

SCHEME OF WORK

PERFECT FOR: Ages 9+; a moving, heartwarming, poignant exploration of friendship, displacement and what family means; understanding the experiences of refugees; creating empathy; exploring the need to challenge bigotry and hate; writing poetry, newspaper articles and formal letters; and going on an adventure with a group of plucky, courageous, passionate children.

KEY FOR CROSS-CURRICULAR OBJECTIVES:

English: Reading Comprehension; Creative Writing;

Poetry; Writing to Entertain and Inform

Drama, Speaking and Listening

Design Technology & Art

Science

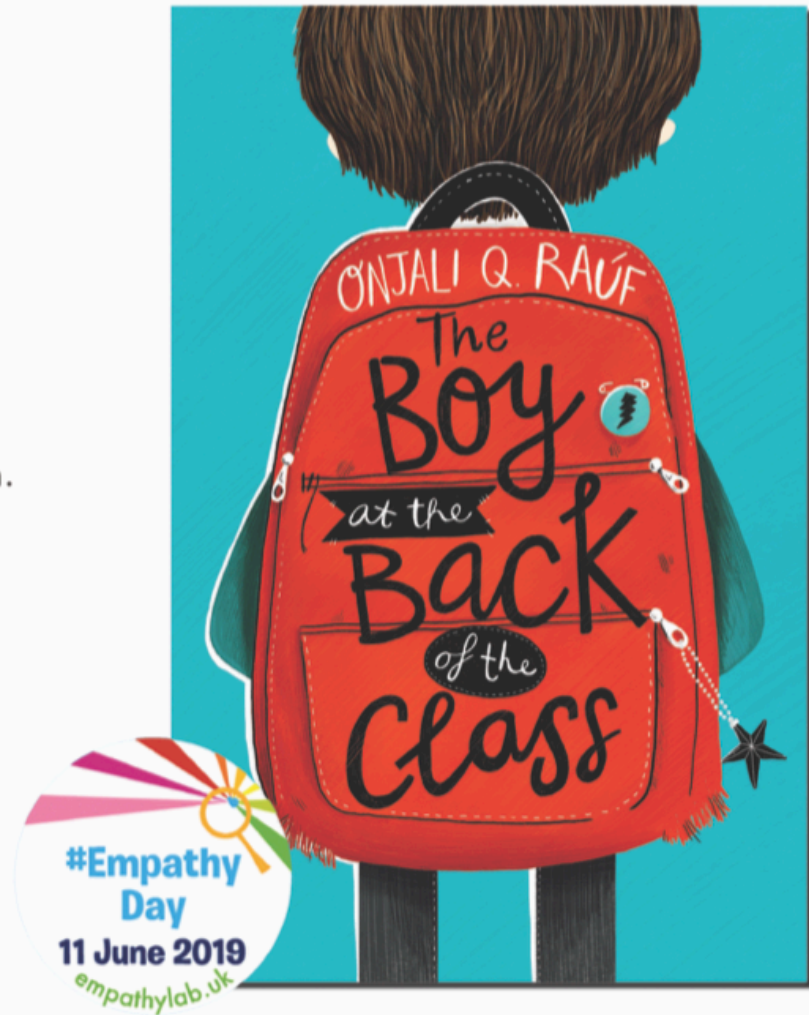
History

Music

Computing

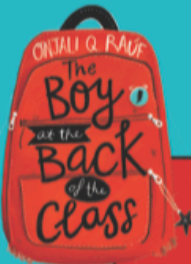
Maths

PSHE and Citizenship



'The Boy at the Back of the Class' is one of the 2019 'Read for Empathy' Collection Books for Empathy Day. More information can be found at www.empathylab.uk

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WEEK 1 (CHAPTERS 1–4)

THE BOY WITH THE LION EYES



SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES

Reading: Comprehension

- Analyse an author's style of writing and identify different techniques and vocabulary used.

