The King Who Banned the Dark by Emily Haworth-Booth (Pavilion)

When a little boy grows up to be king, he decides to use his power to tackle his fear of the dark by banning it. His advisors persuade him that the best way to do this is by convincing the people that it was what they wanted anyway. They even plan a celebration of the dark ban with a grand fireworks display but maybe the people are not as susceptible as the king and his advisors believe… This debut picture book by Emily Haworth-Booth, in which the predominantly yellow colour palette lights up the darkness, has a strong underlying political and philosophical message very relevant for our times.

This teaching sequence is designed for a Year 3 or Year 4 class. It has been specially written for CLPE's Inspiring Writing in Years 3 and 4 course.

Overall learning aims of this teaching sequence:

- To inspire children to engage with literature
- To think and talk confidently about their response to the book, using prediction, asking questions, making connections with their own experience
- To develop creative responses to the text through drama, storytelling and artwork
- To explore the centrality to writers of reader response and reading aloud
- To enrich vocabulary and understanding of the impact of language on readers and audience
- To write in role in order to explore and develop empathy for characters
- To explore the authentic authorial process of ideation, creation, reflection and publication
- To write for meaning, purpose and audience in a variety of forms

Overview of this teaching sequence

This sequence is approximately 5 weeks long if spread over 25 sessions. The book offers a range of opportunities to work across the curriculum as well as in English sessions, giving children the chance to work in more depth around the story. 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 themes such as growing and changing, power and responsibility, understanding society and how it is governed and overcoming fears. Cross curricular work is integral to the English work and the contextualised curriculum suggested enables genuine depth in comprehension, in developing and using language across a range of contexts and in written outcomes. This sequence supports teachers to consider when such cross curricular work might be introduced to maximise the impact of this learning.

Teaching Approaches	Writing Outcomes

- Response to Illustration
- Reading Aloud
- Re-reading
- Role on the Wall
- Looking at Language
- Using visual organisers
- Discussion and Debate
- Role play and drama
- Collaborative writing
- Publishing and Bookmaking
- Booktalk
- Storymapping

- Thoughts and ideas around a text in response to what has been read or seen in the illustrations
- Letter writing
- Concept maps to explore story predictions and ideas
- Writing in role
- Journalistic writing
- Note-taking
- Text analysis
- Free verse poetry
- Performance of writing
- Balanced argument in a written letter
- Formal speech
- Book review
- Own narrative based on themes of the book

Links to other supporting texts:

Other Books by Emily Haworth-Booth

- *Rush! The Making of a Climate Activist* by Tamsin Omond and Emily Haworth-Booth (Marion Boyars)
- *The Last Tree* by Emily Haworth-Booth (Pavilion), coming in January 2020

Other texts referenced in the Teaching Sequence

- No One is Too Small to Make a Difference, Greta Thunberg (Penguin)
- The Little Island, Smriti Prasadam-Halls and Robert Starling (Andersen Press)
- Farmer Duck, Martin Waddell and Helen Oxenbury (Walker)
- Wild, Emily Hughes (Flying Eye)
- Leaf, Sandra Dieckmann (Flying Eye)

Books to Support the Exploration of Themes Inspired by the Text

- *The Dark*, Lemony Snicket and Jon Klassen (Orchard). Power of Reading Teaching Sequence available for this text for Years 1 and 2
- *Orion and the Dark*, Emma Yarlett (Templar). Corebooks Teaching Sequence available for this text for Years 1 and 2

- *Emily Brown and the Thing*, Cressida Cowell and Neal Layton (Hodder). Corebooks Teaching Sequence available for this text for EYFS
- *The Owl who was Afraid of the Dark*, Jill Tomlinson, illustrated by Paul Howard (Egmont)
- *Can't You Sleep, Little Bear?* Martin Waddell and Barbara Firth (Walker)
- *Owl Babies*, Martin Waddell and Patrick Benson (Walker)
- *Jabari Jumps,* Gaia Cornwall (Walker)
- Greta's Story: The Schoolgirl Who Went On Strike To Save The Planet, Valentina Camerini and Veronica Carratello (Simon and Schuster)
- Our House Is on Fire: Greta Thunberg's Call to Save the Planet, Jeanette Winter (Beach Lane Books)
- *Red and the City*, Marie Voigt (Oxford University Press)
- *How to Be a Lion,* Ed Vere (Puffin)
- *On Sudden Hill,* Linda Sarah and Benji Davies (Simon and Schuster)
- *I Am Henry Finch,* Alexis Deacon and Viviane Schwarz
- *Varmints,* Helen Ward and Marc Craste (Templar) Power of Reading Teaching Sequence available for Y5/6
- *The Day War Came,* Nicola Davies and Rebecca Cobb (Walker)
- *The Promise,* Nicola Davies and Laura Carlin (Walker)
- *The Invisible Kingdom, The Kingdom Revealed and The Invincible Kingdom*, Rob Ryan (Hutchinson)
- *The General* by Michael Foreman (Templar)

CLPE Booklists

- Environment Booklist: https://clpe.org.uk/clpe/library/booklists/environment-booklist
- Women's History Month Booklist: https://clpe.org.uk/clpe/library/booklists/womens-history-month-booklist

Websites

- The Guardian Newswise: https://www.theguardian.com/newswise
- Greta Thunberg's UN Climate Change Conference Speech (Katowice, Poland, 15 December 2018) in full: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VFkQSGyeCWg

Cross curricular Learning

All of the following proposed pieces of work could be undertaken simultaneously alongside your study of this book to complement, extend and enrich this sequence of work.

Science

To expand on and deepen children's understanding around concepts explored in the text, plans can be made for the children to:

- Investigate the effect of light and dark on plant growth.
- Find out about nocturnal animals and the ways in which they adapt to suit the night time. How have these adaptations been replicated in design by humans, e.g. reflective cat's eyes?
- Learn how our eyes work, how darkness affects vision and how to protect our eyes from the effects of the sun.
- Use their senses to cope in total darkness.
- Describe the physical properties of a variety of reflective, translucent and transparent materials.
- Learn about the Sun as a light source and make charts and tables based on observations of the seasons and length of day. They can compare with places where the seasonal patterns and length of day can differ significantly from our own.
- Monitor the effect of weather on light.
- Explore simple electrical circuits when creating an artificial light source.

Art and Design

To deepen and expand children's knowledge of how colour and tone is used as part of the storytelling in the illustrations of the text, plans can be made for the children to:

- Use drawing and painting to develop and share their ideas, experiences and imagination about the dark, our fears, shadows and light.
- Use a range of materials such as, charcoal, drawing pencils, putty rubbers, ink and paint, and develop art and design techniques when exploring tone, creating shadows in still life and producing monochrome pieces of art.
- Experiment with different materials to explore contrasts between light and dark shades and bright and dark colours.
- Learn about and appreciate the work of artists – both past and contemporary – who explore light and dark, shadows and silhouettes. They can describe the similarities and differences between different practices and disciplines and make links to their own work.

Geography, History and Citizenship

To deepen and expand on children's understanding of how the monarchy rules and how society is structured, plans can be made for the children to:

- Explore the history of the UK monarchy and how it has been shaped and changed over time.
- Acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in Britain.
- Understand what is meant by democracy and understand the importance of support for participation in the democratic processes, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in Britain.
- Develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence.

- Distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of Britain.
- Accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and to understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely.
- Further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling them to acquire an appreciation for and respect for their own and other cultures.
- Encourage respect for other people.
- Encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Design Technology

To expand on the product design ideas to create or block out light, plans can be made for the children to design, make and evaluate products that revolve around light and dark, such as:

- A nightlight for the King
- A shadow puppet theatre with puppets
- An object that incorporates a light source such as a torch or lampshade or model lighthouse.
- Reflective cat's eyes
- High visibility, reflective garments for when it is dark
- A hat, glasses or mask to block out the light

PSHE and Citizenship

Depending on the age and emotional maturity of the children, you may wish to explore links between this book and wider current issues. You might plan to:

- Link the reactions of the advisors to mainstream media headlines around immigration; views that have been highlighted by the Brexit campaign.
- Explore the concept of propaganda here, linked to past historical propaganda such as that created in wartimes or very directly to more recent newspaper headlines such as those referenced on this Free Movement Organisation webpage: https://www.freemovement.org.uk/daily-mail-immigration-appeals/ or propaganda posters such as the Leave campaign's 'Breaking Point' poster or the vans carrying slogans as part of the UK Home Office's Operation Vaken in 2013.
- If the children are mature enough, you could also explore the concept of othering (as the King and his advisors do with the dark in the text); the conscious or unconscious assumption that a certain identified group poses a threat to the favoured group, largely driven by politicians and the media, as opposed to personal contact.

