

***The Promise* by Nicola Davies and Laura Carlin**

Walker Books (978-1406355598)

A girl who is hardened by the harsh urban environment that surrounds her is transformed into a guerrilla gardener by the unexpected booty resulting from a mugging. The burgeoning wildlife opens up people’s hearts and minds and the girl moves on to multiply the magic. In spare poetic prose, Nicola Davies has fashioned a variation on the myth of the Green Man for a modern age. This was Laura Carlin’s first picture book, although she had previously created superb illustrations for Ted Hughes’ *The Iron Man* and Sonya Hartnett’s *The Silver Donkey*. Here she has drawn absorbing grey and brown cityscapes which gradually become permeated with brightly coloured birds and flowers as the girl plants ‘among rubble, ruins and rusty railings, by train tracks, tramlines and traffic lights’.

Overall learning aims of this teaching sequence:

- To read and discuss a book that is set in a harsh, urban landscape, which allows us to explore people’s feelings and how these can be affected by their environment, how their characters can change in responses to changes in the environment, and how a seemingly small event can have a huge effect;
- Appreciate how a character changes through the course of a story;
- Discuss writing similar to that which they are planning to produce in order to understand and learn from its structure, vocabulary and grammar;
- Progressively build a varied and rich vocabulary and an increasing range of sentence structures;
- Assess the effectiveness of their own and others’ writing and suggest improvements;
- Communicate learning around a key topic to a wider audience;
- Consider how an author’s body of work communicates their thoughts and ideas about the world and topics of interest.

This is a Power of Reading teaching sequence for Years 5 and 6. It was originally produced to accompany CLPE’s Inspiring Writing course.

Overview of this teaching sequence	
<p>This sequence is approximately 3 weeks long if spread over 15 sessions. Nicola Davies’ engaging and compassionate narrative is complemented by Laura Carlin’s illustrations that merit close investigation. The words and pictures combine to invite the reader to look deeply and revisit the book, in turn deepening reader response and reflection. There is a wealth of opportunities for authentic pieces of writing for a range of purposes and audiences. The content will also enable teachers to support children in developing their ability to discuss environmental themes around conservation.</p>	
National Curriculum objectives covered by this sequence	
Reading (Comprehension):	Writing (Composition / Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation):

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Maintain positive attitudes to reading and understanding of what they read by:

- continuing to read and discuss an increasingly wide range of fiction
- reading books that are structured in different ways and reading for a range of purposes
- identifying and discussing themes and conventions in and across a wide range of writing
- making comparisons within and across books

Understand what they read by:

- checking that the book makes sense to them, discussing their understanding and exploring the meaning of words in context
- asking questions to improve their understanding
- drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence
- predicting what might happen from details stated and implied
- summarising the main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph, identifying key details that support the main ideas
- identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning
- discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader
- participate in discussions about books that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, building on their own and others' ideas and challenging views courteously
- explain and discuss their understanding of what they have read, including through

Children should plan their writing by:

- identifying the audience for and purpose of the writing, selecting the appropriate form and using other similar writing as models for their own
- noting and developing initial ideas, drawing on reading and research where necessary
- in writing narratives, considering how authors have developed characters and settings in what pupils have read, listened to or seen performed

Draft and write by:

- selecting appropriate grammar and vocabulary, understanding how such choices can change and enhance meaning
- in narratives, describing settings, characters and atmosphere and integrating dialogue to convey character and advance the action
- using a wide range of devices to build cohesion within and across paragraphs
- using further organisational and presentational devices to structure text and to guide the reader

Evaluate and edit by:

- assessing the effectiveness of their own and others' writing
- proposing changes to vocabulary, grammar and punctuation to enhance effects and clarify meaning
- ensuring the consistent and correct use of tense throughout a piece of writing
- proofread for spelling and punctuation errors

<p>formal presentations and debates, maintaining a focus on the topic and using notes where necessary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide reasoned justifications for their views 	
<p>Speaking and Listening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers Ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge Use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary Articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions Give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for 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 Participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role-play, improvisations and debates Consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others 	
<p>Teaching Approaches</p>	<p>Writing Outcomes</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Book Talk Role on the Wall Responding to Illustration Visualising Reading aloud and rereading Freeze Frame and Thought Tracking Shared writing Hot-Seating Graph of Emotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poems Persuasive Writing Writing in Role Creative writing Letter writing Own picturebook narrative Persuasive writing/presentation (rewilding) Pieces for an exhibition Author study presentation
<p>Cross Curricular Links</p>	
<p>Science</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If these activities don't already exist in your school, you may want to encourage the children to start a gardening club, to grow fruits and vegetables or to transform part of the school grounds into a garden. Supporting resources can be found on the following website: https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/home. 	

- If you are able to maintain a class garden or a school allotment, this will provide the children with ample and rich opportunities to study a variety of plants: drawing and identifying their anatomy, observing their life cycle and by necessity becoming aware of the conditions in which they can thrive. Many elements of the ‘living things and their habitats’ strand of the science programmes of study could be supported and contextualised.
- You might arrange a visit from a horticultural expert from an organization like the RHS or from your local allotment society.
- Further details and ideas around developing gardens and green spaces can be found throughout the teaching sequence.
- To support this work and the work completed in literacy lessons, you may want to arrange a trip to a garden where possible. All the following gardens offer school visits and workshops.
 - Kew Gardens (Richmond, London)
 - Chelsea Physic Garden (Chelsea, London)
 - RHS Wisley (Surrey)
 - RHS Hyde Hall (Essex)
 - RHS Rosemoor (Devon)
 - RHS Harlow Carr (Yorkshire)

Computing

- Children will likely use online sources to research some of the cross-curricular projects, e.g., gardening websites.
- Children could use computing and IT resources to support their school gardening or allotment work. *Could they design, make and program an automatic watering device? Can they log and analyse data relating to weather, moisture, soil quality, or plant growth?*
- The children could collaborate on creating and updating class blogs or vlogs demonstrating your developing gardens or green spaces.
- Publishing and word-processing packages will be used in completing and sharing children’s finished writing. Additionally, opportunities exist to create and edit photographs and film as part of other writing outcomes within the sequence.

Art:

- Investigate Laura Carlin’s illustrative techniques and style. For the images in the book she has used watercolour, pastels and pencil. You may want to allow the children to explore these media themselves, producing images of their local environment. You can find out more about Laura Carlin here: <http://www.lauracarlin.com/>.
- Inspired by the exploration of the natural world, the children could explore the works of famous artists who have shared a similar fascination. For example, they might look at Claude Monet whose gardens in Giverny were a very important part of his life and where he painted often, including of course his famous series of waterlily paintings. They could also look at how artists like Van Gogh or Cézanne paint plants and trees, for example Van Gogh’s *Daubigny’s Garden* from 1890. The following websites contain extensive lists of botanical artists that could be referenced in the classroom:
 - www.botanicalartandartists.com
 - www.soc-botanical-artists.org

- They might be inspired by the works of other artists who work with fauna and the natural environment such as Andy Goldsworthy, Tim Pugh, Sylvain Meyer, Richard Shilling, Cornelia Konrads or Olga Ziemka.

Design and Technology

- Children could work in groups to design their own Chelsea Flower Show garden. You might set a brief for each group of children regarding the size of space they have available. They could select a theme, design the planting and even create their own miniature model. The Royal Horticultural Society have some useful resources:
<https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/resources/activity/design-a-miniature-garden>.

Links to other texts and resources:

- As part of the sequence or following it, the children could go on to complete their own author study of Nicola Davies. An author study gives students the opportunity to delve deeply into an author's life and body of work. Provide opportunities throughout the planned reading programme to explore other work by Nicola Davies, this can be supported by our curated booklist: <https://clpe.org.uk/clpe/library/booklists/nicola-davies-booklist>.
- You can also find out more about Nicola Davies on her website: <https://www.nicola-davies.com/>.

Books with Similar themes:

- *The Secret Sky Garden*, Linda Sarah and Fiona Lumbers (Simon and Schuster)
- *Lob*, Linda Newbery and Pam Smy (Jonathan Cape)
- *Grandpa Green*, Lane Smith (Two Hoots)
- *The Great Kapok Tree*, Lynne Cherry (Harcourt)
- *A Forest*, Marc Martin (Templar Publishing)
- *Tree: Seasons Come, Seasons Go*, Patricia Hegarty and Britta Teckentrup (Little Tiger Kids)
- *Eddie's Garden: and How to Make Things Grow*, Sarah Garland (Frances Lincoln)
- *Greenling*, Levi Pinfold (Templar Publishing)
- *Where the Forest Meets the Sea*, Jeannie Baker (Walker)

Books to support the exploration of conservation, sustainability and environmentalism:

- *If the World Were a Village*, David J Smith and Shelagh Armstrong (A & C Black)
- *Infographic: How It Works: Our Planet*, Jon Richards and Ed Simkins (Wayland)
- *How the World Works*, Christiane Dorion and Beverley Young (Templar)
- *Belonging*, Jeannie Baker (Walker)
- *Dear Greenpeace*, Simon James (Walker)
- *One World*, Michael Foreman (Andersen Press)
- *Survival*, Louise McNaught and Anna Claybourne (Big Picture Press)
- *A is for Activist*, Innosanto Nagara (Seven Stories Press)
- *This Book is Not Rubbish. 50 Ways to Ditch Plastic and Save the World!*, Isabel Thomas and Alex Paterson (Wren & Rook)
- *Our Beautiful Earth: Saving our Planet Piece by Piece*, Giancarlo Macri and Carolina Zanotti (Universe Publishing)

- *Stories for a Fragile Planet: Traditional Tales about Caring for the Earth*, Kenneth Steven and Jane Ray (Lion Hudson)
- *12 Small Acts to Save Our World: Simple Everyday Ways You Can Make a Difference* (Century)
- *Moth. An Evolution Story*, Isabel Thomas and Daniel Egnéus (Bloomsbury)
- <https://clpe.org.uk/clpe/library/booklists/environment-booklist>

Linked Non-Fiction Texts:

- *Allotment Month by Month*, Alan Buckingham (Dorling Kindersley)
- *The Kew Gardens Children's Cookbook: Plant, Cook, Eat!*, Joe Archer and Caroline Craig (Wayland)
- *The Ultimate Guide to Gardening* by Lisa J Amstutz (Capstone Press)
- *A Big Garden*, Gilles Clément and Vincent Gravé (Prestel)
- *Gardening for Beginners*, Abigail Wheatley, Emily Bone and Lisa Dejohn (Usborne)
- *A Little Guide to Gardening*, Jo Elworthy and Eleanor Taylor (Eden Project Books)
- *A Little Guide to Wild Flowers*, Charlotte Voake (Eden Project Books)
- *A Little Guide to Trees*, Charlotte Voake (Eden Project Books)
- *RSPB First Book of Flowers*, Anita Ganeri and David Chandler (A & C Black)
- *The Great Big Green Book*, Mary Hoffman and Ros Asquith (Frances Lincoln)
- *The Lost Words*, Robert Macfarlane and Jackie Morris (Hamish Hamilton)
- *Adder, Bluebell, Lobster*, Chrissie Gittins and Paul Bommer (Otter-Barry Books)
- *Outdoor Classrooms: A Handbook for School Gardens*, Carolyn Nuttall and Janet Millington (Permanent Publications)

Weblinks:

- You can hear Nicola Davies read the whole of *The Promise*, and see Laura Carlin's emotive illustrations here: <https://vimeo.com/73026206>.
- You can watch a film of the book and find supporting resources to explore the themes further here: <https://www.thepromise.earth/>.
- The Royal Horticultural Society: resources for schools and families: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/education-learning/gardening-children-schools>
- The National Allotment Society, useful links and documents for school groups: <https://www.nsalg.org.uk/resources-and-downloads/individuals-and-schools/>
- The Forestry Commission in Scotland have compiled a wide variety of resources for schools related to trees, including a PDF book of traditional tales and stories written by Claire Hewitt, each related to different tree types: <https://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/activities/trees/tree-resources>.
- Useful information for timing sowing and harvesting can be found here: <http://www.paddocks-allotments.org.uk/month-by-month/july/harvest.htm> or in the book: *Allotment Month by Month* by Alan Buckingham (Dorling Kindersley, 2009).
- There is a useful list of how long it takes different vegetables to grow from seed to harvestable food here: <https://www.thompson-morgan.com/top-10-easy-to-grow-vegetables>.

