

The STORM KEEPER SERIES

CATHERINE DOYLE

Educational resource pack



Dear reader,

This educational resource pack is based on Catherine Doyle's unforgettable Storm Keeper trilogy and is the perfect learning resource for children in Key Stage 2. These notes work as an introduction to the themes within the book, giving suggestions for classroom activities to enjoy across different subjects – from creating time capsules, to drawing family trees, to transforming ordinary settings into magical ones.

The reading questions and activities suggested here focus on reading skills, while also providing ideas for cross-curricular links. They invite students to explore the importance of family and community, as well as the creative potential of time, magic and memory.

We hope you enjoy reading this wonderful series and working your way through this pack.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Catherine Doyle grew up beside the Atlantic Ocean in the west of Ireland. Her love of reading began with the great Irish myths and legends, and fostered in her an ambition to write her own one day. She holds a BA in Psychology and an MA in Publishing from the national university of Ireland, Galway. *The Storm Keepers' Battle* is the final instalment in the trilogy which began with *The Storm Keeper's Island* and its sequel *The Lost Tide Warriors*, and was inspired by her real-life ancestral home of Arranmore island, where her grandparents grew up, and the adventures of her many seafaring ancestors. Catherine is based in Galway but spends a lot of her time in London and the US.



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The Storm Keeper's Island

When Fionn Boyle sets foot on Arranmore Island, it begins to stir beneath his feet...

Once in a generation, the island chooses a new Storm Keeper – someone to wield its power and keep its magic safe from enemies. The time has finally come for Fionn's grandfather, a secretive and eccentric old man, to step down. Soon, a new Keeper will rise.

Fionn's ancestral home has been waiting for him. But deep underground, someone else has been waiting, too. As a battle rages, over who will become the island's next champion, a more sinister magic is waking up, intent on rekindling an ancient war.

The Lost Tide Warriors

Fionn Boyle has been Storm Keeper of Arranmore for less than six months when thousands of terrifying Soulstalkers arrive on the island.

The empty-eyed followers of the dreaded sorceress Morrigan have come to raise their leader and Fionn is powerless to stop them. The Storm Keeper's magic has deserted him and with his grandfather's memory waning, Fionn must rely on his friends Shelby and Sam to help him summon Dagda's army of merrows.

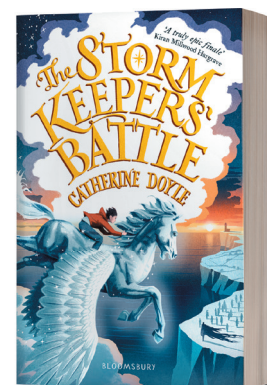
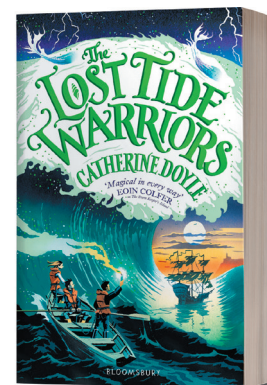
But nobody else believes the ferocious sea creatures even exist. And how can he prove he's right without any magic? As Fionn begins his search for the lost army, the other islanders prepare for invasion. The battle to save Arranmore has begun.

The Storm Keepers' Battle

Fionn Boyle, Storm Keeper of Arranmore, is facing the fight of his life.

The terrifying all-powerful sorceress Morrigan has been raised from the dead and has sealed off the island from all help.

Fionn is the only thing that stands between her and a dark future. He's got to find a way to defeat her. But there are some terrible choices in store for Fionn as the dark sorcerer begins to take his nearest and dearest for her own. With only two candles left to burn, will Fionn master his powers in time to stop her?



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OPENING EXTRACT: BOOK 1

The Storm Keeper's Island Prologue, pages xi–xiii

In a field full of wild flowers, a boy and a girl stood side by side beneath an ancient oak tree. The sky was angry, the thunder growling like an angry beast.

'Are you ready?' asked the boy nervously.