Writing to Entertain

- Write a diary in role, thinking carefully about the conventions of a diary and the layout and features needed for this type of writing.

Science

- Understand the process of photosynthesis.
- Plan different types of scientific enquiries to answer questions.
- Explore the conditions needed for a healthy seed and plant to grow.

PSHE and Citizenship

- Use a table to explore the different attitudes towards refugees.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

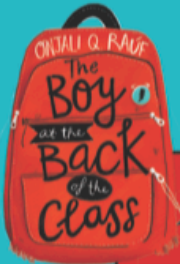
1. Use the information on pages 4 and 5 to draw and label a picture of Tom, Josie and Michael. Which words and phrases help paint a picture of what they look like?
2. What makes a good teacher? What are your first impressions of Mrs Khan? Use evidence from the story to support your ideas.
3. Read page 12. Why do you think Ahmet looks scared and sad? What might be going through his mind as he enters the class? How does the author make you feel sorry for him?
4. 'Lies are more exciting than the truth'. What does the author mean by this? How does this apply to the story so far? (page 18)
5. Rumours begin to spread about the boy like 'an invisible game of pass-the-parcel'. What does this mean? (page 25)
6. How does the author make you want to read on at the end of page 27? Is it successful? Predict what might happen next.
7. On page 27, Josie asks what seclusion means. What do you think the word means? Does it sound like any other words you know? Can you use it in a sentence of your own?
8. What does the word 'used' suggest about the narrator's Dad? (page 28)
9. On page 33, Ahmet's eyes widen. Why? What might he be thinking and feeling?
10. How is a refugee similar to an immigrant? How are they different?

EXTRA ACTIVITIES

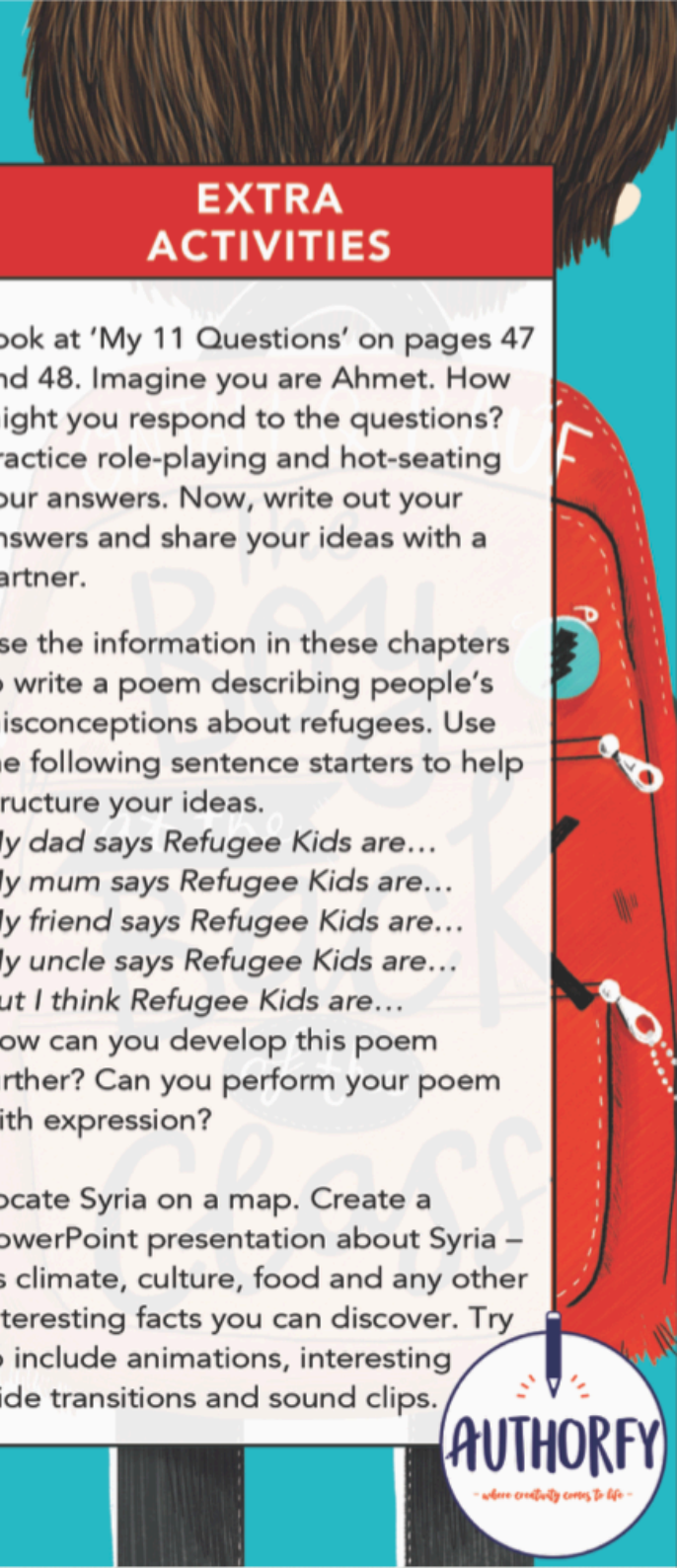
Write in role as Ahmet, describing your thoughts and feelings about moving to a new country. What is your new school like? How did you feel on your first day? Use the events in Chapter 1 and your imagination to help you. Ensure your diary is informal and chatty.