Teaching sessions

Before Reading:

- Before starting work on the book, create a space in the classroom for a Working Wall to enable you to pin examples of responses, reflections, notes and language generated from each session. If you do not have the space for a Working Wall you could create a class 'Reading Journal' using large pieces of sugar paper and use the pages of the journal to capture responses.
- Prepare to engage in planting throughout the course of the sequence; this might include small-scale planting of things that grow quickly like cress, inside the classroom, or larger-scale planting in the school environment in pots, beds, or green areas or engaging with the local community — the local council, local social facilities such as care homes or hospitals, or local businesses to identify opportunities to grow and plant in community areas. Ensure that you have tools and equipment that are accessible and appropriate for the children to be able to plant independently.
- It would be highly beneficial to create a display, as part of your class reading environment, of related texts — fiction and non-fiction — that would allow children to read other inspiring stories about gardens and gardening and find out more about developing and maintaining their own green spaces. These texts might also form part of your read-aloud programme in preparing for storytelling, retellings and in supporting the class in making connections with a wide range of material.
- You may want to allow space on or near the Working Wall so that, during the course of reading and responding to this text, the class can create their own Gardening Calendar — a summary of all the activities that need to be done in a small garden or allotment in order to grow a range of fruits and vegetables, including composting, mulching, pruning, etc., and changes in nature across the course of a year. Nicola Davies' *A First Book of Nature*, illustrated by Mark Hearld (Walker) will be a useful companion for ideas and inspirations.
- Cover the front of the book with brown paper or sugar paper, so as not to reveal the title of the text at the beginning of the sequence. In order for the sequence to work effectively you will need to 'keep back' the text from the children initially, including the cover of the book and title. The story will need to unfold slowly and it is best for the children not to know the ending until you are at the culmination of the teaching sessions.

Session 1: Response to illustration:

- Organise the pupils into mixed pairs or small groups and begin by looking at the endpapers, in which a concrete floor is littered with the detritus commonly found in an urban environment, as well as a lone pigeon. You might want to give each group an enlarged A3 copy of the picture.
- Allow the pupils time to look at the illustration in depth and pose questions or thoughts about the image — you might want to layer the discussion as suggested here, or if the pupils are well practised at exploring illustration, ask the pupils to annotate copies of the picture with post-it notes and then develop the discussion starting with the children's ideas.

- Draw attention to the whole illustration. *What do they notice immediately? Where is their eye drawn to in the picture? Why do they think that is? Are different children drawn to different aspects of the image? Why? What do they notice about the colours used? Are there any questions they have about the space or the objects they see in the space?*
- Start with the picture as a whole, then zoom in on the detail you might want to consider:
 - *Where is this place?*
 - *What is it like? How do you know?*
 - *How might it feel to be here?*
 - *Would you like to be there? Why or why not?*
 - *Have you ever been somewhere like this? Where was it? What was it like?*
- You might go on to then explore the perspective and point of view of the illustration. *What point of view have we been given? What information does that give us? If this was a film what might the next shot look like? Do you think the point of view will change?*
- Consider the absence of people and the vast expanse of empty space. *What does this suggest about the story that is about to unfold? How do you feel when you look at this image? Does the image relate to anything you have seen before, either in books, television programmes or real life?*
- Move on to focus on the following images that precede the start of the story, particularly focusing on the page in which you can see the small figure of the girl trailing a stick on the railings. Give children copies of these images to discuss and annotate in pairs or small groups, encouraging them to draw on features they looked at in the previous image, such as the layout of the image on the page, the choice of colours used, the viewpoint and the objects placed in the space.
- Come back together as a whole group to reflect on the urban scenes depicted, and their thoughts and feelings about the environment:
 - *Was this what you expected to see?*
 - *Does anything confirm what you were already thinking? Does anything surprise you?*
 - *What else do you learn about the setting from this image? What sense do you gain of this place?*
 - *What story do you think might take place here? What makes you think this?*
- The children might talk about the features of the urban landscape and what it might feel like to be there, the absence of colour and life in these images so far, the dog and pigeon being the only living things to feature, alongside the girl.
- Draw attention to the girl if the children haven't already discussed her and ask them to reflect on what they notice. You could provide question prompts to open up discussions, such as: *What do you know or think you know about this girl? How old do you think she might be? What do you think she might be thinking or feeling? What does her body language suggest to you? What expression do you think she might have on her face? Where do you think she might be going?* Encourage the children to relate their speculations and what they have inferred about the story back to what they can see in the illustrations to evidence their thinking.
- Now, reveal and consider the title of the book with the class, *The Promise* and ask the pupils to discuss their initial impressions and how this might relate to the initial thoughts they have already had about the text.

- *Are you surprised by the title? How do you think it relates to the ideas you already had about this story?*
- *What do you know or understand about the word 'promise'?*
- *Do you have any ideas about what **'the promise'** might relate to in the context of the story? What makes you think this?*
- *What predictions do you now have about the story that lies ahead?*
- Allow time and space for the children to consider their predictions, based on the title and the illustrations they have seen and to note these down on a small sheet of paper, to display around the title-page illustration on the Working Wall so that the pupils can refer back to these in subsequent sessions.
- In a linked spelling and vocabulary session, use the resources in Appendix 1 to investigate the word promise, its etymology, meanings, use in context and synonyms. Follow up on the knowledge of the meaning of pro being forward, to investigate the other words with the prefix pro, as seen in Appendix 2, looking at how our understanding of the prefix enhances our meaning of these words.

Session 2: Visualisation, Looking at Language and Text Marking

- Read aloud the opening page of the book and give pupils time to think about what they have heard. Talk about the text together, exploring how this might be linked to what they have already seen in the opening illustrations. *What more do you learn about the setting from these words? What feelings do you now have about this place and what it is like to be there? What do you picture in your mind as the words are read? How does this relate to the images you have already seen?*
- Now, re-read the text again, but this time ask the pupils to close their eyes and invite them to try to visualise the scene. Following this, give the children pieces of paper and appropriate and available art materials such as pastels and then ask the children to sketch the scene they pictured. Read the text again several times while the children draw their pictures.
- After the class have completed their sketches, the pupils could annotate the pictures with key vocabulary or phrases from the text which support their understanding or interpretation. Additionally, you could invite the pupils to annotate their artwork with further detail and description, eliciting their ideas about the setting and location.
- Give the class time to share their work with one another and to compare and contrast their images. Invite individuals to comment on what is similar and what is different about the way they have illustrated the scene and why they think this is.
- Ask the pupils to consider how the way in which they have drawn the pictures expresses the atmosphere of the scene they had in mind; *what provoked the images you saw in your mind's eye, and how do you think the author achieved this?*
- Consider with the children how the opening scene is set, what they can infer about the setting and the story to come, as well as how this might confirm or contradict some of the ideas they had in the previous session.
- Now provide the children with copies of the text, without the illustration and ask the children to reflect on the way in which the opening is written and particularly to respond to the language in the text which resonated. *Which words and phrases stood out to you? Why was*

this? Are there any that you find particularly memorable or significant to the story? Which words, phrases or sentences created the most vivid imagery for you? Why was this?

- Pull out specific examples in this passage that employ precise vocabulary in different ways to set the scene and give the impression of the city, such as; **'mean and hard and ugly'** or **'dry as dust'**, **'never blessed'**, **'gritty'**, **'scratching'** and **'like a hungry dog'**. Explore why these adjectives, verbs, adverbs, expanded noun phrases and examples of simile are particularly effective. *Why do you think these words and phrases make such significant impact? What other words could the author have chosen? What alternative impact would these have made? Would they have created the same effects?* Allow the children time and space to try out alternative ideas and discuss the varying impact of their choices. *Why do you think Nicola Davies made these specific choices? What impression do you think she wanted us to have of the setting? How has she achieved this?*
- In pairs, ask children to support each other to annotate their images with descriptive words and phrases from the text that they may not have identified before the text-marking.
- Now, let the children do a gallery walk to explore each other's compositions, using post-it notes to annotate others' compositions with vocabulary and phrases that are inspired by looking at the images:
 - *What words and phrases came to your mind?*
 - *What words and phrases did your picture help you find?*
 - *Did you pick up any new language from the gallery walk?*
 - *Scribe some of the vocabulary and verbal feedback and add this to the Working Wall with a selection of the artwork.*
- Finally share Laura Carlin's own illustration, stressing that her drawing is a response to the author's text just as theirs is, and there is no right or wrong way to do this — just a range of individual interpretations.
 - *What details of your own and Laura Carlin's illustrations do you think are most effective?*
 - *Why do you think she chose to illustrate in the way she did? What do you think she is trying to convey in her interpretation?*
 - *What were the similarities to and differences from your own sketches? What parts of the writing do you think stood out to her? Where can you see this in her illustration?*
 - *Are there things you have included that she has omitted or vice versa? Why do you think she might have chosen to do this?*
- Give mixed pairs or groups a copy of Laura Carlin's illustration and give them time and space to consider the way in which the language that describes the city is reinforced by Laura's image. Allow them time and space to discuss their ideas and to annotate the image with their thoughts, questions and ideas, making their thinking visible.
- Come back together to discuss the children's observations. They may point out, for example, the buildings all crowd in on one another, leaving only a tiny gap in which you can see the sky; the colours are again muted and dull; the windows of the buildings reflect the congested traffic below which is out of eyesight; the birds loom ominously over the girl, who is placed right at the bottom of the page, not immediately noticeable to the reader, perhaps suggesting her feelings of insignificance. Bring all the thinking together by asking the children about their overall perceptions of the city the story is set in.