Before beginning the book

- In order for the sequence to work effectively 'keep back' the text from the children initially, including the cover of the book and its title. Unfold the story slowly; it is best for the children not to know the ending until you are at the culmination of the teaching sessions. Once the whole story has been shared, however, ensure that there are opportunities for the story to be read and re-read aloud in its entirety, and for children to re-read and pore over the text and illustrations independently.
- Create a space in the classroom for a Working Wall to enable you to display 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 by folding over large pieces of sugar paper and subsequently using the pages of the journal to capture responses.
- You may wish to provide each child with an A5 notebook or encourage them to hand-make this as a writing journal that they can use throughout the sequence.

Teaching sessions

Session 1: Response to Illustration

The picturebooks featured on Core Books have been chosen because of the quality of the illustrations they contain and the ways in which the illustrations work with the text to create meaning for the reader. Children will need time and opportunities to enjoy and respond to the pictures, and to talk together about what the illustrations contribute to their understanding of the text. Such discussions can support the development of inference skills and deepen and enrich reader engagement and response.

- Share with the children the illustration from the inside title page from the book with the title and publication details removed. Give the children the time and space to read this illustration closely. You may wish to have this as an enlarged image on the IWB or give pairs or small groups of children a copy of the illustration to explore and talk about together, and which they can annotate with their initial observations, questions and ideas about the story. This may be in the form of words, phrases, statements or questions. This will allow you to ascertain the children's prior vocabulary and knowledge around the concepts introduced in this illustration.
- Now, encourage them to reflect on the image more deeply through questioning:
    - Where is this place?
    - What is it like? How do you know?
    - What time of day do you think it might be?
    - Would you like to be there? Why or why not?
    - Have you ever been somewhere like this? Where was it? What was it like?

- How might it feel to be here?

- Now encourage the children to look at the characters in the illustration, the human character and the dog:

  - Who do you think they are? How might they be connected?
  - What do you think might be happening or about to happen?
  - What do you think the characters might be thinking or feeling? Why?

- Listen carefully to the children's responses, observing and assessing the level of detail in which they are able to read the image they see closely. Do they note the significance of light and dark across the image, both in the bright ceiling lights cutting through the black background and also in the two pictures on the wall, one showing a bright sun and one showing a dark, moonlit scene. They may also look at the journey we are being led on through the image – the characters are leading us on, but to where? They may also note the plants in the vases, pots and urns along the corridor – what might this suggest? They may link this to the narrative theme of growth – what might this character's growth be focussed on?
- Come back to the two characters and think about how they might be feeling. What tells you this? Encourage the children to look carefully at their body positions and facial expressions. What do you think each of them might be thinking at this point? Give each child a small piece of A5 plain paper and allow them to pick one of the characters and gain some ideas of what they might be thinking or saying here. When they have had time to compose their thoughts in their head, give time for them to write these down on their piece of paper. Then, they will need to consider whether they think their character is thinking this thing to themselves or whether they are vocalising their thoughts. When they have decided, encourage them to draw either a thought or speech bubble around their words and blu-tac their ideas on a copy of the illustration, either on ones that have been copied for pairs or groups or a shared copy that can be displayed on the Working Wall or in the shared journal.
- Give the children the chance to read and compare each other's ideas – are there any common themes? Why do you think this has happened? What do you think the illustrator is trying to communicate through this illustration? Does it make you want to read on? Why/Why not?
- At this point, you may have some children who pick up on the fact that the character looks as though they are walking from a bright, light space towards a dark, tunnel-like opening. Some may voice personal fears or concerns about the dark, which will need to be listened to and taken into account as the story progresses.

Session 2: Reading aloud, empathising and making personal connections with a text

Reading aloud slows written language down so that children can hear and absorb the words, tunes and patterns. It enables children to experience and enjoy stories they might otherwise not meet or

access, enlarging their reading interests and providing access to a range and breadth of texts beyond their usual repertoire. Reading aloud helps children to broaden their repertoire as readers, becoming familiar with a wider range of genres and the work and voice of particular authors, focussing on authorial intent as they do so. By reading well-chosen books aloud, teachers also help classes to become communities of readers, sharing in the rich experience of a growing range of books they enjoy, get to know well and talk about. Talking together about books is a powerful way to explore and reflect on emotional response to a story and what it means for us as individuals, by helping children begin to analyse how the writer has made us feel a certain way.

- Look back at the title page illustration from the previous session and then turn the page to reveal the first spread in the book, **without revealing or reading the accompanying text**. Again, you will need to share the spread at a large scale on the IWB or provide copies for pairs or small groups to read closely. Concentrate on the initial impact of the page turn on the children:
    - Was this where you were expecting to be led? What surprised you or confirmed your thoughts?
- Now give time and space for the children to more closely read and talk about this new spread together, annotating with their thoughts, observations and questions about what they see:
    - What can you see that is familiar to you? How do you think this spread links to the title page?
    - What more can you learn about the characters, the setting and the potential story from this spread?
- Come back together, allowing the children to feed back on their discussions. *Do they have any more ideas about this character; who they might be or what they might be like?* The children's attention may first have been drawn to the familiar characters – what differences are there between the dog and the human character? Does this confirm or change anything they first thought? They might note the symmetry in their facial expression; they are both awake and alert and have curved lines under their open eyes; what might this tell us about them? They may look at the colour palette, limited to tones of black, greys and orange/yellow. What do you think this tells us? Some children may have noticed the prop details in the shadowed background of the illustrations – what might the large collection of books and the globe on the shelves suggest? What about the toys and references to hobbies that you can see, the guitar, the soldier and the horse? They may comment on the grandeur of the four poster bed and the pelmet and curtains; what might this tell us about the setting and character? They may also have noted the items hanging from the coat stand in the far right of the spread. What might these tell us?

- When you have had the chance to develop the children's inferential skills using the illustration, move on to reading the text aloud. Was this what you were expecting from the spread? Does it tell you anything more about the story or what might follow?
- Look at the language used to begin the story; *'There was once a little boy who was afraid of the dark.'*
- Have they heard similar language in anything else they have read? What does this language choice suggest?
- The children may link this to other traditional tales that commonly open with There was once… or Once upon a time… What might this suggest about the story? They may also look at the semantics of the language used. What does the use of past tense in the opening make you think about how the story might progress or evolve? *There **was once** a little boy who **was** afraid of the dark.* Note the children's thoughts around a copy of the illustration on the Working Wall or in the shared journal.
- Re-read the page and focus on children's personal connections with the text. Do they agree that there's *nothing so unusual* about being afraid of the dark? or that *Most children are afraid of the dark at one time or another?* Children may reference books they have read before that cover the theme of being afraid of the dark, such as *Can't You Sleep Little Bear?, The Dark, Orion and the Dark, Owl Babies, A Dark, Dark Tale, The Owl who was Afraid of the Dark* or *Emily Brown and the Thing* (see linked texts above) or may talk about their own personal experiences of being afraid of the dark, or the experiences of someone else they know or have seen in a film or TV series.
- Talk together about the concept of fear:

    - How do we know the little boy is afraid?
    - What does it mean to be afraid of something?
    - Have you ever been afraid? Invite the children to discuss a moment, time, place or thing that has created a feeling of fear in them, **if they wish to discuss this**. Some of the children might have first-hand experience of a fear of the dark that they can connect with or relate to the class.

- What impact do you think being afraid of the dark might be having on the boy? They may connect this with the lines under his eyes, realising that him not being able to sleep is making him tired.
- Encourage the children to think of advice they could give the boy, empathising with his fear, by relating it to their own experience or the experiences shared by others and offering supportive suggestions to help him, based on what they have observed so far.
- Encourage the children to draft a letter of advice to the King. If the children have not had experience of writing a letter before, you could model this first, otherwise you may just want to talk about the purpose, audience and form of the writing to support them in making

writerly decisions before they begin their draft. Start by considering the level of formality they will use to write to this character:

- He is not a direct friend, so they should think about how this will affect their register.
- The letter is to support him and try to help allay his fears, so they should begin by introducing themselves, and offering understanding and support for his situation, rather than just launching into advice.
- Their advice should take a friendly tone, and, not to sound too forceful, they could indicate degrees of possibility using adverbs, such as: ***perhaps*** *you could try…* or ***maybe****… would help?* or modal verbs such as *you* ***might*** *be able to sleep if…* or *you* ***could****…*
- They will also need to think about how to sign off their letter in a friendly and encouraging way.
- Once they have drafted their letter, they should swap it with another child in the class, who can respond to this first draft. As they read, they should consider how the boy would feel as he reads it. You could provide some questions to support them to respond to each other about their writing, e.g.

