

The Day I Was Erased by Lisa Thompson

Recommended Year Group: **Year 4**
Recommended Edition: **9781407185125**
Suggested Term: **Summer**



Unit overview

This six-week unit is a study of *The Day I Was Erased* by Lisa Thompson, a story of family, friendship and finding your place in the world. The plot follows Maxwell, an 11-year-old boy who is always in trouble until he comes across a cabinet of curiosities and finds himself erased from his life, as if he'd never existed. It's not long before Maxwell starts to miss his old life, and it becomes clear that he had more of an impact on those around him than he thought – is there a way to reverse what happened to him? The sequence of learning will develop children's understanding of the story, characters, themes and language, with a focus question each week based on a writing technique. The unit teaches reading, including fluency, vocabulary and comprehension, and meaningful writing, for a range of form, purpose and audience.

Key questions

- Is anyone ever truly satisfied with life?
- Is the grass ever greener on the other side?
- Can the younger generation learn about life from their elders?
- Do adults always know best?
- Did our historical ancestors pave the way for us, and will we continue to do the same for future generations?
- Is there a Reg in everyone's life, and should there be?

Writing outcomes

- **A diary entry character study** – to recount
- **A missing chapter in the style of the author** – to entertain
- **A comparative description** – to explain
- **A report in the form of an interview** – to entertain and inform
- **A speech to other Year 4 children** – to explain and inform
- **A letter to Charlie** – to persuade and explain
- **'Maxwell's top five'** – to explain and describe
- **A written analysis** – to describe and explain
- **A character discussion** – to inform and persuade

Essential teaching guidance

- Although the unit has been planned to last for six weeks, teachers should consider the needs of their class and in turn reshape the unit to best match. Some weeks have a strong focus on reading multiple chapters and this would be best done as a class rather than in small groups. Teachers could explore using this text to teach their reading objectives to the whole class (many resources are provided to do this) including focussing on content domain 2c – to summarise more than one paragraph. It is vital that Year 4 children can hold a chapter in their head and respond appropriately, showing an understanding of what has been read to them. Of course, there are some opportunities for 'deep reads' of specific pages to ensure objectives are taught.
- Lisa Thompson's style is incredibly easy to read aloud to children and teachers should enjoy this, particularly the humorous parts. This book should encourage children to want to read more similar books, before trying new genres.
- In addition to the key questions, each week has a focus question related to the learning that will take place. Displaying these weekly focus questions may support the children's understanding and ultimately ensure a more mature approach to a book study. The additional writing tasks could be shared as homework or as optional activities to support interventions.

Themes and cross-curricular links

- **History** – Roald Amundsen, the Mary Celeste, Amelia Earhart, Louis Le Prince and others who are 'missing'
- **Science** – Survival and adaptation – would historical figures survive in today's world if they went missing? Scientific events where some have been 'transported' rather than erased (Laika the Russian astronaut dog who did not return from space). Discuss the role of science and time-shifting/transportation.
- **Art** – Whose portrait would you paint?
- **Drama** – Role on the wall, hot seating and conscience alley
- **DT** – Design and make an egg like Reg's with an opening device
- **SMSC** – Family, friendship, closure, and the importance of our elders

Related books for wider reading

- *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids* by Hiller and Hiller
- *To Be A Cat* by Matt Haig
- Non-fiction related to Roald Amundsen, the Mary Celeste, Amelia Earhart and Louis Le Prince

Curriculum coverage

Spoken language:

- ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge
- use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary
- use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas
- speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of standard English

Reading:

- identify and discuss themes, characters and plot – showing an understanding by answering questions
- summarise the main points from more than a paragraph and across a chapter (application of this through a range of strategies)
- justify opinions by articulating reasoned inferred responses in various ways including choosing the appropriate evidence from the text to support their points
- discuss the impact an author can have on their reader – be able to make comparisons within and across books

Grammar, punctuation and spelling:

- write grammatically accurate sentences using a range of co-ordinating and subordinating conjunctions, adverbials and noun phrases

