

KS2 Comprehension  
Answers



# Teaching notes

## BOOK 1

## The Green Cross Code

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 4)

**Genre:** Information / instructions


**Source:** Department for Transport

**Introduction** This is a non-chronological information and advice text aimed specifically at children. It has clear-cut layout and formatting with aids to retrieval of information, including numbered paragraphs with inset sub-headings in bold coloured print. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

You might also give the children some further background information. First introduced in 1971, the Green Cross Code procedure was designed to help pedestrians to cross streets safely. The campaign that launched the code was targeted specifically at children; at that time, half of all casualties on the road were children. Following the launch of the Code, the number of casualties dropped by 11 per cent. Sadly, the rate rose again after six months, highlighting the need for road safety messages to be given a high profile at all times.

**Answers** 1. sight, sound 2. 'where drivers can see you' 3. *the distance from one side of the road to the other is shorter if you go straight across; it lessens the danger from vehicles suddenly appearing; it is easier for drivers to predict your movements* (allow for child's own wording and interpretation as long as the answer is logical) 4. between parked cars; on sharp bends; close to the top of a hill 5. (any three from:) subway, zebra/puffin/pelican/toucan crossing, footbridge, island, patrolled crossing 6. back from the edge 7. (either or both:) *can't see approaching traffic; drivers can't see you.*

### Further activities

- Challenge the children to create a poster, including key advice from the text. Suggest that they display this advice in speech bubbles, thought bubbles or call-out stars. They could make the poster by hand or on a computer.
- Encourage the children to prepare and act out a scene that demonstrates the use of the Green Cross Code.
- Invite the children to research other government safety documents and websites, such as the Countryside Code, the Beach Safety Code and the Sea Safety Code.
- Ask the children to identify the key features and conventions of a typical safety document (such as clear headings and bullet points) and use this structure to write a Classroom Code. They should look at safety, tidiness, behaviour and consideration to others, when to speak and when to listen.
-  Hold a class discussion on whether it is ever safe to run across a road, asking the children to explain the rationale behind their views.

## Games glossary

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 6)


**Genre:** Glossary

**Source:** *You Can Do It! Games*

**Author:** Kirk Bizley

**Introduction** This Glossary from the book *You Can Do It! Games* by Kirk Bizley gives children the chance to practise their knowledge of alphabetic organisation of texts and highlights its usefulness in retrieval of information. The combined use of bold and regular fonts enhances the layout for practical purposes. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. dictionary 2. True 3a. after 'overarm pass' and before 'ring' 3b. after 'hamstring' and before 'hitting T' 4. *first two letters are the same, third letter 'c' (in backstop) comes before third letter 't' (in bat)* 5. forehand (stroke) 6. hamstring 7. basketball 8. (two of:) 'cool-down', 'warm-up', 'stretching' 9. verbs: *definitions contain verbs (hitting, catching, throwing).*

- Further activities**
- Discuss the purpose of a glossary and whereabouts in a book readers would expect to find one. Ask, 'What genre of book would contain a glossary?' (Non-fiction or, possibly, classic fiction where archaic words might not be understood.)
  - Use this extract as a model for the children to create glossaries for other information texts that they read or create.
  - List further sport-related words (such as baseline, racket, shuttlecock) and challenge the children to write definitions and position them correctly.
  -  Challenge individual children to prepare and read aloud to the class a short description of game rules or a report on a specific game. Their descriptions should incorporate related words from this Glossary.

## The baby of the family



**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 8)

**Genre:** Poem

**Author:** Wendy Cope

**Introduction** This poem, by the widely published poet Wendy Cope, will strike a chord with any child who has a younger brother or sister. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. *older sibling* 2. jealous 3a. *too young; too tired to walk* 3b. *important, centre of attention; successful* 4. 'short' or 'sweet' 5. *better/calmer, as she is venting her feelings and releasing her pent-up emotion* 6. *the child's spoiling and babyhood; the baby will grow older and be less 'sweet'* 7. 'pie' and 'toys'.

- Further activities**
- Ask the children to look for the effective use of strong verbs in the poem: for example, 'grabs', 'bellows', 'stamps'. Compare possible synonyms, such as 'takes', 'shouts', 'taps'. Discuss how verbs can be used emotively to influence the reader to share the writer's viewpoint and paint a vivid picture.
  -  Discuss how the baby of the family will be feeling. Ask, 'Is the baby aware of his older sibling's presence and feelings?' 'Would the baby's father notice?'
  -  Use the poem as a springboard for discussion about feelings such as jealousy, anger, resentment, and relationships within families. Ask the children, in pairs, to take turns to describe a time when they felt very upset or jealous, angry or hurt. Tell all the children to listen carefully to their partners. Suggest that their partner ask questions beginning 'what', 'why' and 'where'.
  - Encourage the children to turn their own stories into poems about their feelings.

# Invasion

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 10)

**Source:** *I'm Telling You They're Aliens*


**Genre:** Fiction

**Author:** Jeremy Strong

**Introduction** This extract from *I'm Telling You They're Aliens*, by Jeremy Strong, is written in the first person. It includes the use of rhetorical questions and, in contrast to older classic children's literature, a number of colloquialisms. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. the first person 2. 'I decided to keep quiet' 3. (accept any accurate response) 4. *to enter by force and completely take over* 5. *a close neighbour or friend nearby; from a nearby house* 6. all ready to put into action 7. wild 8. digressing 9. (accept any response that is in keeping with the story).

## Further activities

- Make sure that the children understand the use of the word 'alien' to mean 'a creature from another planet'.
- Discuss how the use of language makes this text read as if the character were speaking directly to the reader. Ask the children to list examples of everyday, idiomatic phrases ('The trouble is'; 'if you go round saying'; 'keep a low profile', etc.).
- Invite the children to imagine that they have a new child in the class, whom they think is strangely non-human in some way – a robot, a pixie, an angel, a time-traveller or a living statue, for example. What is odd about the child's behaviour? Is there a special reason why this child has joined their class? Ask them to write a description of the new boy or girl, using conversational and colloquial language. Stress that the children need to use their imagination and make sure that they do not pick on a real child who is currently in the class.
-  Organise a class debate in which the children discuss whether they think aliens exist or not.

# Octocure

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 12)

**Author:** Alison Chisholm


**Genre:** Comic poem

**Introduction** The word play in this humorous poem by Alison Chisholm allows children to practise their phonic skills by decoding rhyming nonsense words and recognising the root words from which they are constructed and which point to their meaning. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. funny, rhyming 2. 'octopus' 3. 'chickenpoctopus' 4. spots 5. 'doctor' and 'octopus' 6. chocolate 7. Olly 8. 'knocktopus'.

## Further activities

- Challenge the children to use the poem as a model for a poem of their own which focuses on a different creature, such as Eleanor the elephant or Benjamin the baboon. They will need to build up appropriate nonsense words to use in their poem, for example: 'telephant', 'jellephant', 'spellephant'; 'bablunch', 'babath', 'babook'.

-  Find further word-play poems, such as Causley's 'Good morning, Mr Croco-doco-dile', and compare these with 'Octocure', discussing how nonsense words can be created in a way that still conveys meaning. Ask for volunteers to read the poems aloud.
- Invite the children to investigate and collect words whose prefix indicates number, for example: 'uni', 'bi'/'duo', 'tri', 'quad', 'penta', 'hexa', 'sept', 'octo', 'centi', 'milli'.

## Odd girls


**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 14)  
**Author:** John Coldwell

**Genre:** Poem

**Introduction** The first part of this poem by the children's poet John Coldwell is made up of rhyming couplets, closing with an ABCB rhyming quatrain, set apart. Its strong rhyme, rhythmic pattern and light tone make it an easy read. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1a. T 1b. ? 1c. T 1d. ? 1e. F 1f. ? 2. after 3. Mary Minns 4. Zara Good (and/or Joanne Green) 5. 'pals' 6. Sue's 7. to rhyme with 'wood' and 'rock' respectively.

### Further activities

- List all the different materials referred to in the poem – glass, Plasticine®, wood, straw, rubber (balloon), rock, flesh, bone. Divide the children into groups and see which group can come up with the longest list of further materials.
- Invite the children to write an 'Odd boys' poem using 'Odd girls' as a model, inviting rhyme-driven couplets and inventive names, such as 'Have you noticed Jacob Draper? His head is screwed-up tissue paper'.
- Ask the children to collect the names from the poem and invent a suitable surname for Sue (Bass? Pass?). Then challenge them to put the names in alphabetical order, according to surname, as they would appear in their class register.
-  Sort the children into groups and ask them to prepare and perform the poem, dividing it into parts – perhaps as a choral spoken poem.

## Teeth

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 16)  
**Source:** University of Manchester Children's University website

**Genre:** Information / explanation


**Introduction** A non-chronological information and explanatory text whose layout features include sub-headings in a bold coloured font. It links well with topic work on personal health and hygiene and biological science. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. incisors 2. no 3. twenty 4. 'adult teeth' 5. milk (teeth), deciduous (teeth) 6. canines 7. *by using sub-headings* 8. information, non-fiction.

### Further activities

- Use this text as a springboard for research into other areas of the human skeleton, such as the bones that form the limbs, with a brief description of each.




- Ask the children to write an additional paragraph on what they know about how to care for teeth, from dietary advice to tips on mouth hygiene and teeth-cleaning. They should follow the style used in 'Teeth', with a paragraph heading and clear language.
- Provide a list of different foods and ask the children to describe as vividly as they can someone attacking each food type. Encourage them to use the correct names of the teeth that are best suited to the food. For example, bread: 'He tore off the crust with his canines, and chewed the bread to a pulp with his molars'; celery: 'Her incisors snapped off the end of the stick sharply, so that it left no threads dangling.'
-  Challenge the children to prepare and perform dental-care advertisements for TV or radio that point out the importance of cleaning one's teeth and making regular visits to the dentist.

## Pelican



**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 18)  
**Author:** Celia Warren

**Genre:** Poem

**Introduction** A contemporary poem displaying many typically English poetic devices including rhyme, rhythm, repetition and the patterned layout of verses. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.  Provide dictionaries for the children to use when answering the comprehension questions.

**Answers** 1. pelican 2. *emphasises subject: the poet's love of words* 3. *brain/head* 4. *she liked the sound of them* 5. *solid 12-sided shape; deciduous tree with winged seeds; sweet-smelling flower with thorny stem; red pepper, often in powdered form; lizard whose colour may change* 6. *beak only small; its name has two syllables rather than three* 7. (expect:) 'Molly' and repetition of 'words'; list of favourites; focus on pelican's name rather than other aspects; final word is 'word'.

### Further activities

-  Refer the children to the drawing on page 18. Discuss the real-life function of the pelican's large beak (scooping fish from the water).
- Invite the children to suggest their own favourite words to substitute into the middle verse of the poem, matching the syllable count of the existing words to retain the rhythm.
- Ask the children to collect more three-syllable words, such as 'butterfly', 'acrobat' or 'telephone'. Choose one to repeat at the beginning of each verse of their own poem. Include questions of the creature or object as if they were addressing it, for example, 'Telephone, telephone, / Why's your bell so loud?'
- Invite the children to write a glossary of any words from the poem whose meaning they don't know.  They may use a dictionary to do this.

## Jorvik Viking Centre, Coppergate

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 20)  
**Source:** *Pathways to Literacy: City of York*


**Genre:** Information  
**Author:** Gill Matthews

**Introduction** This extract is from a guidebook to the city of York, written specifically for young readers. It is an information text which displays features enabling easy retrieval of crucial facts

needed before visiting the site; these include classic devices such as a text box, symbols and a bold font. It shows the value of the use of paragraphs in the descriptive text. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. archaeology 2. relating to the study of relics 3. York 4. sight, sound, smell  
5. street musicians 6. London 7. 7pm 8. (any two of:) combs, (belt) buckles, jewellery  
9. *it makes the visitor information easier to find.*

**Further activities**

- Highlight and compare examples of passive and active voice.
- Use the text as a model for the children to write a guide to a local place of interest.
- Reiterate that Jorvik is the Viking name for York. Challenge the children to find the old names for some other British cities.
-  Draw attention to the wheelchair-user icon. Discuss how this could help people who cannot read or who do not speak English, and how communication does not always depend upon words. Discuss other icons the children can think of (the signs for men's and women's toilets; arrows in various forms). Challenge the children to look for signs on their journey to and from school and see how many different internationally understood symbols they can find. Create a whole-class glossary of signs and their meanings.

## City sounds heard after dark

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 22)

**Genre:** Poem

**Author:** Wes Magee


**Introduction** Rhythm and rhyme combine with alliteration and onomatopoeia to create an audibly atmospheric piece by this popular poet. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. *end word of each set of three lines rhymes* or AAA, BBB, CCC, DDD 2. 'sweesh' 3. *the words sound like the cars speeding past* 4. *pop songs, some old songs, disco music; in the city streets* 5. 'josh': *joke, fool around*; 'jaw': *talk, chat, natter* 6. *people have broken into the park or have accidentally got locked in* 7. *second verse; 'fly' rhymes with 'sky', 'cry' and 'by'; the second verse, like the new line, refers to things that are high up (aircraft, rooftop cats)* 8. (look for two of:) *content and sound describing an aspect of city life; 'dum-di, dum-di, dum-di, dum' rhythm; matching end-of-line rhyme (verse 1: -ars; verse 3: -or/aw/oar; verse 4: -ark).*

**Further activities**

- Use this poem in conjunction with Edward Thomas's poem 'Digging' (see Book 2, page 38 and **Teacher's Guide** page 42) and invite the children to compare the style and content of the two poems. For example, they might compare: use of language; classic and contemporary aspects; town and country; content that relates to different senses (smells/sounds).
- Explain that the poet is a prolific writer. Challenge the children to find more poems by Wes Magee and create a class anthology. They should then choose their favourite poem to recommend to a child in another class, explaining what they enjoyed about it and why they think another child would like it.
- After completing the comprehension exercise, challenge the children to create new words (like 'sweesh' in this poem, which is made from 'sweep' and 'swish') that are also onomatopoeic – sounding like the action they describe. For example, 'thumming'

might be made from the words ‘hammering’ and ‘thumping’. Put the words into sentences to show their meaning.

-  Together, through discussion, write a class poem on ‘City (or Country) sounds heard at dawn’, modelled on Wes Magee’s poem.

## On the Yellow Brick Road

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 24)


**Genre:** Playscript

**Author:** Adapted by Celia Warren from  
L. Frank Baum

**Introduction** This passage presents a scene from the classic children’s novel, *The Wizard of Oz* by L. Frank Baum, in script form, complete with stage directions in parentheses. The use of italics makes such directions distinct from the direct speech of each character. It is presented differently from direct speech in prose, where speech marks would be required. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** **1a.** *stage directions (to players)* **1b.** *to distinguish them from characters’ speeches* **1c.** *to save space, be concise* **2.** four **3.** the Emerald City **4.** a heart **5.** he is afraid/his heart beats fast **6.** the wizard (of Oz)/Oz **7.** (such as:) *trees, landscape, yellow road; toy dog, oil can.*

### Further activities

- Ask the children to write a short profile of each of the characters, with a view to telling actors who are to perform this scene what sort of character they will be playing.
- Encourage the children to sketch in colour a design for an appropriate backcloth for this scene if it were to be presented on stage.
-  Invite the children to take particular parts, memorising the lines and acting out the scene. Use highlighter pens to help the children pick out the words that they need to learn.
- Challenge the children to choose another scene from *The Wizard of Oz*, a favourite novel or famous fairytale, to rewrite in script form and perform to the class.

## House on fire!

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 26)

**Genre:** Prose poem

**Source:** *A Child’s Christmas in Wales*

**Author:** Dylan Thomas

**Introduction** This extract is from Thomas’s descriptive prose poem *A Child’s Christmas in Wales*, written in the 1940s. Some of it was written for radio – and all of it is good for reading aloud. The poem contains images that may be beyond a present-day child’s experience, and these are worth discussing. You could also discuss the fact that this is a ‘prose poem’ – that is, a type of verse that does not rhyme but uses other poetic techniques. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.




This is a long text for Year 3. You might want to read the text together in class and/or work on it over a couple of days.

**Answers** **1.** *it’s Christmas (Eve)* **2.** *speaking ironically/sarcastically, he means there have been better*



*Christmases/this is not a good one 3. dinner gongs and slippers are old-fashioned; no home telephone or mobile phone; 'firemen' – not gender-neutral 'fire fighters' 4. the call to Ernie Jenkins 5. the most appropriate to the circumstances; the only urgent need 6. something to drink/eat 7a. to try and put the fire out 7b. no; it was too dangerous, or yes; it was sensible to try anything to put the fire out quickly 8. excited: they were happily throwing snowballs and casually discussing who to phone.*

### Further activities

- Ask the children how many of their dads wear slippers around the house. Do their dads read a newspaper and sometimes fall asleep with it over their faces?
-  Turn to some of the other images in this poem that are now falling out of use. What would the 'fire brigade' and 'firemen' more commonly be called now? (Fire fighters.) What is a gong? Do any of the children's homes have one? What would it have been used for in the past? (To call the family to dinner.) How many telephones do they have at home? How often do we use telephone boxes these days? How many of the children's homes have a fireplace for a log fire and a chimney to carry away the smoke? What are the advantages and disadvantages of heating your home in this way?
- Can the children tell whose viewpoint the episode is seen from? Ask them to imagine the three firemen discussing later on their visit to the house. Ask the children, in groups of three, to role-play the three firemen. Give them names (Welsh, if possible, perhaps surnames: Jones, Pierce, Williams) and, through improvisation based on the extract, create a script that begins, 'Do you remember that Christmas when we were called out to the Protheros?'
-  Ask the children to retell the story to a partner. Encourage them to use appropriate tone and intonation.
-  Reread the last nine lines of the text with the children. Ask the children to think of a book they would recommend for someone to read on a snowy winter's night. They should then recommend the book to a partner, explaining their reasons for choosing it.