Mrs Khan teaches the children about photosynthesis and plants. Set up an experiment to test the conditions needed for a healthy seed and plant to grow. Place three seeds in small pots with soil. Place one by the window, where there is light and warmth and water regularly. Place one in a box where there is no light, but warmth and water regularly. Place one on a window where there is light and warmth but do not water it. Which plant will be the healthiest? Observe and record your results.

At the school gate, the parents argue about the positive and negative impact of allowing a 'Refugee Kid' into the class. Summarise their views in a table and discuss their points, along with your own views, as a class discussion.



WEEK 2 (CHAPTERS 5–8) THE UNEXPECTED ADVENTURE



SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES

Reading: Comprehension
- Define vocabulary, thinking carefully about its meaning and impact.
- Use a dictionary to look up the meaning of unknown words.

Drama, Speaking and Listening
- Understand and empathise with a character's thoughts, feelings and attitudes and express these through role-play.

Poetry
- Retrieve information from the text and write a poem based on the information.
- Explore people's misconceptions about refugees through poetry.

Computing
- Design an informative PowerPoint presentation.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

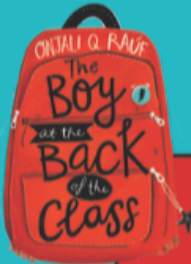
1. Write a definition of the following words from Chapter 5: *serious, destroy, eager*. Can you use them in a sentence?
2. Describe the relationship between the narrator and Mum. Which words and phrases help you understand how they feel about each other?
3. Mum does not feel sorry for refugees. Do you agree with this statement? Why? Why not? (page 43)
4. Create a spider diagram of words and ideas linked to the word 'power'. How does the idea of power link to the refugee experience? Is power the same as greed? (page 44)
5. Josie is 'chewing on the ends of her hair and frowning'. What does this tell us about what she might be thinking and feeling? (page 50)
6. Why might a scarf look like a 'silver river'? What image does this language create in your head? (page 54)
7. Why has the author written certain words on page 62 in capital letters? How should they be read?
8. Find and copy a word on page 67 that means 'taking away'.
9. Mum often comes up with ways to help the narrator spell or say a word. Can you invent some ways to help you remember these words? *refugee, conundrum, confiscate, expensive*.
10. Colour-code the descriptions of the markets, shops and fruits based on the writer's use of sensory language. How do the writer's choice of words help create a vivid picture of the setting?

EXTRA ACTIVITIES

Look at 'My 11 Questions' on pages 47 and 48. Imagine you are Ahmet. How might you respond to the questions? Practice role-playing and hot-seating your answers. Now, write out your answers and share your ideas with a partner.