- use a range of cohesive devices showing an awareness of how their writing is organised and related
- choose grammar and punctuation features to match the formality of a writing task
- show an understanding for using appropriate vocabulary throughout sessions
- demonstrate an understanding of how the writer can impact the reader through choice of sentence length, punctuation for effect and position of words in a sentence

Writing:

- write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences
- enjoy writing across a range of purposes – understanding the task, the purpose, the audience and the form
- use dialogue purposefully (convey character and/or move the action on)
- understand how to proof-read and have strategies for checking through own writing for accuracy and sense
- know how to improve their own writing – purposefully editing

Additional writing activities related to the focus questions

- **Week 1** – Choose a character you relate to and create a 'More about Me' fact file
- **Week 2** – Use the 'events sheet' and write in the role of characters from the book at these specific events
- **Week 3** – Recount the Centenary Ball's 'The Jed and Baz TV Roadshow' from a particular perspective
- **Week 4** – Write in role as one of 'The Missing'
- **Week 5** – Track the friendship of Maxwell and Charlie through the book, illustrating with emojis
- **Week 6** – How did you feel as a reader at the end of the book?

Phileas's Fortune by Agnès de Lestrade and Valeria Docampo

Recommended Year Group: **Year 4**
Recommended Edition: **9781433807923**
Suggested Term: **Autumn**



Unit overview

This six-week unit is a study of *Phileas's Fortune* by Agnès de Lestrade and Valeria Docampo, a story about self-expression, translated from the French *La Grande Fabrique de Mots*. The plot explores themes of self-expression, class and equality, linking with power and communication. The sequence of learning will develop pupils' understanding of story, characters, themes and language. The unit teaches reading, including fluency, vocabulary and comprehension, and meaningful writing, for a range of form, purpose and audience. The final piece of writing will draw on much of what the children have learned across this learning journey. **All extracts, resources, session planning and teaching slides are included within this unit.**

Key questions

- How do you express yourself?
- How important are words?
- How does translation affect meaning?
- How can language and vocabulary affect your position in society?
- Is what we have in our hearts more valuable than material wealth?
- Should richer people have different rights to poorer people?
- Do wealthier people have access to the best language in our society?

Writing outcomes

- **A narrative setting description** – to describe and entertain
- **An internal monologue with choice of character** – to entertain and explain
- **A prediction** – to explain and describe
- **An internal monologue as main character** – to explain and entertain
- **A formal letter** – to inform and persuade

Essential teaching guidance

- This is a high-quality picture book, with themes to explore throughout, allowing plenty of time to discuss and draw inferences through the images is important and how the images and words work together to create meaning.

Themes and cross-curricular links

- **Philosophy/SMSC** – relating the book to themselves and the world, relationships, feelings, family, society, self-expression, power, communication, values, freedom of speech, class and equality, love.
- **P4C** – If we had to live with a restriction to the words we could use, how would this affect our ability to communicate?
- **Maths** – place value, money (value of words), time, problem solving
- **Science** – sound
- **STEM** – architecture (structure of factory, spiralling stairs in Phileas' home)
- **Computing** – 'The Big Word Factory' app
- **Art** – inspiration from everyday life as per illustrator, use of colour to highlight detail
- **Drama** – role play, hot seating
- **French** – links across languages curriculum and 'La Grande Fabrique de mots'
- **Geography** – pollution and the environment

Related books for wider reading

- *The Truth Pixie* by Matt Haig

Curriculum coverage

Spoken Language:

- ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge
- use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary
- use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas
- speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English

Reading:

- identify themes and conventions in a wide range of books
- discuss words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
- check that the text makes sense to them, discussing their understanding and explaining the meaning of words in context
- ask questions to improve their understanding of a text
- draw inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justify inferences with evidence
- predict what might happen from details stated and implied
- identify main ideas and summarising these
- identify how language, structure, and presentation contribute to meaning
- participate in discussion, taking turns and listening to what others say

Grammar, punctuation and spelling:

- extend the range of sentences with more than one clause by using a wider range of conjunctions, including 'when', 'if', 'because' and 'although'
- use fronted adverbials and using commas after fronted adverbials
- use and punctuating direct speech
- use and understand grammatical terminology accurately and appropriately when discussing their writing and reading