The girl raised her chin, her wheat-blond hair sweeping down her back in a curtain. 'I've *always* been ready.'

They pressed their palms against the gnarled trunk. The tree began to quiver, its branches stretching as it shook itself awake. There was a brief silence and then a crack exploded above them. A whip of lightning leapt from the clouds and split the centre of the tree in two. Flames erupted along the bark, climbing across the branches and devouring the leaves until everything was a bright, brilliant gold.

'Betty?' said the boy uncertainly. 'Should we –'

'Sssh!' hissed the girl. 'It's about to say something.'

The tree began to whisper. It was much louder than the boy expected – the crackle and hiss of surrounding flame slowly turning into words. '*Ssssspeak or be sssspoken to.*'

The girl asked her question. As the tree considered it, she grew restless, tapping her fingers against the charred bark. The air grew heavier, a veil of mist curling the strands around her face.

The tree did not speak to the girl again.

Instead, it turned its attention to the boy and climbed inside his head. He fell to the ground, twisting and writhing, as a vision unfurled in the blackness of his mind.

He was standing on the edge of a headland with the clouds gathering in his outstretched hands and the wind wreathing his body. He felt the sea rushing through his veins, leaving salt crystals in the lining of his heart.

He knew that he was changed forever.

Betty had been wrong.

The island had chosen him.

He tried to blink himself awake but the tree tightened its grip on his mind. Another vision pushed its way through. Something they had not asked to see.

'*Watch,*' hissed the tree. '*Pay attention.*'

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A boy appeared before him. He was a little younger, but he was wearing the same nose and the same eyes. In one hand, he held an emerald as green as the island grass. In the other, a crooked staff that pointed out to sea. They stood apart from each other, looking but not really seeing as ravens filled the sky in plumes of feathers. The earth cracked beneath their feet and a shadow crept across the island and buried them in darkness.

The boy woke up. Back in the field of wild flowers, it was pouring with rain.

'Betty,' he said, a droplet landing squarely in his mouth. 'You won't believe what I've just seen.'

The girl was standing over him, her narrowed eyes like burning coals. She kicked him in the ribs. 'Don't you mean what you just stole!'

'Stop!' He twisted away from her as she kicked him again. 'I need to tell you something. Can you stop, please? *Ow!* Listen to me. I saw ravens, Betty. I think ...'

The girl wasn't listening. She was stalking away from him, through wild flowers and sodden grass, her chin tipped to the weeping sky.

The boy wanted to call her back, to tell her this was much bigger than her – that it was bigger than both of them – but she had disappeared into thin air, leaving only the faintest ripple behind.

The boy tried to swallow his fear. Somewhere deep inside the earth, the darkness was rising again, a darkness more terrible than anything the world had ever seen.

It was too late to stop it now.

READING QUESTIONS:

1. What kind of atmosphere does the author, Catherine Doyle, create in the prologue?
How does she do this?
2. What do the boy and girl find out that Betty had been wrong about?
How does this create excitement or intrigue for the reader?
3. What different settings can you see in the prologue?
4. How does the author Catherine Doyle create tension in the prologue?
5. How does the prologue set the tone for the story and the whole trilogy?

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OPENING EXTRACT: BOOK 2

The Lost Tide Warriors Prologue, pages 1–3

On a frosty winter morning, in the waters of a half-forgotten island, a merrow was swimming far from her home. Mist hung like a veil over the sea, clinging to her skin as she broke the surface: first a crown of coral and bone, then yellow eyes as wide as moons. A pale scar traced the curve of her jaw.

She stilled in the water.

There was a boy standing at the edge of the ocean. She could smell the sea-salt in his blood.

She licked her lips.

Storm Keeper.

She remembered him.

The boy's eyes were shut, his breath puffing from him in a trail of clouds. He stuck his hand out and wriggled his fingers above the water. For a moment he stood completely frozen. Then his body hiccupped violently, as though something inside was trying to punch its way out. He snapped his eyes open, fear threading itself into his frown.