Use the information in these chapters to write a poem describing people's misconceptions about refugees. Use the following sentence starters to help structure your ideas.
My dad says Refugee Kids are...
My mum says Refugee Kids are...
My friend says Refugee Kids are...
My uncle says Refugee Kids are...
But I think Refugee Kids are...
How can you develop this poem further? Can you perform your poem with expression?

Locate Syria on a map. Create a PowerPoint presentation about Syria – its climate, culture, food and any other interesting facts you can discover. Try to include animations, interesting slide transitions and sound clips.



WEEK 3 (CHAPTERS 9–12) WAR AND MISSING PIECES

SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES

Reading: Comprehension

- Retrieve information from a text.
- Identify evidence from the text to support theories and opinions.
- Use clues from the text to make predictions.
- Create a comic strip to summarise the events in the story.

Design Technology & Art

- Explore the style and techniques employed by Giuseppe Arcimboldo and then use these to paint a piece of artwork inspired the descriptions of the characters.

Drama, Speaking and Listening

- Understand and empathise with a character's thoughts, feelings and attitudes by completing a Role on the Wall activity.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

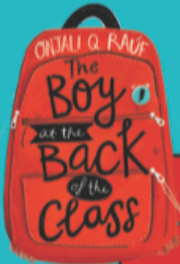
1. The answer is 'Mr Irons'. What could the question be? Could there be more than one question with this answer? (Chapter 9)
2. Read page 102. Using your knowledge of the characters and events so far, make a prediction about who broke Ahmet's plant pot and why.
3. Ahmet is most upset by 'The Day of the Deathly Worm Tray'. True or false? (page 105)
4. Describe the story Ahmet tells in Chapter 10 in three words.
5. What is kibbeh? (page 116)
6. Read 'Our 5 New Questions' on page 121. Imagine you are Ahmet and predict what his reply to the questions might be.
7. What piece of important information do we learn about Grandma Jo in Chapter 11? Why is it significant?
8. Who is Syrah? What has happened to her? (page 139)
9. Why are 'Something' and 'Everything' written with a capital letter? What effect does this have? (page 140)
10. Read to the end of Chapter 12. What do you think will happen next? Write the next part of the story, making a prediction about the events in Chapter 13.

