

## Task for *Too Much Lip*

### Key references for character analysis

#### Ken

- Ken has many sides to his personality and you can never be sure which side you are dealing with; he is unpredictable and dangerous. (p. 16)
- Ken has a very dark sense of humour, as seen on p. 20, when he jokes about harvesting Donny for his organs because all he does is lie around the house all day.
- Ken sees himself as an unofficial mayor, ordering the townspeople not to bring ice into the town: 'Fuck that shit, I've barred ice from Durrongo. The whole pub knows – they bring it here, I'll flog 'em silly.' (p. 22)
- Ken's perspective on Kerry's crime was that she was on her own, and she could do what she wanted, especially if that meant bringing home cash from time to time. He wasn't concerned about her doing jail time and knew she was tough enough to deal with it. (p. 23)
- We get an insight into Ken and Donny's relationship, and why Donny retreats to his computer, on p. 29.
- Ken's usual pattern of behaviour when drinking is described on p. 43.
- Ken is jealous of Black Superman's wealth and success with his government job in Sydney. Kerry notes the hypocrisy of this when Ken enjoys his own special advantages from living with their mum and Pop. (p. 48)
- Ken's call to arms at Pop's funeral to stop the development on their ancestral lands. (pp. 87–90)
- Black Superman has memories of Ken lying screaming on the kitchen floor, enduring Pop's beatings. (p. 256)

#### Donny

- Donny's character is described on pp. 21–22.
- Donny's understanding of his personal totem (the whale) is limited, demonstrating the disruption to traditional knowledge experienced by some Aboriginal people today. (p. 51)

#### Martina

- Introduced in Chapter Two, Martina is a manipulative, calculating real estate agent who is not afraid to bend the truth for her own gain. She is egotistical, materialistic and ruthless. (pp. 25–27)
- *'Come inside!' encouraged Martina, striding up the driveway and not batting an eyelid as she stepped over a six-foot brown snake that chose that very*

*moment to slither over the cracked concrete and into the long grass next door ... She gave absolutely nothing away. Her patter didn't waver, her gaze didn't shift towards the long grass, nothing. The snake had never existed. There was no such thing on the planet as a brown snake. Mesmerised, the women followed her inside. (p. 46)*

- Martina is depicted as a sales shark, predatory, living a fast life – snorting cocaine and looking for a match on Tinder despite having a boyfriend back in Sydney. (pp. 56–7)

### **Mayor**

- The stereotypical power-hungry and self-important mayor character is described on p. 40.

### **Pop**

- Pop has 'little time' for women and 'none at all' for people who identify as queer. (p. 42)
- In Pop's last days he was going back to memories of the mission and stations. (p. 44)
- Pretty Mary and Ken are in hysterics about Pop's hallucinatory gambling, showing their resilience through humour during a sad time. (p. 45)

### **Mum/Pretty Mary**

- A contradictory character – a devout Christian and reformed alcoholic (teetotaler) who sells tarot readings at the markets, calling herself Durrogon the wise (using her Aboriginality to claim spiritual knowledge). She deceives a couple who seek her help to deal with a haunted house, and smokes joints with Ken and Kerry. (p. 45, p. 49, p. 103, pp. 167–8)

### **Black Superman**

- Lack of respect for Mum and Pop. (pp. 73–75)
- Advanced social skills, acceptance in community. (p. 85, p. 90)

### **Uncle Richard**

- Represents the family's link to culture – he holds traditional knowledge and wisdom and is a peacekeeper in the family. (pp. 85–86 and pp. 272–277)