



SCHEME OF WORK

PERFECT FOR: Ages 9+; a gripping drama full of secrets and lies; Edwardian history and inventions; the Suffrage movement; drama and role-play; the solar system and night sky; joining a brave girl on her quest to fight injustice and save her family, set against the evocative backdrop of the Edwardian era.

KEY FOR CROSS-CURRICULAR OBJECTIVES:

English: Reading Comprehension; Creative Writing;
Poetry; Writing to Entertain and Inform

Drama, Speaking and Listening

Music

Design Technology & Art

Physical Education

History

Mathematics

Science

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WEEK 1 (CHAPTERS 1–6): ANYTHING BUT NORMAL

SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES	COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS	EXTRA ACTIVITIES
<p>Reading: Comprehension</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analyse an author’s style of writing and identify different techniques and vocabulary used. - Describe relationships between characters. <p>History: Edwardians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Order and understand the main events that occurred during the Edwardian era. - Use research methods to extend historical learning. <p>Drama, Speaking and Listening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand a character by completing a Role on the Wall activity. <p>Design Technology & Art</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create some starry artwork in the style of Vija Celmins. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Before beginning, spend some time exploring the map at the front of the book. Can you predict what might happen and what role each landmark might play in the story? 2. Read Chapter 1. What are your first impressions of Nancy and her family? Use evidence from the text to support your answers. 3. Read to the end of Chapter 1. Where do you think Nancy’s mother is taking them and why? 4. Imagine you are Nancy at the beginning of Chapter 2 at the train station. What can you see, hear, taste, touch and smell? 5. Why do you think Mother is avoiding the glow of the electric street lamps? Do you think she is behaving strangely? (page 31) 6. What are your first impressions of Grandfather? How does Nancy feel about him? How do you know? (page 37) 7. Use the information in Chapter 4 and 5 to draw and label a picture of Grandfather’s house. Can you describe the house in three words and explain your word choices? 8. How does the author create a sense of tension and fear on pages 52-54? Do you have any favourite words and phrases? 9. Use the information in these chapters to compare and contrast Nancy and Violet – you could use a Venn Diagram to do this. Think about how they react to the strange situation! 10. What are your first impressions of Nancy? Do you like her? Does she remind you of any other characters? 	<p>In small groups, carry out some research into the Edwardian era. You may wish to find out about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Edward VII - The Boer War - Suffrage Movement - The Titanic - Olympic games <p>Create a timeline to show your findings.</p> <p>Complete a Role on the Wall activity. Draw an outline of Nancy. On the inside of your drawing, write down everything you learn about her in these chapters. On the outside, record any questions you might like to ask her. In a different colour, you could imagine you are Nancy and write her answers.</p> <p>What can you find out about Halley’s Comet? What is special about it? You could also learn about the constellations in the night sky! Spend some time exploring the artwork of Vija Celmins and her depictions of the sky. Can you recreate your own starry artwork in a similar style using white chalk?</p>

WEEK 2 (CHAPTERS 7–12): THE CUPOLA AND SECRETS

SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES	COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS	EXTRA ACTIVITIES
<p>Reading: Comprehension</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Define vocabulary, thinking carefully about its meaning and impact. - Retrieve information. <p>Writing in Role</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Empathise with characters by writing an inner monologue. - Explore the difference between what a character says and does. <p>History: Edwardians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct research into Edwardian schools and develop understanding of life for children during this era. <p>Writing to Inform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write a newspaper article to describe and recount a historical event. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write a dictionary definition of these words from Chapter 7: <i>unfurling</i>, <i>impertinent</i>, <i>wary</i>. Use them in a sentence of your own. 2. Why do you think Mother lied? What might she be hiding from Nancy? (page 58) 3. Nancy has questions 'burning inside her'. What does this mean? Have you ever felt like this? (page 65) 4. Why do you think the mayor wants to harm Grandfather's reputation? What were your first impressions of the mayor? (page 70) 5. On page 75, it says that Nancy's insides 'constricted'. What does this mean? What might she be thinking and feeling? 6. Is there anything interesting about how page 77 is set out? What effect might this have? Do you have any answers for Nancy's questions? 7. What is a cupola? Can you find pictures of one? (page 81) 8. Why might the telescope be level with the rooftops of the town? What might Grandfather and Mother be up to? (page 86) 9. Why might Mother's eyes be 'glistening' when Father talks about the Suffrage movement? What might she be thinking and feeling? (page 89) 10. Use the information in Chapter 12 to draw and label a map of the setting and plot the route Nancy and Violet take, recording everything they see. 	<p>What might Nancy and Mother be thinking as they argue in Chapter 7? Choose one of the characters and write an inner monologue to show their feelings. Now, act out the scene in pairs, taking time to pause and share your monologue. Is there a difference between what your character is saying and feeling?</p> <p>What can you find out about schools in Edwardian times? We hear from Burch that he is learning about electricity, while Nancy is learning about how to walk tall and have pretty hair. What might an Edwardian school look like? Perhaps you could use a table to compare and contrast an Edwardian school with your experiences of school.</p> <p>Nancy and Violet are forced to sew handkerchiefs for the Suffrage movement. Why? Who were the Suffragettes and how were they trying to change society? Research what happened to Emily Davison at the Epsom Derby and write a newspaper article or eyewitness account about the tragic events.</p>



