



All Stars 8 Ali, Goal Attack

The All Stars Series

Teacher Notes prepared by Fran Knight

Readership: Upper Primary to
Lower Secondary

Class study — Literature
Circles
Independent reading

Genre: Girls and sport,
friendships

Synopsis

Ali sees herself as the outsider. She is lonely and alone, often sitting in the space behind the shelves in the library to read during breaks at school. She sits alone at her desk, and when a new girl is brought into the class, finds that she is placed next to her. Steph is an instant friend, asking all sorts of questions, inviting herself back to Ali's house, taking Ali shopping.

At the netball final, Mel is unable to play and so Ali is asked to take her place as goal shooter. Ali has never felt that she is a good player. Being the substitute means that she has to be able to play every position on the court and once when she was called to play goal shooter, she felt awful that her lack of skills lost the team the match. After that the coach put up a goal ring in her backyard and Ali practiced. Steph does not like netball but goes along to the matches to watch.

The astute reader will realise that all is not what it seems, and when Steph gets caught with unpaid for clothing in her bag when shopping, Ali takes the blame. Her parents are distraught at this unusual behaviour, but her netball friends stick by her, realizing that Steph is not the friend she makes out to be. All is revealed at the end when several girls go to Steph's house and Ali sees for herself how she has been lied to by her new friend.

Book 8 in this series is about friendship. Ali feels that she is friendless and accepts Steph's friendship willingly. But when that friend urges her to do something against her better judgment then the wider issue of honesty comes into play. Shoplifting is rife in Australia and this timely book will encourage students to talk openly about this crime.

Class Activities

- How can the reader tell in the first three chapters that Steph is not what she seems to be? What clues does the author give? Why does Ali accept the friendship without question?
- Why does Ali not feel part of the team? What does an emergency player do?
- Things start to disappear in chapter nine. What things are stolen and where are they stolen from?



SOSE

- In chapter eleven, the two girls, Steph and Ali are taken to the office by the security officer in the store. What is shoplifting? You may like to research the laws about shoplifting. Invite a Store Security person or Police Officer in to speak to the class. With permission you may be able to visit a store and look at the security measures in place.
 - See if you can find out what is stolen by customers each year in Australia (I simply typed in <shoplifting cost> in google and came up with lots of responses from Police, Government Departments and Security firms)
 - Shoplifting costs Australia \$810 million per year, and accounts for up to 50% of Police reports. Check out www.asial.com.au for information from Australian Security Industries Association. This site gives great information about the costs of shoplifting to the general public, what is stolen and the measures stores can take to prevent the crime.
 - Write a letter to your local newspaper outlining the cost of shoplifting to the local community.

- In chapter 13, the members of the All Stars team defend Ali against the stealing accusations. What have they noticed?

- Practice makes perfect. Ali practices her shots at goal and so becomes more proficient. Have you ever practiced something to become better? What about a musical instrument? Sport? Exercise? Writing? Think about how you became more able at something. Write a short story about what you did.

About the Author



Meredith Costain lives in Melbourne with her partner, children's author Paul Collins, three chooks, a cat, a kelpie and a red heeler. Her work ranges from picture books through to popular fiction and non-fiction for older readers, and she is the editor of national children's magazine, Comet. Besides the All Stars series, Meredith's books include *Freeing Billy*, *The Sandpit War*, *Rock Raps* and *Musical Harriet*, which was adapted for television by the ABC. She regularly presents writing workshops for kids and adults in libraries and schools.

My Brilliant Netball Career

I had my own netball ring at home and just like Ali practised goals shooting with my dog who helped out with the rebounds. However my dreams of playing Goal Attack for the Cora Lynn Netball Club were dashed when my legs grew a metre overnight and I was packed off to the other end of the court by our coach.