EXTRA ACTIVITIES

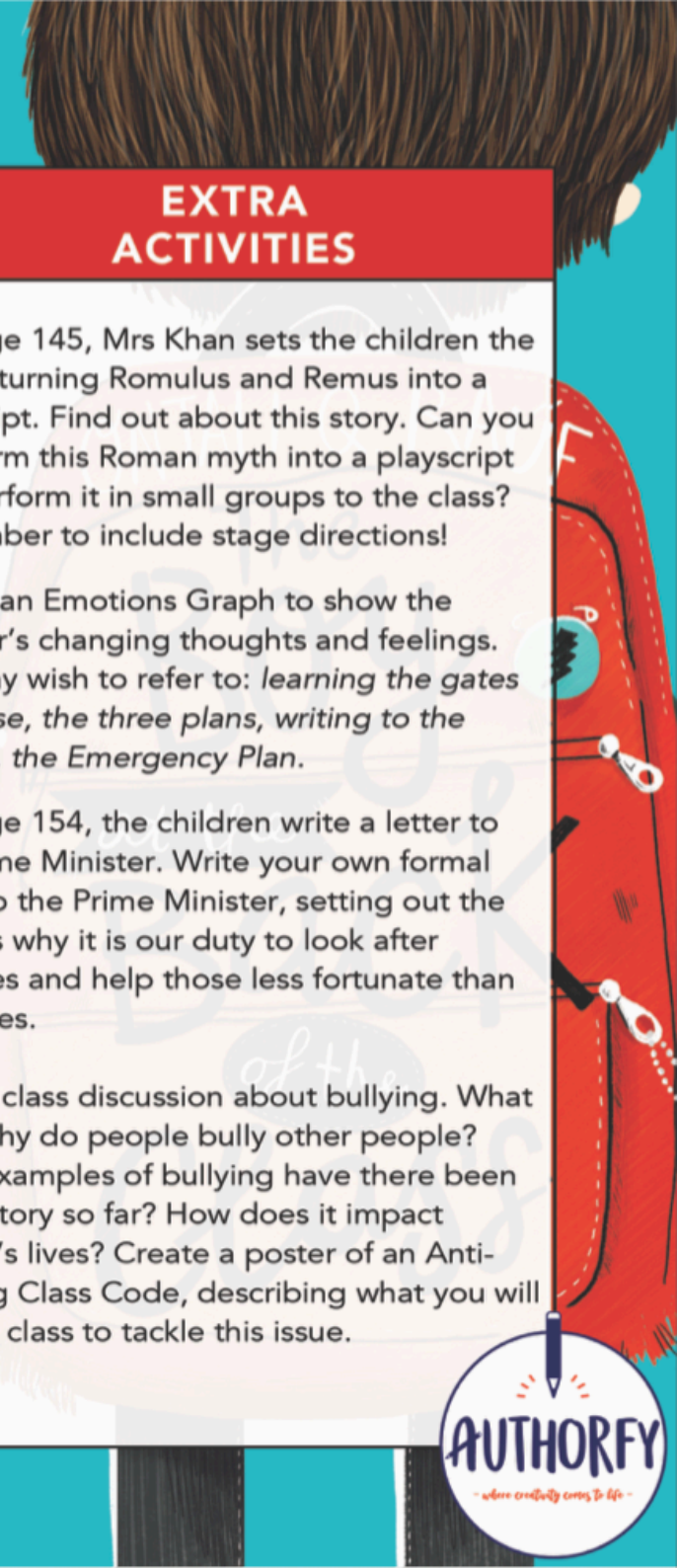
On page 91, a variety of fruits are mentioned, including pomegranates. Spend some time exploring the work of artist, Giuseppe Arcimboldo. Using a similar style to Arcimboldo, create a piece of artwork inspired by the descriptions of one of the characters.

Using the information in Chapter 9, complete a Role on the Wall activity. Draw an outline of Ahmet. On the inside of your drawing write down everything you learn about him and his family in this chapter. On the outside, record any questions you might like to ask him. You may wish, in a different colour, to write down his feelings during this chapter too.

The narrator and Ahmet bond over a love of comic books and Tintin. Create an engaging comic strip with speech and thought bubbles to summarise Ahmet's escape story, using the information from Chapters 10 and 12.



WEEK 4 (CHAPTERS 13–17) THE GREATEST IDEA IN THE WORLD



SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES

Reading: Comprehension

- Use clues from the text to infer information about a character and what they might be thinking and feeling.
- Use an Emotions Graph to explore a character's thoughts.

History

- Use research methods to extend historical learning and research Romulus and Remus.

Writing to Entertain and Inform

- Use formal language and paragraphs to structure a letter.
- Write and perform a playscript.

PSHE and Citizenship

- Explore what bullying is and its impact.
- Create an Anti-Bullying Class Code to describe how you will tackle this issue.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What might the narrator be thinking and feeling as they listen to the man and woman talk on the bus? (page 143 and 144)
2. Why might Ms Hemsli and Mrs Khan have 'pretend smiles'? What might they be hiding? (page 151)
3. Explain what Mrs Finnick's large sign in the library means. How might it apply to the characters in this story? (page 158)
4. What does the adverb 'gently' suggest about Mrs Finnick? What might she be thinking and feeling? (page 160)
5. How does the illustration on page 167 help you understand the events in the story and the narrator's plan?
6. The author uses an ellipsis on page 173. What effect does it have? What does it tell us about Ahmet?
7. Read to the end of page 178. Predict how Ahmet might feel if he discovers the children's plan.
8. The narrator feels as though there are worms, butterflies and frogs jumping in their tummy. Describe in one word how they are feeling on page 179.
9. Use the illustration on page 183 to summarise the Emergency Plan in three sentences.
10. Describe the relationship between the narrator and Ahmet. How is it developing as the story progresses?