Magic.

The merrow drifted closer. The sun was climbing into an ivory sky, and soon the island would be full of people bustling along the strand, cars sputtering into life as shop windows lit up like lanterns. She shouldn't be here, by the shore ... so near the voice that had been whispering to her from its depths. But she had come anyway – to gaze upon the boy who had stirred Morrigan from her endless sleep.

After all these years, he had finally come.

The boy groaned as a spark jolted from his fingertips. 'Come on!' He kicked a clump of seaweed into the water. 'Come on, you stupid thing!'

Trapped magic.

The merrow frowned. Time was wearing thin. She could sense darkness moving beneath the horizon, swelling like a sea of its own as it made its way across the world. Towards the island. Towards the boy. This boy.

Foolish Dagda. He will lead us all to ruin.

The boy picked up a rock and flung it into the air. The merrow followed its arc, her lips

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twisting as it landed with a *plop!* right beside her head.

One heartbeat – two heartbeats – and then he spluttered into life. He charged towards her, the water sloshing around his ankles and then his knees and then his hips.

The merrow hesitated for the briefest moment, before her senses reclaimed her. She dipped under the next wave, her tail disappearing in a sheen of burnt silver.

Not now, she thought, as she speared her way back to the undersea. *Not yet.*

Her warriors were bound to another.

They would have to wait. For ruin, or the Tide Summoner.

Whichever came first.

READING QUESTIONS:

1. What can you learn about this story from its title, '*The Lost Tide Warriors*'?
2. How is the theme of magic presented in the prologue?
3. Who has the boy 'stirred' from 'endless sleep'? Why do you think this is important?
4. How does the author create a sense of intrigue or mystery around the boy?
Who is the boy?
5. How does the prologue make you want to read on? Pick out any words or phrases that make you want to continue reading.

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OPENING EXTRACT: BOOK 3

The Storm Keepers' Battle Chapter One, pages 3–4

Fionn Boyle was sure of two things:

One, he was full of an ancient, rippling magic that could explode from him at any moment.

Two, he had absolutely no idea how to control it.

Not for the first time, he had come to Cowan's Lake, hoping for a miracle. And right now, he was kneeling over its frosty waters while ravens glided overhead, cackling maniacally.

'I think they're laughing at me.'

'Attention-seekers,' muttered Shelby, who was glaring menacingly at the sky. 'They're only trying to put you off.'

Fionn flexed his fingers and tried to summon a flicker of magic. Beneath the skein of ice, a single rainbow fish swished its coloured fin in greeting. There were no visions of past Storm Keepers to greet him today, just his own scowling reflection.

'Told you the lake was a bad idea,' said Sam, who was reclining against a nearby boulder. 'Not worth the frostbite, if you ask me.'

'Cowan's Lake is full of magic. It might help.' Shelby crouched down beside Fionn. 'You just need to calm your mind. Think of something nice. Like puppies.' The shell around her neck glinted bone-white on the icy water. 'Or otters holding hands while they sleep. Or a bunny rabbit on a skateboard. Oh! Or an alpaca. Or –'

'An island made entirely of pizza,' said Sam dreamily. 'Where all the trees are pepperoni.'

Shelby rolled her eyes. 'Sa-aam! Fionn *has* to find a way to make his magic work.'

Fionn sighed. He had rattled through a million different thoughts already; ones that made him happy, ones that made him sad, ones that made him laugh and others that made him want to tear his hair out. He was still trying to find the right emotion – the key that would unlock his magic again.

READING QUESTIONS:

1. Fionn Boyle is 'sure about' two things. What are they?
2. Why is Fionn at Cowan's Lake? What is he looking for?
3. What can you tell about the three characters introduced here: Fionn, Shelby and Sam? What is the relationship between these characters?
4. How does Fionn feel in this passage? How do you know?
5. What themes are introduced here? How might they be explored in the story?

