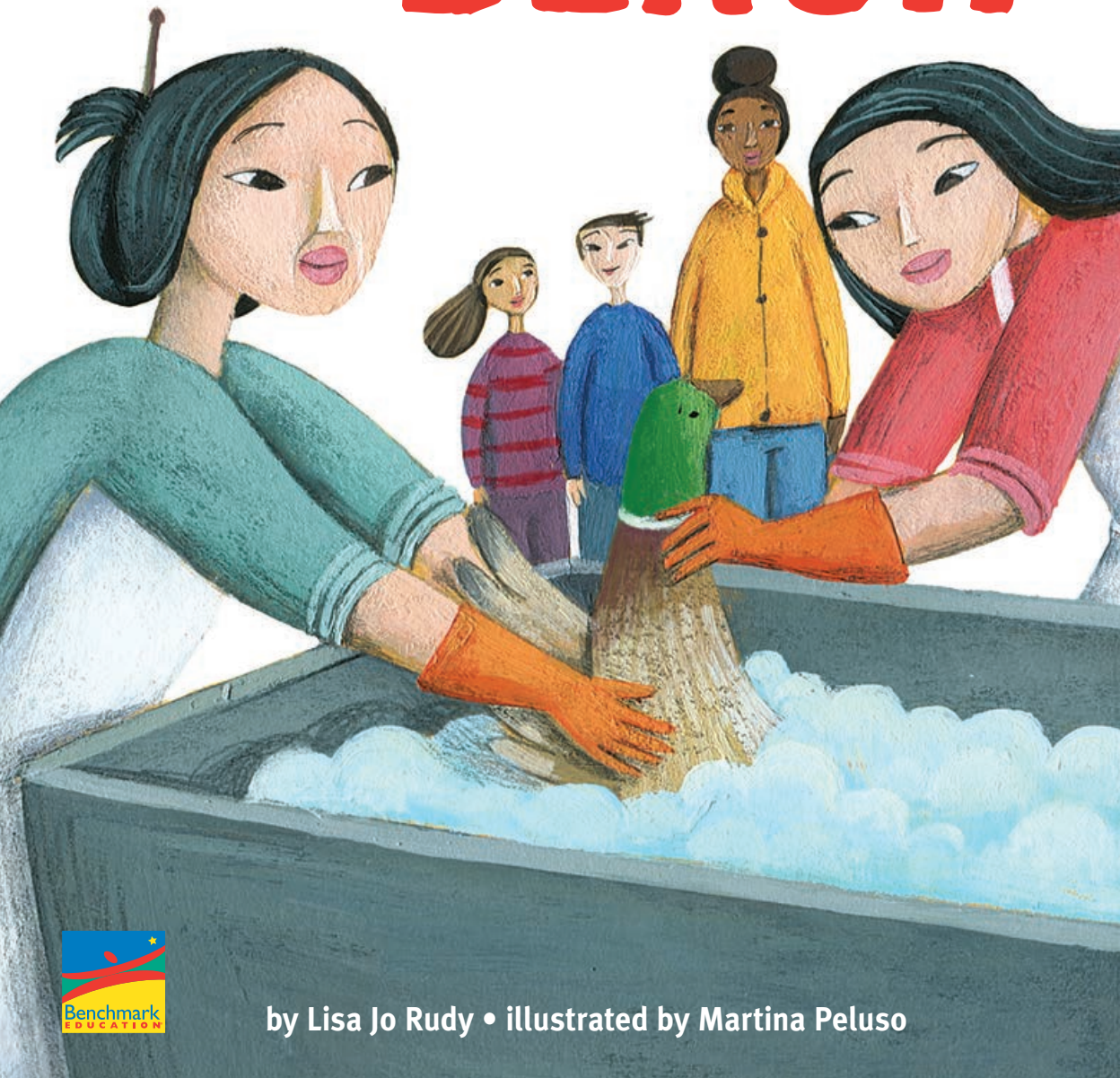
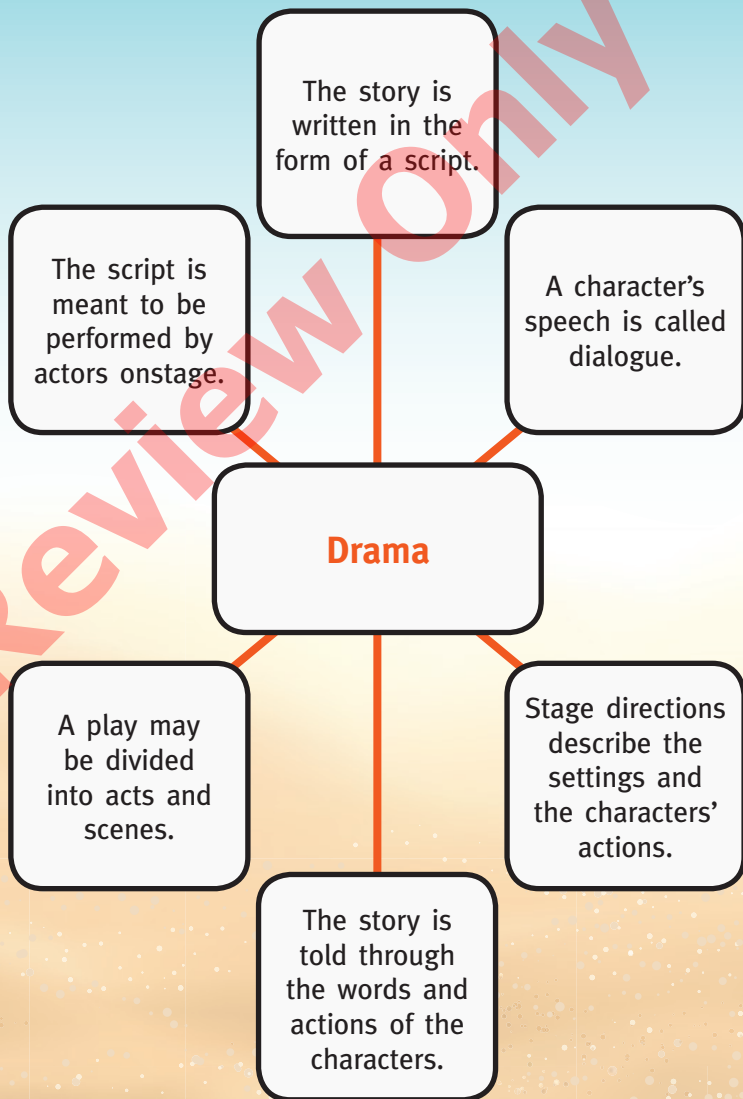


DANGER AT THE BEACH



Drama

Look for the genre features noted below as you read this book. Use the features to help you understand the text.



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Danger at the Beach

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(in order of appearance)

Julia

Zach's eighteen-year-old sister

Mr. Chen

Zach's dad

Mrs. Chen

Zach's mom

Zach

eleven-year-old boy

Amelia

twenty-five-year-old organizer from the Environmental Cleanup Cooperative, or ECC

Will

fourteen-year-old boy, a volunteer

Kim

ten-year-old girl, a volunteer

Meg

Kim's mom, also a volunteer

Mrs. Singh

Will's mom, also a volunteer

SETTINGS

Chen family home; Green Trail Beach Camp in March

An Emergency

(Lights up on the Chen family's dining room, dinnertime. The Chen family is seated around the table. Julia's smartphone sends out a ping sound. Mrs. Chen is annoyed.)

Julia: *(passes the phone to her mother)* Sorry, I know “no phones at the table,” but this is an emergency. It's a text from Green Trail Beach Camp.

Mr. Chen: What kind of emergency happens at a beach in March?

Mrs. Chen: *(looking at the phone)* A garbage **barge capsized**. Currents are carrying the garbage toward the beach, which could “contaminate the water and endanger the wildlife.”

Julia: They're asking camp counselors to help with the cleanup. Look, here are pictures!

(Mrs. Chen returns the phone to Julia, and Julia turns the phone so her family can see the pictures. The family reacts with horror.)





(Zach stacks dirty plates and walks toward Julia.)

Zach: Will the beach be okay? Will we be able to camp there this summer?

Mrs. Chen: That's hard to predict. If the pollution manages to reach the **wetlands**, it could pose a serious threat to the birds and other wildlife.

Mr. Chen: That's true, and the ducks may already be building their nests.

Zach: You mean where the boardwalk is? That's my favorite hike!

Julia: Mine, too. I really want to go and help!

Mrs. Chen: Well, we were supposed to visit Grandma and Grandpa this weekend, but I think this is far more important. I'll give them a call; they'll understand. *(Mrs. Chen exits the stage.)*

(Julia walks to the hallway, opens the closet door, and reaches for a tent on a shelf. Zach and Mr. Chen follow her.)

Julia: What do you think, Dad? Can we camp for a few days and assist with the emergency cleanup?

Mr. Chen: Well ...

Zach: Dad, there's no way we can allow the beach to be damaged. Julia and I really need to go help.

Julia: Zach, I know sometimes it's hard to spend a lot of time with new people, but I'll probably be with the other camp counselors and adults. I think there's a chance you'll be with other kids helping.

Zach: *(frowning)* But what if I don't know anyone?

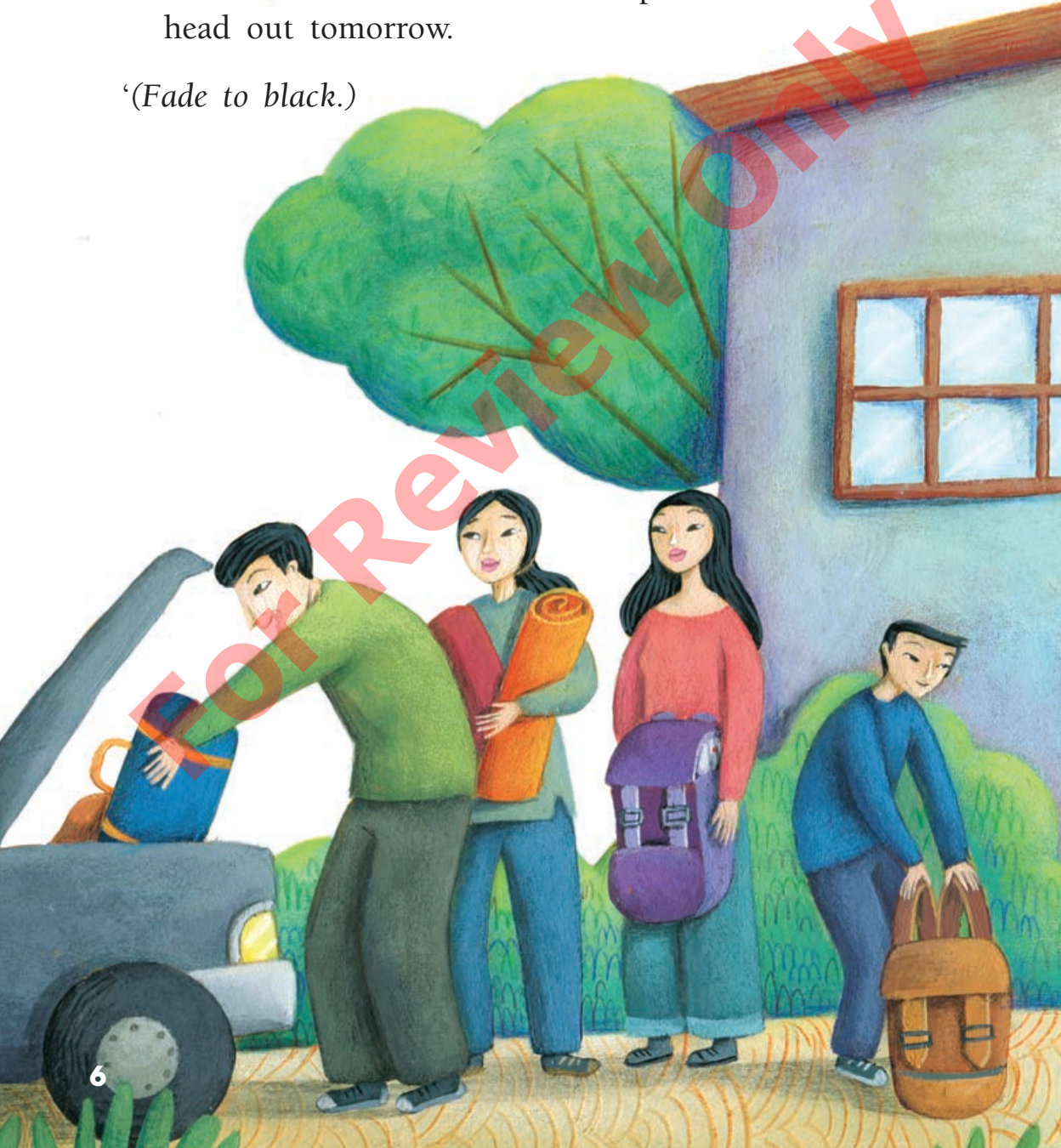


(Mrs. Chen returns and meets everyone in the hallway.)

Mrs. Chen: Grandma and Grandpa say, “Go clean up the beach!” They’re concerned about Green Trail—they used to camp there too!

Mr. Chen: Then it’s settled. We’ll pack the car and head out tomorrow.

(*Fade to black.*)



Get Your Hands Dirty

(Green Trail Beach Camp, late afternoon. Downstage left is the Chens' large family tent. Upstage right is a picnic table. As the scene opens, Mr. and Mrs. Chen are outside the tent. Julia emerges from the tent.)

Julia: All the air mattresses are blown up except for Zach's.

Zach: (from inside the tent) I'm working on it!

Mrs. Chen: Great! We just need to grab the cooler from the car, and we'll be all set.

Amelia: (offstage, through a megaphone) Welcome volunteers. Please congregate at the picnic table!



(Volunteers enter and gather around the picnic table. Mr. Chen, Mrs. Chen, and Julia quickly head over to the picnic table. Zach scrambles out of the tent, sees the crowd, and then slowly walks over with his head down.)

Julia: *(whispers to Zach)* C'mon, it'll be okay.

Zach: But there's a lot of people I don't know.

(Amelia enters, wearing a raincoat and waterproof boots.)

Amelia: My name is Amelia, I'm an organizer from the Environmental Cleanup Cooperative, and I'll be supervising the cleanup. I'm so glad you all came out to make the beach and wetlands safe again.



Will: What do you mean “safe”? Is it considered dangerous here?

Amelia: Well, the garbage barge that capsized was transporting trash and barrels of petroleum oil; the trash included plastic bags and other items that won't **biodegrade**. Some of the trash has washed up onto the shore or found its way into the tidal marsh. More of it has started to sink toward the seabed.

