



## OVERVIEW

Twelve-year-old Duff has a terrible stutter. When he drags himself home after the latest bullying incident, his father decides to use Duff as a guinea pig to test an anti-stuttering device called the FUSE. Duff and the bully meet again at a spring-break camp for drones and robots. Duff speaks clearly now and is no longer a target.

Then life takes a downward turn. Duff's father goes missing. With new-found confidence, self-reliance, and the help of friends and enemies, Duff works to solve the puzzle of his father's disappearance.

All Duff wants is to stop being bullied for his stutter. His parents understand this but know he needs their help. Tangled Tongue provides great discussion starters for upper elementary students about friendship, compassion, and differing abilities.

**Theme:** Friendship, Self - Respect, Bullying, Power of Words

**Comprehension:** Inferences

**Language Focus:** Words with Emotion

About the Author:

Jean Husband grew up in the rural Kootenays. Creston, British Columbia didn't offer many activities so she enlarged her world with the small library on her front porch. Following her leanings towards science, she trained to be Medical Laboratory Technologist, starting her career in more small towns and finally ending up in Metro Vancouver.

When she retired she turned to writing fiction with her grandchildren in mind. She has published two children's picture books.

Jean lives near Crescent Beach in Surrey, B.C. She describes herself as a "children's book writer, art quilter and badminton player."

## BOOK STATS

Grade Level Equivalent: 4–6 Ages: 9–12

Flesch Reading Ease score 93.6: very easy to read.

Gunning Fog score 4.6: easy to read.

The Coleman-Liau Index 5: Fifth Grade

The SMOG Index 3.6: Fourth Grade

Pages: 160

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Subject/Theme: Friendship, Bullying,

**“Words have power, words are power,  
words could be your power also.”  
Mohammed Qahtani**

## **Comprehension – Make Inferences**

Words can be powerful. Many words hint at feelings rather than describe them directly. These words may sometimes be both positive or negative depending on how they are used. Encourage them to look for hints in the text to figure out the meaning.

The author of *Tangled Tongue* doesn't always explain everything that is going on in the story. You have to figure out how a character feels or why he or she does something by using both hints from the story and your own past experiences. This is called making inferences. Example: On page 11, Duff is unsure how he is going to like being his father's test rat. What can you learn by making inferences about these words?

We know that Duff's father stuttered as a child and while Duff understands that his father wants to spare him that burden, his father doesn't seem to understand how Duff feels about being a guinea pig.

## **Activities for students:**

Preview the cover of the book and describe it. What do you expect the book to be about?

Create a new cover for *Tangled Tongue*.

*Tangled Tongue* is a story of overcoming adversity by taking back your own power. Write a review of the book, giving it a rating from one to four stars, telling us why.

Write a personal story about overcoming adversity.

Research some famous people who have stuttered: ie. Joe Biden, King George VI, Bruce Willis.

What devices are used to help stutterers now? Electronic fluency devices, worn like traditional hearing aids, use altered auditory feedback in the form of auditory delays & frequency shifts. Are there Apps out there? Are they useful?