

# Study Guide for The Emily Carr Mystery

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While visiting Victoria to participate in the wedding ceremonies of her best friend, Tiffany, Liz Austen finds herself involved in some very mysterious occurrences. She finds out that the deMornay family has its share of troubled individuals, and that the Thirteen Oaks mansion hides many secrets. She also encounters several dangerous situations that will keep the reader glued to the story.

## Pre-reading Activities

Locate Victoria on a map of Canada. On a map of Vancouver Island, locate Victoria, and look for Butchart Gardens, adjacent to Brentwood Bay, a little north and west of Victoria.

Prior to reading this story, one might like to find out something about Emily Carr and her works. In the Junior Encyclopedia of Canada (1990), Volume 1, p. 291-92, there is a brief biography with colour illustrations of two of her paintings. The same article is available in The 1999 Canadian Encyclopedia Student Edition Young Learner's CD-ROM, although one of the illustrations is different. Rosemary Neering's *Emily Carr (Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1975)* provides a detailed biography, with many black and white illustrations. A number of examples of her work appear in colour in *A Heritage of Canadian Art: The McMichael Collection (Clarke, Irwin, 1979)*, along with a brief biography (p. 133-37). CBC has presented a *Life and Times of Emily Carr* programme, available on videotape.

In the back of the HarperCollins paperback (p. 168), there is a list of websites to visit. They provide extensive information about the city of Victoria, including maps, and several of the sites which are referred to in *The Emily Carr Mystery*.

A glance at a map of Victoria shows that much of the city is surrounded by water. Many of the adventures in which Liz finds herself in this story involve boats; the mysterious comings and goings of boats in Oak Bay, the cruise ships which pass by the island, the small boats which transport people to Fisherman's Wharf on the Inner Harbour. There are a few boating terms which Wilson uses, such as ketch and abeam, which a reader may have to look up in a dictionary.

## QUESTIONS

### Literal

1. What does the name of the boat "Amor de Cosmos" mean in English?
2. Why could Liz not act as maid of honour for Tiffany at her wedding?
3. What does "Klee Wyck" mean, and who gave that honorary name to Emily Carr?
4. Eric Wilson loves to use references to superstitions in his stories. Watch for them as you read and note at least two superstitions which Wilson includes in this story.

## **Inferential**

5. How old is Liz Austen at the beginning of this story?
6. While participating in the "meet and greet" program on the cruise ship, Eric asked Liz if she had brought her platinum credit card. Why would he ask such a question?
7. Major Wright says, "Wouldn't the folks back home in Winnipeg be jealous?" Why do you think that he would want them to feel jealous of Tiffany?

## **Critical**

8. How do you feel when you see a stuffed animal head hanging on a wall?
9. On the boat, Liz asks Paris to slow down because the speed scares her. When riding in Tiffany's Jeep, Liz comments on the speed limit and photo radar. How would you react if you were a passenger in a vehicle when the driver is obviously being careless or breaking the law?
10. How do you feel about children living in poverty? What could be done in your own community to help others?
11. Tiffany tells the Major, "I will not marry Paris. That's my decision, and I won't change it". Is Tiffany being wise or foolish? Explain your answer, and then describe a decision you've made that makes you feel proud of yourself.
12. Pepper wins praise for refusing to pass along rumours and giving friendship to an outcast. What is your opinion of Pepper's actions?
13. Describe a time when you've encountered social pressure.

## **Research**

14. Using the websites provided in the book, learn more about your favorite Victoria settings.
15. Research Emily Carr's story and prepare a report on interesting information about her that is not included in *The Emily Carr Mystery*.

## **ANSWERS**

1. Lover of the Universe (p.6)
2. Liz was only 17, and the law in B.C. requires that you be 18 to sign a wedding register. (p.4)
3. "Laughing one", a name given by the First Nations people. (p.16)
4. "When a ladybug landed on our table, the eldest girl said, "Now we'll all have good luck." (p.105)
5. "If your hat blows overboard, you're marked for drowning." (p.69)
6. Tiffany was 19, "two years older than Liz. (p. 3)
7. The shops on board the cruise ship catered to the very rich, "displaying expensive gowns, jewellery and perfumes". (p. 115)
8. Answers will vary
9. Answers will vary
10. Answers will vary

11. Answers will vary
12. Answers will vary
13. Answers will vary
14. Answers will vary
15. Answers will vary

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