- Give the children word cards and sentence strips to record their ideas, then place these around a copy of Laura Carlin's illustration on the Working Wall. *How do their ideas compare and contrast? Which do they think are the most precise, effective or vivid choices? Are there repeated words, phrases or sentences that have been used by more than one person? Why do you think these are common choices?*
- Encourage the children to come back to their original predictions for the story, talking about how the opening confirms or changes their ideas about the text. Invite them to predict what they might see on the next page, sketching out an idea of what an illustration might look like and what text might accompany this, roughly composing the next page as they imagine it, based on their initial responses and discussions of the text so far. Encourage them to see this as a rough plan, not a worked-up finished piece, but as a means of exploring and communicating their ideas. Relate this to how an illustrator will plan out their ideas prior to creating their finished composition.
- When the children have completed their planned pages, encourage them to pin these up around the classroom and give time for them to look at, reflect on and compare and contrast their interpretations.

Session 3: Looking at Language, Response to Illustration and Poetry

- Re-read the opening of the book and on until '**No one ever smiled**'. *What effect does this closing sentence have on you? What does it make you think about? How does it make you feel? What does it do to add to the perceptions you already had about the setting and the story?*
- Reflect on the use of three short, simple sentences and how this compares with the longer more descriptive passage the children explored in the previous session. *How do the more descriptive sentences on the previous spread compare with these shorter sentences? What impact does it have, having to pause after each statement on this spread? What further impression of the city do you gain from this page? In what way does it reinforce your earlier ideas? What overall impression does this give you as a reader? Why you think Nicola Davies chose these sentence structures for these spreads?*
- Following this, explore the illustration that accompanies the text, asking the class to reflect on what they notice. Look at the shift in perspective from a close up to a wide view of this urban landscape. *How would you describe the city now, seeing the wider landscape? What can you see in the landscape? What might the city sound like? What do you think it feels like to be here? How does this reflect cities that you are familiar with? Do you think there is anything missing that is a familiar sight in a city? What do you notice about the continuation of the colour palette used? Now, encourage the children to look in greater detail, if they have not already noticed the emoticon-like sad face, portrayed by the objects highlighted in black. *Is there anything you notice about the objects painted in black? Can you see an image within the image? What does this do to enhance your perception of the words on the page? How does the illustration take your understanding beyond the words? What do you think Laura Carlin, the illustrator is trying to communicate to the reader in her choice of image?**
- Explore the children's emotional and personal connections with the story. *Does the city remind you of anywhere, either real or imagined? Do you think we are affected by our surroundings? Can you think of a time when your surroundings have affected you and your*

behaviour? This could be negative as here, or a positive example, where the place lifted your spirits and made you feel better. Encourage the children to draw on their personal experiences and the connections they make to other characters and stories they are already familiar with. The setting is central to the story, so it is important to immerse children in the place and its potential. Allow time for the children to feedback initial ideas and discuss these in more detail. You may want to gather some choice examples on sentence strips and display these on the working wall alongside the image.

- You might also support this ideation phase by allowing the children to gather vocabulary from responding to images or sounds of busy, crowded cities. This time-lapse video of cities from around the world is a perfect example and could be a springboard for wider work in Geography around the urban environment, its human and physical features and the benefits and challenges for inhabitants: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qy0vb4V3B-4>.
- Once the children have looked at images or watched the videos, invite them to discuss in groups and note words and phrases that they feel would best describe the city. Take the time to value their suggestions, say them out loud, pause and reflect on their effect and discuss how the reflection and range of ideas can support the refinement of the contributions. Consider what synonyms could be used to refine the quality of the language. Reflect, for example, on how the use of personification might intensify the language. Display the language generated on the Working Wall.
- Now give the children time and space to collaborate in small groups to create a free verse poem, using the ideas generated in the session so far. They could be inspired by other poems on this topic, such as
 - 'This is the City' by Kathy Henderson: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poems/city>
 - 'The City of My Birth' by Karl Nova: <https://clpe.org.uk/poetry/poems/city-my-birth>
 - 'Binley House' by Joseph Coelho: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C7GbC0MuuJY>
- Share the poems together, talk about the ways in which they connect with or contrast with the section of the story you have explored so far. Look at what each poet has done to paint a picture of the city with their words and what feelings you are left with about the city after reading. Consider what you can learn about the content, structure and form of poetry that could inspire your own writing.
- Now, prepare the children for working up a poem of their own. Get them to review the ideas they have collected and to consider which of these they would like to work up into a poem. Draw on the experience of practising poets, to share how they go about transferring ideas into writing. Watch poet Joseph Coelho talk about his process of collecting ideas and working up a poem: <https://vimeo.com/130341918>. What do the children learn about writing from watching him speak, that could support their own writing?
- Give time for the children to get down their initial ideas in writing, encourage them to be free with their ideas; as Joe says, this is a messy process that will be honed and worked up over time. Model this process alongside the children, exploring and experimenting with your own ideas.
- If children struggle to come up with ideas independently, consider strategies that could support children to get going with their writing. They could use the repeated line 'The city', to start verses and springboard ideas from there or they could collaboratively write a list poem in a group, with each child contributing a line and then working to put these together to form a

group piece. When they put the lines together, get them to respond to the full piece they have created, asking appropriate questions to guide their thinking. *How does the poem sound when read aloud? Does it flow? Does anything jar in the rhythm or choice of language? Is it cohesive? What changes to each linking line can be made to enhance the cohesiveness of the piece?* Consider edits that might be made to allow the verses to be linked to form a cohesive poem.

- When they have something down, encourage them to read aloud to themselves the first draft they have, considering what they are most pleased with and why and what they are not yet happy with and why this might be, and to complete a second draft with these things in mind. Model this with a draft of your own first, using the children as a response partner, talking through your successes and challenges and taking on board their ideas and suggestions for improvements that could be made.
- Allow time and space for them to share their second draft with a response partner; this might be another child or an enabling adult. Reading the words aloud is a vital part of this process so you can hear the rhythms, flow and tunes of the words. Encourage the children to talk to their response partner about any sticking points or challenges, and to ask them for specific advice about any aspects they still think they need support with. Encourage the response partners to respond as a reader, as they did with the other poets' poems, talking about what works for them and what they might suggest to improve the poem.
- When children have a draft they are ready to take forward to publishing, talk about how to do this — *would they like to handwrite in presentation handwriting? Use a word processor to type and work on font, style and layout on the page? Record an audio or video performance? Give children a range of choices and appropriate resources and the time and space to work up their drafts, checking spelling, punctuation and layout as they work. You might like to allow time for the groups to add a soundscape — using voice or percussion instruments — or accompanying illustration for their poem to prepare for publication.*
- Consider how to provide an audience for their work through display, creating a hand-bound class collection, publishing on class blogs or sharing audio and video performances using appropriate technology. Publish your own writing alongside that of the children.

Session 4: Response to Illustration, Role on the Wall, Role Play and Freeze Frame

- Re-read the opening of the book and read aloud until **'My heart was as shrivelled as the dead trees in the park.'** *What impact does the use of simile have on you as you read this closing sentence? What images does it place in your mind? What more does it reveal about the main character and her situation? How do you feel about her at this point in the story? What makes you feel this way?* Encourage the children to go back to the text and illustrations to support their views.
- Now reveal the image of the crowd which accompanies the text, and give the children time to respond to the image. *What do you think is happening here? Where do you think this is? What stands out for you in the scene? Can you see anything familiar or surprising? How does this illustration make you feel? What makes you feel this way? Does it remind you of anything you know in stories or real life? How? How do you respond to the colours used? What do you notice*

about the facial expressions and body language of the figures? What do you think it might be like to be in the crowd? What might you overhear people saying if you were part of this group?

- If the children haven't spotted and made the connection with the girl on the right-hand side of the page, draw their attention to her and what is really happening in this scene. *What do you think you know about her and what she might be doing? How does this connect with the words on the page? Does this bring any new understanding as to why she might describe her heart as being 'as shrivelled as the dead trees in the park'? What insights does this give to what she is doing here? Why do you think she might be behaving this way?*
- Prepare a Role on the Wall template by drawing around one of the children or have a prepared template based on one of the illustrations and pin this to the Working Wall.
- Ask the children to write words or phrases on the outside of the outline sharing what they know about her outward appearance or other information about her from the story events so far. Then, use these to begin to infer and deduce her internal feelings and characteristics and note these on the inside of the outline.
- To promote a higher level of thinking, ask the children to consider what we know from what she says and what we have to infer from her body language, gestures and actions. Support the children in making explicit links between the external and internal. For example, how does something she does, tell us about her personality, or how does her personality make that action seem most likely (i.e., for an action to be 'in character' or characteristic).
- Encourage the children to continue to return to the Role on the Wall as you continue to read the story, using a different colour each time to highlight the knowledge they gain as they read on. You can also use this to begin to explore the emotional journey the character takes as the story progresses and how a reader's perceptions of a character can alter as a story progresses.
- Allow the children to look at the illustration again, and invite one child to take on the character of the girl. Invite the other children to take on the role of one of the other characters in this scene. Give time for them to take in and take on their character, creating a short backstory as to who they are, what brought them to this point, and where they might be going next. Then give time for the children to gather together, assuming the positions of the crowd in the scene, sandwiched together, with the girl pickpocketing without the other people being aware. Ask them to freeze in this position. Freeze Frames are still images or tableaux. They can be used to enable groups of children to examine a key event or situation from a story and decide in detail how it could be represented. Invite the children to step into this moment, assuming the character, considering their backstory and trying to think as the character would in this situation. Individual characters can be asked to speak their thoughts out loud, or you may pick a child to act as a commentator to talk through what is happening in their version of the scene.
- Following this, invite the children in role as the characters to voice their thoughts or feelings out loud using just a few words. This can be done by tapping each person on the shoulder or by writing these down on paper in a thought-bubble and holding this above their head.
- You may want the children to momentarily bring these frozen scenes to life, creating the movements and sounds that would accompany the scene supporting the children to understand the world the characters, and especially the girl inhabit. Look at the illustration again, prior to doing this — what sounds might you hear? The children might notice the lack of eye contact or visible interaction between the characters. They might notice that no-one is on

a mobile phone or device. *What does this add to your understanding of the atmosphere? If you don't hear social interaction, what other sounds might take up the space?*

- You could record these sessions so that the children can refer to them again prior to any writing they complete. You could also take photographs of the children in role and ask the children to annotate the pictures following the freeze framing.