WEEK 3 (CHAPTERS 13–18): RUMOURS AND REMEDIES

SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES	COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS	EXTRA ACTIVITIES
<p>Reading: Comprehension</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. <p>Drama, Speaking and Listening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand and empathise with a character's thoughts, feelings and attitudes through role-play. <p>Poetry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interpret and perform a poem, using expression, actions and instruments to convey meaning. - Write a poem about the sky in the style of Grace Nichols. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 'Humiliation is one of the worst forms of bullying.' What does this mean? Do you agree? How does the mayor humiliate Burch's father? (page 114) 2. Read to the end of page 116. How did you feel reading this chapter? 3. Read out loud, "I. Said. Might. We. Be. Introduced." How can you capture the mayor's personality and feelings? (page 118) 4. Burch's hands are 'clenched'. What does this mean? What might he be thinking and feeling? (page 122) 5. Grandfather says, "Protecting those we love from unsettling truths is not always a bad thing." What does he mean? Do you agree with him? (page 126) 6. Read to the end of Chapter 18. Why do you think a book by the mayor is in the cupola? Can you infer anything about the relationship between the mayor and Grandfather? 7. What might a 'gaol' be? Why are Mother and Grandfather whispering outside? (page 135) 8. What are some of the 'terrible prophecies' people have heard about the comet? Do you believe them? (page 138) 9. How does the author explore the theme of 'gender' on page 139? What are your thoughts about what Nancy learns at school? 10. How is the relationship between Nancy and Burch developing and changing as the story progresses? 	<p>Create an Emotions Graph to plot Nancy's changing thoughts and feelings throughout these chapters. You may wish to refer to: <i>meeting Burch and his family, creeping into the cupola and seeing Mother and Grandfather, finding out about the anti-comet pills, making plans with Burch.</i></p> <p>In a group of six, re-create the events from Chapter 13. Think about who will play Nancy, Violet, Burch, Mr and Mrs Cavendish, and the mayor. Perform the scene, each time considering another character's perspective and how you will change your body language. You could even turn this part of the story into a play script to help your performance!</p> <p>Look at the poem <i>Cosmic Disco</i> by Grace Nichols. Discuss what you like and dislike about it, anything that puzzles you and how it links to the story. Work in groups to perform the poem, thinking about how you can use your voice, actions and musical instruments to convey the feeling of the poem. Using the book as inspiration, can write your own poem about the sky?</p>

WEEK 4 (CHAPTERS 19–24): ARRESTED

SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES	COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS	EXTRA ACTIVITIES
<p>Reading: Comprehension</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retrieve information. - Identify evidence from the text to support theories and opinions. - Use clues to make predictions. <p>Drama, Speaking and Listening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a Conscience Alley to explore a character's thoughts and feelings and what motivates them to make a difficult decision. <p>History: Edwardians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research and read a range of Edwardian children's stories and write a review. - Conduct research into Edwardian inventions. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why do you think Nancy doesn't read to Violet anymore? Do you think this will change? (page 158) 2. Why does Burch give a 'low whistle'? What might he be thinking and feeling? (page 160) 3. The author describes the comet as a 'great sword of diffused light bleeding across the inky sky'. What image does this create in your mind? Do you think it's an effective description? Can you draw a picture in response to this description? (page 162) 4. Read to the end of page 171. Do you think Mother really is an arsonist? What could have happened? 5. Nancy leaves Violet with Mrs Cavendish on page 186. Do you think this is a sensible idea? Why? Why not? 6. Read to the end of page 189. Do you think Constable Addison will help the children? 7. Read to the end of page 193. What do you predict Mr Cavendish saw? What role might he play in the rest of the story? 8. Why do you think Eliza gives Nancy a 'pitying look'? What might she know about the Greenstone family? (page 197) 9. Draw a picture of the photograph, which is described on page 202. Predict who might be in the photograph and how this links to the mystery. 10. Read to the end of Chapter 24. Do you think Mother will reply to Nancy's letter? What might she say? Perhaps you can have a go at writing in-role as Mother. 	<p>As a class, create a Conscience Alley. One side of the class should be voices persuading Nancy to contact her father. The other side of the class should persuade Nancy to stay quiet. Take it in turns to play Nancy walking through the alley of voices. How do you feel? Write a paragraph exploring your feelings.</p> <p>Conduct research into the Edwardian inventions that are mentioned throughout the story, such as gas and electricity, flushing toilets, motorcars, and telephones. Create a colourful and informative poster or leaflet about how they work, who they were invented by, and how they changed Edwardian society.</p> <p>Violet says that she misses Father reading to them. These children's books came out during the Edwardian era: <i>The Wind in the Willows</i>, <i>The Railway Children</i>, <i>Peter Pan</i>, <i>Peter Rabbit</i>. Can you read one of these stories and write a summary or review of it? What might they tell us about life in Edwardian times? You may enjoy designing a new front cover for your chosen story, too!</p>

WEEK 5 (CHAPTERS 25–31): ANSWERS

SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES

Reading: Comprehension

- Explore vocabulary and carry out role-play to understand the relationship between characters.