    - Was it written in the right voice? Not too formal or too informal…
    - Was there a good introduction to explain who was writing to him and why?
    - Did the writer empathise with the boy'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?

- The response partners should then feed back to the writer by talking about how they would feel if they were the boy receiving it, commenting on things they found effective and reassuring and any parts they feel could have been improved and why. Allow time for edits to be made on the drafts, sharing the organic nature of this process; crossing things out that don't work, adding extra information without re-writing the whole thing, etc.
- Once the writers are happy with their updated drafts, encourage them to work with a different partner to do a final edit of their writing. This time, the response should focus on the technical elements of writing such as spelling and punctuation.
- When these elements have been polished, give each child a piece of notepaper, such as that they would use to write a note to a friend and a selection of writing implements (gel pens, biros, rollerballs, pencils etc.) to choose to use to write up their letters in presentation handwriting.
- After they have finished writing, display the letters around a copy of the illustration on the Working Wall or in the shared journal. Allow the children to spend time looking at the letters, thinking about what they find effective in their own writing and that of others.

- Writing letters is a form that children don't engage with directly in real life as often, in an age of text and email. To lead on from this, you might investigate a way of encouraging children to correspond by letters as a way of supporting others. The UK charity Post Pals is a small charity run solely by volunteers who are dedicated to making seriously ill children and their siblings smile by the sending of cards, letters, little gifts, support and friendship. Schools can find more information about how to join this important initiative here: https://www.postpals.co.uk/groupsschools/

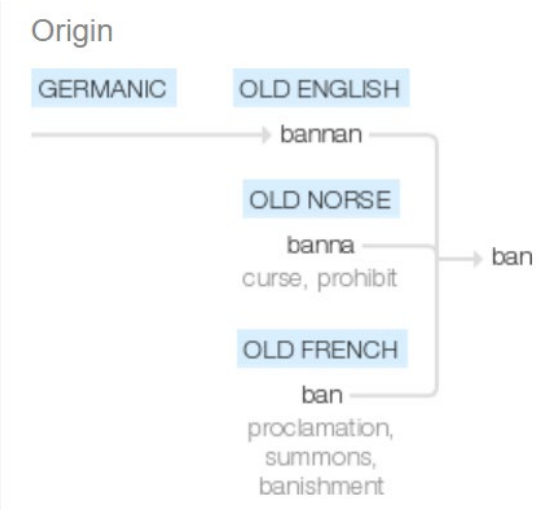
Session 3: Role on the Wall and Looking at Language to more deeply understand character and story events

Role on the Wall is a technique that uses a displayed outline of the character to record feelings (inside the outline) and outward appearances (outside the outline) at various stopping points across the story. Using a different colour at each of the stopping points allows you to track changes in the character's emotional journey. You can include known facts such as physical appearance, age, gender, location and occupation, as well as subjective ideas such as likes/dislikes, friends/enemies, attitudes, motivations, secrets and dreams.

- Prior to this session, prepare a Role on the Wall for the character of the boy; a simple outline drawing of the character. You could draw around one of the pupils in the class.
- Re-read the story from the beginning, to '*Most children are afraid of the dark at one time or another'.*
- Discuss what they have learnt about the boy from the text so far, encouraging children to justify their opinions using evidence from both the text and illustrations and make notes of key points on the Role on the Wall; his thoughts and feelings on the inside of the outline and characteristics or descriptions of what he looks like or likes to do on the outside. Give children the opportunity to make links between the external and the internal – *how does what a character does or say inform us about what they might be thinking or feeling and vice versa?* As most of our early insights are based only on appearance, you might also explore how it's possible to make incorrect assumptions about a person based on stereotypes or cultural biases.
- Now, turn the page and read on to: *'He would **ban** it.'*
- Give the children time and space to carefully consider and discuss this spread by reflecting on the words on the page and the accompanying illustration. *What more do we know about the character of the boy from this spread?* Ensure the children go beyond the initial shock of them finding out that the boy will ban the dark from the text, to discussing in more depth how they know years are passing and the boy has grown up to be King and this will mean the dark is actually about to be banned, from what they can see in both the author's choice of language in the words and what she has chosen to convey in the illustration:

- Look at the two elements on the page. What does the language the author has chosen show us, without directly telling us? The children may note the affirmative language decided, would do something, ban, as well as the pragmatic decision to begin the first sentence with But.
- Then move on to looking at the other elements on the page. What can we learn about the boy from the illustration? They might look at and share how the boy is growing not only in stature but also in confidence by looking at his body language and facial expression.

- Directly compare the illustration of the boy on the left hand side of the page with the final illustration where he places the crown on his head on the right hand side. Look at the simple sentence used above this image: *'He would **ban** it.' What do we know about the boy now?* Here you can begin to unpick with the children, by listening to and building on their ideas, the power the boy now has as he is crowned king. Explore the concept of banning something in more depth; *where have they heard this phrase before? What do they understand by it? What sort of things have they heard have been banned before? Who do they know who has the power to ban things?* Here they are much more likely to discuss personal experiences and you can open up the concept of those with power to those who have authority and/or responsibility over others. They may talk about parents, teachers or people in the public domain, such as politicians or the monarchy.
- It would be a good idea at this point to investigate the history of the word ban. The word is of Germanic origin, derived from the Old English bannan 'summon by a public proclamation', reinforced by Old Norse banna 'curse, prohibit'; the noun is partly from Old French ban 'proclamation, summons, banishment'.



- Unpick the children's understanding of these words to explore more deeply the seriousness and gravity of the King's decree and the consequences of this action:
    - Why do they think he wants to ban the dark?
    - Do they think that this is a good thing to do?
    - How might the King go about banning the dark?
    - What might this mean for the rest of the kingdom or state he rules over?
- Allow time for the children to discuss these ideas and explore possible story pathways that could happen after the ban takes place, in a concept map, with different branches exploring the possible consequences of the King's action on both himself and others.

Session 4: Looking at Language - Broadening knowledge of story events linked to real life experiences

When exploring a story that explores concepts that may be new to some children, in terms of language or themes, it is important to build on and develop children's interests and understanding and plan investigative work around it. Narrative texts often give excellent opportunities to link with real world issues, providing a greater depth of understanding about story events and why characters think and do the things they do.

- Re-read the story so far, and on to '*And so, the advisors started to spread rumours about the dark.',* covering the text in the speech bubbles in the frames in this spread.
- Look at the language used in the text – *the King **told** his advisors* – how does this reinforce the power of the King? Explore the concept of an advisor – what does this word mean? What do you think the job of an advisor entails? Look at the root word, advice; *do the children think the advice given by the advisors is good advice? Why or why not? Who does the advice seek to profit?*
- Look at the small details in the illustration, the reaction of the butler, the paintings on the wall, what might this suggest?
- Re-read the text on the second spread*; 'And so, the advisors started to spread rumours about the dark.'* Ask the children to work in small groups to create an agreed definition for the term 'rumour'. *What is a rumour? Do they think rumours are negative or positive? Are rumours always true?*
- Come back to the spread and look at the way the advisors are portrayed. What do they notice about the behaviour of the advisors in the illustrations? How does this change as the illustrations progress? Now think about what they might be saying; *if the advisors want the people to dislike or be scared of the dark, what sort of rumours might they be spreading? What might they say to turn the people against the dark?* Give the children some sentence

strips in groups of three and ask them to discuss and jot down their ideas for what the three advisors on this page might be saying.

- Allow time for the children to re-read these through themselves, checking for sense and meaning, before deciding how they think each advisor is conveying their rumour in the text. Allow time for the children to role-play their lines as one of the advisors, trying out different ways of delivering their rumours to the people. Give time for three children that are confident to share their ideas with the larger group and have the larger group improvise as members of the public, reacting to the rumours; how might they react to the rumour? What might they say to each other, after they have heard each rumour? Come back together to talk about which rumours they thought were the most effective and why, considering what the 'advisors' did to persuade them the dark was a bad thing.
- Now uncover the speech bubbles and re-read this section of the text again, investigating the loaded language the advisors are using and the way each statement becomes more inflammatory than the last*:*

    - How do the advisors provoke an emotional rather than a rational response in the people?
    - How do they think the people might react to these statements?
    - Do you think the rumours will be believed?
    - Will it make it a difference that the rumours are being shared by government officials and in newspapers?
    - How might we react differently to something we read in a newspaper as opposed to something we are told informally – in a conversation or on social media?