## The story of Helen Keller

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 28)

**Genre:** Biography

**Author:** Celia Warren

### Introduction


The teacher Anne Sullivan turned the tragedy of the blindness and deafness of Helen Keller (1880–1968) into a story of success and triumph over adversity. Her teaching opened doors in Helen's life, freeing her from the imprisonment in which her disabilities had placed her. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Make sure the children understand that not only Helen Keller but many thousands of others have benefited from sign language and Braille since – and still do. Today there are over 23 000 people in the UK who, like Helen Keller, have problems with both their sight and their hearing. This makes it difficult for them to communicate with other people and to get the information they need for daily life. They may also find it difficult to get around.

### Answers

1. 'blind' 2a. T 2b. T 2c. F 2d. F 2e. T 3. *excited, elated, as she was no longer shut in and isolated, but could now communicate* 4. *felt their faces and clothing* 5. *touched their hands* 6. *Braille* 7. *herself and her life (an autobiography).*

### Further activities

- Reiterate the fact that this is a biography – that is, a non-fiction account telling the story of someone's life.
-  Place the children in twos and ask them to try communicating with each other without using words: they can use hand gestures and facial expression but must not mouth words or use any form of spoken language or writing. Come together and discuss how difficult they found this. Could they get their message across? How subtle were their communications? Discuss how much more difficult communication would be without sight. Challenge the children to find out how to say some simple phrases in sign language, such as 'hello'.
- Encourage the children to research the Braille alphabet. Ask each of them to write their name in Braille. When they have done so, show them how to turn their page over and make pin-prick indentations behind each dot. Turn the pages over again and let each child practise fingering the letters of his or her name. Mix up the names and see if they can decode each other's.

## Rebecca

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 30)

**Genre:** Narrative poem

**Author:** Hilaire Belloc

### Introduction


This cautionary tale – a story with a moral warning – is one of many written by the comic poet Hilaire Belloc. Many of the children will have read the poem about Matilda, who told lies; as a direct consequence, her house burned down and she died. The tale of Rebecca is a little less widely known. However, most young readers will at some time have experienced being told off for slamming a door – so the poem should be easily understood. Point out the fact that there are some difficult words in the poem: some of these are explained in the Glossary and the rest the children should be able to work out for themselves. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

This is a long text for Year 3. You might want to read the text together in class and/or work on it over a couple of days.

### Answers

1. 'perished miserably' 2. dislike 3. *bad behaviour* 4. a banker 5. *Rebecca's slamming the door below it (vibration)* 6. 'She looked like that' 7. *jump (with shock/surprise)* 8. *children at the funeral decided not to slam the door in future 'as often they had done before'* 9. *to give a warning of potential dangers* 10. 'inly'.

### Further activities

-  Ask the children to describe to the class any misdemeanours like door-slamming that they are regularly 'cautioned' about. Not cleaning their teeth? Leaving their room untidy? Leaving clothes on the floor? Forgetting their swimming kit? Allow the children to work with a partner to plan a sticky end that could result from disobeying adult advice. (Their ears grow to the size of elephants' ears? Their teeth turn black?) Challenge them to write their story in verse.
- Encourage the children to add new words from the poem to their personal vocabulary books, together with a definition and a sentence that uses the word in context. They should underline and discuss any words that they find particularly interesting.

## Steam train stories


**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 32)  
**Source:** *The Railway Children*

**Genre:** Classic fiction  
**Author:** E. Nesbit

**Introduction** This is an extract from the children's classic *The Railway Children*, by E. Nesbit. It was first published in 1906, when railway travel was in its heyday. This humorous extract demonstrates how dialect can be used in direct speech to great effect – in this case, the Yorkshire dialect, which sounds strange to the London children's ears. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. Roberta, Phyllis 2. tired 3. *includes description and direct speech, is in the past tense*  
4. hooks to link carriages 5. £5 fine 6a. hold, of 6b. would 7a. *someone fooled her/misled her for fun* 7b. *I bet she never forgot.*

### Further activities

- Ask the children to investigate online or in reference books the importance and impact of the railway network in Victorian and Edwardian Britain, before the advent of cars and tarmac roads. Remind them that, at this time, most ordinary people did not own carriages or even horses.
-  Select a small group of children to present the information that they have found (see above) as if for a television documentary programme. Ask the 'audience' to make notes and ask questions at the end of the presentation.
- Encourage the children to read sections of the passage aloud, varying voice, tone and pace to enhance the comic effect. Pay particular attention to the porter's anecdote and the children's questions.
- Challenge the children to imagine the three characters in a present-day setting – with contemporary names – and write a scene about how they are passing their time. Where might they be? (In a shopping centre? At a bus depot? On the London Underground?) Ask the children to use plenty of direct speech, referring to the original text to check how to punctuate their characters' speeches.

## A great storm in Scotland



**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 34)  
**Source:** *The Water Horse*

**Genre:** Fiction  
**Author:** Dick King-Smith

**Introduction** Taken from *The Water Horse* – one of many novels by Dick King-Smith – this extract offers an atmospheric description of setting and skilful mood creation, as well as being a passage that reveals character through both action and direct speech. Many children will already be familiar with this author's writing and some may have seen the 2007 film based on this novel. Other Dick King-Smith stories have also been filmed, including *The Sheep Pig*, which is well known as the film *Babe*. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. small 2. it 'grabbed' the house 'in its jaws' 3. on top of a cliff 4. *that the roof will be blown off* 5. younger 6. snoring 7. *capital G on second 'grumble'* 8. sailors 9. *mother carried an oil lamp* 10. "Can't sleep a wink".

### Further activities

- Invite the children to underline the strong verbs and discuss their role in creating a vivid atmosphere.
-  Ask the children what they think will happen next, after this extract. Draw their attention to the pointer, which explains that Kirstie and Angus find 'something very strange' on the beach the following morning. The children should discuss this with a partner and decide what they think Kirstie and Angus will find on the beach.
- Remind the children that earlier in this book they read a biography of Helen Keller. Reiterate the key features of this genre. Ask the children to research the author of *The Water Horse* (Dick King-Smith) and write a brief biography of his life. This should include when and where he was born, and the names of some of his books for children. Also challenge them to find out why Dick King-Smith has written so many books featuring animals.
- Invite the children to imagine they are Angus, waking in the morning after the storm has abated. Suggest that, although he didn't wake, he heard the storm in his sleep and the sounds entered his dreams. Ask them to write a first-person narrative, entitled 'Angus's dream', using powerful verbs to create atmosphere. The narrative should begin, 'Last night I dreamed ...'
-  Ask the children to share with the class any memories of their own concerning storms, strong winds and floods that their family has experienced.

## Tom finds happiness


**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 36)  
**Source:** *The Water Babies*

**Genre:** Classic fiction  
**Author:** Charles Kingsley

**Introduction** First published in 1863, this abridged extract from the children's classic *The Water Babies* by Charles Kingsley links well with the study of children's lives in Victorian England. Even in this short extract, the wide gap between the rich, educated middle-class children and their poor, over worked counterparts is evident. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1a. *in bold* 1b. *intro: present tense, extract: past tense* 2. an adjective 3. both in water and on land 4. chimney sweep 5. (any two of:) tired, hungry, beaten, sent up dark chimneys 6. friends (mates, pals) 7. *just right (not too hot, not too cold)* 8. (one, such as:) *comfortable, content, happy, carefree.*

### Further activities

- Explain and explore the life of chimney sweeps, covering why sweeps were needed and what they did. Point out that children employed as chimney sweeps were small enough to get inside chimneys. Make sure that the class understands how hungry and poor the children were, living on the street. Point out that many of the children were orphans, and this made them vulnerable to exploitation by irresponsible adults.
- Use the extract as a starting point for research on underwater life in a river in this country – what creatures and plants might a 'water baby' expect to encounter? The children should then present their findings to the class.
- Invite the children to rewrite part of the passage in the first person, as if they were Tom, describing what happened to him and how he felt.
-  Discuss with the children the meaning of 'amphibious' and invite comments on whether they would enjoy being amphibious or if they prefer land or water. They might write and perform poems beginning 'If I were a water baby ...'.


# The milkmaid and her pail

**Contained in:** Book 1 (page 38)  
**Author:** Celia Warren

**Genre:** Traditional tale / fable

**Introduction** A retelling of one of Aesop's fables, exemplifying the widely quoted moral, 'Don't count your chickens before they're hatched'. The wise, hard-working farmer and his feckless, daydreaming daughter are far removed from present-day role models, but are typical of the genre of traditional tales. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. *she is daydreaming or in a world of her own* 2. tell off 3. 'poultry' 4. 'a fine silk gown' 5. tossed her head 6. *outmoded occupation and dress; archaic words, such as pail, a-courting* 7. bucket, think, dress 8. *don't count on/assume success/riches till you have achieved them/have them in your hand* – look for understanding and interpretation as well as the ability to answer in a clear sentence.

- Further activities**
- Explain that this is a fable – that is, a story with a warning or piece of moral advice. Help the children to identify the typical features of a fable, particularly the moral at the end of the story.
  - Reiterate, as in the pointer, that the fable was written over 2500 years ago. Make it clear that Aesop's stories spread quickly by word of mouth. Tell the children that the stories are now available across the world and in many languages.
  - Invite the children to collect and compare further Aesop fables. Ask them to investigate the stories behind other sayings attributed to Aesop, such as 'dog in a manger'; 'belling the cat'; 'crying "wolf"'.
  - Ask the children to identify in this text the tag words that differ from 'said' ('scolded', 'mused', 'reasoned') and to begin a wider collection to use in their own narrative writing.
  - Write a list of proverbs and ask the children to choose one as the subject of their own fable or story, which will include a warning or a piece of moral advice. (A friend in need is a friend indeed; Better late than never; Never a rose without thorns; Where there's a will, there's a way; Do good, reap good, do evil, reap evil.)
  -  Invite the children to act out the story of 'The milkmaid and her pail', improvising dialogue and using a narrator.

## BOOK 2

### London goes wild

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 4)  
**Source:** *Observer*, 31 July 1966


**Genre:** Newspaper report

**Introduction** The children may have heard grandparents and older football enthusiasts talking animatedly about the English World Cup home victory of 1966, which is described in this newspaper article. Use the text to tap into the children's own interest in football as well as their grandparents' recollections. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.



**Answers** 1. enthusiasm, excitement 2. (one of:) *crowds mobbing the players; stopping traffic flow; climbing in fountains* 3. Royal Gardens Hotel, Kensington 4. pubs 5. police cordons 'popped open like seams' 6. *their own safety/wouldn't get mobbed; widely visible to the crowds* 7. *England was again the victor over Germany (as at the close of World War 2)* 8. 3000 million (five times 600 million).

**Further activities**

- Ask the children to write three bullet points to summarise the information in the text.
- Discuss what mood the writer was trying to convey in his report (excitement, joy).
- Ask if the children know why the outcome of the match held an extra spark of interest and national pride. Expand on the Glossary note about the meaning of VE ('Victory in Europe') Day: 21 years earlier, England and its allies had defeated Germany in World War 2, and some saw the match as a sporting parallel to the hostilities. As England also hosted the contest in 1966, there was an additional motivation to national pride.
- Invite the children to imagine that England had lost the World Cup final. Ask them to write a newspaper report describing this outcome. Remind them to use similarly emotive language (for example, 'Britain sank into a slough of despond').
- Invite the children to research online or in reference books particular parts of the article to help paint a clearer picture of the occasion. For example, they might: find and copy a road map of the West End; research details of its monuments and the people they commemorate (do the children know whose statue is in Trafalgar Square?); find out the name of the 1966 team captain for England, together with other members of the team and their positions.
- Challenge the children to identify other key events of 1966 (for example, Indira Ghandi became prime minister of India; over 100 children died when a coal tip buried their school in Aberfan, South Wales; art treasures in Florence were damaged by flooding; Freddie Laker started a new airline, making holidays abroad much cheaper; the Beatles' song 'Yellow Submarine' was released).
-  Tell the children about other events that have prompted a national reaction on a large scale (for example, the 2011 riots; the royal wedding in 2011; the 2012 London Olympics, and other similar events).

## How to make a wormery

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 6)

**Genre:** Instructions

**Source:** Glasgow City Council  
Countryside Ranger Service


**Introduction**

The value of worms as the gardener's and farmer's 'friend' provides good background to this information text. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading. Expand on the pointer by explaining that worms aerate the soil as they turn it over and over. As the worms tunnel and feed, the earth becomes less tightly packed – thus enabling air and rainwater to break through the surface and reach the roots of plants. In addition, food, such as rotting leaves that pass through the worms' bodies, fertilises the soil so that plants grow strong and healthy.

If possible, give the children the opportunity to follow the instructions provided and make their own wormery at school.  Make sure that all the children wash their hands after handling soil.

**Answers** 1. *all verbs* 2. *sub-headings help readers to find information* 3. *pea gravel* 4. *cut off the top and bottom* 5. *soil* 6. *dead leaves* 7. *to make it as dark as underground, like worms' natural environment* 8. *one or two weeks* 9. *you might dig up the same worms* 10. *'habitat hunt', 'stamping up and down'* 11a. *'twanging'* 11b. *15 mins.*

### Further activities

- Challenge the children to find out further earthworm facts. For example, you might ask, 'How many worms turn over how much soil in a given volume of soil? How do they move? How long are they – and what length is the longest ever found?'
- Tell the children to present their findings as a non-chronological information text or a non-fiction article.
- Invite the children to write their own instructional 'How to ...' text: for example, 'How to play the recorder'; 'How to look after a hamster'; 'How to play ping-pong'. Challenge them to invent their own ball or team game and write a set of instructions and rules explaining how it is to be played.
-  Draw the children's attention to the fact that, in making a wormery, they are contributing to the health of the soil – which in turn will contribute to a healthier environment. Broaden this out into a discussion on wider environmental and sustainability issues. You might cover, for example, recycling, waste reduction, renewable energy sources, energy efficiency and sustainable transport. Ask the children to do some further research into one of these areas, and to deliver verbally their own rationale for living in a way that takes account of sustainability issues.

## Why?

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 8)  
**Author:** Charles Causley

**Genre:** Classic poem

### Introduction


Using questions to create atmosphere and emphasise characters' feelings is a technique that Causley uses in a number of poems. Questions can speak louder than answers in the poetic form, allowing readers to infer for themselves what is happening.

Before reading the poem with the children, ensure that they have some knowledge of the history and traditions surrounding Guy Fawkes night, which has been a day of celebration since 1606. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading. Expand on the pointer by explaining that the plotters' intention was to kill King James I and wipe out everyone in the government.

Expand further, as follows, if appropriate for your class. The plotters were Catholic extremists who wanted to return England to the Catholic faith. One of the conspirators had a friend in the Houses of Parliament and sent a letter to him, warning him to stay away from the House on the day the attack was supposed to take place. The letter was intercepted and handed to the king, who ordered the execution of Guy Fawkes and his fellow conspirators.

**Answers** 1. *horrified, upset* 2. *(look for signs of identifying with Susanna and/or empathy relating to a parallel personal experience or feeling)* 3a. *'in an old top-hat'; 'fancy jacket and tie'* 3b. *straw* 4. *she hears 'a last,/long sigh'/it 'won't leave [her] head'* 5. *fireworks: rockets* 6. *(one of:) looks away, has tears in her eyes, holds the speaker's hand, turns pale* 7a. *an adult – perhaps parent* 7b. *'Nobody's going to die'* 8. *lie down on her bed.*

### Further activities

- Explore the rhyme scheme of the poem (ABCB) and discuss how this affects the mood of the poem (menacing, relentless pace).
- Ask the children to research further poems by Causley, especially those where he employs a similar questioning technique, such as 'Who?' ('Who is that child I see wandering, wandering ...') and 'What has happened to Lulu?'
-  Divide the children into pairs or small groups. Invite them to discuss further their answers to question 2 ('How did the poem make you feel? Explain why.'). Encourage the children to talk about any specific words or phrases that particularly appealed to them.
- Ask the children to make notes on an occasion or event when they felt an extreme emotion – happy, sad, excited, scared. Challenge them to turn their notes into a poem using questions, using either the second or third person (as if they were writing about someone other than themselves).

## Dogs are good for you!

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 10)

**Source:** *Daily Telegraph*, 22 January 2007

**Genre:** Newspaper report

**Author:** Lynne Wallis


### Introduction

This newspaper article describes the conclusions of informed, academic research conducted at Queen's University, Belfast. You can use it to demonstrate the importance of backing up statements with specific evidence. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

### Answers

1. the body 2. *they are more likely to become ill* 3a. (two of:) headaches, colds, dizziness  
3b. cancer, epilepsy 4. *taking dog for walks; getting to know other dog walkers* 5. mind  
6. make easier 7. *after some months the benefits wore off for cat-owners, but continued for dog-owners* 8. *that owning a dog could reduce their blood pressure* 9. Health Psychology Journal.

### Further activities

-  Ask the children to briefly summarise what they have read, then ask, 'Which of you has a cat or a dog at home?' Explore whether they would recommend having such a pet. Ask them to explain their reasons. Do they think having a cat or dog is 'good' for them? If so, how?
- Conclude by pointing out that, like all discussions, the conversation you have just had in class was based on personal opinions, even though these might be based on individual experiences – and opinions are not measurable. Medical or other scientific research, on the other hand, involves the gathering and comparing of specific data over a given period of time. In this text, the research involved people who owned pets and people who did not. The newspaper article sums up the results of the research.
- Invite the children to write a story – true or fictional – describing how an animal helps a human character. It might cover anything from the animal comforting a character who is sad or unwell to rescuing them from sudden danger.
- Ask the children to research working dogs, their breeds and origins. Ask which are or were used for hunting, as carriage dogs, rat killers, rescue dogs (diggers and sniffers), guide or hearing dogs, sheep herders, police dogs, guard dogs, sled dogs, etc. Create a class encyclopedia of different breeds.
- Discuss any books that the children have read which feature a dog as the central character. Ask the children to explain whether they would recommend these books to a child their age, and why.