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My Magical Place



Choose a mundane setting of your own (it might be your classroom or your house) – how can you make it seem more magical?
Draw your magical place in the box below. Below it, write a descriptive piece to create an atmosphere of magic or enchantment.

A large, empty rectangular box with a blue border, intended for drawing a magical place. The box is currently blank.

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Fionn's Diary



Write three diary entries in role as Fionn at various points in the story – or perhaps at the end of each book in the trilogy.
How does Fionn change and develop?

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My Mythical Person or Creature



Create your own mythical person or creature; he/she can be a legendary hero, like Dagda, a villain, like Morrigan or a flying horse like Aonbharr!

Name:

Portrait:

Features:

Special skills or powers:



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My Memory

Choose a photograph depicting a memory from your life. Bring it into class and use it to write a description of your memory; begin by only writing words that are evoked for each of the five senses: touch, taste, sound, smell and sight. Why is this an effective exercise to inspire the writing process?

A large rectangular box with a blue border, intended for pasting a photograph. Two pieces of yellow tape are attached to the right side of the box, and one piece is attached to the bottom left corner.

What I could touch

.....

What I could taste

.....

What I could hear

.....

What I could smell

.....

What I could see

.....



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My Storm Keeper Candle



Think back to the previous activity and a memory you'd like to capture. If you could trap the memory in a candle, what would it look like? Draw your creation on this page, give it a memory label, and write details of the memory by the side of it.

A large empty rectangular box with a blue border, intended for drawing and writing. In the bottom right corner of this box, there is a small black and white line drawing of a lit candle in a holder, with smoke rising from the flame.

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The Layers of my Personal History

Write three short, personal memories on one sheet of paper. Fold the paper each time you write a memory, to represent the different layers of your personal history. Pass your folded piece of paper to someone else in the class without revealing your identity. What do you learn about some of your classmates from reading their different memories?

Memory 1

Memory 2

Memory 3

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IDEAS FOR EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Drama + Speaking and listening

- Create a film trailer for one (or all!) of the books in the trilogy. What props will you use? Which scenes will you choose to show to the audience? What will be your persuasive tagline?

History

- The author, Catherine Doyle, grew up in the west of Ireland. The setting in her trilogy is based on her real-life ancestral home of Arranmore Island. What can you learn about the local history of this real-life island? Include information about any myths and legends of the area.
- What is the history of your own local area? Carry out research into the local community, industry and culture.

Geography

- What are the physical features of the fictional Arranmore Island? Create a list of the natural and man-made features of the landscape. Why might some of these things exist? Can you compare the island to a real-life place that you know?
- The sea and the tide are very important in the trilogy. Research as much as you can about the sea; what are tides, for example? How are they influenced? What is the eco-system in the Atlantic sea around the west coast of Ireland?

Social, Personal and Health Education | Citizenship

- Draw a family tree depicting your own family and the different members in each generation. What is the importance of these relationships? Annotate your family tree showing any unique or significant connections.
- Choose one relationship with a family member or friend. If you were to create a candle containing an important memory of them, what would it be?
- Create a time capsule celebrating the special aspects of your family or community. Use an empty plastic bottle or box, and fill it with things that represent these aspects. How will people in the future feel when they open your time capsule? What will they learn about your family or community?

Art & Design

- Choose a setting from the book to draw or paint.
- Choose your favourite quote from the trilogy, giving reasons for your choice. Using coloured pens or pencils and different craft materials, write your quote on a large piece of paper and decorate it to show what it means to you. Create a classroom display of all the favourite quotes in the room!

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**You've now reached the end of this
resource pack for Catherine Doyle's
magical series!**

We hope these notes have proved to be a useful and fun introduction to the themes and ideas found within this book.

We would love to see examples of any work created as a result of this pack, so please do email them over to us on:

childrensmarketing@bloomsbury.com

or share on Twitter tagging us at

[@KidsBloomsbury](https://twitter.com/KidsBloomsbury) [@doyle_cat](https://twitter.com/doyle_cat)

*An island that never forgets.
A series you'll remember forever.*