Writing:

- discuss writing similar to that which they are planning to write in order to understand and learn from its structure, vocabulary and grammar
- discuss and record ideas
- compose and rehearse sentences orally (including dialogue), progressively building a varied and rich vocabulary and an increasing range of sentence structures
- organise paragraphs around a theme
- assess the effectiveness of their own and others' writing and suggest improvements
- propose changes to grammar and vocabulary to improve consistency, including the accurate use of pronouns in sentences
- proofread for spelling and punctuation errors
- read their own writing aloud to a group or the whole class, using appropriate intonation and controlling the tone and volume so that the meaning is clear



The Wolves in the Walls by Neil Gaiman and Dave McKean

Recommended Year Group: **Year 4**
Recommended Edition: **9780747591627**
Suggested Term: **Autumn**



Unit overview

This six-week unit is a study of Neil Gaiman's intriguing and multimodal book *The Wolves in the Walls*. The learning journey will engage children in discussions about fears people can face and how to overcome these with courage and imagination. Pupils make connections on a personal level with Lucy, who confronts both her own and her family's fears head-on. Exploring emotive themes such as fear, bravery and honesty will enhance the pupils' understanding of themselves, others and the world. Reading is central to the teaching and learning, developing pupils' understanding and analysis of the language, image and how different modes make meaning together. Varied, meaningful writing tasks are interwoven, providing opportunities for writing for a range of audiences and purposes. Teaching of grammar and punctuation is embedded within the context of reading and writing. The unit culminates in a final piece of writing where pupils apply what they have learned to compose a multimodal story of their own. **All extracts, resources, session planning and teaching slides are included within this unit.**

Themes and cross-curricular links

- **SMSC** – family relationships, bravery and confronting fears, refuge
- **Music** – producing scary sounds using recycling and 'found' materials
- **Art/DT** – collage, sketches, multimedia scrap books, 3-D models of the house using shoeboxes and cardboard
- **Drama** – role play, freeze frames, hot seating and silent debate
- **Science** – food chains, habitats
- **Computing/ICT** – publishing work using different fonts or using PowerPoint slides, producing online stories, filming drama scenes

Related books for wider reading

- *Beware of the Storybook Wolves* by Lauren Child
- *Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Book?* by Lauren Child
- *The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig* by Eugene Trivizas
- *Walking with Wolves (Wild Lives)* by Nick Arnold
- *The Last Wolf* by Michael Morpurgo
- *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase* by Joan Aiken
- *The Ways of the Wolf* by Smriti Prasadam-Halls and Jonathan Woodward

Curriculum coverage

Spoken language:

- Ask relevant questions to extend knowledge and understanding of a text
- Use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas
- Articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- Compose and rehearse sentences orally (including dialogue), progressively building a varied and rich vocabulary and an increasing range of sentence structures
- Give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings
- Gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener
- Consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others
- Participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play, improvisations and debates
- Select and use appropriate registers for effective communication
- Speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English
- Use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas

Reading:

- Discuss words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
- Predict what might happen from details stated and implied
- Draw inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence
- Identify how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning
- Summarise main ideas
- Ask questions to extend knowledge and understanding of a text
- Summarise and sequence main ideas
- Retrieve and record information
- Consider and evaluate different characters' viewpoint
- Identify themes and conventions in a wide range of books
- Check that the text makes sense to them, discussing their understanding, and explaining the meaning of words in context
- Read aloud their own writing, to a group or the whole class, using appropriate intonation and controlling the tone and volume so that the meaning is clear
- Identify main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph and summarise these

Grammar, punctuation and spelling:

- Use expanded noun phrases for description and specification
- Use conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions to express time and cause
- Use the present perfect form of verbs in contrast to simple past tense
- Use and punctuate direct speech
- Extend the range of sentences with more than one clause by using a wider range of conjunctions, including 'when', 'if', 'because' and 'although'
- Review grammar and punctuation content from Key Stage 1 – past progressive tense and exclamation sentences
- Choose nouns or pronouns appropriately for clarity and to avoid repetition
- Spell contractions correctly for informality
- Use commas after fronted adverbials
- Use an appropriate choice of pronoun and noun within and across sentences to aid cohesion and avoid repetition
- Indicate possession by using the possessive apostrophe with plural nouns