- Follow this up by asking the children to think in role from the experience of a member of the public. Allow them time to get into the mindset that the member of the public might be in by drafting out some ideas. Give the children a blank sheet of paper and tune them in to thinking from someone else's perspective by writing down 'before', 'what I heard' and 'now' on the sheet. They can choose if they want to organise their ideas in a table or as a mind map. Around or under each heading, get the children to note down ideas about how the member of the public they will write in role as felt about the dark before the rumours started, what they heard about the dark from or via the advisors and how they felt about it when they heard it, and how they feel about it now. These ideas will form the basis of some more role-play and writing in the next session.
- Depending on the age and emotional maturity of the children, in this session, or as part of a linked citizenship session, you may wish to explore links between this book and wider current issues. You might link the reactions of the advisors to mainstream media headlines around immigration; views that have been highlighted by the Brexit campaign. You may wish to explore the concept of propaganda here, you could link this very directly to newspaper headlines such as those referenced on this Free Movement Organisation webpage:

https://www.freemovement.org.uk/daily-mail-immigration-appeals/ or propaganda posters such as the Leave campaign's 'Breaking Point' poster or the vans carrying slogans as part of the UK Home Office's Operation Vaken in 2013. If the children are mature enough, you could also explore the concept of othering (as the King has done with the dark here); the conscious or unconscious assumption that a certain identified group poses a threat to the favoured group, largely driven by politicians and the media, as opposed to personal contact.

- As an integrated spelling activity, you could investigate other words that end in –our (where this represents the schwa), such as: *colour, honour, armour, neighbour, splendour, behaviour, glamour, harbour, flavour, saviour, favour, parlour, labour, vapour, humour, savour, odour.*

Session 5: Discussion and Debate leading to Journalistic Writing

The Guardian's Newswise project (https://www.theguardian.com/newswise) provides excellent resources that support children to understand and engage with news; critically navigate news; and report news. The work on journalistic writing in this session and the following sessions is based on work contained in their unit of work on the news. See here for the full unit: https://www.theguardian.com/newswise/2018/sep/17/unit-of-work

- Re-read the story so far, and on until *'…everyone thought they were happy.'* Investigate this page more fully; *do they think the advisors campaign has been successful? Why?* Look at the position of the King in the illustration and his actions on this page and discuss and unpick at depth what is happening here:

    - What has the King managed to do?
    - What is the reaction of the public to his proclamation?
    - Why do you think they are reacting in this way?
    - How do you think the public would have reacted if the advisors hadn't intervened?
    - What do you think about the character of the King now? Explore and extend the children's vocabulary by introducing words and phrases as part of your questioning to deepen the children's thinking, e.g. Do you think the King has manipulated the public? Why do you think he has done this?

- Come back to the text and explore what we might understand from the last sentence on the left hand page "*And because everyone had got what they thought they wanted, everyone thought they were happy*." Discuss the difference between *everyone had got what they wanted* and getting what they *"**thought** they wanted"? What does it mean by they 'thought' they were happy? Is it possible to only think you are happy but not really be happy?*
- Come back to the Role on the Wall and add the children's developing ideas and opinions about the King after this scene in a different colour.

- Share with the children this short scene from *Spider-Man* (2002), where Peter's Uncle Ben talks to him about the responsibility that comes from having power: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-o308cW0hKI:

  Transcript:

  Uncle Ben: Pete look, you're changing. I know, I went through exactly the same thing at your age.
  Peter: No. Not exactly.
  Uncle Ben: Peter... these are the years when a man changes, into the man he's gonna become for the rest of his life. Just be careful who you change into.
  This guy, Flash Thompson, he probably deserved what happened. But just because you can beat him up - doesn't give you the right to. Remember, with great power comes great responsibility.

- Discuss the ideas around power and responsibility in Uncle Ben's speech:

  - Do you agree with Uncle Ben that 'With great power comes great responsibility'?
  - What do you think he means by this?
  - How might this scene relate to the King?
  - What power does the King have? What does this mean? Who is he responsible to?
  - Do you think he has been responsible with the power he has been granted as King?
  - What might the implications of his misuse of power be?
  - Do you think the public should be able to trust those in power? Why is this important?

- Give each child a small piece of A5 paper and encourage them to write their thoughts and ideas about the King's actions at this point and stick these around a copy of the illustration.
- Come back to the text and re-read the page again. *Do you think this is a newsworthy event? Why?* Explore the role of the media. *Why do we have newspapers and TV news? What is a newsworthy story?*
- News companies use news criteria to decide if a story is newsworthy (interesting) or not. They look at:

  - Subject: who the story is about
  - Time: when the story happened
  - Surprise: whether the story will surprise people and/or inform them of something new

- Share the Newswise News Criteria resource - see: https://www.theguardian.com/newswise/2018/sep/17/unit-of-work: Resources – understanding and engaging with news (lessons 1-5) and give the children time, in pairs or

mixed groups, to decide whether this series of events are newsworthy. *Do we think this is an event the media should report on? Why or why not?*

- Come back together and allow each group to feed back on their thoughts, encourage the children to justify their ideas against the criteria provided.
- Introduce the idea that over the next sessions, the classroom will become a newsroom, with different news teams working together to report on this story. As the Newswise resources reveal, 'Sometimes journalists can make a difference to people's lives by revealing truths that the public didn't know about before.' *What do you think the people are unaware of in this situation?* And, as the Newswise resources go on to state: 'When people are being treated unfairly or when powerful people are doing something wrong, journalists can investigate and reveal the truth about what is happening - this is one way to challenge power.' *Do they think the King is doing something wrong? Are the people being treated fairly in this situation? Why or why not?* This will be the aim of their news story – to investigate the truth about what is really happening here and to report the facts to the best of their knowledge.
- Divide the children into news teams of 6. Each team will contain:

    - 2 Reporters: The reporters will find and summarise the 5Ws of a report (see Session 7) and devise interview questions to find out the most interesting information.
    - 2 Subeditors: The sub-editors will proofread a report to see how many mistakes they can find, then practise writing subject-verb-object headlines to highlight the most interesting information.
    - 2 Picture editors: The picture editors will take or source and choose the most interesting and appropriate pictures to match the headline, explaining what makes some pictures better than others.

- Allow time for the roles to be allocated, either by you as the teacher, who can work in role as the Chief Editor or for the children to negotiate between themselves, depending on their experience and maturity. Give them time to come up with a name for their newspaper in preparation for the next session.

Session 6: Ideation for Journalistic Writing

When teachers are supported to understand and implement the interrelated stages of an authentic writing process, similar to one that a published author undertakes, children's independent writing is of greater depth and higher quality. The process leads them from ideation before beginning writing, through providing opportunities for reading, thinking, discussing, drawing and note making before embarking on the creation of a text. Plenty of opportunity is built in for genuine reflection and feedback on the content of the writing before the piece is finally published.

- Encourage the children, in their different news teams, to think more about the purpose and audience of their report. As the Newswise resources recognise, 'Journalists must ensure their news reports inform and interest their readers. News is important for many reasons, e.g. it informs us about what is happening around the world; potential disasters; events, people and products that interest us. News reports are published mainly to inform and to interest the reader. Therefore reports should be truthful and interesting.'
- Give each group a newsdesk that they can use as a base for the next series of sessions – tables where they can work, have access to a laptop or tablet, a digital camera or a tablet with camera function, reporter notebooks, pens and pencils, USB Dictaphones and a display board or space where they can collect and share information between them.
- Explain that today's session is designed to help them prepare for their story, learning about the how the news works and what news teams need to consider before they go about reporting on a story. Explore the concept of truth in reporting more deeply. Look at the Newswise description that 'Journalists must only report facts – they must be truthful.' Investigate this concept more fully through discussion with the children. What is a fact? How do we know when information is fact? What is the difference between fact and opinion?
- When they are clear on the difference between fact and opinion, give the team time to work together and summarise all the facts they know about the story of the ban so far. Providing each team with copies of the spreads so far would be a useful resource for them to draw on.
- Come back together to share the facts they have compiled. Do we all agree these are facts? Could any be regarded as opinions?
- Move on to talk about the potential challenges in revealing the truth about what has happened here. What might be the potential consequences of revealing the underlying story?
- Introduce the children to the idea that, as Newswise recognises, 'News produced by professional news publications is regulated (has strict rules to follow about fact-checking).'
- Deepen children's understanding of the media by introduce the increasingly challenging issue of fake news and media bias:

    - Have the children heard these terms before? What do they think they mean?
    - How do we know if the news we hear, see or read is truthful?
    - Which sources are we most likely to trust?
    - How might we tell if a news report is fake?
    - Why do you think people create fake news?
    - How might the term fake news be misused? Children might have seen politicians centre on this term in discussions, facilitate discussions appropriately to the age and maturity of the children so they understand this term in a wider context.

- Encourage each news team to get together to discuss the questions and give time for them to report back on their opinions. Use this time to extend and deepen children's existing knowledge. As the Newswise resources explain, 'Sometimes people deliberately make up

news where they don't tell the truth or only tell half of the truth: this is called fake news. Fake news is created and shared for many reasons: as a joke/an April fool; to influence people's beliefs about a person/place/product; or to generate money through advertising.