# The 'ration book' Olympics

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 12)  
**Source:** National Archives of Great Britain

**Genre:** Information / explanation  
**Author:** Celia Warren

**Introduction** This article is based on documentary material held by the National Archives. It describes the Olympic Games held in Britain during the post-war period (1948) and invites comparison to and contrast with Britain's hosting of the 2012 Olympics. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. competitor, competition 2. severe, hard-going 3. 'have a bad psychological effect' 4. bigger 5. fruit and vegetables 6. America 7. American teams as they complained of 'stomach trouble' 8. John Strachey 9. *often, during rationing, only dried milk was available.*

- Further activities**
- Explain that ordinary people were struggling after the war to provide for their families. Money was short and food and clothes were still rationed. Many people were living in temporary accommodation as there was a housing shortage.
  - Ask the children to discuss whether this text contains mostly facts or opinions.
  - Invite the children to examine the use of capitals throughout this article and, together, create a list of the different reasons for using them: for names of people, places, official boards and departments, formal job titles, countries and nationalities. Point out how even 'Games' has a capital, referring as it does to the Olympic Games.
  - Challenge the children to work out the quantities of specific foods and drinks they consume each week (for example, milk, bread, potatoes, apples, sugar, sweets) and to present this information in a short written report.
  - Ask the children to consider how they might have felt about extra money and rations being provided to Olympic athletes and the cost of hosting even an 'austere' Olympic Games at a time when they were struggling to look after their families. Challenge them to write a letter to a newspaper, pointing out how difficult it was for them to manage.
  -  Explain why it is expensive to host a Games to Olympic standards (preparing a site; building stadia, changing rooms, pools, spectator stands; providing car parks; insurance; medical care; staff salaries, and so on). Hold a class discussion on whether it is justifiable to spend a large sum of money on this international event every four years. Ask questions such as, 'Can all host countries afford the cost? Should there be a fixed site in one country (for example, Greece) for every Olympic Games? Should each participating country contribute to the cost? What impact might competing in their own homeland and climate have on the athletes?'

# Robin Hood


**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 14)  
**Source:** *The Adventures of Robin Hood*

**Genre:** Classic fiction  
**Author:** Patricia Leitch

**Introduction** This episode from *The Adventures of Robin Hood*, first published in 1983, is an action-packed narrative. It captures well the atmosphere of the Sherwood Forest setting and describes an encounter between Robin Hood and Little John. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. 36 2. True: a, e, f; False: b, c, d 3. *agree to stop fighting* 4a. 'made to shine' 4b. 'frosted' 4c. 'dodged and evaded' 4d. 'chopped down' 5. head 6. *tripped over a root* 7. (accept any reasoned answer).

**Further activities**

- Invite the children to look at the author's use of paragraphs. Discuss how the author decided when to start a new one. (A change of perspective or action.) Ask them to sum up the content of each in turn. (1: setting the scene; 2: the pause in activity; 3: the description of the fight; 4: a brief switch of viewpoint to that of the onlookers; 5: the close of the fight.)
- Identify and highlight examples of metaphor. Discuss how these enhance the description and help to paint a picture of the scene.
- Challenge the children to write a newspaper article about the fight, in a present-day voice – either as a straight news report or as a back-page sports report, using journalistic language and including direct quotations from Robin Hood and Little John on their own and each other's performance.
- Encourage the children, in pairs, to explore and imagine what Robin Hood and Little John might have said to one another during this incident. Ask them to write and then perform their brief dialogue.
-  Ask the children how this part of Sherwood Forest would have looked in the depths of winter. Collect lists of words that might be used in a description of this same fight taking place in snow and ice, and write these on the board. Invite the children, in small groups, to write and then perform their own new text.

## The veiled lady

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 16)

**Genre:** Playscript

**Author:** Adapted by Celia Warren from

'The Adventure of the Speckled Band' by Arthur Conan Doyle



**Introduction** Most children will have heard of the great detective character Sherlock Holmes, even if they have never read any of Conan Doyle's stories. They might even be able to describe his deer-stalker hat, cloak and pipe or know that his friend and confidant is called Dr Watson. They may or may not know that the oft-quoted exclamation, 'Elementary, my dear Watson!' never appeared in any of Conan Doyle's stories, despite its becoming an integral part of the character's popular image. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. fear 2. *long, dark Victorian dress; coat; veil over face; gloves* 3. *a friend has recommended Holmes* 4. *a disguise to avoid her being recognised* 5. *pats her arm and tells her they'll soon 'set matters right'/not to be afraid* 6. *a dog-cart: her left sleeve is mud-spattered* 7. 'I am all attention' 8. *they tell the actor how to perform* 9. a colon (:).

**Further activities**

- Explain that, when a novel is turned into a script for actors to perform, this is called 'dramatisation'. Can the children spot the root word 'drama'? Can they think of books that they have seen dramatised on TV or for the cinema? (*The Railway Children*; *Babe*; *Mrs Doubtfire*; *Alice in Wonderland*; *The Wind in the Willows*, and many more.)



- Invite the children to 'play detective' and spot clues revealing that the story does not have a contemporary setting. (Clothing, mode of transport, no central heating.) Afterwards, tell the children that Arthur Conan Doyle wrote his first story about Sherlock Holmes in 1887.
-  In pairs, ask the children to discuss what they think will happen next. What might the lady be afraid of? Will Sherlock Holmes solve the mystery? Why? Why not?
- Encourage the children to find the original story and compare its telling with the script. (It may be found online by searching for 'The Adventure of the Speckled Band'.)
- Discuss what is lost or gained in dramatising a story. (How might the characters' private thoughts and feelings be conveyed on stage? Is it as easy to provide background to a character in a script as it is in narrative? Why not?)
-  Ask for two volunteers to perform the play in front of the rest of the class. Encourage the children to speak clearly so that they can be heard. Afterwards, start a class discussion on those parts of the performance that worked well and those that might be improved. Make sure that criticisms are constructive and include helpful suggestions.


## Battered by hurricane winds

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 18)  
**Author:** Celia Warren

**Genre:** Newspaper report

**Introduction** The 1987 storm achieved fame by its greater-than-expected ferocity and by the failure of the BBC TV weather team to correctly forecast its direction – thus viewers were misled into believing it would stay across the sea and cause no problems. The resulting havoc came as a shock. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. debris from buildings and falling trees 2. weeks of steady rain had weakened roots 3. west 4. fallen trees off roads and railway lines; debris from roofs and buildings; broken vehicles in boatyards and caravan parks 5. insurance claims/compensation payments 6. Shanklin, Isle of Wight 7. central government 8a. people who travel to work 8b. train lines and roads were blocked (by fallen trees, etc.).

- Further activities**
- Expand on information in the pointer with material from the Introduction above. Check that the children understand any unfamiliar words.
  - Challenge the children to research the causes of hurricanes and in what geographical regions they usually occur. Discuss how people might have prepared more effectively had they realised how bad this particular hurricane would be.
  - Invite the children to imagine waking up to find the roof ripped off their house and their possessions being whisked away by the wind. Ask them to find words and phrases in the text that capture their imagination. Challenge them to use some of these words in an e-mail to a friend, describing what happened and how they felt.
  - Ask the children to prepare a set of questions with which to interview an older relative or family friend who remembers the 1987 storm.
  -  Hot-seat individuals role-playing survivors of the hurricane who have lost their house or possessions or even a relative or a pet. Invite others to ask open questions of them, such as, 'At what point did you realise this was no ordinary gale? How did you feel when your roof blew off? Where were you when the hurricane hit?'

## The thrill of wartime work

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 20)

**Source:** *Peggy Speeds the Plough*


**Genre:** Fiction

**Author:** Madge S. Smith

**Introduction** This extract comes from a novel aimed at girls of school-leaving age and is blatant propaganda to encourage girls to enrol for the Land Army and to work on farms across the UK. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. to influence people's thinking and behaviour 2. *makes it entertaining to retain interest and help readers to identify with the central character or hero* 3. 'mushy' 4. *she does not cry* 5. 'Iris' 6. *tears in her eyes* 7. to go; to take oneself 8. *farm work; ploughing* 9. (look for answers that show an awareness of social and employment roles in that era, such as:) *the farmer might feel uncomfortable issuing orders to women to do hard physical work; he might be resentful or open-minded; he might fear that the women were not strong enough; he might be happy to accept their contributions to the work of the farm. He would have to start from scratch teaching the women how to use equipment, how to drive tractors safely, and would need to explain farming practice.*

### Further activities

- Encourage further discussion of why women were being asked to do what had previously been men's work.
- Emphasise the fact that, as here, persuasive writing is not always confined to non-fiction texts.
- Take the phrase 'A chance to do things' as a title for a fictional narrative that the children are to write. Explain that the plot of their story should involve someone rising to the occasion in a crisis. (It could be a family or personal crisis, not necessarily a national one.)
- Based on the scenario presented in this extract, challenge the children to research the Land Girls' role in wartime Britain and to design a poster to attract older girls to join the Land Army. Can they think up a catchy slogan and brief persuasive text to include?
-  Sort the children into pairs and ask them to improvise a telephone conversation between a new 'land girl' and a friend or relative, asking and explaining what they have to do, and how they find working conditions and their new friends and co-workers. Alternatively, the characters speaking might include an elderly male farmer getting used to having women instead of men working on his land. Does he think them up to the job? Does he accept and admire their role or feel uncomfortable seeing young women doing what was traditionally 'men's work'?

## Arthur's sister turned to stone

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 22)

**Source:** *King Arthur and the Round Table*


**Genre:** Myth / legend

**Author:** Geraldine McCaughrean

**Introduction** The stories about King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table are largely myth and legend. This retelling captures all the familiar elements that have endured over centuries. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. 'jingle'/'jingling' 2. vertebra 3. they are turning to stone 4. *their transformation makes them resemble statues and carvings, but they have not actually been carved* 5. (King) Arthur 6. made unable to move 7. 12 8. (one of:) 'the rock face shivered', 'puffs of dust erupted', 'pebbles trickled down' 9. *the repetition adds emphasis, strengthens the picture of the absence of colour in the scene* 10. (accept any reasoned answer).

### Further activities

- Point out how the emotional effectiveness of this episode is enhanced by the author's reference to human senses: hearing, touch and sight. Allocate a colour code to each sense and ask the children to underline in colour those descriptive phrases that draw on each one (hearing will include: 'silence', 'jingle', 'noise of galloping', 'snorting'; touch will include: 'trembling violently', 'ran his fingers over ...', 'laid his hand over hers', 'tears in his eyes'; sight will include: 'as grey as dusk', 'columns of pebbles', 'the fresco carving on a wall', 'beautiful, hard, bloodless', 'Morgan's hand turned from grey to pink').
- Talk to the children about the word 'petrified', which is used in question 5. Explain its origins (the Greek *petra*, meaning 'rock') and discuss its present-day meaning (to frighten into immobility). Check that the children understand other unfamiliar words – for example, 'fresco', which is a way of painting on walls covered with damp, freshly made plaster.
- Ask the children to describe in the first person, from Morgan's point of view, the feeling of life returning, first to her fingers and gradually to the rest of her body and senses, as she turns back to life from being petrified.
-  Organise a class performance of this text. Ask for two volunteers to play Morgan and King Arthur. Then divide the rest of the class into three groups. One group reads out the text: help them to practise, ensuring that their diction is clear so every word can be heard. The second group takes the part of the company of horsemen: they need to practise turning to stone and slowly returning to life. A third group acts as critical observers, making notes, reviewing and giving verbal comments on the performance afterwards. Encourage this group to give reasons and examples when making their comments.

## Overheard on a saltmarsh

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 24)

**Genre:** Conversational poem

**Author:** Harold Monro

### Introduction


This poem is a conversation between strangers who meet on a saltmarsh. The nymph and goblin have no names, fixing the reader's attention, like that of the goblin, on the green glass beads. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. a goblin 2. a 'saltmarsh' 3. the goblin 4. the nymph's beads 5. green glass 6. a silver ring 7. because she stole them (out of the moon) 8. howl 9. why does he stare at the beads? why does he love them so?

### Further activities

- Invite the children to consider the themes and emotions in the poem (obsession, envy, longing and selfish greed on the goblin's part; curiosity and possessiveness on the nymph's part).
- Draw the children's attention to the fact that, although this is a conversation, there are no speech marks. How do we distinguish between the two speakers? (The layout makes

this clear, and when the poem is read aloud the completely opposed perspectives of the two characters ensure that their voices remain distinct.)

-  Encourage the children to read the poem aloud in the two voice-parts, either with a partner or spoken chorally (with girls reading the nymph's lines and boys reading the goblin's). Decide together which words or phrases should be spoken loudly or quietly. Encourage those reading the different parts to use this emphasis to give life and expression to their reading.
- Compare how the layout of the poem differs from a playscript (no speakers' names or stage directions) and what poetic devices it uses (repetition, rhyme, alliteration, assonance).
- Invite the children to create two new characters, and a new possession belonging to one of them. Ask them to script a conversation but, in contrast to *Monro's* poem, explain that in their scenario one character must be trying to persuade the other to take the object from them. They must decide why. (Perhaps the owner feels weighed down by it? Perhaps it is enchanted with a curse? Perhaps it is stolen property? 'It is worse than ...'; 'Take it, take it, I hate it so', etc.) The title should reflect the setting (for example, 'Overheard on the bus'; 'Overheard in a supermarket', etc.).

## The arrival of a rugged seaman

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 26)

**Source:** *Treasure Island*

**Genre:** Classic fiction

**Author:** Robert Louis Stevenson

**Introduction** The classic adventure story *Treasure Island* has so much to offer. Emphasise that it contains mystery, crime and exciting characters, and was specially written by Stevenson to entertain his own stepson. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.


Other texts by Robert Louis Stevenson appear in **Key Stage 2 Comprehension Book 3** (page 24, the poem 'Keepsake Mill' and page 30, 'Respected relative', which is a letter that the author wrote as a teenager) and **Book 4** (page 24, 'Our toilsome journey', which is an extract from *Kidnapped*).

**Answers** 1. (any two of:) 'hands ragged and scarred', 'black, broken nails', 'the sabre cut across one cheek' 2. *at sea since boyhood, before his voice broke* 3a. situated 3b. ought to/must 4. *to show how the character speaks/the pronunciation he used* 5. the inn 6. *what to call him; if he can pay* 7. bacon, eggs and rum.

### Further activities

- Ask the children to read the opening sentence. How is the sentence constructed? (It is a very long list of different characteristics.) What is its effect on the reader? (Slow, unhurried recollection of a vivid image.)
- Once they have read the piece through, check that the children understand the vocabulary used; direct the children to the Glossary and any available dictionaries, and give further explanations as necessary.
- Ask the children to discuss with a partner the events that might follow this extract. How long will the captain stay at the inn? What will he do while he is there?
- List the hyphenated words from the start of the story ('sea-chest', 'hand-barrow', 'nut-brown'). Underline the key noun or adjective in each term ('chest', 'barrow', 'brown'). Point out how each attached word adds information to modify the main word and add

detail. Invite the children to list as many colours as they can think of. Challenge them to attach different words to each colour to modify and more closely define variations of each colour, using hyphens to do so: for example, pea-green, sea-green, sky-blue, pillar-box-red.


- Explain some of the customs of sailors of the time: to wear their hair in a pigtail that they dipped in tar (which has an antiseptic property and may have helped keep them free of head lice); to receive a daily measure of rum.
- Moving on from the point above, ask the children to research online or in reference books the history of life at sea for sailors and/or pirates. What would they eat? How old would they be when they first joined a crew? What ranks and related duties could they expect? What would the ship's surgeon's job be? What animals might be taken aboard and why? (If possible, take the children to visit an old sailing ship to see the living conditions.)
-  When the research is complete, ask for volunteers to present their findings orally. The other children are to listen carefully and make notes.

## The scarecrow

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 28)

**Genre:** Classic poem


**Author:** Walter de la Mare

**Introduction** A classic observational poem written in the first person by the timelessly popular poet Walter de la Mare. Strong rhythm and rhyme prevail, with fine examples of alliterative phrases, leading the reader through the seasons of the year. It requires challenging close reading. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.  Provide dictionaries for the children to use when answering the comprehension questions.

**Answers** 1. the scarecrow's 2. winter 3. wheat 4. crows 5. horses pulling a plough 6. *ripened by the sun* 7a. frost 7b. joy, delight, joyful delight, ecstasy 7c. empty space 8. (any of:) blows/black, midnight/maze, stand/stubble/stiff, rapture/rags; sterile snow.

- Further activities**
- Warn the children that some of the language is old-fashioned (for example, 'sun-begotten' and 'hath'), but that once they read the poem and think about the context, the meaning will become clear. Encourage them to choose their favourite phrase or line in the poem and explain why it appealed to them.
  - Explain that the poem only mentions two seasons by name, winter and spring. Invite the children to tell you in which order the next two seasons will follow.
  - Draw attention to the layout of lines, with every other line inset. Read the poem aloud, emphasising the consistency of the metre (four iambs – di-dum, di-dum, di-dum, di-dum, followed by three iambs, di-dum, di-dum, di-dum) and pointing out how the layout of the text reinforces this metre visually, helping the reader to retain the rhythm when reading aloud.
  - Challenge the children to write a few pairs of lines in the same metre on the subject of their choice. Alternatively, give them a starting first line: 'In winter when I trudge to school ...' or 'At midnight when the clock strikes twelve ...'
  - Ask the children to write a series of entries in the scarecrow's diary throughout the year, beginning with an appropriately wintry date, such as January.
  - Invite the children to use the detailed images in this poem as a stimulus for drawing or painting an illustration of the scarecrow.



-  Discuss with the children other scarecrows that feature in children's literature – for example, in *Worzel Gummidge* (Barbara Euphan Todd) and *The Wizard of Oz* (L. Frank Baum). Compare these characters with Walter de la Mare's scarecrow.

## Holy horrors

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 30)

**Source:** *National Trust Magazine*,  
Autumn 2007


**Genre:** Magazine article

**Authors:** Oliver Garnett and  
Claire Masset

**Introduction** The irreverent images of gargoyles – grotesquely funny or just plain rude – will fire the imagination of most readers. In their day, gargoyles met the practical requirements of essential plumbing, but may also have been seen in the same way as today we see graffiti. This potted history makes fascinating reading. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. 'plumbing' 2. (one of:) to ward off evil spirits; to warn Medieval people against evil 3. not easily understood 4. 'gargle' 5. by mouth-pulling 6. wings, fangs and claws/clawed feet 7. vampire 8a. the 'Green Man' 8b. leaves 9. high up on the edge of the building.