Writing:

Plan their writing by:

- discussing and recording ideas
- discussing writing similar to that which they are planning to write in order to understand and learn from its structure, vocabulary and grammar

Draft and write by:

- composing and rehearsing sentences orally (including dialogue), progressively building a varied and rich vocabulary and an increasing range of sentence structures
- in non-narrative material, using simple organisational devices such as headings and subheadings
- in narratives, creating settings, characters and plot
- organising paragraphs around a theme)

Evaluate and edit by:

- assessing the effectiveness of their own and others' writing and suggesting improvements
- proof-reading for spelling and punctuation errors
- proposing changes to grammar and vocabulary to improve consistency, including the accurate use of pronouns in sentences

Key questions

- Why do we need to be believed and understood by our parents?
- How can we bravely confront the fears which challenge us?
- How do different members of our family support us when we are upset or worried?
- What is multimodality? How are different modes of meaning used throughout the story?

Writing outcomes

- **Internal monologues** (Sessions 4–5) – to recount and reflect
- **Poems** (Sessions 7–8) – to entertain
- **Non-fiction fact cards** (Sessions 9–10) – to describe and inform
- **Free writing** (Session 16) – to reflect
- **Narratives** (Sessions 19–20) – to entertain
- **Internal monologues** (Sessions 22–23) – to explain and reflect
- **A multimodal story** (Sessions 26–30) – to entertain

Essential teaching guidance

- Reading and writing activities are interwoven throughout the sessions. All elements of the English curriculum are covered, including opportunities to immerse pupils deeply in the text as they explore the challenges which Lucy's family face when wolves move into their house.
- Many sessions include discussing characters' feelings and thoughts. Therefore, there are SMSC and personal development links throughout.

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane by Kate DiCamillo

Recommended Year Group: **Year 4**
Recommended Edition: **9781406360660**
Suggested Term: **Summer**



Unit overview

This six-week unit is a study of Kate DiCamillo's charming story *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*. The learning journey will develop children's understanding of the story – its characters, themes and language. Pupils will make connections on a personal level with Edward, a china rabbit, who is on a journey of self-discovery. Varied, meaningful writing outcomes are interwoven throughout the unit, providing opportunities for writing for a range of audiences and purposes. Grammar and punctuation teaching points are embedded within the context of the sessions; pupils are taught to apply what they have learned to their own writing around emotive themes such as friendship, separation and learning to be loved – as well as to love. The unit culminates in a final piece of writing where pupils compose a new chapter for the novel. At the end of the learning sequence, DiCamillo's final chapter and coda are read, with the children realising that Edward's journey has now come full circle. **All extracts, resources, session planning and teaching slides are included within this unit.**

Themes and cross-curricular links

- **SMSC** – friendship, love and kindness, dealing with separation and loss and change, self-discovery
- **Geography** – North America in the 20th Century (1930s–1940s)
- **Music** – country and western songs and ballads including John Denver and Johnny Cash
- **Art/ DT** – line sketching, colour washing portraits of characters; the style of illustrator Bagram Ibatoulline
- **Drama** – role play, hot seating and conscience alley

Related books for wider reading

- *Louise, The Adventures of a Chicken* by Kate DiCamillo
- *The Tale of Despereaux* by Kate DiCamillo
- *The Mouse and his Child* by Russell Hoban
- *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll
- *The Firework-Maker's Daughter* by Philip Pullman

Curriculum coverage

Spoken language:

- ask relevant questions to improve their understanding of a text
- speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English
- articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas
- consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others
- participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play, improvisations and debates
- compose and rehearse sentences orally (including dialogue), progressively building a varied and rich vocabulary and an increasing range of sentence structures
- gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener
- give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings
- use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas

Reading:

- discuss words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
- draw inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence
- ask questions to extend knowledge and understanding of a text
- predict what might happen from details stated and implied
- check that the text makes sense to them, discussing their understanding, and explaining the meaning of words in context
- retrieve and record information
- identify main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph and summarise these
- identify how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning
- summarise main ideas
- read aloud their own writing, to a group or the whole class, using appropriate intonation and controlling the tone and volume so that the meaning is clear

- consider and evaluate different characters' viewpoints
- identify themes and conventions in a wide range of books

Grammar, punctuation and spelling:

- extend the range of sentences with more than one clause by using a wider range of conjunctions, including: when, if, because, although
- use expanded noun phrases for description and specification
- use conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions to express time and cause
- use the present perfect form of verbs in contrast to simple past tense
- explore the changes in word meaning when prefixes and/ or suffixes are added to a root word
- spell contractions correctly for informality
- use an apostrophe to mark singular possession
- indicate possession by using the possessive apostrophe with plural nouns
- use and punctuate direct speech
- use commas after fronted adverbials

Writing:

- plan their writing by:
 - discussing and recording ideas
 - discussing writing similar to that which they are planning to write in order to understand and learn from its structure, vocabulary and grammar
- draft and write by:
 - organising paragraphs around a theme
 - composing and rehearsing sentences orally (including dialogue), progressively building a varied and rich vocabulary and an increasing range of sentence structures.
 - creating settings, characters and plot (in narratives)
- evaluate and edit by:
 - assessing the effectiveness of their own and others' writing and suggesting improvements
 - proposing changes to grammar and vocabulary to improve consistency, including the accurate use of pronouns in sentences
 - proofreading for spelling and punctuation errors

Key questions

- Why is it important to love but also allow ourselves to be loved?
- How do we influence others when we share life's experiences and events with others?
- How do we cope with separation and loss?
- What is self-discovery? What causes us to change?
- Why are internal character traits and personality more important than physical, external appearance?

Writing outcomes

- **Free write 'Something precious to me'** (Session 2) – biographical, to reflect and recount
- **Diary entry of household events** (Sessions 4–5) – to write in character as Edward
- **Non-fiction fact sheet or poster on the RMS Queen Mary** (Session 7) – to inform
- **Free write Edward's reflections** (Sessions 10 and 19)
- **Internal monologue on Edward's time at the dump** (Sessions 13–14) – to explain and reflect
- **Poem 'A Travelling Life'** (Sessions 17–18) – to inform and entertain
- **Free write diary or internal monologue** (Sessions 22–23) – to inform us about Edward from another character's POV
- **Final piece: a new chapter for the story** (Sessions 26–29) – to inform and entertain

Essential teaching guidance

- As whole class reading and writing outcomes are interwoven throughout the sessions, it would be helpful to have guided reading and writing sessions happening at the same time. Many of the teaching slides offer comprehension questions to challenge pupils' understanding of the themes; these could be recorded separately after oral discussion during the sessions.
- Pupils are encouraged to freely discuss their own feelings throughout, including how they deal with challenges such as separation and loss. It is important that there is clear guidance about respecting the thoughts and emotions of others; teachers need to be mindful of sensitive discussions if there are pupils in class who have personal challenges relating to these areas during the class study.

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C. S. Lewis

Recommended Year Group: **Year 4**
Recommended Edition: **9780006740582**
Suggested Term: **Spring**



Unit overview

This six-week unit of work immerses children in the themes, language and characters of C. S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. They will use the text to develop their reading comprehension, vocabulary and writing. Grammar and punctuation are examined within the context of the text – interrogating how and why it's used by the author, and for what purpose in the story. They use this exploration to make connections with themes on a personal level and create varied, meaningful writing outcomes. The unit culminates in a final piece of work where the children apply all that they have learned in this story to create a non-chronological report to inform and guide a visitor to Narnia. **All extracts, resources, session planning and teaching slides are included within this unit.**

Themes and cross-curricular links

- **History** – World War 2; the Blitz and evacuation
- **Geography** – Human and physical features of cities that made it essential for children to be evacuated.
- **Science** – Changing states (melting), thermal insulators
- **DT** – design and build an insulated bottle to keep a drink warm in Narnia
- **RE** – the theme of forgiveness and resolution across all major world religions, Christian symbolism
- **Art** – Blitz pictures using silhouettes and colour mixing
- **SMSC** – Relationships, change, hope, betrayal, temptation, good versus evil
- **Drama** – Performance of scenes from evacuation photographs, hot seating, conscience alley, role play
- **Music** – Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*