Session 5: Reading Aloud, Book Talk and Reader's Theatre

- Re-read the opening of the book and read aloud until **'She loosened her grip at once and smiled at me.'** *What is happening here? What do the children think of the girl's actions? The way in which she views the old lady? The fact that she steals the old lady's bag? Consider her revelation that 'I was mean and hard and ugly too.'* *What does this show about her own self-awareness? What further insights does observation give us about her character?* Continue to make notes on the Role on the Wall to capture the children's thinking.
- Now consider how the old lady responds. *What do you think about the woman's reaction? Does it surprise you? Why do you think she might react in this way? What might this tell us about the kind of person she is?*
- Re-read this page again, reflecting on the events in this part of the text and closely looking at the illustration. Use question prompts to support children's interpretations of how the text and illustrations work together, for example:
 - *From what perspective do we see this situation?*
 - *What do you think the girl thinks is inside the bag? What do you actually think the bag is 'fat and full' of?*
 - *Why might the old lady hold so tightly onto the bag? What could she want to protect?*
 - *How do you think this event relates to the title of the text? What promise do you think the old lady expects the girl to keep?*
 - *What could she want her to plant? Why might she want her to do this?*
 - *Why do you think the old lady smiles at her when she takes the bag?*
 - *Do you think the girl will keep the promise? Why or why not?*
 - *Why do you think Laura Carlin decided not to directly show the reader this scene?*
 - *Where does looking down at the shadows place you in this scene as the reader? What does this make you think about or feel?*
 - *What do you notice about the way the girl is depicted in the scene? Would you have thought it was her if you had not been told? Why? Why not?*
- Following this, put the children in smaller groups and ask the children to prepare the text as a Reader's Theatre performance, using the extract below. The children can then work together to decide how to perform the text creatively:
 - *Which parts might be read in unison?*
 - *Which bits might be read with one voice/two voices?*
 - *Which bits might be read loudly/softly/echoed?*
 - *Might you include sound effects?*
 - *Might you include any actions?*

- Ensure that the children understand that any of these effects should be used to enhance, not detract from, the reader's understanding of the events portrayed. Give the children the text divided into sections as suggested:

Section 1:

*And then, one night,
I met an old lady down a dark street.
She was frail and alone, an easy victim.*

Section 2:

*Her bag was fat and full,
but when I tried to snatch it from her,
she held on with the strength of heroes.*

Section 3:

*To and fro we pulled the bag until at last she said,
'If you promise to plant them, I'll let go.'*

Section 4:

*What did she mean? I didn't know or care,
I just wanted the bag, so I said,
'All right, I promise.'
She loosened her grip at once and smiled at me.*

- Following their group work the children should work together to perform the work to the whole class, putting their separate sections together.
- After this, ask the children what language was highlighted during the Reader's Theatre activity and reflect on how this supported their understanding of author intent and purpose. You might support the children with prompts, such as:
 - How did you feel as you listened to the performance?*
 - What words or phrases stood out? Why?*
 - What impact did the different sentence structures employed have on you as a reader?*
- This will enable you to explore authorial techniques and will provide a valuable opportunity to explore and use meta-language meaningfully through reader response and will allow you to teach grammar in context.
- Following this, revisit the Role on the Wall for the girl, adding in the children's responses in another colour as well as taking the opportunity to reflect on her thoughts and feelings at this point in the story. Engage the children in the opportunity to write in role from the girl's perspective, exploring the possible motivations behind her actions, reflecting on what happened and exploring her thoughts around what she might do next. When they have written their piece, encourage the children to read this aloud to a response partner, discussing what was effective about their writing in capturing the character of the girl and what they might do to improve their writing further. When they have done this, allow them to edit and publish their piece for display around a copy of this illustration.

Session 6: Book Talk, Conscience Alley and Persuasive Writing

- Re-read the opening of the book and read aloud until **'But when I opened it... there were only acorns.'** Share the two illustrations that accompany the two pages you have just read, but do not yet reveal that the girl has decided to keep her promise. You could bring this to life even further for the children by collecting acorns or obtaining some prop acorns and putting them in a handbag and pausing the reading after **'But when I opened it...'** passing the bag round for the children to see for themselves to gauge a real reaction. Allow time for children to discuss their initial thoughts about this new spread from themselves. *Are they surprised to see what was inside? What clues did the old lady give to the contents of the bag? How do you think the girl feels as she looks upon the contents?*
- Now, give copies of the spread to mixed pairs and groups to re-read and discuss together. Consider the girl's assumption that the bag was full of money and food as well as her potential disappointment that the bag contains acorns; *what do you think the girl is thinking as she runs away from the old woman? Why do you think she runs away without even a 'backwards look'? What does this suggest to you? Do you think she has really considered the promise she has made in this moment? Why do you think the old lady was carrying a bag 'fat and full' with acorns? Why do you think she wants the girl to plant them? What do you think the girl is thinking as she realises the bag is full of acorns? What do you think she might do with them? What would you do if you were her? Why?* Allow time for the children to annotate the spread with their thoughts, questions and ideas, making their thinking visible.
- Now, ask the children to work in groups and give each group a large sheet of sugar paper or flip chart paper divided into two columns — reasons the girl should keep her promise and plant the acorns, and reasons against — and some post-it notes in two different colours — one colour 'for' and the other 'against'.
- Ask the children to complete as many post-it notes as possible with different reasons for and against. As they add them to their large sheet of paper, the children should check if there has already been an idea added that is similar to their own; if there is, they should group them together.
- After sufficient time has been given for children to add their ideas, ask them to discuss as a group, to decide the three most important reasons in favour of her keeping the promise and the three most important reasons against.
- Share the ideas as a class and create a class list combining all of the three reasons for and against that children have come up with.
- You might also want to give time and space for them to discuss the children's personal response to the girl's situation. *What do they think she should do? Is there an alternative she hasn't thought of?*
- Following this, support the class in using Conscience Alley to further refine their ideas. Ask the class to create two equal lines and then turn to face one another, leaving a narrow alley between the two lines. Select one pupil who, in role as the girl, will walk between the two lines.
- As they walk between the lines, pupils on one side give reasons to persuade her to keep her promise, while pupils on the opposite side give their reasons why she should leave the bag of acorns and carry on with her life.

- As one child walks along the line in role as the girl, encourage the other children to give their advice to her for example: ‘plant the acorns and keep your promise, you shouldn’t have stolen the bag in the first place’ or ‘planting the acorns will bring benefits to your city, it will make it a greener and nicer place to live’. Or ‘don’t bother planting the acorns, this will take too much time and they might die anyway’ or ‘you can’t get distracted by planting acorns, you need to find money for food.’
- When the pupil in role reaches the end of the ‘alley’, they can explain the decision they have made and why. You might repeat the task, so that each side of the ‘alley’ has had the opportunity to argue both ‘for’ and ‘against’.
- Having had the opportunity to reflect on the girl’s different options, ask children to decide for themselves what they think she should do. At this point, ask the children to write a letter to the girl giving her advice on what they think she should do next and why.
- Give the children time and space to draft their letter, whilst you as the teacher-writer draft your own alongside. This could be done with a focus group who may need support in getting going with their own writing. Once they have drafted, give them time to read their letter aloud to themselves, before sharing their draft with a response partner. Model this process with your own draft first and the children as your response partner. Ask them to listen to your letter, imagining that they are the girl at this point in the story. *How does the letter make them feel? What does it make them think?* Ask them to respond to what that thought was effective in the letter and any parts that could be improved before the girl reads it. Give time for the children to go through this process themselves, with their own response partner, making amendments as necessary.
- When they are happy with the content, move them on to polishing the letter ready for publication, checking spelling and punctuation. Provide the children with appropriate writing materials and notepaper to write up their letters, ready for the girl. Display these prominently and give the chance for children to read and evaluate their own and others’ work, looking at what made different letters effective. You could provide some questions to support them to respond to each other about their writing such as; *was it written in the right voice — not too formal or too informal? Was there a good introduction to explain who was writing to her and why? Did the writer empathise with the girl’s situation? Did they show they understood by drawing on examples of their own or of others? Did the writer offer sound advice that didn’t sound too forceful or uncaring? Did the writer sign off appropriately at the end of the letter? Do you think the girl will come to the right decision in the end?*

Session 7: Book Talk, Hot-Seating and Writing in Role.

- Re-read the opening of the book and read aloud until ‘**And in the morning, I began to keep my promise.**’ Reflect on the fact that the girl has decided to keep her promise and will plant the acorns; *is this what the children expected? Why? Why not?*
- Look again at the image of the girl staring at the acorn from the bag she had stolen; *is there anything in this illustration that suggested she would keep the promise? In what way do the shadowy images of the trees in this illustration foreshadow her decision? What does the text suggest she thinks of the acorns when she first sees them? Is this what you had imagined? Why do you think she understands the promise she has made in this moment? Does she really hold a*

forest in her arms? Why do you think the girl feels changed by the bag of acorns? Why does she feel rich? How does she know the acorns will make a difference?

- To explore the girl's character further, in particular her change of heart in this moment, involve the children in a hot-seating exercise. This activity involves children closely examining a character's motivation and responses. Before the hot-seating, the children will need time and space to discuss what it is they want to know what they want to find out from the character and identify questions they want to pose to them. If the children haven't engaged in hot-seating before and do not have experience of working in role in this way, you could work as teacher in role, taking on the role of the girl. You may also have a clearer understanding of the future impact of the act of planting the acorns than the children, so exploring the wider thinking around this would be good to model and demonstrate.
- Tell the children to imagine that the girl will be visiting us and support them in composing comments or questions that they would like to put to her. Open up discussions about how to compose the most effective questions, which will elicit the most information from the character. *How will they ensure their questions are open, so that they find out more information, rather than closed questions which provided a limited answer?* Give the children time and space to try out and compose questions of their own reflecting on their effectiveness as they work. *What kinds of answers might you expect to get from these questions? Are the answers likely to open up more insights and information about the character and her actions?* Take the opportunity to share a range of question tags that vary the form of questions and explore different ways of using language to compose the questions. Review how to punctuate the questions effectively, particularly if these are two- or three-part questions. Encourage the children to refine and edit their questions as they go, to get to the most effective result.
- If necessary, you may wish to scribe for a small or large group to create questions together, enabling the children to concentrate on their ideas and composition, removing the transcriptional load. The teacher and children should work as active partners, talking together to share ideas and while the teacher guides the children through all the decisions that writers need to make and help them shape their thoughts on paper.
- The teacher, TA or another appropriate adult should take on the role of the girl, taking their questions and responding to the children in role, using the opportunity to extend their ideas and support the development of deeper empathy and understanding of the character and their actions. It is useful to have a signifier, such as a bag of acorns, putting on a checked shirt or tying your hair back into the girl's ponytail to help the children to understand when you are taking on the role of the girl and when you are back to being teacher again. Confident children could try this for themselves in small groups, once this has been modelled.
- Record and display some of the answers that the girl provides on the Working Wall and reflect on what further insight they have gained from meeting her. Add any additional insights to the Role on the Wall to develop understanding of her actions and characteristics.
- Now, offer the children a further opportunity to write in role as the girl at this point in the story, reflecting on how she was at the start of the story and the impact that her encounter with the old lady has had on her, as well as her hopes for what will happen next for her.
- Give sustained writing time for the children to plan, draft and write; this may need to be supported in group writing sessions or through modelled writing first, if children need support to get going or develop the sophistication of the content of their writing.