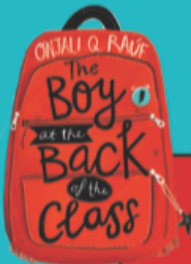
EXTRA ACTIVITIES

On page 145, Mrs Khan sets the children the task of turning Romulus and Remus into a playscript. Find out about this story. Can you transform this Roman myth into a playscript and perform it in small groups to the class? Remember to include stage directions!

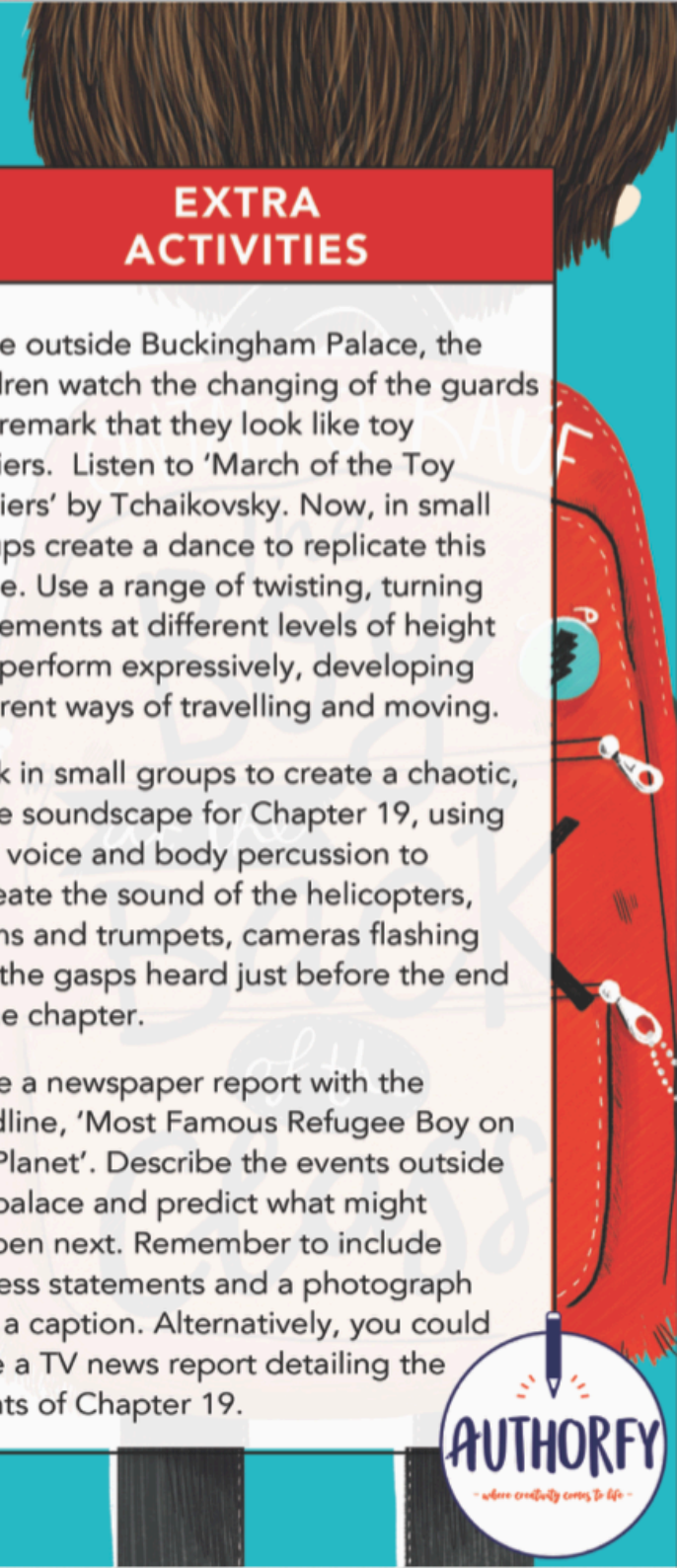
Create an Emotions Graph to show the narrator's changing thoughts and feelings. You may wish to refer to: *learning the gates will close, the three plans, writing to the Queen, the Emergency Plan.*