Music

- Use your voice and instruments with control and expression to create a magical, starry soundscape.

Writing in Role

- Recount an event from the story in-role, considering a character's thoughts and feelings.

Creative Writing

- Explore how authors create a sense of excitement and use this to model a new piece of writing in the same style.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. How does the author create a sense of excitement and tension in Chapter 25? Which words and phrases are particularly successful?
2. What is 'melancholy'? Why might it weigh heavily on Nancy? If 'melancholy' were a colour, what colour would it be and why? (page 219)
3. What is the most important piece of information on page 222? Do you have any theories about what is revealed?
4. The answer is 'Agatha'. What might the question be? Can you think of more than one possible question? (page 225)
5. Role-play the conversation between Nancy and Burch at the beginning of Chapter 28. How can you use your voices and expression to capture their feelings?
6. Grandfather says he has 'retreated into my shell like a mollusc'. What does this mean? Why has he behaved like this? (page 236)
7. Grandfather says that Nancy has grit and determination. Do you agree? Where in the story has she shown these qualities? (page 237)
8. Try reading the letter on page 244 aloud in role as the mayor. How can you capture his menacing and frightening manner?
9. Read up to page 250. Has your opinion of Violet changed at all as the story has progressed? Why?
10. Why has the mayor lied about the telescope being broken? (page 265)

EXTRA ACTIVITIES

Listen to extracts from 'The Planets' by Holst or Beethoven's 'Moonlight Sonata'. What can you see in your mind's eye as you listen to the music? In small groups, create a magical soundscape based on the theme of stars, the night sky, and the solar system. Use your voices and a range of instruments to create your composition. You could even make a graphical score to represent your music!

Re-write the events in Chapter 27 from Agatha's point of view. How does she feel about seeing Nancy for the first time? What has her life been like in prison? Consider how you can emulate her voice and character. How does this activity help you further develop your understanding of Agatha?

Write a flashback for the story, describing the moment Mr Cavendish found the mayor stealing. How might you show Mr Cavendish's emotions and actions in a similar style to the author? How can you create a sense of menace when the mayor threatens him?

WEEK 6 (CHAPTERS 32–38): DOING THE RIGHT THING

SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES	COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS	EXTRA ACTIVITIES
<p>Reading: Comprehension - Identify and discuss the main themes in the story. - Create character profiles. - Summarise information. - Make comparisons within and across books.</p> <p>Writing in Role - Write clearly and succinctly for a specific audience and purpose.</p> <p>Design Technology & Art - Create a class display about comets, using a range of mixed media, poetry and writing.</p> <p>Writing in Role - Empathise with a character by writing in role. - Emulate a character's voice and personality.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Summarise how Burch feels on page 274 in one word and explain your word choice. Can you give examples from the story when people raise their voices to fight injustice? (page 277) Explain why Nancy wants to know, but also doesn't want to know, on page 281. Summarise the events in Chapter 33 in six sentences. Can you do it in three sentences? What about one sentence? Why do you think it took Grandfather so long to face the truth and stand up for his family? (page 299) Explain why Burch's face is a combination of 'awe and fear'. Refer to both words in your answer. (page 300) The mayor says, "Everyone knows that it is wealth and property that makes a person powerful." Do you agree? Do you feel sorry for him at all? (page 321) Which character do you think develops the most during the course of the story? Why? 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? <i>family, secrecy and lies, education, comets, justice.</i> Describe the following characters in one word and explain your word choice: <i>Nancy, Violet, Burch, Grandfather, Mother, Mr Cavendish, the mayor.</i> Perhaps you could create a Character Profile about each one, including illustrations. 	<p>Prepare and perform a 'live report' from the comet party. Think about what spectators might see and hear and how they might react to the unfolding events. How can you convey the intensity of the evening through your performance? Following this, can you write a newspaper article about the mayor's arrest? How will you adapt your tone and organise your paragraphs to create a newspaper article?</p> <p>Use a range of mixed media to create a class display entitled 'Our Comet Party'. You could include paintings of the comet, invitations to your party, information texts about comets, models of the solar system, poems about the night sky and more.</p> <p>Write a diary entry in role as Nancy at the end of the story. How would she reflect on what has happened? What are the most important things she has learned about the world around her, fighting for justice, her family, new friends, and Cupola House?</p>