- Look back at the illustration at the bottom of the spread where the advisors are spreading the rumours. Look carefully at the headlines on the newspaper, billboard and posters on the news stand and discuss the reporting shared:
    - Is this responsible reporting?
    - Are these journalists telling the truth?
    - Why might they be spreading this fake news?
- Again, give time for the news teams to consider, discuss and report back their thinking.
- Reinforce with the children that their role as a news team is to:
    - inform and to interest the reader
    - be truthful and interesting
    - reveal the truth about what is happening
    - only report facts
- Share with the children that you will act in the role as the regulator and will be coming back to each news team to encourage them to fact check their stories as they develop.

Session 7: Role-play and Drama: Building a news story

When children have explored a fictional situation through talk or role play, they may be ready to write in role as a character in the story. Taking the role of a particular character enables young writers to see events from a different view point and involves them writing in a different voice. In role, children can often access feelings and language that are not available to them when they write as themselves.

- Reconvene the news teams to tell them that they are going to get the chance to visit the point in time where the king made his announcement. The reporters and journalists must only report fact, not their own opinions.
- Newswise give the following definitions, which may be useful to share with the children as a basis for their writing:
    - Fact: something that is true and definitely known about a situation - supported by research and evidence.
    - Opinion: a person's view or idea about a situation.
    - Speculation: a guess or inference about what has happened. Anyone can speculate, even if they weren't there.

- Rumour: a story about a situation that has not been proven. Each time it is repeated it changes and you don't know which bits are true.

- Tell the news teams that their first job is to work together to prepare the reporters and picture editors to go to the scene and report on what is happening.
- Remind the children of the role of the reporters. The first job a reporter needs to do is to find and summarise the 5Ws of a report and devise interview questions to find out the most interesting information. Explain the 5Ws to the children and give them time and space to define these for their news team:

  - **Who** is involved in the story?
  - **What** is happening?
  - **When** is it happening?
  - **Where** is it happening?
  - **Why** is it happening?

- Allow the children to define these on sentence strips in large writing to keep coming back to as they work on the story, and display them on their news board.
- Next, the team will need to help the reporters to think about who they would like to talk to when they get to the scene, and what questions they would like to ask these people. At this point, the teams will need to consider carefully how to compose an effective question, ensuring that these encourage the interviewee to speak in as much detail as possible. They should compose their questions as a group and then read them aloud to each other, having a go at answering them themselves to check they are effective.
- After that, they will need to help the picture editors decide on possible photos they could take whilst they are there. What do you think you will need to try to get photos of while you are there to illustrate what is happening and to whom?
- Now split the news teams into two halves, this can be done by you as the teacher, based on your knowledge of which children engage best with role-play or negotiated with the children. Leave one of each role in the news team and free up one of each role to engage in the drama.
- Assign roles to the children who will be role-playing the announcement event. You will need a King and some advisors and the rest will be the people. Allow time for these children to get into role. The King could wear a crown as a signifier, the advisors may wear hats and the 'people' may want to make some quick banners with markers and A3 paper. Give the children acting a few moments to get into role. Talk to the King and the Advisors about what they might or might not say to the people and the journalists and let the 'people' review the notes they made about how they felt before, during and after the announcements.
- In the meantime, leave the rest of the news team to prepare their cameras, dictaphones and write up their most effective questions in their reporter notebooks so they are ready for the event.

- Encourage the actors to freeze frame the scene they can see in the illustration, with the news teams watching, recording what's happening through sound recording and photographs. You may wish to run this through twice, so they have a chance to get an idea of what is expected. On a signal bring the scene to life; the people could chant 'No more dark, ban the dark', until the King raises his arms and delivers his lines: *'Very well! From now on, the dark will be banished from this land!'* At which point the people can celebrate. Freeze the action again and ask the news teams watching how it felt to watch. What were the people like before the King made his announcement? How did you feel watching and hearing what the King had said? How did the people react to the announcement? Allow them time to note some ideas into their reporter notebooks.
- While the news teams are doing this, assemble the actors together in a group for the press conference.
- Allow time for the reporters to ask their key questions; they will need to listen carefully to the questions of other teams so that none of these are repeated. Give each team turns to state who they want to direct their question to, ask their question and hear the response. The picture editors can continue to take photos throughout and the reporters can record answers, either with a sound recording device or by making notes in their reporter notebooks.
- Call the press conference to an end at an appropriate point and allow all the children to go back to their news teams. Give them time to discuss the most interesting things they found out, and to discuss ideas about how they might shape their story

Session 8: The Reader in the Writer: Analysing news stories

When exploring a story that explores concepts that may be new to some children, in terms of language or themes, it is important to build on and develop children's interests and understanding and plan investigative work around it. Narrative texts often give excellent opportunities to work across genres, providing purpose, audience and context for such writing. As part of non-fiction writing, children will need to hear and see lots of high-quality examples of non-fiction writing as an example of what they will be writing to pick up on the differing structure, organisation and use of language, before writing in the style themselves.

- To prepare the news teams for writing their news stories, copy and distribute some real-life news stories. To support the theme of their own article, draw on real life examples of a time where something has been banned, e.g.:

    - The Guardian: Boots to ban plastic bags and switch to brown paper carriers https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/jun/24/boots-to-ban-plastic-bags-brown-paper-carriers
    - The Guardian: Is Britain ready for outdoor smoking bans?

- https://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/jul/22/outdoor-smoking-ban-britain
- The Guardian: Victoria to ban mobile phones in all state primary and secondary schools

https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/jun/25/victoria-to-ban-mobile-phones-in-all-state-primary-and-secondary-schools

- Give each news team time to read the three articles for themselves and read and think about what makes the article effective and any questions they have about each article. Encourage the groups to annotate and text mark the articles to share their thoughts and note effective words, phrases, techniques or ideas.
- Come back together to talk about each article and what reading these articles has made their team think about the article they will write. Allow time after for each group to draw up their own lists of things they want to think about for their own articles for the next session and to start drafting broad ideas about the shape of their story and what details to include.

Session 9: Collaborative writing – creating the news story

First responses to writing, including marking should focus on children developing the content of their writing, ensuring the writing is as strong as it can be before secretarial skills such as spelling and punctuation are corrected at the publication stage. Teaching children the skills of responding to their own writing as well as acting as editor or response partners for others increases their self-efficacy and stamina as writers, making them better prepared to persevere and support themselves and others to overcome challenges when writing independently.

- Start the session by reflecting on what made the news stories explored in the previous session effective. Share with the children how to plan the content of their story as a news team; first looking at the broad shapes, e.g.:

  - Introduce the fact the King has chosen to ban the dark.
  - Talk about when this happened and where he made the announcement.
  - Investigate why he chose to make this announcement – what happened in the lead up to the announcement?
  - Report on the reactions of the public.
  - Consider what the wider impact of the ban might be.

- Allow the news teams to go back and work on their own structures and to negotiate roles to gather the content for the story. Set a deadline to make this an authentic experience for the children, and remind them of this as they progress. Suggest ways that the teams could organise themselves so that they can ensure their deadline is met. One reporter might work on transcribing some of the good quotes while another begins to draft the content, the picture editors might select photos that could be included and think about how they might caption these. One sub editor might support the reporter drafting the content, checking for

sense and meaning, the other might look at possible headlines or experiment with wordplay that the reporter could include. Emphasise to the children that this should be a messy process, working roughly until the content is right, before polishing and putting together when they type up and publish.

- Encourage the children to keep coming back together to look at the piece as a whole, reading and responding to what they think is effective and what could improve the writing.
- Ask for the draft stories and their ideas for headlines and photographs to be submitted to you as the news editor. Read and provide feedback on this before the next session.

Session 10: Collaborative writing – reflecting on and publishing the news story

Children should be provided with opportunities to publish their finished work in a way that reflects real-life writing. This allows them to see the purpose of writing and gain a sense of pride in their achievements.

- Allow each news team time to read and reflect on the feedback you gave as the news editor. *Is there anything that needs to be revised or reworked before publishing?* Model how the teams might go about this. *Do they need to find a better photograph? Does a paragraph of the story need to be re-written? Do they need more or better quotes?* Give each team time to make any necessary amends.
- Provide each team with access to a laptop with publishing software and time and space to publish their stories. Discuss with the group as a whole:
    - How are news stories published in real life?
    - Is it always in a printed newspaper?
    - Why do you think newspapers publish the news digitally?
    - What are the advantages and disadvantages of each type of publication?
- Allow each team to decide if they will publish a digital or print story and give the children the chance to look at the layout and organisation of each of these types of publication, noting their ideas before they publish their own.
- When each group has completed their stories, allow them to share these with other groups and work together to reflect on and evaluate each story as a community of writers.
- In free writing sessions, the children may want to think of, compose and publish their own news worthy stories. These could be published in a class newspaper, a school newsletter or on a class blog or webpage.