- After the children have had a chance to write, allow those that feel confident to read their work in role as the girl, thinking about how she might be feeling at this moment.
- Following this, you may want to give the children time to create their own *'leafy visions'* that they think the girl has while she slept that night to accompany their writing.
- To support the children in understanding the changes that will come about due to the girl's planting, plan for the children to engage in gardening and growing activities themselves. This could be linked to the wider curriculum in Science. Try to incorporate a range of plants that grow at different speeds, observing and monitoring their progress and changes over time and learning how to support their plants to grow healthily and successfully. You could look at the wide variety of benefits from growing plants, such as: growing cress and other vegetables and fruits for food; growing flowering plants that support the population of bees to grow and thrive; growing plants that have fruit and seeds that can be a food source and can be dispersed by birds and other animals; herbs that can be used in cooking. The children could take these plants home to add to their own windowsills, balconies or gardens if they have them.
- If you are able to do so, it would be a very purposeful exercise to find and collect acorns for the children to plant their own, as the girl does, considering the impact of her actions at a deeper level and observing and tracking the impact of their work over a much longer period. This might link to the activity in the final session of the sequence. Supporting resources and instructions can be found here:
 - <https://www.rhs.org.uk/education-learning/gardening-children-schools/family-activities/grow-it/grow/oak>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K-trSFUMZ-c>
- As growing an oak tree takes a long time, you may also want to show the children this time-lapse video which shows how much an oak grows in eight months, this will support the children to understand the care and patience the girl has had to show in keeping her promise and why the change to the city happened so slowly:

<https://thekidshouldseethis.com/post/from-seed-to-sapling-time-lapse-of-an-oak-tree>

Session 8: Book Talk, Role on the Wall and Visualisation

- Re-read the opening of the book until *'But slowly, slowly, slowly shoots of green began to show.'* What does this tell us about the events that have occurred? Why do you think the author chose to repeat the word *'slowly'* three times in this sentence? How much time do you think has passed between these spreads?
- Re-read the sentence again, asking children to close their eyes and visualise how they think the city will look once the *'shoots of green begin to show.'* Give the children time to share their ideas in small groups or pairs and then to feedback their ideas as a whole class. Following this, give the children one of the images of the girl planting, for example the picture of the train tracks and tramlines, as well as a range of pastels, crayons, chalks or felt tip pens and explain to the children that you are going to re-read the text again several times and while you read you would like the children to overlay the image to show what the city will look like once the plants bloom fully.

- Once the children have had time to alter their images, ask them to share their images with one another, commenting on what they did and why they did it. Display these on the Working Wall and compare their images to the city as described in the poetry they created in Session 3; *how do you think you would describe the city once the planting takes effect?*
- Encourage the children to write a short descriptive piece, to describe the altered city they have created. Give the children time and space to draft their description, whilst you as the teacher-writer draft your own alongside. This could be done with a focus group who may need support in getting going with their own writing. Support the children to structure their thinking and to choose and use language and sentence types effectively to communicate the right messages and feelings with the reader. Look back at the impact certain language and sentences have had on them as readers when the city was described at the start of the story? *What feelings were we left with after reading? How did the author create these feelings within us through her choice of language and sentence construction?* Look back at how effects have been created by the author and for what purpose this might be. Now, talk about what feelings they want to invoke in the reader at this point of the story, how these are different from those at the start of the story and how they might choose and use language and structure sentences to effectively communicate with their reader.
- Once they have drafted, give them time to read their piece aloud to themselves, before sharing their draft with a response partner. Model this process with your own draft first, with the children as your response partner.
- Ask them to listen to your writing, considering the thoughts and feelings it evokes in them alongside the illustrations. *How does the writing make them feel about this place? What does it make them think about?* Ask them to respond to what they thought was effective in the writing and how it might be improved.
- Give time for the children to go through this process themselves, with their own response partner, making amendments as necessary. When they are happy with the content, move them on to polishing the letter ready for publication, checking spelling and punctuation.
- Provide the children with appropriate writing materials and presentation paper to write up their descriptions to be published for a wider audience.
- Give the chance for children to read and evaluate their own and others' work, looking at what made the descriptions effective and how they link with the children's artwork. You could provide some questions to support them to respond to each other about their writing such as; *did it convey the right sense of feeling about the change in the environment? Did it describe the changes in enough detail for the reader to be able to feel part of the moment?*
- Display these prominently alongside the artwork for a wider audience to read.

Sessions 9–10: Book Talk, Role Play and Creative Writing

- Re-read the opening of the book until '**drawing down the rain like a blessing.**' *What wider impact have the girl's actions had? How have her actions affected the people in the city as well as the physical environment?*
- Support children in using a full range of reading strategies — re-reading, close reading, noting the text structure, empathising, clarifying — to make the fullest sense of the pages read so far,

and the accompanying illustrations. Focus particularly on the impact of the changes to the city on its inhabitants.

- Place the children into pairs and ask them to role play the scenes depicted across these pages, imagining what the conversations would be between the people who live in the newly ‘greened’ city. Give time for the children to explore the images first, considering their facial expression and body positioning, contemplating on what this may reveal to us about their relationships and feelings.
- You could record these sessions so that the children can refer to them again. You could also take photographs of the children in role and ask the children to annotate the pictures following the role play.
- Explain that the children are now going to write in role as one of the members of this community that has benefited from the girl’s planting. Encourage them to step inside the character in their mind and consider:
 - *How did you feel about the city before?*
 - *Did you notice what was happening around you? At what point?*
 - *How do you feel about the city now?*
 - *What impact has the change had on you, personally?*
- **Or**, you might want to explore what has happened to the old lady from the beginning of the story
 - *Did she watch, from a distance, the changes as they occurred?*
 - *How did she feel knowing that she has started this?*
 - *What would she say to the girl if their paths ever crossed again?*
- Allow time for the children to discuss story ideas in small groups and then to work either independently or in pairs to jot down ideas, and if they want to, draw out their ideas in notes or a visual organiser prior to writing. At the end of the session, invite them to talk through their ideas so that they have the opportunity to think their idea aloud and develop the flow and pace of their piece.
- After some modelling and shared writing to explore how to shape and develop the content of the writing, the children will need time to write their own ideas. You may choose to model writerly behaviour by continuing to work on your own story while the class writes; perhaps alongside a guided group.
- Encourage the children to regularly reread what they have written to ensure that it reflects their aims. They might make use of a response partner during the writing stage to ‘try out’ smaller sections of their text rather than waiting until the whole story is completed.
- Once the class has completed a draft of their writing, discuss the importance of getting feedback and a response from a reader to ensure that it is as effective as possible. Discuss again their aims in creating their piece — *where were they aiming for it to be exciting, reflective, joyful, etc.? Have they achieved their aims?*
- Ask children to choose a response partner to work with. They can either swap and read each other’s work; or take it in turns and read aloud their writing to their chosen partner.
- After they have read or heard the writing, they can tell their partner something they liked about the writing, how it made them feel and then ask them a question about it. They might think about what makes it good to read: *Were any parts interesting, effective, exciting,*

affecting or made you think? Was there anything that you didn't understand or that was unclear?

- After children have had the opportunity to respond to the recommendations and editing support that they have received from their peers (they may also have had the opportunity to benefit from a conference with their teacher or another adult in the class), they might additionally work with an editing partner to polish some of the technical and transcriptional elements of their writing (such as spelling and punctuation) prior to being given the opportunity to publish their story so that it can be shared more widely.
- Discuss whether the children want to use presentation handwriting for the text, or whether to type on a word processor.
- You may want to display these finished pieces of writing alongside the children's artwork in which they 'greened' the city by drawing over the existing image from the book.

Session 11: Graph of Emotion and Writing in Role

- Re-read the opening of the book until '**and another**'. Spend time looking back on and reflecting on the illustrations in this section of the book and the way in which colour now spreads throughout the book, increasing on each page turn. *What do you think Laura Carlin is communicating through this series of images? How do these images and the use of colour within them compare and contrast with the earlier spreads in the book? How do you feel as you look at these images? What sense do they give you about the journey of the story and the girl's development as a character?*
- Following this, work with the children to create a Graph of Emotion to reveal how the girl's feelings have changed throughout the story. Start by working with the children to establish what the key events in the story are. Once these key moments are established place these along the horizontal axis. Then move to the scale of emotion which is written on the vertical axis. Draw on the children's repertoire of vocabulary to describe the chosen character's feelings throughout the story.
- Revisit the first few events as a class, supporting the children to negotiate and agree on how she might have felt at that point in the story, placing a small image of the girl above the event to correspond with the appropriate word used to describe the emotion.
- Reflect on how the girl's emotions have altered, and the positive impact of the planting on her life. Return to the Role on the Wall created for the girl and also reflect on how her personality has changed as a result of the events in the book.
- Now ask the children to imagine that they are the girl at this moment in the story and ask them to write a letter to the old lady thanking her for the changes in her life and explaining what has happened as a result of keeping the promise.
- Give the children time and space to draft their letter, whilst you as the teacher-writer draft your own alongside. This could be done with a focus group who may need support in getting going with their own writing. Support the children to structure their thinking and to choose and use language and sentence types effectively to communicate the right messages and feelings with the reader. Look back at the impact certain language and sentences have had on them as readers in the story so far, looking at how effects have been created by the author and for what purpose this might be.

- Once they have drafted, give them time to read their letter aloud to themselves, before sharing their draft with a response partner. Model this process with your own draft first and the children as your response partner.
- Ask them to listen to your letter, imagining that they are the old lady at this point in the story. *How does the letter make them feel? What does it make them think about?* Ask them to respond to what they thought was effective in the letter and any parts that could be improved before the old lady reads it.
- Give time for the children to go through this process themselves, with their own response partner, making amendments as necessary. When they are happy with the content, move them on to polishing the letter ready for publication, checking spelling and punctuation.
- Provide the children with appropriate writing materials and notepaper to write up their letters, ready for the old lady.
- Display these prominently and give the chance for children to read and evaluate their own and others' work, looking at what made different letters effective. You could provide some questions to support them to respond to each other about their writing such as; *was it written in the right voice? Not too formal or too informal? Was there a good introduction to explain who was writing to her and why? Did they show they understood by drawing on examples of their own or of others? Did the writer sign off appropriately at the end of the letter?*
- You could then ask a parallel year group or a teacher to reply in role as the old lady.