On page 154, the children write a letter to the Prime Minister. Write your own formal letter to the Prime Minister, setting out the reasons why it is our duty to look after refugees and help those less fortunate than ourselves.

Have a class discussion about bullying. What is it? Why do people bully other people? What examples of bullying have there been in the story so far? How does it impact people's lives? Create a poster of an Anti-Bullying Class Code, describing what you will do as a class to tackle this issue.



WEEK 5 (CHAPTERS 18–21) THE QUEEN'S PALACE



SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES

Reading: Comprehension
- Define vocabulary, thinking carefully about its meaning and impact.

Physical Education
- Perform a dance using a range of movement patterns.

Music
- Use your voice and instruments with control and expression to create a tense, chaotic atmosphere.

Writing to Entertain and Inform
- Write a newspaper report, thinking carefully about the layout and features required for this type of writing.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Match these words (*destination, announce, eagerly*) from Chapter 18 to their meaning (*the place to which you are going, tell people clearly, with excitement or a yearning to do something*).
2. What does it mean if your eyes smile? What does this suggest about the taxi man? (page 197)
3. Look at the illustration on pages 200 and 201. Can you think of three adjectives and a simile to describe Buckingham Palace?
4. Give two reasons why the helicopters above Buckingham Palace might seem like giant dragonflies (page 202).
5. Describe the mood during the changing of the guards. Pick out words and phrases that provide evidence for your opinion (pages 204-208).
6. What does 'looming tower' suggest about the policemen?
7. The narrator and Tom are irresponsible and reckless. Do you agree with this statement? Why? Why not?
8. What do the descriptions of the guards and paramedics imply about their character? (Chapter 20)
9. What is bigotry? Mum says that Mr Greggs tries to cover his bigotry up. What does this mean? Is a bigot the same as a bully?
10. Match the word on the left to its synonym on the right:

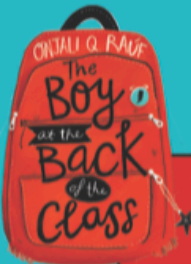
ranting	loathsome
despicable	inkling
impression	bellowing

EXTRA ACTIVITIES

While outside Buckingham Palace, the children watch the changing of the guards and remark that they look like toy soldiers. Listen to 'March of the Toy Soldiers' by Tchaikovsky. Now, in small groups create a dance to replicate this scene. Use a range of twisting, turning movements at different levels of height and perform expressively, developing different ways of travelling and moving.

Work in small groups to create a chaotic, tense soundscape for Chapter 19, using your voice and body percussion to recreate the sound of the helicopters, drums and trumpets, cameras flashing and the gasps heard just before the end of the chapter.

Write a newspaper report with the headline, 'Most Famous Refugee Boy on the Planet'. Describe the events outside the palace and predict what might happen next. Remember to include witness statements and a photograph with a caption. Alternatively, you could write a TV news report detailing the events of Chapter 19.



WEEK 6 (CHAPTERS 22–26) THE PRESENT

SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES

Reading: Comprehension

- Identify and discuss the main themes in the story.
- Create character profiles, exploring how the characters have developed.
- Retrieve and summarise information from a passage and use it to inform writing.
- Categorise and summarise the story using a Plot Diagram.
- Analyse the symbols in the story to explore the main themes and ideas.

Drama, Speaking and Listening

- Understand and empathise with a character's thoughts, feelings and attitudes and express these through role-play.