Sessions 11 and 12: Looking at Language - Writing Poetry

Children need support to understand that there are many forms, shapes and sizes of poetry and it doesn't always need to rhyme! Poetic form is often a big obstacle to children who are beginning to write poetry. This is because most people's ideas of what a poem ought to look like are based on traditional poetry, on its regular verse forms and strict rhyme schemes. Teachers can support by helping children to recognise the importance of pattern in poetry and introducing children to a variety of poetic forms that can be used to shape experience and provide an extra stimulus for writing.

- Read aloud the next double page spread, up to "…an enormous artificial sun was installed above the Palace." Give the children the chance to discuss this new development: Why do you think the King has done this? Is it a good thing? Is it likely to make people's lives better? Discuss the phrase 'enormous artificial sun' – does it sound like a good thing? Why or why not?
- Encourage the children to think about the real sun; what do they think of when they think of the sun? Create a mind map to collect all the children's ideas, what mood is created by their descriptions? Are their connotations about the sun positive or negative? Now encourage the children to think about an 'artificial sun' what does this make them think of? Again, mind map the children's thoughts and ideas – how do these compare with when they think about the real sun?
- Listen to Grace Nichols read *Sun is Laughing* on Poetryline: https://clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poems/sun-laughing Allow time for children to respond emotionally to the poem after hearing it: *How did the poem make you feel? What did it make you think about?*
- Now give the children a copy of the poem to re-read to themselves and talk about in pairs or mixed groups; *how do you think the poet feels about the sun? How do you know?* Encourage the children to text mark and annotate the text to identify how the poet shows how she feels about the sun in her writing, without directly telling us. Come back together to feed back on the children's ideas. They may talk about the way the poet has personified the sun, so we feel like we know her or that she is a friend. They may have noticed how the poet uses adjectives to describe the colour of the objects mentioned, allowing us as the reader to paint a picture in our minds. They may talk about the contrast between the first and second stanzas, showing the temperamental nature of the weather.
- Now come back to the book and read on to *'…which was easy, because it never got dark.'* Allow the children to reflect on what they have heard and seen. What is the impact of the ban on the dark? How has it affected the people? How do they feel about the light? *Look at both the text and the illustration. How do the people feel?* As there is so much happening in this spread, you might give the pupils a viewfinder (a square of cardboard with a hole cut from the middle) to use to isolate parts of the illustration to look at in more detail. *Is there anybody or anything in the illustration that might be badly impacted by the banning of the dark? Can you envisage any problems that might start occurring in the near or distant future?* If the children don't mention it, you might ask them why they think that Emily Haworth-Booth has included

an owl in the sky for this illustration. *How might nocturnal animals be affected by this change to their environment?*

- Read on to *'But if anyone tried to switch their lights off, the Light Inspectors would make them pay a fine.'* Think about how the two full page illustrations on this spread help the reader to more fully understand the negative impact of the banning of the dark, and how the introduction of the Light Inspectors places another level of authority onto the people, under the King and his advisors. Use the illustrations to explore some of the negative effects of having no darkness and being under such tight control:

    - How has the author/illustrator chosen to show the reader just how tired the people are?
    - What has she told us in the words? What has she shown us in the illustrations?
    - How do you feel looking at these two images? How does this compare to the double page spread before?
    - How do the colours in these spreads compare with the rest of the book? What impact does it have on us? What is she trying to convey with her use of colour

- Encourage the children to look at the smaller details they can see in the scenery and props:

    - What can we infer about this society from details such as the 'Light is good' poster on the classroom wall, the 'why the dark is bad…' lesson taking place, and the implementation of 'Light Inspectors'?
    - Why do you think the plants of by the window are wilting?

- Think about the two contrasting scenes they have just observed. Give each child a piece of plain A4 paper, which they should fold in half lengthways. On one side of the paper, at the top of the page, tell them to write 'At first' and on the other side, 'Now'. Give the children time and space to write down words and phrases that describe what life for the people is like in the two spreads. They may draw directly on what they can see or make inferences around the scenes.
- When they have these ideas, allow them to draft a two stanza poem comparing what life without the dark was like at first and what it is like now. They may choose to draw on things they found effective in Grace Nichols's poem, such as the use of expanded noun phrases to paint a picture of the moment; the sharp contrast in the second verse, marked by the first line: *'Then, without any warning,' – what would they say for their poem? Is it a sudden transformation? Or would they choose a phrase like 'As the eternal day dragged on,'?*; the use of personification to bring the subject to life.
- At the same time, write your own composition alongside the children, so that you are able to experience the challenges and successes of crafting the poem and are able to involve yourself in the discussions about creating, refining and editing, ready for publication.
- As part of the drafting process, encourage children to read aloud, and to move as they read, finding the most effective rhythm for their lines. Emphasise that these are free verse poems

that do not need to rhyme. Use your own poem to support them in responding to their own work, reading aloud, voicing and discussing where you think you've achieved success and where things aren't working as well as you'd like and asking the children for advice on these points, working as a community of writers. You will also need to think about the layout on the page; where they will place line breaks and how they will arrange their poem on the page.

- When they have a draft they are ready to share, ask children to share these with their own response partner to check for flow and meaning, suggest what works well in the poem and identify what could work better, and suggest improvements, based on your example. Emphasise that these comments should focus on the content at this point, the polishing of spelling and handwriting can come at the publication stage.
- Allow the children choice and voice in deciding how they would like to publish their poem and give them appropriate time and space to do so. This could be as part of a published anthology showcasing presentation handwriting or to use a word processor to type and experiment with layout; or as a performance for classmates, other classes, the whole school or for filming,
- If they are going to perform or voice record their poem, they will need to consider how best to do this to enhance the mood they want to create. Encourage them to think back to Grace Nichols' performance, it wasn't overdramatised but subtly shared the emotions behind the piece. You might provide some prompts for consideration, such as; *How will you pace the performance? How will you use your voice, face or body to help convey the emotions felt?* Give time for the pupils to build up their poems, text marking with performance notes and ideas, practising, editing and polishing to a finished performance.

- In free writing time, encourage the children to write their own poetry. This could be around a change, their feelings about a person, place or object or could capture any moment they wish to share. Ensure you are reading aloud poetry often, as part of your read aloud programme to share what the medium offers the children as writers and give inspiration for their own independent writing ideas.
- There is a wealth of advice from published poets on how they come up with their ideas, work on their poems and prepare them for publication or performance on the CLPE Poetryline website at https://clpe.org.uk/poetryline/poets-videos/poet-interviews.

Session 13: Debate and Discussion

Debating ideas calls for a more formal and objective response to the story and helps children begin to analyse how the writer has made us feel this way. Teachers can structure debates inviting 'for' and 'against' arguments around particular statements arising from a book.

- Re-read the book from the start up until *'…what we need is a distraction.'* Give time and space for the children to read this spread closely. Come back to the Role on the Wall and discuss; *What do we know about the character of the King now? Is he still powerful? How do the people view him now?* Note the children's thoughts and observations in a different colour on the Role on the Wall and look at the words, phrases, questions and ideas that you've added to this over the course of the sequence. *How has the character of the King developed, as the story has progressed?*
- Think now about the people. *How do they feel at this point? What might they be thinking? What do they want to happen?*
- Discuss with the children 'Do you think the King should reverse the ban?' looking at the deeper considerations beyond the obvious yes answer. Create a two column For and Against table and think of the benefits and consequences of the King doing this. You might look at the fact that the advisors are desperate to distract the public, rather than consider their requests; *why might they do this?* Their job is to advise and keep the King's best interests at heart; *what are they trying to protect him from? How might it look if a person in power admits a decision they made was wrong?*
- Encourage the children to make personal connections with this moment in the text.
    - Have they ever made a decision they later knew was wrong?
    - Have they ever had to admit to being wrong about something?
    - Have they ever tried to distract attention from something they did that was wrong?
    - Why might you do this?
- When you have collected ideas to support both positions, encourage the children to write another letter to the King, this time as a balanced argument. How will you use language to show that you understand the position that he is in as well as putting forward the benefits of the case for reversing the ban?
- After confirming the purpose of the writing, move on to consider the level of formality that the people would need to use in writing to the King. How might you address him to begin your letter? How will you use words and phrases to respect the power he has, whilst putting your point across? This may be a good opportunity to introduce the subjunctive in a purposeful context, using phrases like *If you were to…* and subordinating conjunctions in phrases like, *we understand that… but…*
- 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 King 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 King 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 handwriting pens and notepaper to write up their letters in presentation handwriting, ready for the King.
- 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.