Session 12: Book Talk

- Read on until the end of the book, considering the fact that the girl has now had her bag stolen from her, but that she is confident the thief will keep the same promise that she has; *do you feel as confident that her planting will go on? Why? Why not? Why do you think she repeated the same bargain the old lady made with her? What do you hope will happen next?*
- Explore the endpapers in which the same image the children examined at the start of the sessions has also been altered by the actions of the girl. Allow the opportunity to re-read and reflect, then discuss the impact of the end of the story, the language choices the author has made, the way the illustrations deepen our understanding of the text and our response to it. *How does the end of the story affect you as a reader? What mood are you left in by the final sentence and endpapers?*
- Discuss children's responses to the ending of the book. *What are the children's initial responses to the way the story ends? Are they satisfied with the ending? Why or why not?*
- Allow the children to begin to explore their responses to the text as a whole through booktalk, with the help of what Aidan Chambers calls 'the four basic questions'. These questions give children accessible starting points for discussion:
 - *Did you enjoy this story? What did you like or dislike?*
 - *What puzzles did it contain?*
 - *What links do you see to other stories you already know, or things that you know about from real-life experience?*
- Go on to discuss how the children felt about the book compared to their original expectations:
 - *When you first saw this book, even before you read it, what kind of book did you think it was going to be?*

- *What made you think this?*
- *Now you've read it, is it as you expected?*
- *Have you read other books like it? How is this one the same? How is it different?*
- *If the writer asked you what could be improved in the book, how would you have made it better? [Alternatively] If you had written this book, how would you have made it better?*
- *Would you recommend this book to a friend?*
- Discuss how the children felt about the book overall and their personal responses to the story:
 - *Has anything that happens in the book ever happened to you?*
 - *In what ways was it the same or different for you?*
 - *Which parts in the book seem to you to be most true to life?*
 - *Did the book make you think differently about your own similar experience?*
 - *When you were reading, did you 'see' the story happening in your imagination?*
 - *Which details — which passages — helped you 'see' it best?*
 - *Which passages stay in your mind most vividly?*
- Finally, discuss their responses to the illustrations:
 - *Which illustrations particularly stood out for you?*
 - *Which added further meaning or aided your understanding of the story?*
 - *Which provided viewpoint that you wouldn't have had otherwise?*
 - *What did you notice about the relationship between the text and illustration?*
- You may want to encourage the children to illustrate and write about their favourite scenes in the book. This may also be a good opportunity to recommend further reading to the children so that they can continue to explore the themes of the book.
- The publisher describes the book as 'A picture book of great beauty and hope about the power we have to transform our world.' Do you think this is an accurate description? If you had to summarise the book succinctly in this way, what would you say about it? Collect the children's ideas on sentence strips to display around a copy of the front cover to display in the class reading corner or school library. *Who do you think would enjoy this book? Why? What would you tell them about it to encourage them to read it? What would you hold back, so as not to spoil their reading experience?*
- Following this, the children could write their own reviews of the book, identifying what they think are its strengths, or create a book trailer or podcast inspired by their reading. *What will they choose to include to encourage others to read the book? What might they choose to leave out as it may affect their views on whether to read it?*
- You may also want to encourage the children to write a next chapter for the story, about the young thief who steals the bag from her. *What life have they previously led? Do they continue to keep 'The Promise'? How?*
- In a linked spelling session, investigate phonic rules and spelling patterns linked to words taken from the text.
- You could investigate different ways of representing the /ee/ phoneme, in words such as:
 - *City, ugly, gritty, constantly, hungry, everything, easy, only, many, lucky, leafy, rusty, slowly, everywhere, tiny, already, sorry,*
 - *Money, alley*

- *Mean, stealing easy, dreams, tea, breathing*
- *Streets, trees, green, keep, see*
- *She, me*
- *Thief*
- You could look at how to pluralise words ending in y, using words such as:
 - *Factory - factories*
 - *Balcony – balconies*
 - *City - cities*
- You could also explore adverbs that end in the suffix –ly, such as:
 - *Constantly*
 - *Slowly*
- Continue to draw children’s attention to patterns between words that help to increase their knowledge of how words are spelt, as well as their origins and meanings.

Sessions 13–14: Continuing the story — constructing an independent narrative

- Re-read the book as a whole,
- Now ask the children to reflect on the main characters in the book. *Who were they? How did we relate to them? How did the author encourage us to engage and empathise with the character? Why do you think she chose a young girl as her main protagonist?*
- Come back to the Role on the Wall and draw together your understanding of this character. *What do we really know about her by the end of the story? What unanswered questions do we have about her? What are we inferring about her to fill in the things that are left unsaid in the text?*
- Now ask the children to think of words and phrases that best describe the book for them. Encourage them to respond to the storyline, features of the book and their reactions to it as readers when choosing words and phrases.
- Explore with the children why the publishers might have chosen this story to publish. *Why might it appeal to readers initially? What elements of the story might engage readers? How might they connect the story with their own lives?*
- Together, work on how to summarise the big shapes of the story in no more than 5 or 6 parts. Really encourage the children not to think about tiny details, like where they went or what they said, but the main structural features of the story, e.g.,
 - We are introduced to the main character the girl and learn about the sadness of the city, the setting of the story.
 - We learn the girl is desperate and breaks the law
 - The girl snatches the bag from the old lady. The old lady makes her promise to plant what is inside.
 - The girl has a dream and decides she has to keep her promise. She begins to plant the acorns all over the city.
 - The acorns grow and the city is transformed. The girl moves on to plant in other cities around the world.
 - One day a girl snatches her bag and she makes the same bargain.

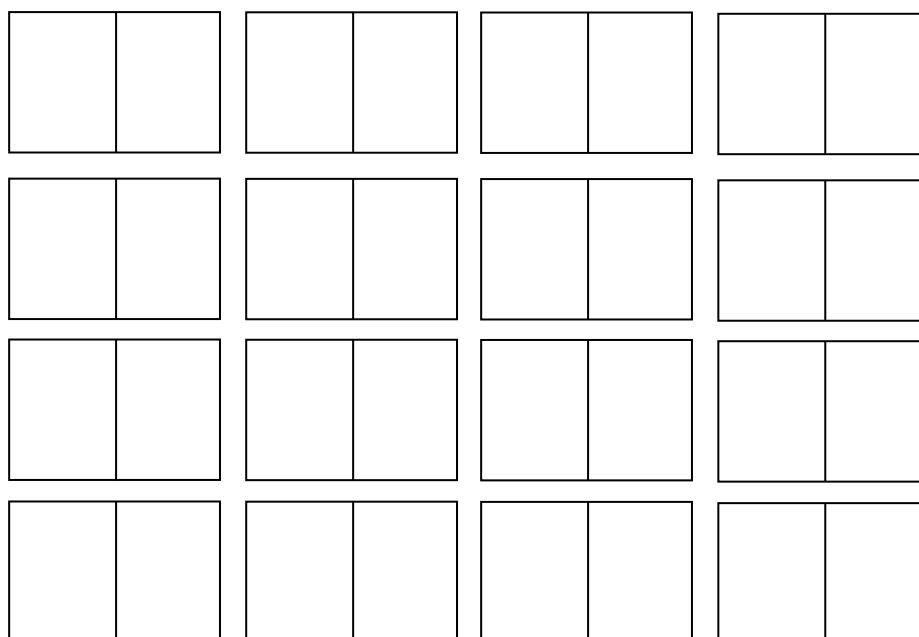
- Think back to the original story of *The Promise*. *How were you introduced to the character? How did we get to know the character more? What was the pivotal event that changed the course of the story and the life of the character? How did this happen? How was the story drawn together at the end?*
- Talk about how the action moves between each story shape — *is it fast-paced to capture attention quickly or create drama, or is the action more drawn out to create depth of engagement or suspense?*
- Encourage the children also to come back to the emotional journey of the story. *Where were the highs and lows? Why do you think this is important for reader engagement?*
- Tell the children that they are going to write a second story, telling the story of the young thief who ended up stealing the girl's bag of acorns. Talk with the children about how they think picturebooks are made. Encourage them to think about the whole process from the author's idea to the finished book. Split the children into groups to come up with a diagram or visual organiser to explain what they think the process might be in a succinct way.
- Allow time for the children to think about and put together the backstory of their character: who they are, where they live, what caused them to steal the bag from the woman, what they will choose to do when given the 'bargain' by the girl and how the story will progress from this point. You may want to explore the possibility of what might have happened to the girl in the original story if she hadn't decided to keep the promise, and how this could have affected the course of the story.
- Give time for the children to plan the big shapes of their own story, as they did with *The Promise*. As before, encourage them not to go into detail at this initial stage, but to define the broad structure in 5 or 6 summary sentences.
- Now give time for the children to work with an initial response partner. This could be another child in the class or a supportive adult. At this initial stage, the response should work on the reader's initial feelings about the story concept and structure. Supportive questions to focus on might be:
 - *Are they engaged with the characters and theme?*
 - *Does it work as a story?*
 - *Are the big shapes and characters right before you flesh out the detail?*
 - *How does a reader engage with your initial concepts?*
 - *What do they like about it?*
 - *What do they want to see in more detail?*
 - *How do your characters work for your reader?*
 - *What do they like about them, what do they want to know more about them? What questions do they have about them?*
 - *Which parts of the story work best for them? Which parts might need further development?*
- Following the response partner session, give time for the children to reflect on their initial ideas, revising where necessary.
- Now think about how you will add detail to these events and work through each stage of the story to get from one big shape to the next, adding extra layers of detail where they feel it is needed. As with all the other stages, the children should be allowed to work flexibly in words and/or pictures at this stage, using whatever format best supports their planning. They may

choose to storymap, flowchart or box up their story into sections, they may just work in words, draw dominant images or use a combination of both words and pictures to plan ideas in more detail.

- Model the process of starting to sequence your story in more stages, adding detail and considering the emotional journey their reader will experience through the story, and how one event will flow on to the next. Encourage them to think in broad terms, not planning the exact writing that will appear in the text, but getting the shape and structure of the story right, working on from the session with their response partner and incorporating suggestions. If they have ideas for lines, or things characters say, they can note these but encourage them to be loose with their ideas at this point. If there are any images forming in their mind about what this might look like in the book, encourage them to make rough sketches alongside, but, as with the text, keep these loose.

Sessions 15–16: Planning ideas in more detail through Storyboarding

- Lots of author/illustrators will work using a storyboard on a single sheet of paper, representing the whole book in small thumbnail-sized squares. Within the squares, they can plan the basic design of each page, plan how the story unfolds over the pages, see how the words and illustrations work together, and consider how the illustrations work together.
- Go back to the original text again and look at the way the text and images are used across the book to tell the story. Consider here:
 - reader engagement;
 - characterisation;
 - the overall structure of the story and how it flows;
 - how events are planned to encourage page turns;
 - use of language, questions, sentence structure, how the text is presented and how we are encouraged to read it;
 - how the illustrations provide story detail beyond the text.
- For more verbose writers the economy of the text in a picturebook can be challenging. Spend some time modelling the thinking about what will be said in the image and what will be said in the picture — will they give the same message? (one emphasising the other); will they be a literal representation of each other? (this is unusual in a published picturebook); will they show the same thing but from a different point of view?
- Have a storyboard with a maximum of sixteen spreads (this is the usual number for a published picturebook) marked out on a flipchart or IWB for you to model marking out a story. Remember that the first spread will show the front and back cover, the second spread the front endpapers, the third spread the title page and dedication and the last spread the final endpapers.