Maths

- Use a Venn Diagram to compare and contrast the two main characters.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Summarise the events in Chapter 22 in six sentences. Now try and summarise them in three sentences, then one.
2. Which words and phrases are particularly effective in Chapter 22 at portraying the chaos outside the school?
3. Do you agree that there are two types of being scared? Have you ever experienced either of these? (page 244)
4. Summarise in three words how the narrator feels on page 250.
5. Look at the newspaper report on pages 252 and 253. Which language and layout features of a newspaper does the report include? Which features are not included?
6. What is a Rollercoaster Day? Have you ever had one before? What happened? Summarise the narrator's Rollercoaster Day in one sentence.
7. Brendan deserved what happened to him. Do you agree with this statement? Why? Why not? (page 261)
8. Mrs Hall asks the children what makes Ahmet special. What do you think makes him so special? (page 272)
9. We only find out the narrator's name on page 293. Why do you think this might be? Why does the author do this? What impact does it have?
10. Which of these do you think is the most important theme in the story? Can you rank the themes from least important to most important? *home, friendship, respect, war, outsiders, family, hatred.*

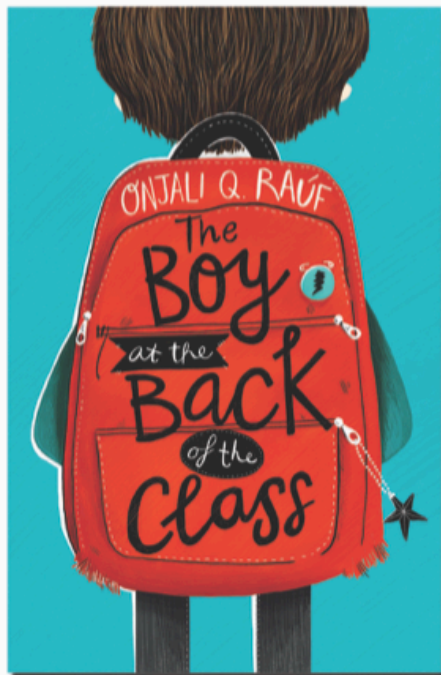
EXTRA ACTIVITIES

Explore the symbolism throughout the story, in the form of a spider diagram. Think about what these represent – lemon sherbets, the pomegranate, the red rucksack, the Tintin comic, World Wide Whispers, letters.

Freeze-frame key moments in the story and then draw a Plot Diagram to show the main events during *The Boy at the Back of the Class*. Can you sort the action into a beginning, build up, climax, resolution and ending? How do the main characters feel at each point?

Create character profiles for the following characters, including information about their personality, relationships, and how they develop as the story progresses: *Ahmet, the narrator, Josie, Michael, Tom, Mum, Mrs Khan.*

Use a Venn Diagram to compare and contrast Alexa and Ahmet. How are they similar? How are they different? What about their experiences and home life? Write a few paragraphs explaining your ideas and use evidence to support them.



EMPATHY DAY

ABOUT EMPATHY LAB: EmpathyLab is a new organisation. They are incubating an empathy, literature and social action programme for 4-11 year olds. They aim to make a real difference to thousands of children's lives, story by story.

ABOUT THE EMPATHY DAY 2019 BOOK GUIDES: Empathy is a vital life skill for young people and a beacon of hope as our public discourse becomes increasingly divided and hate crimes rise to their highest ever level. Scientific research shows that books are a powerful empathy-building tool. Reading gives young people insight into other people's feelings, ways of life, and the experience of facing challenges like becoming homeless, or a refugee.

Empathy Lab's brand new 2019 Empathy Book Guides feature forty five titles (including 'The Boy at the Back of the Class'), specially selected by an expert cross disciplinary panel to strengthen children's empathy skills and inspire them to put empathy into action in their communities. The collection for 4-11 year olds has 30 superb books - picture books, novels, a graphic novel and a poetry collection.

For more information and additional resources for schools, go to:

www.empathylab.uk