **Who occupies the Snyder house?** Three men, father and son and one other person, occupy the house.

What relationship do the men have to each other and to the man whom Taffy helped capture on the beach?

Two of the men are father and son. The three men work with the man on the beach whom Taffy and Malene helped capture.

What does the older man say about the islanders and why? He calls the islanders "stupid" for allowing the agents to operate "under their noses" all winter and spring and succeed in sinking over twenty Allied ships.

4. **How do the men capture Taffy?** The men place a strand of wire in Taffy's path, causing Sailor to throw her. Then the men carry her to the house; she is unconscious.

How do they keep her quiet? They place chloroform on a sponge to Taffy's nose, and she breathes it in.

What do the men intend to do with the house and equipment...and with Taffy? They soak the radio equipment and house with gasoline, plan to burn everything and leave Taffy in the burning house.

Taffy of Torpedo Junction



Word study

- tearing** – moving with violent haste or energy; behaving forcefully.
- plowing** – cutting through or proceeding laboriously; plodding.

What or who is tearing (Sailor, over the sand fence) **or plowing** (Gramp, through the sand)? **What else may be torn or plowed? What do the words refer to in this chapter?**

What do the expressions mean?

- like shadows in a dark forest** – secretive, movement unseen as no light reveals presence.
- like a flash** – move quickly as a flash of light.

Do you know another story in which a character or characters move "like shadows in a dark forest"? Have you ever moved in that way? When and why?

Can you move "like a flash"? Demonstrate the motion and an opposite motion.

Thinking skills

- When Sailor comes home alone, what does Gramp think?** He thinks that "frisky" Sailor threw off Taffy.

What does he fear? Gramp fears that she may be hurt.

Where does he turn for help and why is Big Jens not at the station? Gramp contacts the DF Station. Big Jens is at Snyder House, so two other men head out in ambulance to help Gramp look for Taffy.

- What does Big Jens hear Hans and his father say about Taffy and their plans for her?** The men say that Holstein wants to "get even" with Taffy for her part in capturing the agent on the beach. They intend to leave her in the burning house.

Does the conversation confirm what you predicted after reading Chapter 14?

- Illustrate Taffy's rescue. Create a storyboard with words and drawings.**
- Do you consider this chapter the most exciting or do you think another chapter is more exciting? What do you think is the climax of the story? What do you think happens next?**

Taffy of Torpedo Junction



Word study

1. **sickbay** – place where the sick or injured are treated.

What do the following expressions mean? What may happen to cause a person to be "limp as a dishrag" and "sore as a boil"?

1. **limp as a dishrag** – lacking strength or ability to stand, without backbone or drooping as a dishrag.

2. **sore as a boil** – physically in pain as a wound or "boil" would be; hurt that makes movement painful.

Thinking skills

1. **In your own words, explain how Taffy feels as she wakes up.** She is bruised and sore from the fall and also from being carried to and tossed around in the house. Taffy is confused.

Why do you think she cannot remember what happened to her? Taffy was knocked unconscious in the fall from her horse, and she was kept unconscious with chloroform. Dictionary definitions of chloroform describe it as toxic, and it was once used as anesthesia. Because of its properties, chloroform continues to make Taffy feel sleepy.

2. **Why do you think Big Jens does not want anyone to know what happened?** Taffy will face lots of/ too many questions. Talking about events at the Snyder's house feeds fear and gossip....

Why do you think he and Gramps agree not to tell Taffy for a long, long time? Big Jens and Gramp want Taffy to recover and don't want to scare her more with news about her capture and plans to harm her.

Do you think not telling her is a good decision?

3. **Do you think the attacks on United States and British ships stop or continue after the operation at the Snyder house is shut down? Verify what happens along the coast during the war years, using other sources.**

Taffy of Torpedo Junction



1. Based on events from the story, tell why you consider Taffy courageous or foolhardy or somewhere in between.

2. Can you apply anything you learned from Taffy to situations in your life, to interpretations of other stories, real and/or make believe? Can any lessons from *Taffy of Torpedo Junction* be applied to current events?

3. Draw conclusions about life on the Outer Banks during World War II.

4. Now that you have read Taffy and viewed photos and maps of the area, what conclusions do you draw about the coastal area around the Outer Banks and the way it looked and felt during WWII? Search for photos about the Outer Banks today. How has the area changed?

5. Use events and references in *Taffy of Torpedo Junction* to create newspaper stories or pages.

First, study the different formats used in newspapers and then work on one or more of the following:

A. Use the style of hard news stories (Who, What, When and Where in opening paragraph(s) to report on Brandy's rescue or the capture of the enemy agent.

B. Write profiles about Taffy, Gramp, Sailor or Brandy, Big Jens, Kenny and/or other characters.

C. Or write a lost and found ad for Brandy.

D. Write letters to the editor or opinion columns about the war effort, rationing and stipends, the dangers on the North Carolina coast or cooperation between the United States and Great Britain.

E. Write explanatory, background stories on the war. Conduct additional research and compare the U-boats used in WWI with submarine warfare in WWII.

F. Create ads for blackout curtains, radios, walkie-talkies, jeeps and other items mentioned in the story. Illustrate your stories with drawings, maps, graphs and photos.

Taffy

of Torpedo Junction



Thanks to Sandy Semans, editor, Outer Banks Sentinel, for recommending Web sites to and for explanations of sand fences, Banks ponies, the brandywine camphor bottle and Old Christmas.

Web sites mentioned in the text above:

Chapter One

rations – www.scc.rutgers.edu/njwomenshistory/Period_5/ration.htm
www.genealogytoday.com/guide/war-ration-books.html

Shackleford ponies and "Portugee" sailors –
www.shacklefordhorses.org/timeline.htm

Sir Walter Raleigh and Barbary coast –
<http://raleigh.classicauthors.net/DiscoveryOfGuiana/DiscoveryOfGuiana1.html>

Sir Walter Raleigh, settlement of Roanoke Island and Lost Colony
http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/raleigh_walter.shtml
<http://www.lib.unc.edu/ncc/ref/swr/swr.html>

Legend of Bluebeard
<http://www.endicott-studio.com/rdrm/forblue.html>

"hoi toide" brogue
www.languagemagazine.com/internetedition/nd2000/wolfram.html
or see this book, published by UNC Press that explains this special dialect HOI TOIDE ON THE OUTER BANKS: THE STORY OF THE OCRACOKE BROGUE by Walt Wolfram and Natalie Schilling-Estes

Chapter Two

Adder snake and its venom
www.bbc.co.uk/nature/wildfacts/factfiles/279.shtml

Carbolic acid and other "old remedies"
www.worldwideschool.org/library/books/iit/newage/MiracleMongers/chap10.html

Chapter Three

nor'easter
<http://science.howstuffworks.com/question595.htm>

North Carolina's Outer Banks during World War II
<http://ncmuseumofhistory.org/workshops/WWII/Session5.htm#torpedo>

Teacher's Guide

This teacher's guide drew from and adapted definitions for words and phrases from the following sites.

www.dictionary.com
www.merriamwebster.com
www.freedictionary.com