### Further activities

- Check that the children understand the vocabulary used; direct them to the Glossary, and give further explanations as necessary. You may need to explain 'guises' (appearances) and 'ward off' (protect against), both in paragraph 2.
- Point out how the article begins and ends by addressing the reader with imperative verbs: 'walk', 'look'. Discuss how this challenges the reader to become personally involved and invites their enthusiasm. Ask the children to write an opening paragraph introducing any subject that they love (for example, skateboarding, keeping a hamster, judo).
- Encourage the children to look around their local area, or places they visit, and see how many examples of gargoyles they can spot. Ask them to make sketches or take photographs and create an annotated class display.
-  Divide the class into groups, asking each group to write a commentary on a selection of the gargoyles they have found. Prepare and practise a TV-style documentary on gargoyles in your area. This can then be performed to other classes.
- Challenge the children to create their own gargoyle designs using materials such as cardboard tubes, papier-mâché, modelling clay, fabrics, and so on. Ask them to draw a diagram of their gargoyle and to write some simple instructions on how it is to be put together.

## De

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 32)



**Author:** Valerie Bloom

**Genre:** Poem / parody

**Introduction** Valerie Bloom's parody of Thomas Hood's evocative poem is thoroughly tongue in cheek. Like all dialect poems, it works best when read aloud, preferably in a Jamaican accent. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1a. 'the' 1b. the joints are all rheumatic 2. *the word-play relies on the first two letters of the month 'December' being a word, just as 'no' is a word in 'November', which only happens within this dialect* 3. no: e.g. 'frostbite', 'misery', 'gloomy', 'sinkin' heart' 4. onomatopoeic 5. *it's a broken electric blanket – cold because it is without power* 6. 'De wind dat cut like razor' 7. it is raining 8. *had double-glazing fitted* 9a. 'November' 9b. *a parody follows the same pattern as the original.*

### Further activities

- Encourage the children to find and read Thomas Hood's original poem, 'No!'.
-  Discuss and compare the two poems, looking for similarities and contrasts of style and form and investigating how each reflects its era.
- Ask the children to list some of the things they might do on a rainy Saturday sitting around at home. Then challenge them to write parodies of their own: working from their notes, they should use 'Sat' as the title and 'Saturday' as the last line. Encourage them to use the ABCB rhyme scheme. For example, the poem might start:  
(I...)  
Sat twiddling my thumbs,  
Sat watching the rain,  
Sat wishing for sun,  
Sat resting my brain.
-  Choose some of the best poems that the children have written and invite the children to read them aloud to the class. Ask the rest of the class to tell you two things that they like about each poem, and one thing that they think might be improved. Work with the whole class to see if, together, you can make the improvements suggested.

## Alice meets the Cheshire cat

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 34)

**Genre:** Classic fiction

**Source:** *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*


**Author:** Lewis Carroll

### Introduction

From the minute Alice follows a talking white rabbit down his hole in the ground, all her dream-experiences have grown 'curiouser and curiouser'. Set the extract in context before presenting it to the children. Ask if any child has heard the expression 'to grin like a Cheshire cat'. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. it begins, 'The door led straight into a large kitchen' 2. three (Alice, Duchess and baby) 3. pepper in the air 4. *the sneezing and howling take it in turns, one after the other again and again* 5. a large cauldron 6. over the fire 7. the baby 8. *to begin to talk to and/or exchange views with someone* 9. *shyly, nervously* 10. *the place in front of the fire; because cats like warm places* 11. 'from ear to ear'.

### Further activities

- Ask the children to identify all the contractions in the text: 'there's', 'it's', 'that's', 'didn't', 'em', 'don't', and to rewrite them as full words. Discuss how and when these are used (within direct speech).
-  Invite the children to rewrite this short scene as a playscript, adding any further stage directions as required and writing a list of the props needed (a stool, a baby doll, a big cooking pot and a spoon to stir it with). Then perform the play in class. Ask those not taking part to make notes on the strengths and weaknesses of the performance; invite volunteers to present these as if they were on a radio chat-show.

- Challenge the children to predict what might happen next, then find the source of this (abridged) extract in the original book (available online, if not in the school library) to see if they were right. They should then retell the end of this episode in their own words.


## The fox repaid in his own coin

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 36)

**Source:** *The Canterbury Tales*


**Genre:** Traditional tale / fable

**Author of original:** Geoffrey Chaucer

**Introduction** Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* are stories within the overall frame of another story. Each story is told by a different character as together they make their pilgrimage to Canterbury; each has a moral message (akin to Aesop's fables). This is the story told by 'the nun's priest', rewritten for the *Children's Encyclopaedia* by Arthur Mee. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.  Provide dictionaries for the children to use when answering the comprehension questions.

**Answers** 1. a hen 2. *seeing a fox* 3. *his other dreams had come true in the past* 4. *listed*  
5. *indigestion* 6. *because he speaks nicely to the cockerel and earns his trust, then tricks him* 7a. 'spied' 7b. 'racket' 7c. 'deceived' 8. '(strutting around) as fierce as a lion'  
9. a fox 10. b.


### Further activities

- Explain that Geoffrey Chaucer lived over 600 years ago and his writing – much of it poetry – led him to be dubbed 'The father of English literature'. (Most poetry before his was written either in French or Latin but Chaucer chose to write his poems in English, making it more easily accessible for future generations.)
- Check that the children understand the vocabulary used (for example, 'deceived', 'cockerel', 'enumerated', 'mate', 'racket', 'widow').
- Point out typical story-telling devices in the organisation of the text: use of paragraphs, direct speech, time phrases ('While', 'Some days later'). Highlight archaic phrases ('alas', 'Gentle sir').
- Discuss the fact that this tale is a 'fable' – a moral tale in which animals are used to communicate a special message about the way humans interact with one another. Ask the children if they know of other fables (by Aesop, for example). Read some of them in class, and compare them to this text – how does the 'moral' of each tale compare and what are the similarities and differences between the characters?
- Encourage the children to retell this story in their own words and research further *Canterbury Tales*.
-  Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each character. Divide the children into groups of three and invite them to act out the story, improvising their own scripts and showing the characters' personalities in their performances.


# Digging

**Contained in:** Book 2 (page 38)  
**Author:** Edward Thomas

**Genre:** Classic poem

**Introduction** Like his friend Robert Frost, Edward Thomas wrote simple traditional poems that often echo the patterns of natural speech. 'Digging' is a typical example, giving clear evidence of his ability to evoke the essence of the English countryside, capturing mood and feeling through images of nature. It draws particularly on the sense of smell. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.  Provide dictionaries for the children to use when answering the comprehension questions.

**Answers** 1. *the words sound alike* 2. *observing through the sense of smell* 3. 'odours', 'smell' 4. *to give up* 5. 'wounds' 6. *bonfire smoke* 7. *usually used of liquids* 8. *laughter; merriment* 9. *hearing* 10a. *mirth is the opposite of sadness* 10b. *he is both sad and happy (nostalgic?)*.

- Further activities**
- Ask if the children know what major world event happened during the poet's lifetime (World War 1 – known as 'The Great War', in which Thomas died).
  -  Briefly discuss how the countryside has changed since the time when Thomas was writing. (Many green areas have been built on – and are now industrial sites, housing estates, shopping centres.) Give specific examples in your local area if possible. Encourage the children to discuss the dilemmas and tensions between wanting to preserve green spaces and the beauty of the countryside and at the same time wanting to provide affordable housing for families. Focus on the details that will make this issue clearer for the children: for example, wild animals and plants are good for the environment, but families with children need houses to live in; farmers need open land on which to grow crops, but big shopping centres are cheap and convenient for doing all your shopping in one place.
  - Ask what other senses, apart from the sense of smell, poets may use in description (hearing, sight, taste and touch).
  - Invite the children to search anthologies for further poems by Edward Thomas.
  - Ask the children what they notice about the organisation of lines 3 and 4 in the first three verses, pointing out the use of commas as a clue. (They are lists.)
  - Challenge the children to write their own poem, focusing primarily on one of the senses and using a list technique.

## BOOK 3

### Jacky Daydream remembers

**Contained in:** Book 3 (page 4)  
**Source:** *Jacky Daydream, The Story of her Childhood*


**Genre:** Autobiography  
**Author:** Jacqueline Wilson

**Introduction** In this extract by the ever-popular Jacqueline Wilson, children's Laureate 2005–2007, the author recalls childhood shopping trips in post-war Britain. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1a. *writing books; writing novels* 1b. 'autobiography' 2a. *mosaic-tiled walls* 2b. *the dressing room of a lady in the East* 3. *the butter was hard and the bread wasn't sliced, so it*

was the easiest way to do it; if you cut the bread first and then buttered it, you would need to cut thicker slices, or the bread would disintegrate when you spread it with hard butter 4. there were separate queues when you bought things in different parts of the shop; food was rationed as normal international trade had not fully resumed following the war 5. (accept any accurate response) 6. they argue over the price of goods to try and get a bargain 7. they have cash tills and electronic registers to do the arithmetic automatically 8. within a child's reach 9. she was an imaginary friend whom Jacky could blame for naughtiness.

### Further activities

- Explain to the children that ordinary people were struggling after the war to provide for their families. Money was short and food was still rationed. You will have touched on this when discussing the text 'The "ration book" Olympics' (**Key Stage 2 Comprehension Book 2**, page 12).
- Draw attention to Jacqueline Wilson's use of the past conjunctive tense: 'We'd' (short for 'We would'). Discuss what she means when she says, 'You could ...' (meaning 'one could' or 'people generally could'). Help turn such sentences into the passive voice: for example, 'You could get oranges ...' becomes 'Oranges were available ...', etc. Ask the children which version makes it easier for the reader to identify with the writer's experience. (The author's conversational, informal voice using 'you' more readily involves the reader.)
- Ask the children if they know what 'garbed' means (line 9); then ask them if they know any other synonyms for 'dressed' (attired, arrayed, rigged up, draped).
-  Discuss some of the many differences between the Sainsbury's grocery shop of Jacky's childhood and the supermarket chains of today: the different lengths of (and reasons for) queues; the presentation of the food (loose/pre-wrapped); the availability and range of foods; the means of payment; loyalty cards, and so on. Few people would have had cars in which to carry heavy shopping home.
- Invite the children to write a description of a recent shopping trip for food and household goods.

## Seal saves drowning dog

**Contained in:** Book 3 (page 6)

**Source:** *Daily Telegraph*, 19 June 2002

**Genre:** Newspaper report

**Author:** Paul Stokes

### Introduction

The children may have read stories of dolphins rescuing human beings struggling in the water, but this true account of a seal coming to a dog's rescue will strike a touching chord with many young animal lovers. It will also prompt a sense of wonder at the interaction between different creatures in the natural world. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

### Answers

1. an Alsatian-cross 2. *its injury combined with panic when approached* 3. Raymond Hinds 4. Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals 5. they were walking their two dogs 6. it wore no collar 7. River Tees 8. *muddy land exposed when the tide goes out, such as in a river estuary* 9. Stockton 10. (look for different wording from the original, such as:) *a cut head and a damaged back leg* 11. (accept any accurate response).

### Further activities

-  Ask the children if they have ever witnessed or heard about a similar rescue of one animal by another. Encourage them to compare and discuss one another's stories.



- Introduce the term ‘anthropomorphism’ – applying human attributes to an animal. Ask the children to adopt the persona of the seal and write an account of what happened and how and why he chose to help the struggling dog, as if the seal had human feelings and were writing an entry in his diary.
- Invite the children to retell the story as a fictional narrative, possibly again adopting an anthropomorphic tone, if they wish. Suggest that, for the purposes of fiction, names and locations can be changed and the circumstances adapted and enhanced.
- Discuss what the children know already about the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) and invite them to research this organisation and the work it does for animals.

## You are old, Father William

**Contained in:** Book 3 (page 8)

**Source:** *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*

**Genre:** Classic nonsense poem / parody


**Author:** Lewis Carroll

**Introduction** This is the poem that Alice recites, at the request of the caterpillar, in Chapter 5 of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* – though its nonsense retains just as much appeal when read out of its original context. In fact, this poem is a parody of another that was famous at the time, ‘The old man’s comforts and how he gained them’, by Robert Southey (1774–1843). Although the first lines of the two poems are very similar, Lewis Carroll’s version is evidently not the poem that the caterpillar had expected to hear from Alice, since he tells her that it is ‘wrong from beginning to end’. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Another extract from *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll appears in **Key Stage 2 Comprehension Book 2** (page 34, ‘Alice meets the Cheshire cat’).

**Answers** 1. his son 2. white hair 3. continually, without stopping 4. ABAB (CDCD, etc.) 5a. pliant, flexible, bendy 5b. turn back-somersaults 6a. *small pieces of fat from an animal, used in cooking* 6b. *it is soft when cooked/made up of small pieces/would not be too chewy for old jaws* 7. the bones and beak 8a. the old man, Father William 8b. *a wise person* 9. ‘What made you so awfully clever?’

- Further activities**
- Read the poem aloud to the class.
  - Check whether there are any words that the children do not understand – for example, ‘shilling’ (line 15). Explain that a shilling would be worth 5p in today’s money, though at the time that would have bought them many more things than now. Ask the children to underline and discuss their favourite phrase in the poem.
  - Ask the children whether the old man’s recommendations are serious, and whether they would really help to keep someone young and healthy. Having established that the poem is intended to be funny, encourage the children to identify it as a good example of nonsense poetry.
  - Point out how the direct speech is punctuated and explain that the use of commas, full stops and speech marks is the same as would be used in prose narrative.
  - Invite the children, with a partner, to improvise and write a nonsense conversation between two characters of their own invention. Encourage them to refer to the original poem to check their use of punctuation.

- Challenge the children to think up a fifth question for the young man to ask of Father William, regarding a further unlikely activity. It should use the same rhythm and rhyme scheme as the original verses.
-  Using highlighter pens, mark up the different 'parts' in the poem – the words spoken by Father William, his son, and the narrator. Ask for three volunteers to give a dramatised reading of the poem, each of them taking one of these three parts. Alternatively, you might ask groups of children to take the different parts, making it a choral speaking activity.
- Obtain a copy of Robert Southey's poem (which begins 'You are old, Father William, the young man cried') and read it aloud to the children. Display the text of both poems and discuss the differences between them. Ask the children whether they think Southey's poem is a nonsense poem too, and encourage the class members to discuss their reasons.

## Welsh hero Simon Weston

**Contained in:** Book 3 (page 10)

**Source:** (First paragraph:) *Forgiveness: Breaking the Chain of Hate*. (Remainder of text:) *100 Welsh Heroes*

**Genre:** Biography

**Author:** (First paragraph:) Michael Henderson. (Remainder of text:) Allison Coleman, Ian Courtney, John Davies, Iestyn George and Miles Fletcher


**Introduction** In this age of celebrity, in which people are 'famous for being famous', a present-day example of true heroism cannot fail to impress and inspire respect. Learning of Simon Weston's personal battle to recover from his appalling injuries will bring history to life and will also help the children to put their own troubles into perspective. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. almost half 2. the Welsh Guards 3. four years 4. *most people would see his injuries as a painfully tragic disaster* 5. *he prefers to look forward rather than back and finds it pointless to try and apportion blame* 6. underprivileged youngsters 7. *inspiring others to positive attitudes and actions* 8. *it took courage and patience to fight a long and painful battle to overcome his injuries and disfigurement, come to terms with an end to his army career, and find purpose and joy in his life again* 9a. *similar to a journal, a story relating events in the order in which they occurred* 9b. *it is like following a path, a long slow progression towards an end goal (of being well and independent again).*

### Further activities

- Touch briefly on the reasons for the Falklands War, as described. Avoid heavy discussions of the rights and wrongs of armed conflict, focusing instead on Simon Weston's personal courage as he copes with the aftermath of his physical injuries.
- Check that the children understand any unfamiliar vocabulary: for example, 'disfigured', 'magnified', 'fireball', 'engulfed', 'controversy', 'apportioning of blame', 'underprivileged' and 'broadcaster'.
- Point out that Simon Weston's survival and recovery would not have been possible in the days of, say, Tudor sea battles. Ask the children if they know why this is, and discuss briefly a few of the obvious innovations of contemporary medicine (such as anaesthetics, X-rays, blood transfusions and skin grafts).
- Invite the children to write a poem entitled 'To a Hero'. They might begin each line, 'You are ...' and use metaphors to describe Simon Weston or some other brave hero of their

choice – preferably someone they know well. Individuals should then read their poem aloud to the class, with appropriate tone and intonation.

-  Discuss the non-physical injuries that Simon Weston may have had to face. (Nightmares? Loss of confidence? Fear of rejection? Depression?) Discuss how and why he was himself helped by helping others. (He was able to avoid self-pity and to see something good coming from something bad. He had a new purpose and pride in life and a role in society – even though he was not fit enough to return to the army.)

## Matilda joins Crunchem Hall

**Contained in:** Book 3 (page 12)

**Source:** *Matilda*


**Genre:** Fiction

**Author:** Roald Dahl

**Introduction** Roald Dahl never minces his words when it comes to describing characters – especially unpleasant ones. Use this extract to encourage the children to read *Matilda* for themselves, as well as finding more books by the same author. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Another text by Roald Dahl appears in **Key Stage 2 Comprehension Book 4** (page 10, 'Chocolate', which is an extract from *Boy, Tales of Childhood*).

**Answers** 1. oval 2. a porcelain figure 3. *she is gentle, warm, never shouts and is understanding* 4. *can be touched* 5. (two words such as:) *bewildered, afraid* 6. her snort 7. they bounced out of her path as she ploughed through them 8. like 'an enraged rhinoceros' 9. climb up the nearest tree and stay there until they have gone away.

