

SCHEME OF WORK

PERFECT FOR:

Students aged 8+; a classic Edwardian adventure story reimagined; exploring family dynamics and making new friends; creative writing and drama; the history of steam engines; classic poetry and children's stories; persuasive and informative writing; joining a girl with a head filled with dreams on her action-packed and suspenseful voyage of discovery, set against a backdrop of idyllic countryside and, of course, The Primrose Railway.

KEY FOR CROSS-CURRICULAR OBJECTIVES:

English: Reading Comprehension; Creative Writing;

Writing to Entertain and Inform

Drama, Speaking and Listening

Design Technology & Art

Science

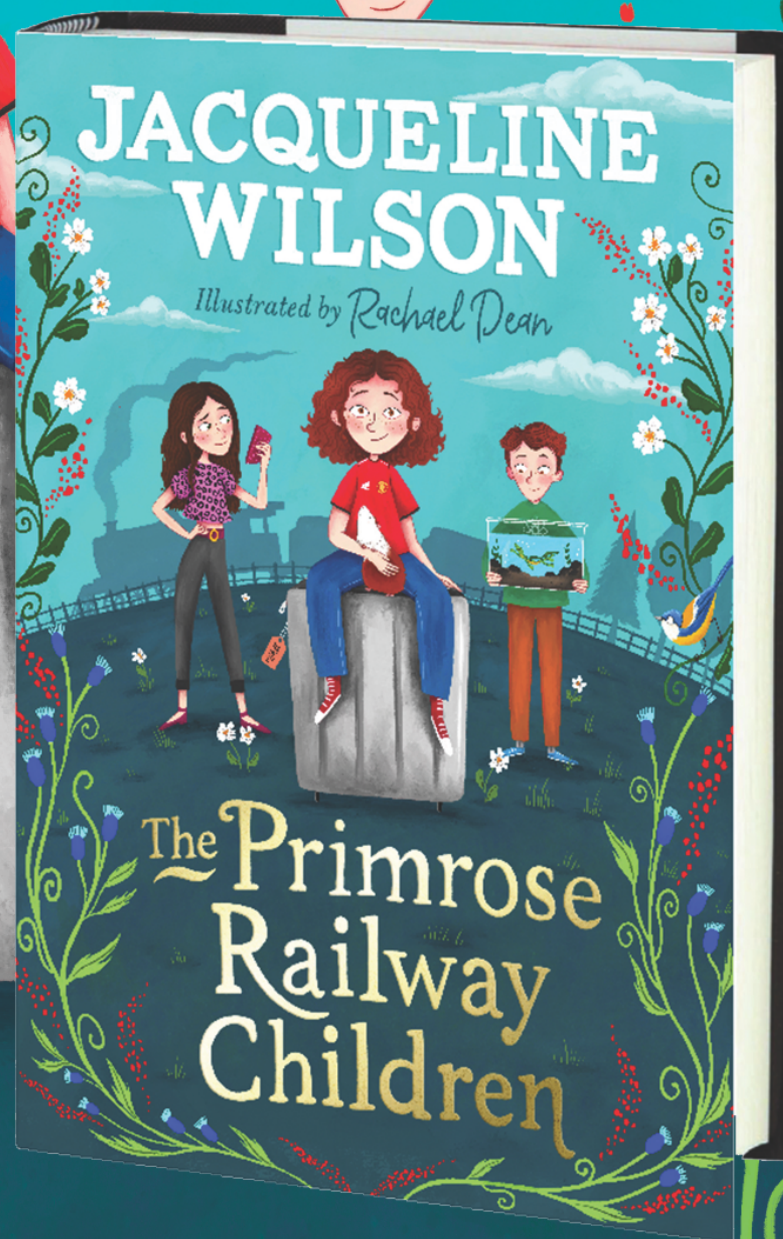
History

Geography

Computing

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WEEK 1 (CHAPTERS 1–4): SOMETHING STRANGE IS IN THE AIR

SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES	COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS	EXTRA ACTIVITIES
Reading: Comprehension - Predict what might happen from details stated and implied - Draw inferences, such as inferring characters' thoughts and feelings - Identify how language and structure contribute to meaning Design Technology and Art - Research the life and works of Frida Kahlo and create artwork inspired by her self-portraits Science - Research key facts about newts and identify how they have adapted to their environment Drama, Speaking and Listening - Understand a character by completing a hot-seating activity	1. Look closely at the front cover design. What do you predict this story may be about? Now consider the author, blurb, and the fact that it is based on the classic E. Nesbit novel. What does this add to your understanding? 2. On page 1, we hear about arguments between Mum and Dad. Why do you think the narrator feels that the 'hissing sounds' are worse than shouting or yelling? 3. Amelie and the narrator have been best friends since Reception. In what ways are they beginning to drift apart? 4. What do we learn about Phoebe's dad (pages 6 – 7)? How do you think he felt to go 'out of fashion'? 5. On pages 10–14, we find out more about Phoebe's siblings. How would you describe each one in your own words? Can you find evidence to support your views? 6. After reading chapter 2, go back and look for foreshadowing. Pick out all of the phrases that suggest Phoebe's dad is not behaving in his usual manner. 7. Phoebe describes her anxiety with the phrase 'worries inside my head buzzed like angry bees' (page 49). What type of poetic device is this, and why is it effective? 8. The cliffhanger at the end of chapter 3 reveals that life is probably not going to return to normal for the family. What do you think has happened to their dad? And what do you predict may happen next? 9. On pages 63–64, the sisters end up having a fight, calling each other 'jealous' and 'pathetic'. What are their reasons for these insults? Deep down, what do you think is really upsetting the sisters? 10. What are each child's reasons for not wanting to go away? Thinking about everything that has happened so far, what do you think they are most worried about right now?	Phoebe and her dad are big fans of Frida Kahlo. Using the Internet and books, find out about her life and look at a range of her self-portraits. Can you paint a self-portrait that you feel resembles your appearance <i>and</i> your personality? What will you include in the picture to symbolize your interests and aims? Perry is a huge newt lover and is reading a library book called <i>Our Native Amphibians</i>. Imagine you are writing a section for the book, either about newts or another type of British amphibian. Research key facts and present your findings in a clear and interesting manner. Don't forget diagrams and illustrations! Hot-seating Phoebe: after reading these chapters, come up with a range of open questions that you would like to ask Phoebe at this point. Consider her friendships, siblings and worries about her parents. Take it in turns to play the role of Phoebe, answering the questions in character.



WEEK 2 (CHAPTERS 5–8): A QUIRKY COTTAGE AND QUIRKIER CHARACTERS

SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES	COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS	EXTRA ACTIVITIES
Reading: Comprehension - Describe relationships between characters - Skim and scan to retrieve information from a passage - define vocabulary, thinking carefully about its meaning and impact Design Technology - Design and make a 3D model using a range of materials Writing in Role - Write a personal letter from a character's perspective Computing - Create a PowerPoint presentation using various animation and design features History - Find out about Edwardian fashion and sketch/annotate costumes	1. The following words are used to describe the children and their behaviour at the start of chapter 5: obstinate, indignant, relentlessly, mournfully, agitated. Find the definition and word class for each word and then see if you can use them in your own sentences. 2. Look back at pages 86–90. Can you spot any quotations that reveal how Phoebe idolises her father? 3. How does Jacqueline Wilson use the senses and detailed description to create a vivid picture of the countryside surrounding the cottage (page 102 and 104–105)? Try to find words/phrases for each of the five senses. 4. Can you find evidence that Phoebe's mum is feeling stressed or anxious on page 11? