

Book Review

Deadlocked by Tom Palmer

If you like rugby, you'll enjoy this book! My student Nathan (11) plays rugby and recently read and reviewed the book. We both enjoyed it for many reasons but, in particular, at the time of writing, the Rugby World Cup was on.

It's about a team of school-aged Welsh rugby players who come to Auckland to play in the fictitious World Schools' Rugby Trophy. Owen, the main character, is 15 and a struggling reader. As a present, Owen's teacher gives him a book to read during the long flight from London. He had a churning worry "that he wouldn't be able to finish it."

I know my students sometimes have the same feelings. However, this book is written in bold print with short, well-spaced paragraphs making it easier to track and comprehend. There is typical teenage dialogue and language and the local setting of Auckland makes the book 'immediate' and interesting. The boys discuss the All Blacks, the haka, and mention characters such as Jonah Lomu and Richie McCaw.

I particularly enjoyed the themes in this book. They are centred on making good choices, dealing with unacceptable behaviour and attitudes, team spirit, faith, reading, and believing in yourself.

The plot follows the team's journey through the tournament. It's exciting but I won't tell you the outcome. Owen did eventually finish reading his book, despite finding reading difficult, and his team did get into the final!

Reviewed by SPELD NZ Teacher, Wendy Klyen

To download free New Zealand-specific resources on *Deadlocked*, see:

<http://tompalmer.co.uk/new-zealand-rugby-resources>
Recommended reading age: 10+



SPELD NZ student, Nathan Jordan (11)



Title: Dead Locked Author: Tom Palmer
Date started: 15.9.15 Date finished: 21.9.15

What was the book about?

It was about high schools competing in a rugby world championship. It was New Zealand High going to the final at Eden Park and versus New Zealand Auckland Grammar.

What did you like about the book?

How it had cards at the front and back so I could see who the players were. The words were bigger than usual and not too many on a page. I also liked that there was real facts in the story.

Were there any parts you didn't like? Discuss.

No, I enjoyed the whole book.



What was your favourite part of the book?

That they played at Eden Park where the All Blacks played in their 2011 Rugby World Cup Final.

Would you recommend this book to a friend?

YES NO

How many stars would you give this book? Colour the stars.

(5 - Excellent, 1 - Poor)



Draw a picture to show your favourite part of the book.