- Further activities**
- Ask the children to comment on the suitability of the names 'Honey' and 'Trunchbull' for the characters described in this text. Discuss how the names reflect the characters' nature and personalities. Challenge the children to invent names for characters who are, respectively: mean, generous, moody, funny, irritable, quiet, bossy. Encourage them to write a scene in which two of these characters interact, such as ordering lunch in a café, catching a train or clearing out a garden shed.
  - Invite the children to make up some similes to describe different characters from real life or fiction, television or film (such as, 'Robin Hood jumped from the tree, as sprightly as a grasshopper').
  - Reread the pointer, where an indication is given of the origin of Roald Dahl's unusual name (it is Norwegian). Discuss any unusual names among class members, or any that are known to the children, and discuss their possible origins. Be sure to promote an unusual name as something positive and interesting rather than something odd or curious.
  -  Divide the children into groups of three. Explain that they can take turns to be a narrator or a miming actor. First the narrator will read out the description of Miss Honey (the second paragraph) while the other two role-play Miss Honey and a child, using body language, stance and facial expression, to indicate each character's demeanour and attitude. Next, the two actors will play Miss Trunchbull and a child, again through mime alone, responding to the words of the third paragraph, as the narrator reads the description of Miss Trunchbull. Encourage the children to use exaggeration and humour in their acting, to complement the author's writing style.
  - Ask whether any of the children have read *Matilda*, or any other books by Roald Dahl. Would they recommend them to a friend? Why? Why not?

## Rats

**Contained in:** Book 3 (page 14)


**Genre:** Classic poem

**Author:** Robert Browning

**Introduction** The famous retelling of the traditional story of ‘The Pied Piper of Hamelin’ has delighted readers for over 100 years. It is well worth reading aloud, so that the children may enjoy its lyrical rhythm and rhyme before they begin to read it closely. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. Hanover 2. to the north (as the river washes its south wall) 3. ‘vermin’ 4. a (lyrical/ rhyming) poem 5. line 20: ‘In fifty different sharps and flats’ 6. cheeses and sprats 7. *they disapprove as the council appears to be doing nothing about the town’s problems* 8a. *simpleton, idiot, fool* 8b. *fur from a stoat’s winter coat, when it turns white* 9. line 32: ‘we’ll send you packing’.

### Further activities

- Read the poem aloud so that the children are able to fully appreciate its features.
- Ask the children to use an atlas to locate the German town of Hamelin (Hameln) and the River Weser on which it lies (in Lower Saxony).
- Encourage the children to find and read the whole poem and then retell the story in their own words.
-  After reading the whole poem, hold a class discussion on the responsibilities of town and community leaders. How accountable should they be to the townsfolk who vote them into their positions of authority? How do the children feel about the behaviour of the councillors of Hamelin? Were they right to cheat the Pied Piper? Was his revenge appropriate?
- Challenge the children to learn parts of the poem by heart and practise reciting it to the class.

## Mischievous Tom

**Contained in:** Book 3 (page 16)

**Genre:** Classic fiction

**Source:** *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

**Author:** Mark Twain

**Introduction** When *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* was first published in 1876, Mark Twain wrote in his preface:



Although my book is intended mainly for the entertainment of boys and girls, I hope it will not be shunned by men and women on that account; for part of my plan has been to try to write pleasantly, to remind adults of what they once were themselves, and of how they felt and thought and talked, and what queer enterprises they sometimes engaged in.

The universal appeal of *Tom Sawyer* proves the author’s success in this ambition. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. American 2. Tom’s Aunt Polly 3. *Where’s he got to? What’s he up to?* 4. ‘built for “style”, not service’ 5. the cat 6. tomato vines and jimson weeds 7. ‘roundabout’ 8. *a flexible whipping stick* 9. *Tom was in great danger of being hit.* 10. *he tricks her into looking away and*

while her back is turned he climbs over the fence and vanishes 11. she 'broke into a gentle laugh'.

### Further activities

- Check that the children understand any unfamiliar vocabulary: for example, 'state', 'perplexed', 'resurrected', 'arrest', 'closet', 'truck'. Discuss any words or phrases that they find particularly entertaining – such as, 'she could have seen through a pair of stove-lids just as well'.
-  Ask the children to discuss what might happen next, after the extract. Will Aunt Polly get angry with Tom eventually? What tricks will Tom play during his stay?
- Ask the children to note all the characters' physical movements and actions that help the reader to picture the scene very clearly (the adjusting of the useless glasses; the bending and probing with the broom; the grabbing of Tom; his antics to avoid capture and a beating).
- Tell the children to rewrite the scene as a first-person recount, allowing them to choose whether they take the part of Tom or Aunt Polly.
- Challenge the children to rewrite this scene as a film or playscript, complete with stage directions in brackets. Remind them that each piece of speech will follow the speaker's name (in capitals) and that speech marks are not needed.
-  Invite the children to find a partner and use their scripts to practise and perform a radio presentation of this episode. Remind them that this medium offers no visual clues, that their clarity and tone of voice, pace, volume and any sound effects are all they have to put across the characters and events to the audience. Listen to the results and vote on which pair performed in the most arresting way.

## Sixteen steps to the ice-house

**Contained in:** Book 3 (page 18)

**Genre:** Shape poem

**Author:** Gina Douthwaite

### Introduction

Gina Douthwaite is renowned for her 'concrete' or 'shape' poetry and the children will find a rich variety of further examples in anthologies where her work appears. Other poetic devices commonly feature in her work, for example rhyme, near-rhyme and assonance (see below). Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

### Answers


1. 16 lines to match the number of steps, stepped-inset capitals mimic the appearance of 16 steps  
2. down 3. (two of:) mould, slime, rats' bones, it dates from a time when people had servants, it is 'not of this century' 4a. e.g. 'mould'/'cold'; 'still'/'chill' 4b. e.g. 'holds'/'souls'; 'steps'/'depths' 5. (two of:) 'some sinewy shape not of this century', 'the dead who guard', 'ghostly' 6. servants (the petrifying cold 'holds the souls of servants') 7. it makes the reader retrace the steps with the speaker; it reinforces images.

### Further activities

- The children will be used to identifying rhymes, especially at the ends of lines. However, this poem offers wonderful examples of near-rhyme and assonance (which is a correspondence of vowel sounds, even though the consonant sounds are different). Draw the children's attention to further internal near-rhymes: for example, 'scattered'/'shatter'/'stagnant'; 'sinewy'/'century'.
- Ask the children to brainstorm other places that steps might lead – the deep end of a swimming pool, a dusty attic or loft, a roof, an apple tree, the crow's nest of an old



sailing ship, the inside of a chimney ... Challenge them to create an atmospheric poem of their own, drafting it before shaping the lines in steps formation. Encourage the children to use near-rhyme if possible.

- Invite the children to gather together various anthologies and look for more Gina Douthwaite poems. What common features can they identify?
- Ask the children to research old houses and stately homes in your area and to find out whether any of them once had an ice-house. They should then present their findings to the class.
-  Divide the children into groups of six and ask them to plan a choral performance of the poem. They can choose how to divide up the lines among themselves and/or which, if any, lines to read together. Make sure that the children understand the significance of the italicised *from* in lines 13 and 15 (ghosts may be coming *up* the steps and/or the speaker is hurriedly retreating). Encourage them to reflect this in their performance. They can also plan sound effects, using percussion instruments or recording 16 footsteps, or other sound effects, such as dripping water or a clattering stone. Allow each group to perform their recitation and invite the audience to discuss areas of success or for improvement.

## Sea fever

**Contained in:** Book 3 (page 20)

**Genre:** Classic poem


**Author:** John Masefield

**Introduction** This classic poem paints a graphic picture of life at sea. Its strong pattern of rhythm and rhyme makes it an ideal poem for learning by heart. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading. As an extension activity, invite the more able children to write a review of the text; space is provided in the box below the questions. Discuss the reviews in class later.

**Answers** 1. 'I must go down to the sea again', 'and all I ask'; *the repetition reinforces the increasingly impelling longing and urgency* 2. (one of:) 'lonely sea', 'wheel's kick', 'wind's song', 'sea's face' 3. it has tall masts and sails 4. 'a star to steer her by' 5. flying clouds, flung spray, blown spume 6. sharpened 7. lines 11 ('merry yarn ... fellow rover') and 12 ('when the long trick's over', which refers to taking turns at the helm) 8. (two of:) 'wind's song', 'call of the running tide', 'sea-gulls crying', 'laughing'.

- Further activities**
- Draw attention to the lists of things that follow the repeated 'And all I ask ...' in each verse. Discuss how easily these desires may be fulfilled. Are they modest or fantastic? Ask what they indicate of the speaker's experience of sailing. Suggest that the writer's description also endorses the joys of life at sea aboard a sailing ship.
  - Ask the children to write and perform a poem of their own that will encourage readers to share an experience they have enjoyed. Their descriptive language must persuade the readers to share the feelings, sounds and smells that they long to revisit. Allow the children to choose their own subject or suggest a holiday place they have visited: the home of a friend or relative; a castle or picnic spot; a pet or toy shop. Challenge the more able children to create a parody of the original, for example, 'I must kick a ball on the green again, where our goals are folded coats ...'.
  - Invite the children to research online or in reference books the life of John Masefield. They might focus on: his idyllic early childhood in Herefordshire; his being orphaned

and sent to live with an aunt and uncle; his love of reading; his time at sea; his life in the USA during the Depression; his return to London; his friendship with the poet Yeats and his circle; his experiences as a Red Cross worker in World War 1; his appointment as Poet Laureate in 1930. They should then present their findings to the class.

-  Display an enlarged copy of the poem and underline words or phrases that imply discomfort and misery, such as 'lonely', 'kick', 'shaking', 'grey', 'like a whetted [sharpened] knife'. Invite the children to offer suggestions why, despite these images, the poem is cheerful and optimistic, making sailing seem romantic and fun. For example, facing a challenge and overcoming the forces of nature can be exhilarating and rewarding, making someone feel more 'alive' or 'at one with nature'. Invite comments on how and why the last line brings the poem to a calm, relaxing close.

## The hippogriff's tusk

**Contained in:** Book 3 (page 22)


**Source:** *Jennings' Diary*

**Genre:** Comic fiction

**Author:** Anthony Buckeridge

**Introduction** This extract comes from the fifth of 25 novels featuring Jennings, the first being published in 1950, and the last – after a gap in the 1980s – in 1991. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading. As an extension activity, invite the more able children to write a review of the text; space is provided in the box below the questions. Discuss the reviews in class later.


**Answers** 1. 14 days 2. vegetables 3. his visit to the Natural History Museum 4. mythical: 'that species had never existed, except in legend' 5. fake, phoney 6. to fossilise: to preserve in rock something that was once a living creature or plant; to ossify: to convert to bone; to petrify: to turn to stone 7. its owner had sharpened its teeth on Bronze Age rocks 8. they will put it in the Form 3 museum.

- Further activities**
- Check that the children understand any unfamiliar vocabulary, for example: 'enterprise', 'unbounded', 'relic'.
  - Ask the children to research Anthony Buckeridge and write a short biography of his life and work. Encourage them to find and read this and other stories by the same author.
  - Invite the children to find out about the Natural History Museum in London and plan a short leaflet, flyer or poster advertising its purpose, location, opening times and facilities.
  - Challenge the children to keep their own diary for a fortnight, describing day-to-day happenings both at home and at school. Discuss how they might make everyday events sound interesting or exciting with a little help from their imagination – embellishing and exaggerating facts and using interesting and unusual imagery.
  -  The hippogriff in literature is an imaginary animal, shaped like a winged horse with the head of a griffin; it was first described by the Italian poet Ariosto in the sixteenth century and has featured in several works of children's literature. Ask the children to make up their own description of the hippogriff, what it looked like (including its tusk), what it ate and when it became extinct. Invite the children in turns to present their description to the class – using clear diction so that everyone can hear. They might use the style of a television presenter, and could include their own drawings as visual aids.

# Keepsake Mill

**Contained in:** Book 3 (page 24)  
**Author:** Robert Louis Stevenson


**Genre:** Classic poem

**Introduction** The rhythm of this poem offers a perfect example of extended onomatopoeia as the rhythm throughout echoes the sound of the mill wheel's continuous 'turning and churning' – the 'moil'. Read the poem aloud to the children and encourage them to learn all or part of it by heart. Encourage them to enjoy the strong rhythm as they recite it. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.  Provide dictionaries for the children to refer to: a full adult dictionary would be useful for question 5.

Other texts by Robert Louis Stevenson appear in **Key Stage 2 Comprehension Book 2** (page 26, 'The arrival of a rugged seaman', which is an extract from *Treasure Island*), **Book 3** (page 30, 'Respected relative', which is a letter that the author wrote as a teenager) and **Book 4** (page 24, 'Our toilsome journey', which is an extract from *Kidnapped*).

**Answers** **1a.** A rhymes: e.g. 'pardon'/'garden'; B rhymes: e.g. 'below'/'we go' **1b.** e.g. 'here'/'weir'; 'turning'/'churning'; 'stiller'/'miller' **2.** a child: 'for us children, to-day'; 'we shall find' (when older); 'old ... we shall meet' (future tense); 'your marble of Saturday last' (recent) **3.** 'breach' **4.** going 'over the borders' (*trampling on the flowerbeds and/or leaving the confines of the garden*) **5.** *rushing water (in a channel bringing water to the mill)* **6.** *he is deaf and his eyesight is failing* **7a.** *a keepsake is a memento, such as the bean and marble* **7b.** *they were very close friends and expect to remember each other for ever* **8a.** e.g. (one of:) breaking/branches; weir/wonder; moil/mill **8b.** e.g. (one of:) humming/thunder; home/ocean/heroes **9.** *they accentuate the lyrical flow of the words, so that the whole poem becomes onomatopoeic, sounding like the mill wheel's constant, rhythmical turning.*

## Further activities

- Ensure that the children have some idea of what a watermill is and what it looks like.
- Check that the children understand any unfamiliar words: for example, 'borders' (line 1): flowerbeds; 'sluice' (line 7): water channel; 'moil' (line 12): churning; 'Indies' (line 17): the lands of south and south-eastern Asia (in Stevenson's time, much of this area was owned by Britain); 'honoured' (line 23), 'apparelled' (line 23).
- Invite the children to jog on the spot at a steady pace – or around the room if space permits. Ask them to maintain a smooth pace, counting one-two-three-four, one-two-three-four. When they stop, together clap the jogging rhythm. Challenge the children to substitute words for the numbers, that fit both the metre and the subject of going out jogging, for example, '**under trees** and **past the houses**' (bold here represents the four strong beats). Encourage each child in the group to add another line. Experiment with rhyme, perhaps beginning with an ABCB pattern.
-  Return to the poem 'Keepsake Mill' and read it aloud together as a class. Listen again to the strong, regular rhythm. Encourage the children to recognise how this echoes the theme of the poem – the passing of time, from childhood to old age. Use a metronome, set at a speaking speed, as a background sound, as the children attempt to read or recite the poem to a steady rhythm. If possible, record the children's performance for them to listen to.
- Read together and compare other poems where the rhythm helps to evoke aspects of the subject – for example, 'Night mail' by W. H. Auden.
- Ask the children to recall their earliest memories, making notes on every detail and involving all their senses. Challenge them to develop their notes into a piece of prose or poetry in an effort to evoke atmosphere and emotion.



# Bilbo the hobbit meets Smaug

**Contained in:** Book 3 (page 26)  
**Source:** *The Hobbit*

**Genre:** Classic fiction  
**Author:** J. R. R. Tolkien

**Introduction** A forerunner to *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Hobbit* introduces the small underground-dweller Bilbo Baggins and quickly takes him through a series of dangerous adventures. Here he encounters Smaug the dragon and has to deal with his own fear. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. touch and hearing 2. a horse, a cat 3a. a dragon 3b. his fear 4. 'bottommost' 5. Smaug 6. reddish 7a. gems and fragments of gold 7b. *he had lain on them for so long that they had stuck to his belly* 8. armour and weapons 9. *it has been worked on, fashioned by manual labour, embellished or shaped.*

- Further activities**
- Remind the children that the world which Tolkien invented for *The Hobbit* is the same world that is further explored in his later novel, *The Lord of the Rings*. Mention that both of these books have been turned into films, and ask if the children have seen them. Would they recommend them to their friends? Why? Why not?
  -  Ask the children to work in pairs and discuss what they think might happen next. Will Smaug see Bilbo? Will Bilbo make it out alive?
  -  Return to the theme of Bilbo's real battle, that of overcoming his own fear. Discuss what it means to 'be brave'. Can you be brave if you know no fear? It has been said that anyone who claims they are never afraid is either stupid or a liar. Explain that fear is a natural emotion, necessary for our survival as a species, even if some of our fears may turn out to be irrational.
  - Challenge the children to write a short story about a character who overcomes his or her fear to achieve something positive.
  - Ask the children to reread the description of the dragon. Invite them to look at Tolkien's use of figurative language, then write a detailed description of some other imaginary beast. They might invent their own or write about a traditional mythical creature, such as an ogre, a mermaid, a griffin or the minotaur.

# The woman of water

**Contained in:** Book 3 (page 28)  
**Author:** Adrian Mitchell


**Genre:** Classic poem

**Introduction** The first verse of this chilling story of damaged pride, spite and revenge is told in the form of a recipe as a spell is prepared for the woman. The second verse may offer a challenge to the children's previous perception of what a smile indicates, and is worth discussion. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading. As an extension activity, invite the more able children to write a review of the poem; space is provided in the box below the questions. Discuss the reviews in class later.

**Answers** 1. *she has refused to marry him* 2. *they are (abstract) things that would be impossible to collect* 3. e.g. (one of:) 'dark', 'thunder' 4. revenge 5. *she drinks the wizard's potion* 6. *it emphasises the extreme depth* 7. *not really: the woman gets the final revenge – the 'last laugh'*

– but both are destroyed 8. (any of:) ‘squeezed’, ‘drained’, ‘charmed’; look for recognition of the reader’s ability to visualise these actions and how their meanings reflect the nature of each ‘ingredient’.