- Show the children how to work with the spread diagram to develop one of the stories on paper or in your own sketchbook. Model and demonstrate carefully how to transform your story ideas onto the spreads, talking through each step of the thinking involved — what the pictures will look like on the page, the size and scale of elements within illustrations, what words will accompany the pictures and where the best place for the words will be. Also consider where you will place your defining moment for your character and what will shift the emotions in the story.
- Give children a large storyboard frame (or allow them to draw their own) and plenty of time for having a go at roughly planning out their story.
- At this point the drawings only need to be rough sketches, but the children should think carefully about the images they will draw, words they will use, how they will be written and where they will appear on the page.
- When they have completed their storyboard, ask the children to re-read it as a whole. Then to read again, this time, giving careful consideration to the reader — *at each moment what do they want their reader to be thinking or doing? What will make them want to turn the page? What effect do you want your story to have on the reader?* Allow time for the writer to make rough notes about what they want their reader to think, feel and do as they read, ready for a reflective discussion about their ideas.
- Use your own work or negotiate with a child to share their storyboard, under a visualizer if you have one, to model a process for responding to the story created. Look back at the original picturebook, reminding the children of the shapes and structure of the original story. Open up a reflective conversation about the overall structure of your story, gauging their responses as readers. You might use key questions to target their thinking, such as:
 - *Does the story make sense?*
 - *Do you engage with the characters?*

- *What parts make sense, what parts could be refined or improved?*
- *Does the story flow?*
- *Are you engaged as a reader, would you want to turn the page and find out what happens next?*
- *Are you emotionally engaged with the story?*
- In the light of this discussion, consider revisions that could be made and why.
- Now, share with the children what you were trying to achieve with your story as a writer, and what effect you wanted to have on them as readers. Open up a reflective discussion around your own work as a model for children pairing up and reflecting on their own work. Encourage them to make suggestions that will achieve the effect the writer is looking for as well as an effect on the reader.
- Now give plenty of time for the children to pair up, looking at and reviewing their draft ideas, to evaluate the effectiveness of their writing for another reader. Allow time to make changes or enhancements.
- Come back to your own storyboard and share the decisions you will start to make to take this through to the publication stage. Revisit the illustration spreads, still working in roughs, to consolidate finer details, staging and setting, props, use of colour to reflect mood, use of framing to show the passing of time, whose perspective the reader sees spreads through, the scale of the characters on the page, the colours used and how this adds to our interpretation of the story and our emotional engagement with it. *Will interactive elements like flaps or pop ups add to the story?*
- Now think about the words needed on each page. Sparsity is key here, many picturebooks will have less text, as the pictures are doing the weight of the work. Children will have to think about their text differently; for example, if they have used framing to show the passing of time, they will not need to use fronted adverbials for this; if they have depicted a character's emotion in the illustration, they won't need to do this in the words. They should be encouraged to think about the right words for each page that allow the text and image both to contribute to the storytelling. They will need to think about where the text will be placed on the page and may wish to use tracing paper to try out different arrangements.
- Allow time for the children to work here with an editing partner, where two children or a child and an enabling adult support each other with transcription; reading the story aloud, looking at the potential impact of the illustration, proofreading, looking at spelling, punctuation and grammar and to consider the quality of the writing as a whole, prior to publication.
- After working with their partner, allow children time to make any further changes, again using a different colour pen or pencil to track changes made.

Sessions 16–20: Publication — Bookmaking

- Demonstrate to the children how to make an origami book with dust jacket and modify to increase the number of spreads. The Never Ending books technique from *Get Writing! 7–11* by Paul Johnson (Bloomsbury, 2008) gives a good example of how to make a book which suits this activity. Making each spread before taping together and covering the book allows children to be able to redo and replace spreads if needed as well as redoing the cover art if this goes wrong.

- Using one of your own spreads, model the difference in the quality of illustration from the storyboard to the finished book. Think about the options for adding the text; *will you use presentation handwriting, or type on a word processor, cut out and stick?*
- Give plenty of time for the children to complete the publication of the inside of their books. Allow them to choose and use the materials they think best fit the style of their illustration, exploring and experimenting with these first to test these and explore their effects. If the children want to make watercolour illustrations, model how to sketch, paint, dry, and then add pen detail on each spread before moving on. You might also want to explore the children creating spreads outside of their books, then scanning and resizing on the computer before printing and sticking into their books. This will enable the children to work on each spread without worrying about spoiling others.
- Go back to the original book to explore and work on adding features of published texts on the front and back covers. *What will they call their book that will interest the reader without giving the whole story away? What illustration will they place on the front cover to give the reader an idea of the story? Where will they place their name as the author/illustrator?* This is a fantastic opportunity to demonstrate more complex book language in action, such as publisher logo/name (this could be agreed as a school or class name publishing house), spine text, dust jackets and endpapers, dedication, publication details, blurb, barcode, price.
- Encourage the children to share their own hand-made books with a different response partner. They can swap books, read each other's stories and share their opinions on them. This should be a positive experience, so you may want to model this with another adult responding to your book with what they liked about the story and illustrations first.
- Give lots of time for them to swap with a number of different people. The children could then pick their favourite comment that they got from someone else to write as a quote on the back of their book.
- You may wish to arrange reading partner sessions where children can share their books with children in other classes in the school. They could see how their book appeals to readers of different ages and what each reader gains from their text.
- Display the books prominently in the class reading area, library or an appropriate communal space so that they can be shared with and enjoyed by a wider audience.

Session 21: Exploring the story in an alternative medium — film literacy

- Following the reading of the book, share with the children the animated film that has been created, based on the book. You can find the film, along with additional resources and a climate action campaign here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ea7W4EfhZGk>.
- Prior to talking about the film, some specific terminology will be beneficial in supporting the richness of children's talk, for example, in discussing the impact of camera angles.
- Here's a summary of some of the main shot types:
 - Often included at the beginning of a scene, **the establishing shot** — or **wide shot** — helps to build ambiance, may give a nod at what's to come and indicates where (and sometimes when) the scene is taking place. It allows the viewer to familiarise themselves with the environment and some of the subjects within it.

- The **full shot** shows the entire body of the subject from head to toe and tends to focus more on the character's movement and gestures, rather than their state of mind.
- The **medium shot** (also known as the $\frac{3}{4}$ shot) typically shows the subject from the knees up. It allows the viewer to see both the background environment and the character's gestures, while still being close enough to capture their emotions.
- The **close-up** shot shows the subject's reactions and emotions without the distraction of a detailed background
- An **extreme close shot** can show important details or allow the viewer to experience the extremes of a character's emotions
- The **point of view** shot speaks for itself — it shows us the subject's point of view, and allows us to view the world from their perspective — we can get a better idea of what is important to them or see something that they have noticed.
- A **birds-eye view or down shot** can make the subject seem vulnerable or powerless, whereas the **up shot or worm's-eye view** can give the impression that the subject is in some way powerful.
- An **over the shoulder** shot is taken from behind the shoulder of a character and usually frames the subject in a medium or close shot. It is usually used in dialogue scenes and helps to establish which characters are speaking to each other.
- In addition to these types of shots, we might also consider how the camera moves — pans, tilts, dolly and zoom — and how it is angled in the shot. Further resources to support film analysis can be found here: <http://www.bfi.org.uk/education-research/education/education-resources>.
- Start by watching the whole film and allow time for children to share their initial responses and reactions to what they have seen, heard and felt. *What did you like or dislike about the film? How did it make you feel? Did your feelings change while you were watching? How did you feel at different moments? What caused your feelings to change? How does the film compare to the book? What moments were the same? Which moments were different? What did you notice about the way in which the book was changed to suit the medium of film?*
- Spend time reflecting on the colours used in the film and how they compare to the palette choices made by Laura Carlin; *what are the main colours you remember from the film? Did some colours feel more important than others? Why do you think certain colours are used? Do the colours change as the story progresses? How does this compare to the book?*
- Consider how music and sound add to the film and are used in a way which you cannot replicate in a book. *What sounds can you hear during the film? What sounds were most memorable or impactful for you? Is there music in the film? How would you describe the music? Do you like it? Why/why not? Did it remind you of anything? How does the music make you feel? If you were scoring the film, what music would you add? Why? Are there moments of silence in the film? When do they happen? What impact do they have? Is there any dialogue in the film? Do you think the film needed dialogue? Why/why not?*
- Finally reflect on the shots used and the way in which this both mirrored and was different from the illustrations in the book. *What shots can you identify? Do they change how you feel as a viewer or how you see the character? Do you ever see events from the character's point of view? When does the camera move and when does it stay still?*

- Ask the children to complete a double bubble to share their ideas (see Appendix 1). In the diagram the children should share their thinking around what the book uniquely offered, what the film uniquely offered, and common areas shared between the book and the film.
- When they have completed these, use them to open up discussions around how each medium effectively captured the essence of the story. *How did the process of reading across media deepen or extend their insights? What was each medium able to uniquely offer to the story and our interpretation of it? Did either medium resonate with them more deeply? Why was this?*

Sessions 22–23: Providing real-world experiences and contexts — planning a community project to create a green space

Prior to this session, it would be useful to do some background research on setting up and running a community garden to support the children later in setting up their own community or school garden. Understanding what is involved will better support you to plan authentic writing opportunities that a real gardener would need to employ for such as project, such as: lists, leaflets, posters, newsletters, plant care labels, etc. You can find useful information on Cultivation Street’s website which aims to promote community projects or creating a school garden: <https://cultivationstreet.com/cultivation-street-national-winner-2017/>.

- Explain to the children that there are many real people in Britain who are similarly passionate as the old lady and the girl in the story are about making grey, concrete parts of the country greener. Supporting resources and information you can share can be found here:
 - <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/gherrilla-gardening-meet-the-man-who-plants-flowers-in-the-night-to-make-london-a-greener-city-a3236816.html>
 - <https://www.rhs.org.uk/get-involved/greening-grey-britain/why>
- Look at the infographics on the RHS website (see link above). *Do you think it’s important to change grey spaces to green? Why/Why not? Why do you think groups of people may be resistant to change like this?*



- Ask the children if they themselves feel inspired to try to create or support a community garden of some kind having read the book. This could be as simple as supporting an elderly allotment keeper to maintain his or her plot, or creating a small school garden, or it could involve something that involves the wider local community should resources, experience and time allow.
- Take the children's ideas and draw on the learning throughout the teaching sequence to support them to choose a feasible project, then plan, finance and execute it as a class. It is important to show the children how community politics works and how to appropriately action change in a community by going through the proper channels to support them in their journey from understanding to activism to positive action. You could use English, citizenship or PSHE sessions to embark on a project investigating how to achieve positive change in the local community, using the roadmap resource and farmer's market case study on the Everyday Democracy website to support you in learning how to bring such a project to a positive outcome and understanding how democracy works: <https://www.everyday-democracy.org/resources/action-road-map-planning-tool>.
- You may to involve members of the school or local community for permissions, experience and support which will provide the children with authentic contexts within which to apply their knowledge of the world and literacy skills.
- To begin, as a class, work together to think of any small grey spaces that are in need of transformation in your local area. This might require going on a short walk around your school (or, if you prefer, the neighbouring streets) on the lookout for small plots that are ripe for environmental change.
- In small groups, ask children to choose one of the spaces that they have seen and that they think could be made greener. Using ideas of their own and from the RHS website, the children should plan what they would ideally like to do with the space. They will also need to conduct extra research on the benefits of plants and flowers in the environment and building a persuasive argument to support achieving permission to engage in planting in the community.
- They should think about how long it would take, what they would need, how much it would cost, and what they hope the final impact and benefits would be. They might take a photo of the space as it looks now, and then produce an artist's impression of what the space could look like after the work has been completed.
- Once children have made their initial plans, ask them to prepare a presentation which would communicate their vision for the space, the reasoning behind it and the practical steps necessary to achieve it.
- Clarify with the children who their intended audience is and what the purpose behind their presentation is. If it is a grey space within the school grounds, the audience might be the Headteacher, a member of the governing body, or the school site manager, if it is a neglected space in the local community it may be a local councillor or head of a local business.
- Give them time to prepare their presentation, thinking about how they will make it clear, concise, cohesive and persuasive. *How are they going to know who is speaking when? Are they going to write down and rehearse what they are going to say? How long should they speak for? Are they going to require props to facilitate their presentation — prepared videos, PowerPoint slides, interviews with members of the school community, photographs and illustrations?*