- In free writing time, children may wish to take a matter of personal importance, such as littering in the local area, the necessity of school uniform etc. and write to a person that has the power to explain or support the importance of their idea.

Session 14: Exploring issues and dilemmas in story events

- Re-read the book so far, and on to *'…whisper by whisper, they hatched their own plan.'* Discuss the 'distraction' that the advisors have come up with:
    - Is this a good distraction?
    - Do you think it will make people 'excited by the dark ban again'? Why or why not?
    - What do you think the author means when she says 'But the people weren't as silly as the King's advisors thought they were'? What opinion do you think the advisors have about the people and, conversely, what opinion do you think the people now have of the advisors?
    - How might the very nature of the way the poster is presented make the distraction obvious?

- Look carefully at this sentence again, in conjunction with closely reading the illustration. *How do you know the people are starting to disagree with those in power?* The children might note the fact they are whispering to each other, wearing dark glasses to block the light, talking surreptitiously behind trees and newspapers. You might also look at the symmetry of the dog's actions with those of the people, as has been seen already in the symmetry between the King and his dog.
- Look at the dilemma that leaves the people having to be so secretive:
    - Is it ever right to disagree with those in power?
    - What might the challenges of disagreeing with those in power be?

- What might the consequences be of challenging those in power?

- Children may relate this back to personal experiences of disagreeing with someone they feel has a greater power over them, to help them relate to this concept. Note the children's ideas around a copy of this illustration on the Working Wall or in the shared journal.
- Re-read this spread again and come back to the final sentence; *'Whisper by whisper, they hatched their own plan.'; what do the children think the plan might be? What might make the plan successful? What consequences might the plan have – on the people, on the King?*
- Allow time for the children to write their predictions out and display these around a copy of the illustration. Compare and contrast the different ideas that the children come up with and why they might have thought the things they did.

Session 15: Role on the Wall into Writing in Role

When children have explored a fictional situation through talk or role-play, they may be ready to write in role as a character in the story. Taking the role of a particular character enables young writers to see events from a different view point and involves them writing in a different voice.

- Re-read the book so far, and on to *'The King sighed.'* Explore the effect of the page turn here. Is this what they expected to come next? Why or why not?
- Provide a copy of this spread for pairs or small groups to explore in detail, looking carefully at what they can see from the text and the illustrations; *What does this spread tell us about the King at this point in the story?* Encourage the children to text mark and annotate the spread with their thoughts and ideas. The children may look at the position of the King on the page, small in the bottom left corner, but still with the hand of an advisor, shining a light over him. The may look at his facial expression and body position. They might look at the expanse of blank space before him, and the words in the text '*nothing could be seen at all.'* They may talk about the poignancy and simplicity of the last sentence *'The King sighed.'*, clearly split off from the rest of the text.
- Come back together to discuss their thoughts and observations and to consider:

  - How do you feel about the King at this point in the story? What has the author/illustrator done to make you feel this way?
  - How do you think the King feels at this point of the story? Why do you think he feels this way?

- Such questions are an excellent way of providing children with the opportunity to summarise key events, but also to think more deeply and critically about what they have read, understanding and empathising with characters and their situation.

- Return to the Role on the Wall, and in a different colour reflect on the King again, comparing this with previous annotations. What can we tell about the emotional journey the King has undergone from what we have observed about his character along the way? Where have the high points and low points been for him?
- After focussing so carefully on this character, invite the children to write a monologue in role as the King, sharing his journey, his thoughts and feelings as he stares into the blankness.
- After the children have had a chance to write their monologues, allow those that feel confident to, to read their work in role as the King, thinking about how he might be saying these words if he were saying them out loud. Reflect on the children's writing, noting what they have been able to capture about the King's character at this moment.
- Come back to the text and consider what might be next for the King:
    - Has he reached his lowest point?
    - Could anything get worse for him?
    - What do you think will happen next, knowing what you know about what the people are doing at this point?
- Note the children's ideas on the Working Wall or in the shared journal.

Sessions 16 and 17: Writing Speeches – effectively arguing a position

- Re-read the book so far and on to *'The sky began to dim.'* Take the time to discuss what the children think is happening here. *What is the people's plan? What might the consequences of their actions be? How are the Light Inspectors reacting? How might the story continue from here?*
- Look at how the first house started a chain reaction of action across the next houses, the whole street, the next street and so on. *Can the actions of one person galvanise many people into action? Have they seen any examples of this in real life?* The children may well be aware of the work of the environmental activist Greta Thunberg, especially in relation to the school strikes. Explore this societal phenomenon with the children, exploring how it went from Greta striking alone to creating a mass movement of people wanting affirmative action on global climate change.
- Share with children two news stories that chart her journey from being a nameless 'Swedish 15 year old' in the headline of this story: https://www.theguardian.com/science/2018/sep/01/swedish-15-year-old-cutting-class-to-fight-the-climate-crisis
  to her name being at the forefront of this more recent headline: https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/sep/26/greta-thunberg-teenager-on-a-global-mission-to-make-a-difference

and talk about what she has done to galvanise society with a shared purpose, as the people in the story have here. You could also look at texts such as Greta's Story: The Schoolgirl Who Went On Strike To Save The Planet by Valentina Camerini and Veronica Carratello
Our House Is on Fire: Greta Thunberg's Call to Save the Planet by Jeanette Winter to broaden children's knowledge.

- Now look at the way Greta has engaged with those in power, making articulate and informed speeches in front of leaders and representatives across the globe. Allow the children to listen to her speech from the UN Climate Change Conference Speech (Katowice, Poland, 15 December 2018), available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VFkQSGyeCWg
- Allow the children to reflect on and respond to what they have heard:
- *Why is she taken so seriously by her supporters and on the world stage? What gives her speech credibility?*
- *How does she provide a critique without being overtly rude or offensive?*
- Now, provide pairs of children with a copy of the transcript of this speech. This is available in *No One is Too Small to Make a Difference* by Greta Thunberg (Penguin). Allow time for the children to read and re-read the speech and discuss its effectiveness in engaging the listener, text marking and annotating the speech with their thoughts, questions and ideas:
What makes this a good speech to present to those in power? What language does she use that engages the listener to take her arguments on board?
- Come back together to discuss what the children have noted and to extend their thinking around this kind of writing; its purpose, its audience, the way it is structured, the language chosen for effect on the reader, devices like rhetorical questions.
- Now imagine that you are one of the people and you are going to deliver a speech to the King and his advisors on the actions you are taking to end the dark ban.
- Provide children with a piece of blank paper and allow them to focus their mind on all the reasons they can think of as to why the dark ban is so detrimental to their society. Encourage them to think more widely of the impact that the constant light has on not just the people themselves, physically, mentally and emotionally, but the impact it might be having on the wider society; the environment, business, and day to day life.
- Now encourage them to think about how they might structure their speech, coming back to Greta Thunberg's speech for reference. You might provide some helpful questions to support their thinking, such as:

    - *How will you introduce yourself?* – make children aware they can make up a name for the person they are writing as
    - *How will you introduce the issue you are raising?*
    - *How will you back up their points with evidence of the effects?*
    - *How will you highlight the wider impact?*
    - *How will you articulate a solution?*

- *How will you round up their speech and end it effectively?*

- Allow the children time to plan, structure and draft their speeches. At the same time go through this process yourself as a teacher writer, so that you can support the children effectively with the process.
- When they have a draft, come back together to discuss your own. Read it aloud to the class and ask for their feedback as listeners, providing supportive questions to focus their responses, e.g.:

  - Do you know who I am and is the subject of my speech clear?
  - Is it in the right tone?
  - Is it assertive without being rude?
  - Is it structured well; is there a clear introduction; does one point lead cohesively to another and does my speech round up and end effectively?
  - Does it make you want to listen and take action?
  - What are the most effective parts?
  - Is there anything that could make it more effective?

- Discuss and take on board suggestions made by the children, showing how to edit parts without re-writing the entire speech.
- Now give time and space for the children to go through this process with their own response partner and respond to and edit based on their discussions.
- Now give the children time to polish the spelling and punctuation and to publish their speeches. Public speeches are commonly typed so that a transcription can be made available, so you may wish to provide the opportunity for the children to type up their speeches, to make this an authentic process.
- After typing, some children may want to perform their speeches publicly to the rest of the class. Allow those that are confident to do so, and reflect on and evaluate the effectiveness of these as listeners.

- In free writing time, children may want to compose their own speeches focussed on matters that are important to them.