### Further activities

- Ensure that the children know what a well is and that they understand that ‘giving one’s hand’ to someone means agreeing to marry them.
- Draw attention to the opening phrase, ‘There once was ...’ and ask the children what other genre of writing it reminds them of. Explain that this is a story, or narrative, poem. Like stories, it has characters, a plot, a setting and a situation to be resolved. It also has a beginning, a middle and an end.
- Ask the children to identify the language devices that make this piece of writing into a poem (rhythm, rhyme, repetition, alliteration – such as ‘woman’/‘water’; ‘drained’/‘dark’ – and assonance – such as ‘weight’/‘grain’; ‘height’/‘cypress’).
- Ask the children to identify the effects of the repetition of the word ‘And’. (It adds to the sense of single-minded determination on the part of the wizard. At the same time, the repeated simple word does nothing to distract from the list of amazing ingredients.)
- Invite suggestions as to how the telling of this story would differ in prose narrative. Would more time be spent on describing the woman’s daily trips to the well, for example, and the wizard’s noticing and watching the woman of water and becoming obsessed by her? (Consider whether, if he really loved her, he might still want to destroy her when she turned him down?)
- Ask the children to retell the story in prose, embellishing the characters and adding detail and direct speech. Ask them to imagine how the wizard proposed, how much time passed before he punished her, how she felt when she became a well and what her thought processes were in planning to trap the wizard.
-  Explain that cypress trees are often planted in graveyards. Discuss how this knowledge might have influenced the poet’s choice of tree and how this adds to the atmosphere and implications of the poem. Compare other trees’ attributes and how differently they would work in a spell recipe – such as the sap of an oak, in a potion to give someone strength, or the sap of a willow, to make someone weep. Share ideas to create a class ‘spell’ poem, which the children can then perform to another class.

## Respected relative

**Contained in:** Book 3 (page 30)  
**Author:** Robert Louis Stevenson

**Genre:** Letter


### Introduction

This is a genuine letter that the Victorian children’s poet and author Robert Louis Stevenson wrote to his father in 1866, when he was aged 15½. It will strike a chord with any child who has tried to sweet-talk a parent into giving them extra pocket money. Its formality is tongue-in-cheek but is nevertheless typical of the era. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Other texts by Robert Louis Stevenson appear in **Key Stage 2 Comprehension Book 2** (page 26, ‘The arrival of a rugged seaman’, which is an extract from *Treasure Island*), **Book 3** (page 24, the poem ‘Keepsake Mill’) and **Book 4** (page 24, ‘Our toilsome journey’, which is an extract from *Kidnapped*).




**Answers** 1. the address and the date 2. his father 3. doctor 4. one month/the next month  
5. 'enormous', 'elephantine' 6. 'moderate' 7. strong winds, tempests 8. money 9. *to have stated his case; to have won sympathy* 10. 'My sense of generosity forbids the receipt of more – my sense of justice forbids the receipt of less than half-a-crown.'

- Further activities**
- Invite comments on the layout and content of the letter. What is and isn't there that the children would expect to find? (A specific date; the address aligned to one side; the absence of 'Dear' at the beginning.)
  - Ensure that the children understand any unfamiliar vocabulary.
  - Explain that Robert Louis Stevenson was a sickly child and spent long periods confined to bed when he was young. Discuss the location of Torquay (on the Devon coast). His health was doubtless benefiting from the fresh sea air.
  - Challenge the children to write a similarly tongue-in-cheek request to their parent for money, but using twenty-first century formal parlance, at the same time creating a fresh scenario, such as a school field trip or skiing holiday.
  - Challenge the children to create a conversion table of old money (pounds, shillings and pence) to new decimal coinage, as introduced in 1971. Note: there were 12 old pence to a shilling and 20 shillings to a pound, so 2/6 – two shillings and sixpence (or 'half a crown', a crown being five shillings) – is 12.5 new pence; a crown is 25 new pence; a shilling is five new pence, and so on.
  -  Read and discuss with the children any of Stevenson's poems that refer to his ill-health as a child – for example, 'The land of counterpane', or 'The sick child'. Ask them if they can identify with the feelings he expresses.

## Toad learns a lesson?



**Contained in:** Book 3 (page 32)  
**Source:** *The Wind in the Willows*

**Genre:** Classic fiction  
**Author:** Kenneth Grahame

**Introduction** *The Wind in the Willows* was first published in 1908 (the same year as Mrs Emmeline Pankhurst gave her lecture – see page 38 of the same pupil book). So strong is Toad's character that his part was developed into a play, 'Toad of Toad Hall', by another well-known children's writer, A. A. Milne. The children may have seen it on television. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.  
 Provide dictionaries.

**Answers** 1. 'disregarded' 2a. wasting 2b. speech, lecture, sermon 3. *he hopes Toad is sorry and will emerge a reformed character* 4. 45 mins 5. they sit in armchairs, wait patiently, and listen through the door 6. (one of:) he has 'seen the error of his ways'; he is 'truly sorry for his misguided conduct' 7. *Toad will break his promise and drive again; he will get into trouble again* 8. doubtfully 9. *the animal characters behave like humans*.

- Further activities**
- Ask the children to suggest what might happen next and discuss these ideas with the class. Will Toad listen to Badger? What will happen if he doesn't?
  - Check that the children understand any unfamiliar vocabulary: for example, 'contemptuously', 'drone', 'oratory', 'discourse'.
  - Invite the children to add new words to their personal dictionary: for example, 'squander', 'oratory' and 'discourse'.

-  Explain that Toad's interests changed each time he discovered some new mode of transport. Discuss what forms of transport he might be interested in trying if he were a twenty-first century character. (Microlite flying? Ski-jumping? Space flight? Jet-skiing? Paragliding?) Invite the children to describe a comical incident in which Toad's great-great-grandson, Toady, gets into trouble trying out a new sport without taking due care and attention. What other animal characters does he meet? What havoc does he cause?
- Challenge the children to find out and present some key facts about the early history of the car from 1886 onwards. (This was the year when the German engineer Karl Benz was awarded a patent for the first car to run on petrol.)
-  Start a class discussion on sustainable transport that has a minimal impact on the environment. For example, you might cover: reducing the need to travel (by using local shops); cleaner alternative fuels; the promotion of initiatives such as car sharing, teleworking and public transport; more cycling and walking, which will also make us more healthy. Be specific and choose examples that the children will relate to.

## How music made peace

**Contained in:** Book 3 (page 34)


**Source:** *Children's Encyclopaedia*

**Genre:** Myth


**Author:** Arthur Mee

**Introduction** Music without words is an international language, crossing barriers of nationality, creed, politics and tradition. Here, the special qualities of music are brought to life in one of many stories about Ancient Roman gods. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. Jupiter 2. a tortoise shell, stems, reeds and slender strings 3a. rang out 3b. sweet-sounding, tuneful 4a. *he was too busy playing his flute* 4b. *he was supposed to be looking after the herd* 5. *he was distracted by the sight and sound of the lyre* 6. a shepherd's pipe 7a. two snakes entwined around a wand (later with added wings) 7b. the Caduceus 8. myth 9. Apollo.

- Further activities**
- Ask the children to briefly summarise the text, remembering to include all the key events.
  - Check that the children understand any unfamiliar vocabulary: for example, 'absorbed', 'abyss', 'entwined', and discuss any words that they particularly liked.
  -  Ask the children what the names Jupiter and Mercury have in common. (Both are the names of Roman gods; both became the names of planets.) Invite the children to investigate the characters of Mercury and Apollo. What other stories can they discover about either of these mythological characters? What were the Greek names for these characters? (Jupiter was Zeus; Mercury was Hermes; Apollo was Phoebus.) Ask individual children to retell their favourite story to the class.
  - Ask the children to categorise the instruments referred to in the story. (The lyre is a stringed instrument; the pipe is a wind instrument.) What present-day instruments fit into these categories? What other types of musical instrument are there? (Woodwind, brass and percussion.) Invite the children to discover how the instruments are arranged in an orchestra. Challenge them to design a musical instrument and write instructions on how to make and play it.
  - Introduce the children to Gustav Holst's orchestral composition, 'The Planets', composed between 1914 and 1916. Play the third and fourth movements – titled 'Mercury, the

winged messenger', and 'Jupiter, bringer of jollity'. Discuss how well the music reflects the characters. Can the children identify any of the instruments they hear?

-  Encourage the children to invent their own brief story describing an incident in which music brings peace – quelling, for example, an argument, disagreement or fight. Challenge them to tell their story to the rest of the group using expression, varying tone, pace and volume, and adding musical sound effects if appropriate.

## Pyramus and Thisbe

**Contained in:** Book 3 (page 36)  
**Source:** *A Midsummer Night's Dream*


**Genre:** Playscript  
**Author:** William Shakespeare

**Introduction** This extract is from one of the most accessible and popular of Shakespeare's plays, and it has particular appeal for children. The humour involving the artisan players demands to be read aloud and the children may well enjoy reading more of this scene from Act I, Scene ii. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading. Explain that 'Ercles' (line 8) is Bottom's way of pronouncing Hercules – the great hero of Ancient Greek mythology.

Another text by William Shakespeare appears in **Key Stage 2 Comprehension Book 4** (page 38, 'From father to son', which is an extract from *Hamlet*).

**Answers** 1. *celebrating a wedding* 2. *carry on* 3. *they will be moved to tears* 4. *a cruel or oppressive ruler* 5. (one of:) 'raging rocks', 'shivering shocks', 'shall shine', 'make and mar', 'foolish Fates' 6. *to demonstrate his skill* 7. *equipment for blowing air (to start a fire, for example)* 8a. 'I have a beard coming' 8b. he tells him he can wear a mask 9. a 'wandering knight' 10. 'monstrous' suggests the complete opposite of a 'little' voice 11. (accept any reasoned answer).

### Further activities

- Read through the text together, ensuring that the children fully understand each line – since Shakespearean language will be unfamiliar to most of them.
- Allocate the parts of Bottom, Quince and Flute to three individuals and ask them to read the scene aloud with expression in their voices, changing the tempo, volume and tone as if they were performing a radio play.
- Discuss why Flute is being asked to play the part of a woman. (Plays were often played either by guilds of workers, or by members of a church community, and members of both these groups tended to be male. Therefore it became a tradition, for a time, for men to play both male and female roles in the theatre.)
- Remind the children of the Roman gods who featured in the story 'How music made peace' on page 34. Explain the phrase 'Phibbus' car' – the chariot of Phoebus, which is the Greek name for the Roman god, Apollo (god of the sun). Invite the children to research the names of other Greek gods, such as Phoebe (Roman god, Artemis), goddess of the moon.
- Invite the children to research online or in reference books 'the Fates' – three mythical figures of Greek legend, sometimes called 'Moirae'. They are three sisters, all robed in white, who decide on human fate. Lachesis speaks of the past, Clotho of the present and Atropos of the future.
-  Group the children in threes and ask them to plan and write a script for the three Fates, as if they were addressing a familiar fictional character, such as Cinderella,

Dick Whittington or Little Red Riding Hood. Each in turn will tell the chosen character, respectively, how things were, are now and will be in the future. For example, Lachesis' script could tell Cinderella what a beautiful and much-loved girl she was; Clotho could describe her life since her father remarried; Atropos could warn her to expect a visit from her fairy godmother and advise her to follow her counsel and so become a princess.


## Laws affecting women

**Contained in:** Book 3 (page 38)  
**Author:** Emmeline Pankhurst

**Genre:** Persuasive text

**Introduction** Assisted by her daughters, Sylvia and Christabel, Mrs Emmeline Pankhurst (born in Manchester in 1858) led the Women's Suffrage Movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Her campaign for women's legal rights and equality with men was aided by the outbreak of World War 1 in 1914, which forced women to take on the jobs of men, who were away fighting. When many men lost their lives in the war, the status of women in society was, by default, altered. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. 'suffrage' 2. the home, child-rearing 3. *decisions on how money is spent* 4. 'she ought to give up her employment' 5. shelter, food, clothing 6. *allowing women adequate clothes and food and/or control and choice over spending: 'equality'* 7a. 'legal' 7b. 'sufficient' 8. (brief summary, such as:) *marriage laws are made by men for women, and they have a profound and often unfair effect on women.*

- Further activities**
- Check that the children understand the words 'just', 'security', 'obliged' and 'conscientious', then ask them to write a short summary of the text.
  -  Ask the children to imagine that they are living 100 years ago and have just listened to Mrs Pankhurst's speech. For this activity, split the class into pairs. In each pair, one child should take the role of someone who agrees with Mrs Pankhurst. The other child should play someone who disagrees, and thinks women should be told what to do, what to eat, what to wear and how to spend their money. Together, the pair should improvise a dialogue where each character is trying to convince the other of their views. Invite the children to perform their dialogues to the class.
  - Explain that, in concluding her lecture, Mrs Pankhurst points out that the Suffragettes' wish for the vote was not simply as a 'right' but in order that women could carry out more effectively their duties within their community. Clarify that rights come with responsibilities. Ask the children to think of some aspect of their lives that they think is 'not fair'. Ask how it could be improved and who, beyond themselves, would benefit? Invite them to write and present a short lecture on their point of view. For example, they might focus on 'It's not fair that I have to go to bed earlier than my older brother' or 'It's not fair that you can't drive until you are 17 years old'.
  - Challenge the children to find out the year in which some women were at last given the right to vote in elections (1918).
  - Ask each child to make two lists, one headed, 'Things I like to decide for myself' and the other, 'Things I like my parents or teacher to decide'. Sort the children into twos and ask them to share and compare their lists and discuss common ground or disagreements. Bring the class together and invite the children to share their findings with others and discuss and explain their feelings and rationales. Ask the children why some decisions

are better taken out of their hands. At what age do they think, for example, that children should decide for themselves what time to go to bed, what to wear, and so on? Invite any children with younger siblings to consider why limitations are sometimes a good idea. In a separate lesson, ask the children to write a speech after the style of Mrs Pankhurst to argue a case for more freedom for children over, say, how they spend their pocket money or how late they are allowed to play outside.

## BOOK 4

Because the children will meet many new words in this book and because some familiar words have entirely different meanings when used in different contexts, it is recommended that they have dictionaries to refer to throughout.

### The rooks' parliament

**Contained in:** Book 4 (page 4)  
**Author:** Alison Brackenbury

**Genre:** Poem

**Introduction** The rural setting of this poem by a twenty-first century writer lends itself to comparison with classical poems about birds by poets such as Edward Thomas (see 'The owl' on page 12) and William Wordsworth (see 'To the cuckoo' on page 20). Here the rooks' right to life is defended without sentimentality as the poet champions their cause in lively lyrical form. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.


**Answers** **1a.** *she wants to distinguish them from crows* **1b.** *she believes that people confuse the two birds* **2.** 'kind' **3a.** 'chilling blue flame' **3b.** *the light in the eyes of the dead rooks*  
**4.** 'rookeries crown rough roadside trees' **5a.** French 'parler'; to speak **5b.** *to give the rooks a voice; speaking on their behalf; a reference to their 'assemblies' – 'where wisdom is made'* **6.** *serious, solemn* **7.** *they are harmless, gentle, and eat pests.*

#### Further activities

- 'Parliament' here is a collective noun. Ask the children to think of other collective nouns for creatures, especially birds, or list the following: a 'skein' of geese or swans (in flight), a 'cast' of (a couple of) hawks, a 'charm' of goldfinches, an 'ascension' of larks, a 'bouquet' of pheasants, a 'company' of parrots or a 'colony' of penguins. Point out how the word 'parliament' reflects the talkative nature of rooks and discuss how the parliament of a country or state makes laws and sets taxes.
- Invite the children to select one of the collective nouns above, and turn it into a title as the poet did here (for example, 'The pheasants' bouquet' or 'A casting of hawks'). They should then plan and write their own poem. Depending on their choice of noun, they will need to consider questions such as, 'What flowers would the bouquet contain?' 'To whom and why would they present it?' 'Would the hawks be a married couple?' 'Might their poem be a dialogue for two voices?' Invite the children to perform their poems to the class.
- Ask the children to list other creatures that people might consider to be pests, such as mice, snails, flies, rats, wasps, magpies, foxes and badgers. Challenge them to champion the cause for preserving one or more of these creatures. Ask them to investigate the food chain and consider ways in which the animals that we see as 'pests' might be food and life to another creature or make a useful contribution to our environment. (For example, thrushes eat snails, snails clean away rotting debris, and so on.) Ask the children to write a paragraph titled 'In praise of snails'



(or another creature) – encouraging them to be controversial if necessary, so that their writing will prompt class discussion.

-  Ask the children to investigate the characteristics of either the rook or the crow, and then to make a presentation to the class so that their shared research makes clear the differences between the two.

## Tudor wedding

**Contained in:** Book 4 (page 6)

**Source:** *My Tudor Queen – The Diary of Eva De Puebla, London 1501–1513*


**Genre:** Historical fiction in diary form

**Author:** Alison Prince

**Introduction** This authoritative and well-researched fiction looks at the Tudor court through the eyes of a fictional Spanish maid-in-waiting to the real-life Catherine of Aragon. It is set at the time of Catherine's wedding to Prince Arthur, older brother of Henry (Harry): she will later become the first of Henry's six wives. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading. As an extension activity, invite the more able children to write a review of the text; space is provided in the box below the questions. Discuss the reviews in class later.

**Answers** 1. Spain (Aragon) 2a. argumentative 2b. calm, peaceful 3. 'like two white swans' 4. *he might then have been the bridegroom/married Catherine himself* 5. 'burgundy', 'scarlet', 'crimson' 6. near the beginning: the entry is dated November 1501 and the book covers 1501–1513 7. (underlined:) as befits the future Queen of Scotland.

### Further activities

- Make sure that the children understand any unfamiliar vocabulary in the first paragraph – for example, 'pageantry', 'law-resistant', 'insensible'.
- Invite the children to research online or in reference books the real-life characters that appear in this extract and fit them into part of a family tree of the Tudors. Ask them to find out how old Harry would have been at the time of Catherine's first wedding.
- Ask the children to analyse the use of colour in this description. Encourage them to construct a table in which each column is used for a different colour, with each row listing a different object seen. Then ask different individuals to tell the class what objects they have identified in a particular colour.
- Eva writes in her diary, 'I wish Mama could have seen it'. Ask the children to adopt the persona of Eva and, writing in the first person as she does here, compose a letter to her mother in Spain. Discuss how her language might differ in a personal letter. Then ask the children to write in the style of a twenty-first century letter or e-mail, describing the same event. Encourage them to choose a different range of colours as they describe the scene – for example, silver and blue rather than gold and red.
-  Initiate a class discussion of wedding customs by describing a wedding that you attended. Fully involve any children from different cultural backgrounds and ask them to tell you about any special wedding traditions they know about. Encourage the other children to contribute by asking questions and making comparisons.