Related books for wider reading

- *The Lost Magician* by Piers Torday
- *Nevermoor: The Trials of Morrigan Crow* by Jessica Townsend
- *A Place Called Perfect* by Helena Duggan
- The rest of *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C. S. Lewis

Curriculum coverage

Spoken language:

- listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers
- ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge
- articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including expressing feelings
- maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments
- use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas
- speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English
- participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play/improvisations and debates
- gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s)
- consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others
- select and use appropriate registers for effective communication

Reading:

- apply their growing knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes (morphology and etymology) both to read aloud and to understand the meaning of new words that they meet.
- listen to and discuss a wide range of fiction and retrieve and infer information from these texts
- read books that are structured in different ways
- identify and discuss themes and conventions in and across a wide range of books
- check that the text makes sense to them, discuss their understanding and exploring the meaning of words in context
- ask questions to improve their understanding of a text
- draw inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justify inferences with evidence

- discuss the words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
- predict what might happen from details stated and implied
- identify the main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph and summarising these
- identify how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning
- participate in discussion about both books that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say

Grammar, punctuation and spelling:

- spell further homophones
- spell words that are often misspelt
- use the first two or three letters of a word to check its spelling in a dictionary
- use fronted adverbials and punctuate these accurately
- use and punctuate direct speech
- choose nouns or pronouns appropriately for clarity and cohesion and to avoid repetition
- use conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions to express time and cause
- use a wider range of conjunctions

Writing:

- discuss writing similar to that which they are planning to write in order to understand and learn from its structure, vocabulary and grammar
- discuss and recording ideas
- create settings, characters and plot in narratives
- use and punctuate direct speech accurately
- compose and rehearse sentences orally (including dialogue), progressively building a varied and rich vocabulary and an increasing of sentence structures
- organise paragraphs around a theme
- assess the effectiveness of their own and others' writing and suggest improvements
- propose changes to vocabulary, grammar and punctuation to enhance effects and clarify meaning
- proofread for spelling and punctuation errors

Key questions

- What are the most important themes that we see throughout the book?
- How does the character of Edmund change as the text progresses?
- Are things always as they seem?
- Does good always overcome evil?
- How do the relationships between the siblings change?
- Are there any lessons we can learn from this story?

Writing outcomes

- **Character spider diagram** (session 3) – to inform
- **Thought bubble from the perspective of Lucy** (session 4) – to recount
- **Diary Entry as Lucy of her meeting with Mr Tumnus** (session 7) – to recount
- **Letter Home as Lucy** (sessions 12 and 13) – to reflect and recount
- **Writing in the style of the story about what happened to Mr Tumnus** (sessions 14 and 15) – to recount
- **Mind map of the Key Events of Chapters 7 and 8** (session 16) – to summarise and recount
- **Monologue from Edmund's perspective** (session 19–21) – to reflect and recount
- **Spider diagram about changes in Peter's character** (session 22) – to reflect
- **Paragraph from the point of view of Aslan or the White Witch regarding the fate of Edmund** (session 24) – to persuade
- **Haiku** (session 25) – to recount
- **Travel guide to Narnia** (sessions 28–30) – to inform

Essential teaching guidance

- As the reading and writing are closely related, it would be optimal to have guided reading and English lessons happening at the same time. The guided reading session could be used to look at the reading more deeply (i.e. ask SATs-style questions, available in the teaching slides) and the English could be used for the role play, discussion, writing activities, etc. as outlined in the unit.
- Children are urged to freely discuss their feelings throughout, so it is important that there is clear guidance about respecting the thoughts and emotions of others.