Session 18: Looking at Language – portraying events to effectively engage the reader

- Re-read the book so far, and on to *'We must punish the people!'* Give the children time to reflect on and respond to the new spreads.
- Encourage the children to look carefully at the differences between the reactions of the people and the reactions of the Light Inspectors and the advisors. *Since their protest outside*

the castle was ignored and answered with a distraction, how would you describe the people's reaction? What in the text tells or shows us this?

- They may pick out the calm colours used in the spreads where the people and their houses are shown, they may pick up on the quiet, thoughtful and unthreatening choices in the language used; *'whisper by whisper', 'hatched their own plan', 'switched off its lights', 'small group of people', 'climbed up the walls'.*
- Now go on to look at the reactions of the advisors and the Light Inspectors. *How does this compare with the reactions of those in authority?*
- Here, they might discuss the contrast in the darker backgrounds and tones used, the space they or their actions, such as the banner, take up on the page, the faster, more reactionary, aggressive and powerful language choices, e.g. *'throw a party', 'began to panic', 'called for back-up', 'rushed to help them', 'must turn the sun back on', 'shouted the advisors', 'crush the uprising', 'punish the people.'*
- Discuss how these language and illustration choices affect our reaction to the two groups of people. *Who do we sympathise most with? Why?* They may also note the contrast in the singular body language of the advisors and the Light Inspectors compared with the communal and supportive body language of the people, working together. Allow the children time to write up their ideas, justifying their opinions with evidence from the text, including the illustrations.

Session 19: Booktalk

Discussion about books forms the foundations for working with books. Children need frequent, regular and sustained opportunities to talk together about the books that they are reading as a whole class. The more experience they have of talking together like this, the better they get at making explicit the meaning that a text holds for them.

- Read the entire book from the beginning and continue to read aloud until the end, allowing the children to enjoy the story as a whole and pausing for the children to make comments and observations without losing the flow.
- Consider the way the book ended:
    - Was this an appropriate ending?
    - What does this ending give for the King?
    - What does it give for the people?
    - What does it give for the society in the story as a whole?
- Once the children have heard the whole book read aloud, the group can begin to explore their responses to it with the help of what Aidan Chambers calls 'the four basic questions'.
- These questions give children accessible starting points for discussion:

- Tell me…was there anything you liked about this story?
- Was there anything that you particularly disliked…?
- Was there anything that puzzled you?
- Were there any patterns…any connections that you noticed…? Did it remind you of anything else you've read or seen?

Session 20: Understanding story structure, story mapping and ideation for own writing

Giving time and space for children to come up with ideas for their own writing before creating texts is an essential part of the writing process. This allows them to see this process through the eyes of the practicing writer, thinking the way an independent writer thinks and feeling the way an independent writer feels.

- Re-read *The King Who Banned the Dark* in its entirety for enjoyment.
- Talk about the story as a whole: What was the overall theme of the book? Who were the characters? Where did it take place? What were the main events in the story?
- Support the children in breaking the story down into no more than six shapes, e.g.
  1. The boy is scared of the dark
  2. When he becomes King he bans the dark
  3. His advisors help him to get the people to support the ban by spreading rumours
  4. The people think they are happy
  5. They realise they have made a mistake and revolt by turning the sun off
  6. The King realises he was wrong and lifts the ban.
- Explain to the children that they are going to be writing their own stories that focus on the theme of power. Collect ideas, based on other stories they already know, or real experiences they have had on a sheet of large paper that can be displayed on the Working Wall for the children to refer to, e.g. characters with power, characters that are being controlled by those in power, use and misuse of power, power for the greater good, the power to change. In and around the session, find times to read aloud and share a variety of books that centre on the theme of power and look at how to draw on these for ideas as part of this ideation process. You may read texts such as, *The Little Island* by Smriti Prasadam-Halls and Robert Starling, *Farmer Duck* by Martin Waddell and Helen Oxenbury, *Wild* by Emily Hughes, *Leaf* by Sandra Dieckmann to give the children experience of other stories which revolve around power struggles.
- Compare and contrast the stories with *The King Who Banned the Dark*; *what did the stories have in common? What was different about them? Which did you like best, why? What other ideas do these give you for a story of your own?*

- Now explore the ideas they have about characters that might be good to have in a story with power at the heart; *will they be a character with power? Will they be a character that wants power? Are they a character who wants to escape from power? Are they a character that is powerless? Will they support another character to be more powerful?* If this is challenging for some of the children, you can encourage them to lean on the familiar concept of a powerful character who bans something and the impact this has or a character that overcomes a fear and with it, becomes more powerful within themselves.
- Once you have decided this, think about where the story might take place. Will it be in one specific location like the kingdom the King rules over, or will the story travel to different locations?
- Model this whole process of ideation as a teacher writer, an enabling adult who can share the process of how a practising writer comes up with ideas for writing, empty your mind of lots of possible ideas, noting down multiple ideas so that you can come back to others if first ideas aren't successful when following through to planning. Share how this process is a rough process, just noting words and phrases or drawing sketches of possible characters or scenes, rather than writing the actual story.
- Now give the children their own pieces of blank paper, which will be their ideas sheets (A3 paper is ideal as it gives lots of space to get down and add to ideas and is easy to come back and refer to while writing) and get them to follow the same process, noting down all their ideas about possible characters, settings and story events.

Sessions 21- 25: Drafting, gaining a response to and publishing own stories

When the pedagogy of teaching writing demonstrates that writing is a creative process and rough and draft work are essential to producing quality outcomes, children are more engaged in the process as well as the outcomes. This helps the children to understand that published writing is refined and developed over time before it reaches publication.

- Come back to the ideas sheets from the previous session. As a teacher-writer model the process of choosing one of the ideas to take forward into the drafting of a story.
- Select one of the ideas of around a character that might have power and decide the main thrust of the story: what power do they have? What do they choose to use their power for? How does it affect others? Does anyone support or challenge them? Do they change their ways by the end of the story?
- When you have decided this, come back to the big shapes into which you divided *The King Who Banned the Dark* and think of the big shapes of your own story, again in no more than six parts. At this point you don't necessarily need to do these in order. For example, you might know how you want the story to start and how you want it to end straight away, then you may need to model the thinking around the events in between. Or you may know one of the

big events in the middle of the story and then you'll need to model how to work back to how you got there from the start and where you will go to get to the end of the story. Share this process with the children, asking for help if you get stuck and asking for their response on your own ideas.

- Give time for the children to do the same with the ideas they have on their own ideas sheets. Remember, they only need to summarise the main shapes of the story, not begin to write the story itself.
- When they have done this, allow them to share their initial ideas with a response partner, talking together about the shape of their story, whether it flows, and having a chance to discuss anything they are stuck with.
- When they are happy with their initial plans, model how to use these to draft the story. Each shape is a separate stage of the story which can be expanded on in writing, this may also help them to think about sectioning their story into pages or paragraphs. They will also need to think about whether they will present their story just in writing, or if they will illustrate alongside, as they work. At the drafting stage, they may want to make small rough sketches to support their thinking, but again, you should be clear that this will be rough at this stage and will be redeveloped before publishing.
- After drafting, give time for the children to read through their ideas with a response partner. Give them prompts to reflect on the writing, e.g.

    - Was the choice of characters good? Did you want to read their story?
    - Did the story have a clear beginning, middle and end?
    - Was it written in the right style?
    - Did they use enough detail to make it interesting to read?
    - Did it flow between each part of the story?
    - Was there anything else that could be added to make it easier or more interesting to read?

- Give time for the children to share and reflect on each other's ideas before giving time to go back, revise and edit their work as necessary.
- To model the act of revisiting, honing and refining the writing, you might go back your own modelled writing or potentially use one of the children's writing - with their agreement. It can be effective, if you have access to a visualiser, to enlarge the writing so everyone can see it.
- When they have shaped the content, look at how to check spelling and punctuation prior to publication, through writing conferences, marking or editing alongside a peer.
- Give choice to the children in how they would like to publish their stories for their audience. Will they make homemade books, write these out as a continuous short story which may or may not have accompanying illustrations, will they make an e-book or audiobook?

- Give time and space for the children to publish their stories and access to appropriate resources such as a variety of different kinds and sizes of pens and paper, art materials for illustration, ICT equipment, publishing software, iPads for e-publishing or audio recording.
- Encourage the children to share their finished stories with a different response partner 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 story with what they liked about the story and illustrations first.
- Allow time for the children to be able to present this work to a wider audience such as in a learning showcase to parents or the rest of the school or having a permanent display space where the variety of texts they have produced are available to view by a wide audience.
- Following this the children might be inspired to generate ideas for other stories and compose their own stories from their most promising ideas. Providing each child with a free-writing journal for this and other writing will support them in writing for themselves, as, when and how they wish.