# The way through the woods

**Contained in:** Book 4 (page 8)  
**Author:** Rudyard Kipling

**Genre:** Classic poem

**Introduction** This elegantly lyrical poem is worth reading aloud, to enjoy the atmospheric use of alliteration, assonance, rhythm and rhyme. The children may recognise Rudyard Kipling's name as author of *The Jungle Book* and the *Just So Stories*. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. 'anemones' 2. *it is overgrown; animals and birds are unafraid; trees grow where the road once ran* 3. *the riders are heard, not seen; the sound follows the course of the now non-existent road* 4. the otter's mating call 5. uninhabited areas; lonely, isolated, secluded places 6. fish (trout) surfacing 7a. *e.g. a rise in tempo to emulate the horse's galloping feet; slowing down for the 'misty solitudes'* 7b. *e.g. quieter when the text describes isolation and slightly louder when the keeper is mentioned – reflecting the human presence – and/or the noisy horse's hooves.*

- Further activities**
- Check that the children understand the language used ('undone', 'coppice', 'heath', 'cantering'). Explain to them the meaning of 'the keeper' (gamekeeper), and why he is the only person who can see where the road once ran. (It is likely that he has known the forest for many years and is familiar with every inch of the land and the animals that inhabit it.)
  - Challenge the children to name all the animals mentioned in the poem (ring-dove, badger, trout, otter and ghostly horse) and to suggest other animals that might also have been in the wood, though they are not referred to here.
  - Ask the children, in twos, to describe to each other an outdoor place that they know well. Encourage them to draw on all their senses, especially those of sight, sound and smell. Partners should ask questions to elicit further detail. Let the children make notes and begin to draft a poem about this familiar location, describing the feelings it evokes in them when they visit.
  -  Invite the children to look for further poems by Rudyard Kipling. Ask every child to choose an extract they enjoy to perform to the rest of the class, explaining what they like about it and why they would recommend it to a friend. Some children may feel able to draw simple comparisons between Rudyard Kipling's works.

## Chocolate

**Contained in:** Book 4 (page 10)  
**Source:** *Boy, Tales of Childhood*


**Genre:** Autobiography  
**Author:** Roald Dahl

**Introduction** Even Dahl's autobiographical writing has a story-telling tone and the children will doubtless recognise the author's schoolboy experience as a source of inspiration for his popular book, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*; film versions of this novel are available on DVD. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Another text by Roald Dahl appears in **Key Stage 2 Comprehension Book 3** (page 12, 'Matilda joins Crunchem Hall', which is an extract from *Matilda*).

**Answers** 1. *it is fact-based autobiography* 2. *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* 3. *so that the testers would be influenced by taste alone; at that stage of development a name would serve no purpose* 4a. *Cadbury's Coffee Cream bar* 4b. *as a 'benchmark'; as a known quantity, for comparison purposes* 5. *took part enthusiastically* 6a. *they were old enough to have wide experience of eating chocolate; they knew every existing bar intimately* 6b. *'connoisseurs'* 7. *not distinctive enough in flavour to be widely popular* 8. *'irresistible'.*

### Further activities

- Ensure that the children understand any unfamiliar vocabulary – for example, 'manufacturers', 'stunt', 'palate', 'laboratory', 'concocting'.
- Invite the children to imagine their own perfect chocolate-box collection. What fillings would they like? What flavours, textures, colours, shapes? Ask them to write a mouth-watering description of each of a dozen new chocolates, giving each a temptingly descriptive name reflecting its properties (for example, Strawberry Sizzle or Damson Diamond).
-  Ask individuals to list their 12 chocolate names and read out their 12 descriptions, while the rest of the group give marks out of 10 according to how attractive the author has made each chocolate sound. The children should take into account the name of the chocolate as well as its description. Find out which is the most popular and discuss how successful the writing was in its appeal. List the 12 most popular chocolate names and vote on a favourite, creating a bar chart of the results.
- Challenge the children to write a memory from their first week at school: they should include how they felt, what happened, why they will never forget it. (A battle in the sand tray? Spilling paint? Making a new friend? Feeling homesick?)

## Two owls

**Contained in:** Book 4 (page 12)  
**Author:** 'The Owl', Edward Thomas;  
 'Owl', John Agard

**Genre:** Classic poem and more recent poem


**Introduction** These two poems, dating from opposite ends of the twentieth century, offer an opportunity to compare a classic and a more recent poem describing the same subject. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the poems to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. *the first person* 2a. *hunger, cold, tiredness* 2b. *he reaches an inn that meets all his needs* 3. *both offer shelter, an observation platform, a contrast to the night outdoors* 4. *the owl sounds sad, which makes the speaker sound sad in sympathy* 5a. *'melancholy'* 5b. *sad and gloomy* 6. *he thinks about all homeless people, sleeping rough, especially soldiers and the poor* 7. *the owl* 8. *rhetorical* 9a. *e.g. a hollow tree seems like heaven* 9b. *e.g. the moon puff[s] out my feathers* 10. *cold: owl's feathers puffed out; clear night encourages frost and makes things 'twinkle'* 11. *it is made up of four-line verses (quatrains) with regular metre or ABCB traditional rhyme pattern* 12. *that owls are wise.*

### Further activities

- Ask the children to draw a picture of something they have all seen – such as a tree. Advise them to think of a specific tree that they can picture in their mind's eye. When they have drawn it, ask them to add some other elements to their drawing – perhaps someone climbing the tree, or a building nearby, or a creature in or near the tree, or flowers nearby. Finally, ask them to put themselves in the picture. Collect the pictures and look at each in turn, reminding the children that they were all given the same

subject to draw: a tree, and yet each picture is different. Explain that it is the same with poetic writing. There are many English poems in existence on the subject of owls. Just as each person draws a different picture, so each poet will paint (in words) a different image of the same subject. Invite them to write a poem about their tree, focusing on whatever aspect is most striking to them: for example, the tree itself, its age and physical appearance; its 'function' to animals who thrive in it; the shade it offers from the sun; the sound of the wind through its leaves; the smell and taste of its fruit, and so on.

- Read both owl poems aloud. Focus on selected elements of the detail of the poems – particularly those not covered by the comprehension questions. In the first, ask the children the meaning of 'All of the night was quite barred out' (line 7). In the second, ask them the meaning of 'bespectacled' (line 6).
-  Ask the children to choose the poem they like best and explain in a few sentences why they like it and whether they would recommend it to a friend. Invite them to find more poems by these two poets to read and present to the rest of the class – again, saying why they like them and whether they would recommend them.

## Mammoth find

**Contained in:** Book 4 (page 14)

**Source:** *Guardian*, 11 July 2007


**Genre:** Newspaper report

**Author:** Luke Harding

**Introduction** The extremely cold climate and isolation of Siberia helped preserve the carcass of this juvenile woolly mammoth for around 10 000 years. The rarity of such a complete specimen is what made this valuable find so newsworthy. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1a. a baby woolly mammoth 1b. *to grab readers' interest and make them read on* 2. *cold, sparse Arctic area with few trees* 3. northern Russia/Siberia 4. *the animal is complete and well preserved* 5. female 6. 'lopsided' 7. *by selling them as souvenirs* 8. *illegal trade* 9. around 10 000 years ago/during the Ice Age/Pleistocene era 10. 'It is being sent to Japan for further tests.'

### Further activities

- Reiterate that the opening paragraph of this article contains the pronouns 'its' and 'it', which are normally only used after the noun in whose place they stand. Discuss why the journalist has done this. (To hook the readers' attention and encourage them to read on and discover the subject.) Ask the children to experiment with this technique by writing an opening paragraph on a subject of their choice (for example, a rare butterfly or a famous person) beginning with 'It', 'He' or 'She'.
- Discuss with the children other ways in which the author arouses the readers' interest. (The use of the words 'hailing' and 'sensational' to bring drama to the discovery; the description of an ordinary person 'stumbling' across the carcass, with the implication that it was someone with whom the reader might identify who had made this discovery; the amazing fact that the carcass was so well preserved.)
-  Challenge the children to research online or in reference books the Ice Age and the woolly mammoth and write a short background article. What did the creatures live on? In what parts of the world were they found? How long did the Ice Age last? Ask for volunteers to present their findings to the class.

## Poems that entertain

**Contained in:** Book 4 (page 16)

**Author:** 'Crocodile's Tale', John Agard;  
'There was an old lady', Edward Lear;  
'Magic', Judith Nicholls; 'Haiku', Peggy



Poole; 'The amorous teacher's sonnet to his love', Dave Calder

**Genre:** Poems in a variety of forms

**Introduction** This collection of five poems includes a couplet, a limerick, a cinquain, a haiku and a sonnet. Their diverse subject matter should ensure that every reader finds something that appeals. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** **1a.** 'There was an old lady', Edward Lear **1b.** limerick **1c.** 'Crocodile's tale', John Agard **1d.** two lines with AA end rhymes and matching rhythm **1e.** 'Haiku', Peggy Poole **1f.** words with a total of 17 syllables, divided 5-7-5 across three lines **2.** raindrops **3.** 'Crocodile's tale' and the sonnet **4.** 'Haiku': it makes the goal sound like a hungry mouth longing for food **5.** it was bitten off by the crocodile when he unwittingly stepped on it **6.** 'Magic' and 'Haiku' **7.** 'I long to shout, "I love you" through the noise' **8.** able to do nothing wrong in the eyes of the onlooker; perfect.

### Further activities

-  Ask the children for their own definitions as to what poetry is – expanding on, agreeing with or disagreeing with the pointer. Then read the poems aloud, and discuss how each one fits – or does not fit – the definitions given.
- Discuss the different tones of voice required for reading the different poems – these will range from mischievous ('Crocodile's tale' and 'There was an old lady') to dreamy ('The amorous teacher's sonnet to his love'), amazed or wondering ('Magic') and matter-of-fact ('Haiku').
- Introduce the children to the term 'iambic pentameter', which describes the 'di-dum di-dum di-dum di-dum di-dum' metre in 'The amorous teacher's sonnet to his love'.
- The poem 'Magic' is a cinquain. Challenge the children to write a cinquain of their own – that is, a poem of five lines with the syllable counts 2-4-6-8-2. Writing a cinquain is an excellent exercise in brevity, and in making sure that every word in a poem 'earns its keep'. Possible subject matter for the cinquains could be: the classroom; a best friend; a season – the names of all but 'spring' (which has only one syllable) provide a perfect opening or closing line.
-  Invite the children to read their cinquains aloud to the class. Allow the children listening to give two positive comments about each one, and to make one suggestion as to how it might be improved.
- Encourage the children to find more poems in a specific form and/or further poems by one of the poets represented here. Build up a class anthology of favourites and ask individual children to recommend a poem they think a friend would particularly like. The children might also research the poets and write a short biography to accompany each poem. Make the children aware that Edward Lear is famous for having written many other limericks, in the same form as the example given here. Most children will also be familiar with his popular poem, 'The owl and the pussycat', and will be aware that much of his verse is humorous.




# Child employment

**Contained in:** Book 4 (page 18)



**Genre:** Formal information text

**Author:** abridged from [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

**Introduction** This extract from government directives on child employment gives the children some practical experience in interpreting complex information with several different variables. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.  Please note that this information was correct at the time of publication. However, you should not use it as a source of reference without checking that it is still current.

**Answers** **1a.** Jack can leave on the last Friday in June of that year **1b.** Indira must wait until the last Friday in June of the following year **2a.** Mandatory School Leaving Age **2b.** compulsory **3.** 'National Insurance Number' **4.** Lily cannot do shop-work until she is 13; Eve can work for the advertising agency as a model (but will require a chaperone and a performance licence) **5.** 12 hours **6.** children are not allowed to work in an industrial setting **7.** theatre, television, modelling or similar work, which would require a performance licence **8.** *a chaperone is an accompanying responsible adult, licensed by the local authority; a child would need one if working in the performing arts, sport or modelling* **9.** education department of the local council.

## Further activities

- Read the text aloud, section by section.
- Tell the children the current Mandatory School Leaving Age (which can always be checked on the government website) – they will not have needed this information in order to answer the comprehension questions.
- Ask the children why the text is organised as it is. What are the functions of the bullet points, the short paragraphs and the coloured headings? (Ease of reference, brevity, clarity.)
- Point out the use of initials to represent a longer term ('MSLA' for 'Mandatory School Leaving Age'). What other such abbreviations are the children aware of – and what do they stand for? (For example, BBC for British Broadcasting Corporation, AA for Automobile Association, PC for personal computer, CD for compact disk.)
- Discuss any rules or policies that are in force in the class or in the school, or make up some rules if there are none at present. Use the layout of the text as a model for writing or presenting the rules in a suitable format.
-  Point out that the children's not too distant ancestors, including grandparents and great-grandparents, may well have left school at age 14 or 15 to learn a trade, perhaps as an apprentice, or to find employment. Arrange for some older family members to come and talk to the children about their life just before and after leaving school. What, if any, Saturday or holiday jobs did they do? Before the visit, ask the children to plan and write down some questions they would like to ask.
-  Hold a class debate on the child employment laws. Are they a good idea? Do they go too far or not far enough? How and why might children need protecting? What benefits are there to part-time work while children are still at school (apart from extra pocket money)?

# To the cuckoo


**Contained in:** Book 4 (page 20)  
**Author:** William Wordsworth

**Genre:** Classic poem

**Introduction** Wordsworth was a lyrical poet who painted a romantic but simplistic picture of rural life. Born in Cockermouth, William and his sister Dorothy, also a poet, grew up surrounded by the beauty of the Lake District. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading. As an extension activity, invite the more able children to write a review of the poem; space is provided in the box below the questions. Discuss the reviews in class later.

**Answers** 1. 'darling of the Spring' 2. (one of:) 'wandering voice', 'twofold shout', 'babbling' 3. *because it is heard and not seen* 4. three times 5. No: 'again', 'often', 'same' (as in boyhood) 6. a) and c) 7. 'blessèd'.

## Further activities

- Demonstrate the sound of the cuckoo's call to the children to ensure that they recognise it – and can listen out for it during the spring and summer.
- Explain that Wordsworth was writing in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and that much of the language he used, though 'simple' at the time, is now 'archaic' (old-fashioned and no longer in common usage). Highlight words no longer used, such as 'thee', 'bringest', 'unto', 'art', 'wert'.
- Clarify that 'thou' was a familiar form of address. Invite the children to compare the following: 'I am/was', 'me' and 'my'; 'you are/were', 'you' and 'your'; 'thou art/wert', 'thee' and 'thy'. Point out the difference between 'you bring' and 'thou bringest'.
- Challenge the children to 'translate' lines containing archaic words into present-day English, where the poet would address the cuckoo as 'you'.
-  Challenge the children to find out as much information as they can about the cuckoo, and then take turns in presenting this information to the class in the style of a television nature programme.
- Bring to the class other poems, pieces of music or works of art that also describe the cuckoo or conjure the atmosphere of spring. Play the children 'On hearing the first cuckoo' by Frederick Delius or 'The four seasons/Spring' by Antonio Vivaldi, encouraging the children to listen for the sound of the cuckoo's cry. Choose all or part of another spring poem to read the children: for example, 'The spring' by Thomas Carew, 'To spring' by William Blake, or 'Ode on the spring' by Thomas Gray. Encourage the children to draw comparisons between the different representations of spring.
- Invite the children to write their own poems about the season that you are currently in. Alternatively, ask them to write a poem in praise of a wild animal, bird or pet of their choice. Encourage them to describe specific details that will bring their writing to life. Ask individuals to read their poem aloud to the class.

## The magic of shells


**Contained in:** Book 4 (page 22)  
**Source:** *National Trust Magazine*, Summer 2007

**Genre:** Non-chronological report  
**Author:** Mark Rowe

**Introduction** Most children will have seen and collected seashells at the beach and some may be familiar with cockles and mussels as a seafood. This description of the variety and distribution of different species makes fascinating reading and will enhance future trips to the seaside. If the children in your class live within reach of the sea, or have shells that they brought back from a holiday, encourage them to help you identify shells mentioned in this article. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** 1. they thought that shells ‘dropped from the stars’ 2. gastropods (e.g. limpets, periwinkles) and bivalves (e.g. cockles, mussels) 3a. ‘herbivores’ 3b. cowries and dog whelks 4. *because people have always found shells attractive and collected them and always will* 5. *acid on the tip of its tongue burns a hole through a shell* 6. (accept any accurate response) 7. *that each shell is empty* 8. *that shells are in need of protection* 9. *it suggests a way to collect shells without seriously affecting beaches.*

### Further activities

- Encourage the children to underline key advice in the article (such as, ‘taking a lot of shells is not sustainable’ and ‘always make sure they are empty’).
- Invite one group of children to design a seaside poster to display near a beach with a view to protecting the environment. Discuss the balance between ‘rules’ and interesting information and the impact of layout, font size, ‘white space’, illustration and use of colour. Use the information in the article and a computer art program to create and print posters.
-  Invite a second group of children to write and perform a television information piece, to be screened along with the advertisements, putting across the same information in a way that viewers will remember.
- Encourage the children to list, sketch and research the different shelled species found on the coastline. Ask them to create an alphabetical glossary, listing the creatures and adding a sentence or two about each.
- Challenge the children to research types of shellfish that are eaten as seafood and to find a simple seafood recipe.

## Our toilsome journey

**Contained in:** Book 4 (page 24)  
**Source:** *Kidnapped*

**Genre:** Classic fiction  
**Author:** Robert Louis Stevenson


**Introduction** This atmospheric, descriptive passage creates a mood of tension as each of the countryside’s geographical features represents either danger or safety to the two refugees in fear of capture. With no direct speech, the use of the first person helps readers to identify with the narrator. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Other texts by Robert Louis Stevenson appear in **Key Stage 2 Comprehension Book 2**

(page 26, 'The arrival of a rugged seaman', which is an extract from *Treasure Island*) and **Book 3** (page 24, the poem 'Keepsake Mill' and page 30, 'Respected relative', which is a letter that the author wrote as a teenager).