How to Train Your Dragon by Cressida Cowell

Recommended Year Group: **Year 4**
Recommended Edition: **9780340999073**
Suggested Term: **Spring**



Unit overview

This six-week unit of work immerses children in the themes, language and characters of Cressida Cowell's *How to Train Your Dragon* – the first in the series of her novels about Hiccup, the young son of a Viking chief. The study of this text will develop reading comprehension, vocabulary and writing. Grammar and punctuation are examined within the context of the text – with the children interrogating how, why and to what effect they are used in the story. Children make connections between themes on a personal level with Hiccup and create varied, meaningful writing outcomes across various genres. The unit culminates in a final piece of writing whereby the children apply all that they have learned along the way with their hero, Hiccup. They will innovate a new short story version of the novel's ending to engage their friends. **All extracts, resources, session planning and teaching slides are included within this unit.**

Themes and cross-curricular links

- **History** – The Viking invaders to Britain
- **Geography** – Routes from Scandinavia taken by Viking long ships to Britain
- **Science** – Mammals and adaptation
- **RE** – Viking gods and goddesses
- **DT** – Design and make Viking long ships or a set of runes
- **Art** – Viking/Norse art and design, including jewellery
- **SMSC** – Exploring relationships, personal challenge and perseverance
- **Drama** – Hot seating, working in pairs and groups; performing improvised scenes
- **Extra curriculum:** A trip to the Yorvik Viking Centre or a Natural History Museum to explore historical artefacts from the times of the Norse invaders

Related books for wider reading

- *Dragon Daughter* – Liz Flanagan
- *Dragonology: the complete book of dragons* – Dugald Steer
- *Beowulf* – Michael Morpurgo
- Other books in the *How to Train Your Dragon* series – Cressida Cowell

Curriculum coverage

Spoken language:

- Speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English
- Consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others
- Give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings
- Compose and rehearse sentences orally (including dialogue), progressively building a varied and rich vocabulary and an increasing range of sentence structures
- Ask questions to improve their understanding of a text
- Articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- Participate in discussions, presentations, performances role-play, improvisations and debates
- Select and use appropriate registers for effective communication

Reading

- Discussing words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
- Identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning
- Drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence
- Checking that the text makes sense to them, discussing their understanding, and explaining the meaning of words in context
- Predicting what might happen from details stated and implied

Grammar, punctuation and spelling

- Using conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions to express time and cause
- Extending the range of sentences with more than one clause by using a wider range of conjunctions, including: when, if, because, although
- Using commas after fronted adverbials
- Indicating possession by using the possessive apostrophe with plural nouns
- Proposing changes to grammar and vocabulary to improve consistency, including the accurate use of pronouns in sentences
- Using an appropriate choice of pronoun and noun within and across sentences to aid cohesion and avoid repetition

Writing

- Identify the audience and purpose for writing, selecting the appropriate form and using other similar models for their own
- Give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings
- In narratives, describe settings, characters and atmosphere and integrate dialogue to convey character and enhance meaning
- In non-narrative material, use simple organisational devices such as headings and subheadings
- Organise paragraphs around a theme
- Assessing the effectiveness of their own and others' writing and suggesting improvements
- Using and punctuating direct speech

Key questions

- What is a challenge?
- How can you empathise and work with others?
- Why is perseverance needed to get a job done?

Writing outcomes

- **Fact file** (session 5) – to inform
- **Written dialogue** (session 7) – to entertain
- **Hiccup's monologue** (session 10) – to explore the character's thoughts and feelings
- **Formal persuasive letter** (session 13-14) – to persuade
- **Hiccup's diary entry** (session 17-18) – to explore change in the character's thoughts and feelings
- **Description of a sea dragon** (session 19) – to imagine
- **Final piece: first person narrative from Hiccup's POV or continuing the story** (sessions 26-30) – to entertain

Essential teaching guidance

- Whole class guided reading and writing outcomes are interwoven throughout the sessions. All elements of the English curriculum are covered, including opportunities to immerse pupils deeply in the text as they explore personal challenges along with the main character.
- Many sessions encompass discussing and writing about characters' feelings and how they are approaching and dealing with situations. Thus, there are SMSC links throughout.
- Teachers may want to include the use of some film stills or clips from the popular *How to Train Your Dragon* films but be aware that the storylines in the films are very different from Cressida Cowell's novels.