- Once children have prepared, allow them time to rehearse their presentation to another group or to the class who can give them feedback on the clarity and effectiveness of their message.
- If it is a school-based project, arrange for these to be heard by an appropriate panel. After the children have given their presentations, the panel might offer feedback and even a small budget towards realising one or more of the visions.
- If the area selected by the children is outside of the school grounds, rather than a physical presentation, the children might record a video to accompany their diagrams and illustrations to send to their local councillor or transfer their thinking and ideas into a written letter.
- The children might also go on to write persuasive texts linked to campaigns which are fighting against the reduction and damage to green public spaces in the UK and why these areas are important. They might link to the importance of allotments and to the work on protecting green belt being done by the Campaign to Protect Rural England. Children can draw on their own experiences caring for and tending a garden or allotment space or may have had the opportunity to volunteer to help in local allotments within their wider community. The National Allotment Society also has resources to support children becoming involved in their work: https://www.nsalg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/A5_Children_on_the_plot_240516_HiRes.pdf.

Sessions 24–25: Sharing cross-curricular knowledge — the importance of rewilding and how you can help

- Motivated by this idea of protecting the green belt, they could consider what would happen if we continue to lose plants and trees in the environment, imagining and visualising what a dystopian vision of England with no greenbelt spaces with all the towns and cities joined together into one enormous sprawling metropolis might look like in art or writing. *What would be the consequences of this loss of green space? What would happen to food production, wildlife and habitats, air quality, noise pollution, exercise, and peace of mind?*
- They can then use this to engage in action on a wider scale, writing to parents or locals in the community, encouraging people to grow plants on balconies and in gardens, writing to an MP or minister about the need for rewilding on a larger scale or creating a video that can be shared more widely on a school website or social media platform.
- Bring all of the learning together by creating a display of all the work for the school community to view and learn from. Consider what additional features they might want to incorporate into the exhibit to allow their planned work to be showcased effectively, for example a screen and projector or device on which to share videos made by the children, a space where children can give talks about aspects of their learning, boards on which to pin information, writing and artwork.
- Give time and space for the children to plan their exhibition space and what to put in it then to set up the space, prepare the input and check the information is clear and meaningful to the visitors who will be coming.
- Once you have agreed the children’s ideas and layout of the exhibition space, give the children time to create labels, signs, an exhibition floor plan and a souvenir pamphlet. You might choose to organise a class visit to your local museum or gallery to help support your planning.

- Divide the children into groups and designate them different zones in the exhibition to welcome guests and share the work. Give them time to plan and rehearse how they might explain and talk about their part of the exhibition.
- Give the children the opportunity to write their own invitations to their chosen special guests.
- Host the exhibit for the invited audience. Have a visitors' book available for invited guests to comment and feedback on what they have seen, and conducting interviews to find out what they have learnt or what the exhibition has inspired in them.
- Reflect on the exhibition as a whole with the children after it has taken place. *How did it feel to see all their work displayed in this way? How did the guests' reactions feel?*
- Also encourage the children to reflect on the topic as a whole. *What new knowledge or skills do they think they have learned? What were they most interested in throughout the sequence of work? Why? Which piece(s) of their work were they most proud of? Why?*

After completing the sequence:

- The children can go on to complete their own author study of Nicola Davies. An author study gives students the opportunity to delve deeply into an author's life and body of work. Provide opportunities throughout the planned reading programme to explore other work by Nicola Davies. The CLPE Nicola Davies booklist outlines a wide variety of the titles she has produced throughout her career: <https://clpe.org.uk/books/booklists>
- Encourage the children to draw out intertextual links between the stories and to consider the importance of animals, the environment and human interaction with nature throughout her work.
- Working individually, in small groups, or as a class, the children should be encouraged to:
 - critically evaluate an author's themes, characters, and writing style;
 - make connections between the author's life and work;
 - make personal connections between their own experiences and those of the author and his/her characters.
- Author studies necessarily require lots of reading, giving the children plenty of opportunities to improve their reading fluency. In addition, teachers can use author studies to target reading instruction by recommending texts from across Nicola's vast body of work that are most appropriate to each child's current stage of development.
- A key component of author studies is researching an author's life and work, using print and online resources. This research provides a built-in opportunity for teachers to continue to teach information literacy skills introduced in this unit of work, especially how to find information sources and determine if they are credible and reliable.
- Throughout the study, opportunities for discussion, research, and a final project, where children organise and present back their findings will need to be planned in and appropriately scaffolded where appropriate. The work they have done in completing the exhibition will be a good scaffold to support children's independent work and organisational skills.

Opportunities to explore and contextualise spelling patterns, including phonics

Children have opportunity to use and apply words from the National Curriculum Word List for Years 5 and 6, such as:

- *achieve, appreciate, bargain, conscience, curiosity, desperate, determined, environment, individual, marvellous, necessary, neighbour, opportunity, persuade, sacrifice, vegetable*

Opportunities also exist to teach, revise and investigate the etymology of complex sound and spelling patterns, associated with the deep orthography of the English language. When developing children's language and vocabulary to describe the city images early in the book, the inhabitants of that city (including our protagonist) and the impact of the trees when they start growing, words suggested by the children might support an exploration of

Endings which sound like /jəs/ spelt –cious or –tious: *vicious, precious, cautious, malicious, ambitious*
Words ending in –able and –ible: *terrible, horrible, possible, invisible, unfeasible, incredible, capable, fixable, valuable, endurable*

The text provides opportunities to revisit different spellings of the /ee/ phoneme: *city, mean, ugly, streets, heat, gritty, constantly, hungry, stealing, trees, lady, easy, she, heroes, me, money*

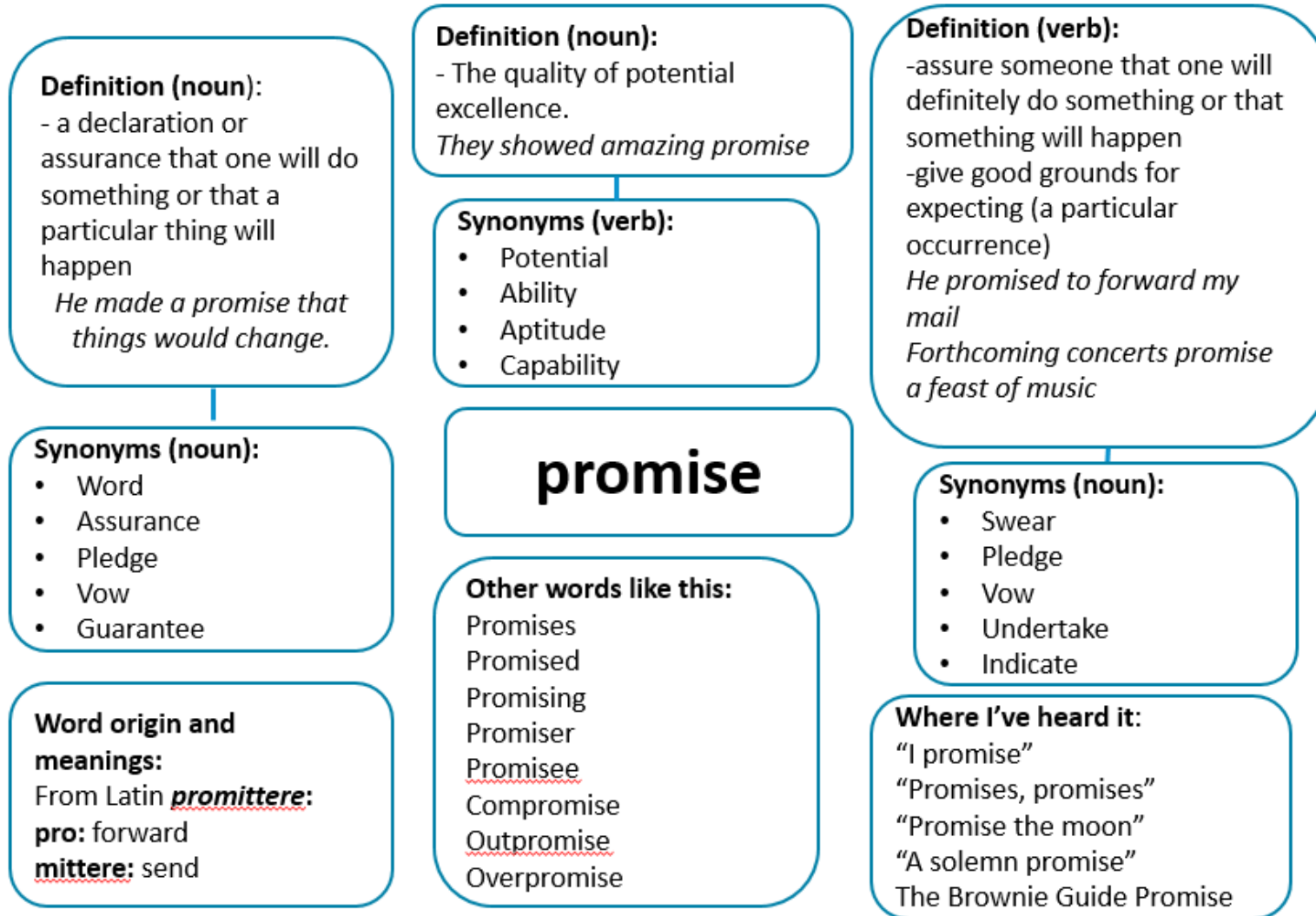
As suggested in the sequence, the children could create a word family for the word **promise**, starting with an investigation into the etymology or morphology of the word then developing into a wider bank of related words relating to word class and meanings.

Opportunities to explore and contextualise language and grammar

There is plenty of opportunity provided in the teaching sequence to study language and grammar in the context of real and rich reading and writing opportunities. It is also worth considering the following opportunities, when working with traditional tales:

- short, simple or minor sentences to provide emphasis;
- relative clauses;
- adverbials to indicate degrees of possibility and conjunctions to provide pace and sequencing;
- figurative language and poetic devices to provoke emotional response or create connections, including personification, metaphor, simile, alliteration
- passive and active voice to create ambiguity and foreboding;
- cohesive devices like repetition, lists or the use of synonyms;
- punctuation to create drama, including ellipses for suspense.

Appendix 1: Promise word investigation



Appendix 2: Investigating words with the pro- prefix