**Answers** **1a.** *because they are so far in the distance* **1b.** *they are dead and their branches are bare and leafless* **2.** *to make themselves less noticeable by staying close to the ground* **3.** troops (armed forces) **4.** midday ('about noon') **5.** (hot) smell ('of the heather'); sound ('the drone of the wild bees'); taste ('of sleep in my throat') **6.** *the shadow of a sprig of heather moving to a chosen point would indicate the time to change shift;* **7.** (accept any reasoned answer).

### Further activities

- Make it clear that the narrator is David Balfour, and he is travelling with his friend Alan Breck Stewart.
- Explain the meaning of 'hag' (in 'bogs and hags and peaty pools', line 4): a firm place in a bog. Understanding this phrase is important to visualise the setting.
- Taking account of the children's suggestions, create a list of old-fashioned terms. Help the children to rephrase them in present-day English and discuss any that the children find interesting. For example: 'as waste as the sea' (line 1): as unbroken an expanse; 'devious travel' (line 9): indirect route; 'it behoved us' (line 10): we had to; 'turned aside' (line 11): turned away; 'hard upon' (line 14): close on the trail of; 'had scarce' (line 20): had hardly; 'rouse' (line 22): waken.
- Ring words that are used to underline the human emotions and the frailty of those involved in the mission ('wearier', 'toilsome', 'stooping') and the desolation of the terrain ('waste', 'dead', 'skeletons', 'desert', 'naked', 'killing'). Discuss how well camouflaged the travellers would be. How easy would it be for them to be spotted or for them to spot their pursuers?
- Challenge the children to select an area of the classroom or school grounds and view it from an ant's point of view. Write a description in the persona of an ant attempting to reach its colony without being trodden on. What obstacles does it face? Where can it hide?
-  As you read the text aloud, slowly and clearly, ask the children to listen very carefully and draw a map of the terrain that Balfour and Stewart are crossing. They can check details afterwards by reading the text again themselves.

## Diogenes and the Cynics

**Contained in:** Book 4 (page 26)


**Genre:** Information / explanation

**Author:** Celia Warren

**Introduction** Bearing in mind the military feats of Alexander the Great, King of Macedonia, and his lust for power, it is astounding that Diogenes should have had the courage to ask him to move and stop blocking his light. It is a measure of the king's recognition of, and respect for, Diogenes' intellect and beliefs that he accepted this behaviour. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** **1a.** *an academic, a thinker, someone concerned with matters of the mind* **1b.** *thrifty, not wasteful* **2.** (one of:) 'unkempt', 'unusual', 'plain', 'proud', 'strange' **3.** dogs **4.** Antisthenes **5.** *the fact that he was proud of his plain lifestyle and unafraid to say what he thought* **6.** *he asked him to teach/educate his son* **7.** 'enquired' **8.** (accept any accurate response).

### Further activities

- Ensure that the children have a basic understanding of what philosophy is, as explained in the pointer.
- Check that the children understand any unfamiliar vocabulary – for example, ‘sect’, ‘surly’ and ‘unkempt’ – and discuss any words that the children find interesting.
- Ask the children to investigate the current meaning of ‘cynical’. (A person who is ‘cynical’ tends not to believe that people can sometimes act in a selfless way.)
- Invite the children to list any words in the passage that are outside their active vocabulary, such as ‘frugality’ and ‘intellect’, adding the related adjectives, ‘frugal’ and ‘intellectual’.
- Challenge the children to make these ‘words of the week’ and find ways to use them as often as possible in different contexts during the next few days. Make sure that you also take part in this challenge!
-  Start a class discussion on materialism (the way of life that focuses almost entirely on material things and money, to the exclusion of other things like friendship, love, art, music or religion). Ask the children what non-material things are most important to them.

## Welcoming Grace

**Contained in:** Book 4 (page 28)

**Source:** *The Woodlanders*

**Genre:** Classic fiction

**Author:** Thomas Hardy


### Introduction

*The Woodlanders* (first published in 1887) is a gloom-ridden story of false pride, wounded love, loyalty versus disloyalty, and ultimate tragedy – typical of Hardy’s novels. Nevertheless, this extract demonstrates Hardy’s inimitable eye for humour: he describes the incident masterfully through observation of social ineptitude, graphic detail and comic timing. Read in isolation, it cannot fail to amuse. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.


### Answers

**1a.** ‘they’ **1b.** (one of:) ‘Tis’, meaning ‘it is’ or ‘that is’; ‘bain’t’, meaning ‘aren’t’ **2.** *by using both sides of the plate – one for the main course and the other for the dessert* **3.** c) invite Grace to marry him **4.** (one of:) he snuffed out candles; he stuffed bread into his mouth **5.** he gives a warning **6.** *Cawtree’s suggestion of a kiss* **7.** *lack, shortage* **8.** (accept any reasoned answer).

### Further activities

- Explain that much of the success of this passage can be summed up as ‘actions speak louder than words’. Point out that what the characters say (to be polite) does not always match what they think or feel. Highlight speeches that are left unfinished. Discuss why they are abandoned.
- Discuss how Giles’s choice of mismatched guests was one of the causes of his party’s failure. Invite the children to imagine that they are having a party to which their best friends are invited. Challenge them to suggest an ill-matched guest – or a gatecrasher – who is a liability or embarrassment (not another member of the class). Encourage them to describe the events that follow. (The guest might be a fictional character: a wizard, Oliver Twist, a frog prince.)
-  Challenge some of the children, working in small groups, to rewrite the text as a playscript and to act it out in class. There will be speaking parts for Giles Winterborne, Robert Creedle, Farmer Cawtree, Grace Melbury and her father George Melbury (the timber merchant); other children can play additional guests.



-  Challenge the other children, also working in small groups, to improvise and script a short scene between two or three characters where one or more is clumsy or embarrassing in what they do and say. Suggest a choice of social situations – introducing an embarrassing friend to Mum or Dad; being taken to a restaurant by a clumsy aunt who likes to speak for you; watching a friend try on unsuitable clothes in a shop. Encourage the children to make their scene amusing by including exaggerated or extreme characters, strong action and restrained speech.

## Scott of the Antarctic

**Contained in:** Book 4 (page 30)


**Genre:** Information / biography

**Author:** Celia Warren

**Introduction** Captain Robert Falcon Scott and his team of explorers are remembered and acclaimed as much for their bravery in adversity as they are for reaching the South Pole – particularly as they failed to be the first there. This text makes reference to a number of conditions they faced in their expedition. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

1. 'accelerate' 2. they make the cold seem even colder 3. to be the first man to reach the South Pole (and raise the Union flag of Great Britain) 4a. Norway 4b. adjectives  
5. vitamin C 6a. *that he would not be returning, that he had walked out to his death* 6b. *in the hope that without his slowing them down, his companions might make quicker progress and survive* 7. *they were exhausted, ill and suffering from frostbite and had no dogs or ponies left to pull their sledges* 8. *he grew up to be a respected and famous naturalist and was knighted.*

### Further activities

- Check that the children understand the meaning of the word 'stoicism' (line 23): an uncomplaining attitude to suffering.
- Ask the children to list the following and, arranging them alphabetically, create a short glossary to accompany the article, describing the meaning of each term: 'continent', 'blizzard', 'scurvy', 'snow-blindness', 'frostbite', 'naturalist', 'ornithologist'.
- An absence of vitamin C caused the men to contract scurvy. Challenge the children to research and create a pamphlet naming the main vitamins, in what foods they can be found, and how they can help to prevent some illnesses in human beings. They might work in groups to achieve this, using word-processing tools to create a professional-looking flyer.
-  Challenge the children to find out all they can about the South Pole as it is today, and to write this up as a short article to deliver to the class in a short presentation.

# Scott's last letter

**Contained in:** Book 4 (page 32)  
**Author:** Robert Scott

**Genre:** Letter

**Introduction** Captain Scott was the last of the group of explorers to die in their shelter. He kept a diary and used blank pages towards the back to write several letters to friends, family and officials, to be removed and distributed when his body was found. In the event, his body was not discovered until some months after his death. His letter to his wife, written in short bursts over several days, is among the most touching of the collection. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

**Answers** **1a.** *in extreme, dire difficulties* **1b.** *unlikely to survive; likely to die* **1c.** *deteriorated; got worse* **2a.** *'preparatory to'* **2b.** *energy and enthusiasm* **3a.** *his wife* **3b.** *'pleasant recollections'* **4.** *over several days ('... since I wrote the above' or 'since writing the above' or '20 miles'/'11 miles' from the depot)* **5a.** *the severe cold; 70° below zero with only a tent as shelter* **5b.** *'... memory. Certainly ...'* **6.** *he knows he will be dead by the time his wife reads it, making her a widow* **7.** *(one of:) that he be made to love nature; that he be given lots of fresh air so that he might enjoy being outdoors; that he be encouraged to believe in a God.*

## Further activities

- Refer the children to the previous text for more information about Scott.
- Discuss the mixed emotions that Captain Scott's widow must have felt on hearing of her husband's death and on receiving his last letter to her (pride; sadness; disbelief; a degree of anger; sorrow; determination). Invite the children to imagine that they are Captain Scott's widow. They are going to write a last letter to Captain Scott in the persona of his wife, telling him how they feel on receiving his personal effects and the diary of letters for her to read and distribute. Clearly, her husband will never read this letter; she is writing it for herself to ease her grief. What promises, hopes and fears might she express? What words of praise has she to pass on?
- Obtain a recording of *Sinfonia Antarctica* by Ralph Vaughan Williams and play an excerpt to the children. This is Vaughan Williams' seventh symphony and is based on his music for the film *Scott of the Antarctic*. While the children are listening to the music, challenge them to write, as poetry or prose, a few lines describing Scott's impressions of the landscape around him.
- Ask one group of children to research the Norwegian explorer, Roald Amundsen. How would the Norwegians have reacted to the news that their flag was the first to fly at the South Pole? Challenge the children to write a contemporary-sounding Norwegian newspaper report on his success. How might they pay respect to Scott without diminishing their pride in Amundsen's achievement? Remind the children to make use of emotive adjectives, such as 'perilous', 'brave', 'valiant', 'courageous'.
- Ask a second group of children to research the naturalist and conservationist Peter Scott, son of Robert Scott. Ask them to imagine how he might have felt when he learnt for the first time about his father's bravery during the expedition to the South Pole. How might Peter Scott's understanding of his father's experiences have influenced his own personal and working life?
-  Invite both groups of children to present their work to the class.

## Carried with a mighty force

**Contained in:** Book 4 (page 34)

**Source:** *Robinson Crusoe*


**Genre:** Classic fiction

**Author:** Daniel Defoe

**Introduction** Many children will have heard of Robinson Crusoe and Man Friday but are unlikely to have read the original book. It was first published in 1719 and is one of the first novels ever written. This extract gives an evocative description of Crusoe's near-drowning experience. The lengthy sentences will hone the children's concentration skills. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading. As an extension activity, invite the more able children to write a review of the text; space is provided in the box below the questions. Discuss the reviews in class later.

**Answers** 1. panic-stricken 2. *could not get out of the sea/water* 3. used up its energy 4. *the sea's speed and strength were stronger than Crusoe's and the wave's height held him underwater, dragging him away from the shore as fast as it had carried him towards it* 5. 'as furious as an enemy' 6a. 'pilot' 6b. 'endeavoured' 6c. 'swiftness' 7. (accept any reasoned answer) 8. *the long sentences leave the reader breathless, reinforcing the narrator's experience; the long sentences, unbroken by shorter ones, echo the constant, relentless movement of the waves.*

### Further activities

- The height of the waves is described as 'twenty or thirty feet'. Translate this into metric measures as a wall of water that is between six and nine metres deep.
- Draw attention to the length of sentences in this passage and discuss the effect this has on the tone and mood. Note how the long sentences reflect the unremitting power of the waves, leaving the reader almost as breathless as the character. Point out that the use of commas between clauses makes the sentences easier to read. Show the children that the second paragraph begins with the onslaught of a fresh wave.
-  Ask for volunteers to each read a short excerpt from the passage as if they were Crusoe himself. They should concentrate first on enunciating all the words carefully so that they can be clearly heard, and second on putting expression into the recount.
- The descriptive passage reads almost like a battle between unequal opponents – a tired, confused man and the force of the mighty ocean. Invite the children to consider other elements of nature that people might face. For example, they might think about the severe cold of an Antarctic wind, climbing a sheer mountain face, pot-holing in underground caves with narrow crevices and the risk of falling rock, deep-sea diving and facing sharks or barracuda.
- Ask the children to choose one extreme climate and activity and research it, making notes on terrain, temperatures and what hazards apply. Then challenge them to write a passage of their own, imagining they were in a terrifying situation and describing their feelings.

## Victorian Christmas

**Contained in:** Book 4 (page 36)

**Source:** *A Christmas Carol*

**Genre:** Classic fiction



**Author:** Charles Dickens

**Introduction** Of Dickens's many novels, the story of Ebenezer Scrooge and his visits from the ghosts of Christmases past, present and future is one of the most accessible. So famous is the

story that this character's surname has become a byword for meanness. Many children will be familiar with *The Muppets' Christmas Carol*, which retains many elements of the original story, albeit in a light-hearted, humorous way. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading. As an extension activity, invite the more able children to write a review of the text; space is provided in the box below the questions. Discuss the reviews in class later.

**Answers** 1. *going ahead of carriages with lights to guide them* 2. the church tower 3. 'as if its teeth were chattering in its frozen head' 4. 'brazier' 5. *disliking people; hating mankind* 6. *cheerful and optimistic*: (any of:) 'a splendid joke', 'a glorious pageant', 'stirred up tomorrow's pudding', 'gave orders to his fifty cooks...' 7. 'God bless you, merry gentlemen' 8. *Scrooge grabbed a ruler (and the carol singer expected to be hit)*.

### Further activities

- Run through the Glossary and explain any other unfamiliar terms used, for example: 'proffering' (line 2): holding out, offering; 'gruff' (line 3): stern, bad-tempered; 'Gothic window' (line 4): a window with a pointed top, as would have been seen in medieval times; 'tremulous' (line 5): shaking, trembling; 'poulterers and grocers' (line 12): merchants of poultry, such as chickens, turkeys, geese and ducks, and sellers of general foodstuffs, respectively; 'stronghold' (line 14): strongly built place.
-  Having told the children to listen carefully, making notes if they wish, read the first paragraph aloud, twice. Then ask the children to retell the content orally, using their own words. Make sure that, between them, the children mention the fog, the cold, the fire in the street, the ice, the shops and the preparations for the banquet.
- Moving on to the second paragraph, explain the reference to St Dunstan and his 'familiar weapons' (or tools) in lines 20–22. St Dunstan was a metal worker and a skilled musician. One day, when he was at work in his forge, the Devil paid him a visit, disguised as a beautiful woman. St Dunstan spotted the cloven hooves beneath the dress and grabbed the Devil's nose with his red-hot tongs. The Devil escaped by leaping in one bound as far as Tunbridge Wells. There he plunged his burnt nose into the spring. The 'Chalybeate Waters' (meaning 'waters containing iron') remain in the town to this day.
-  Invite the children to look up the text and tune of the carol 'God rest you merry, gentlemen'. Role-play the scene of their singing at Scrooge's door and his ferocious response.

## From father to son

**Contained in:** Book 4 (page 38)  
**Source:** *Hamlet*

**Genre:** Playscript  
**Author:** William Shakespeare




### Introduction

This is a challenging read, which will stretch the children's levels of reading comprehension. First, before you read the text aloud as the character Polonius, ask for a volunteer to join you at the front in the role of his son, Laertes. Explain to the children that Laertes is about to go abroad and before he goes his father wants to give him some advice. As you read, speak directly to Laertes, using both your voice and your body to help make the meaning clear. Use the pointer in the pupil book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Another text by William Shakespeare appears in **Key Stage 2 Comprehension Book 3** (page 36, 'Pyramus and Thisbe', which is an extract from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*).

**Answers** 1. friend; position in society; management of money 2a. don't share all your thoughts 2b. don't get too close, too soon, to new acquaintances 2c. hang on to your close friends that you've known through good times and bad 2d. avoid quarrels, but if you find yourself involved in one, make sure you state your case strongly 2e. only buy clothes you can afford: they should be of good quality but not showy 2f. never borrow money (it stops you living within your budget) and never lend money (you may lose both your money and the friend who borrowed it) 2g. be honest/true to yourself – that way you'll be honest with others too 3. (look for relevance, justification and clear reasoning).

### Further activities

- Run through the Glossary and explain any other unfamiliar terms used, for example: 'the opposed' (line 9): those having a different opinion; 'gaudy' (line 13): flashy, over-bright and garish; 'season' (line 23): to make or become an ingrained habit, to mature and strengthen.
-  Read the text aloud, with expression, as suggested in the Introduction above. This will help the children to unravel the meaning.
- Then encourage the children to read it all the way through themselves, with a partner, to try to understand the gist of the speech, before taking a sentence at a time. Give hints before they begin. For example, tell the children that in the first two lines thoughts are personified as creatures which (line 1) should not be given the opportunity to speak out of turn and (line 2) should not be acted upon without careful consideration. Also tell them that 'thou' and 'thy' in present-day language are the same as 'you' and 'your'.
- Point out the use of apostrophes in the past participles 'hatch'd' (line 7) and 'express'd' (line 13). Ask what letter is missing. What does this abbreviation tell us about how the word would have been pronounced normally in Shakespeare's day? Compare the frequent pronunciation, even today, of the past participle of the verb 'to bless' ('blessèd'). Discuss how Shakespeare would have written this word if he had wanted it to be read as one syllable ('bless'd').
- Run through the text sentence by sentence. As you go, write on the board a brief present-day paraphrase.
-  Initiate and lead a discussion on what makes a good friend. What qualities would make the children want to 'grapple [their friend] unto [their] soul with hoops of steel' (line 5)? Can they think of or invent a modern metaphor with a similar meaning. (Hang on to them for dear life? Chain them to your heart?)
-  Explain that the quotation from this passage, 'Neither a borrower nor a lender be' (line 17) has become an oft-quoted maxim. Have half the children prepare a debate in agreement and half in disagreement, thinking up supportive scenarios for each side. Conduct a formal debate, with proposers, seconders and a chairperson, listeners voting for the team that presents their argument most convincingly.
- Ask the children what advice they think their own parent or carer might give to them. What might they say? How would their advice be similar to or different from the advice given by Polonius?