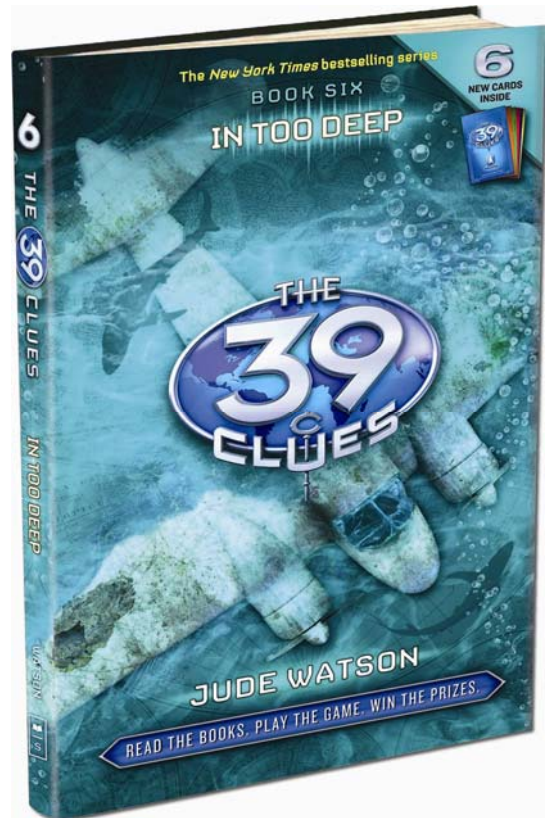


# The 39 Clues Book #6: *In Too Deep* Teacher's Guide

**Theme: Research Skills**



## Guide to The 39 Clues Book #6: In Too Deep, by Jude Watson

Theme of this section: Research Skills

### **What the Book is About**

A hint from their parents' past puts Amy and Dan on the trail of secrets their grandmother Grace would *never* have wanted them to know. Awful memories begin to crowd in on Amy, just as her enemies circle closer. How far would she go to protect Dan? How much of a Cahill is she prepared to be? Perhaps Grace was right; some secrets are better left buried.

### **About the Author**

Jude Watson is a pseudonym for Judy Blundell, author of *What I Saw and How I Lied* (Scholastic Press), winner of the 2008 National Book Award.

What could be more fun than writing in your journal? Well, how about writing Queen Amidala's journal for her? Jude Watson is currently the most celebrated author in the prequel-era of the Star Wars phenomenon. She's no stranger to science fiction - her own series, entitled *Danger.com*, is a mystery series based on the Internet. Watson became involved with LucasBooks when an editor she had worked with in the past selected her to write *Captive to Evil by Princess Leia Organa* (Star Wars Journal). Since then Watson has penned the Star Wars Jedi Apprentice series as well as journals for *Queen Amidala* and *Darth Maul*.

Although the books are written for children ranging from 9 to 13 years of age, Watson has found a

large fan base with adults! That's not a surprise since the stories are not only timeless, but also universal.

Jude Watson lives in Katonah, New York, with her husband and daughter.

### **Reference and Research Skills - A Clue Hunter's Secret Weapon**

Amy's exceptional ability to find facts and information about history, people and geography help her and Dan stay ahead of the Cahill pack in their search for clues! Reference and research skills are also an essential component to any reading and language arts curriculum. *The 39 Clues* series takes kids to interesting new places and introduces them to fascinating people in history. Help develop their curiosity by teaching them to find out additional facts about the settings and people in the story.

### **Finding the Best Source**

Knowing the best places to find the information can make all the difference between finding the next clue or finding danger! Following bad information could lead Dan and Amy on a wild goose chase. Good researchers have to know how to evaluate their sources. Use the *39 Clues* to teach your students about a variety of reference sources while improving their research skills.

### **The Library**

The library is filled with powerful tools like nonfiction books, such as biographies, and reference books, like encyclopedias. Teach your students to explore secret library codes such as the Dewey Decimal system. Guide them through the mysteries of alphabetical order using encyclopedias. Test their new research skills by asking them to find new facts about their favorite famous Cahill.

### **The Internet**

Good clue seekers can get lost on the infinite possibilities of the Internet. A simple search on Amelia Earhart can bring up over 1.6 million possible sites. Teach your students how to evaluate good sites that are filled with factual information from less credible sites that are filled with opinions and unchecked facts. First, look at the page's content and source. A web page from a library, museum, educational institution or government source will most likely contain credible information. A site that contains many commercials or whose author is unknown may not contain the most factual information. Ask the following questions when evaluating a site:

- Who wrote the information? Is the author listed? Is the author an expert - if so, on what basis?
- Is the purpose of the site to convey information objectively? Is the information accurate, and based upon facts? Or does the site exist to promote an agenda or viewpoint - is it propaganda?
- Is the site up to date? Is the research recent? Do the hyperlinks to related information work?
- Is the information corroborated by information on other sites? It's always a good idea to check several sites, not rely on just one.
- Is the information well-organized, well written, and easy to navigate?

## **Make the Journey an Adventure**

Would Dan and Amy search for clues if the journey ended in a boring, written report? No Way! Develop your students' love of research by making the final product as much of an adventure as the fact finding.

For instance, after researching their favorite famous Cahill, have them report the information in an acrostic poem. Students sometimes have a difficult time relaying research without plagiarizing. By writing the facts through a poem that begins with the letters of the person's name, students learn to put the information in their own words.

Students can develop their public speaking skills by presenting their research dressed as their famous Cahill. From Benjamin Franklin to Amelia Earhart, your students will love to teach others about "themselves."

Create a living museum where students can report on *39 Clue's In Too Deep* settings like Australia. Imagine your room filled with displays of information about Sydney, models of Coober Pedy's unique underground lifestyle, or interactive lessons that teach students how to speak Australian slang, all created by the students.

By leading your students on a reference and research adventure, you will be giving them the most powerful thing in the world: the ability to gain knowledge, and evaluate it thoughtfully!

*Guides written by Laura Stockwell, Fifth Grade Teacher, Orlando, Florida*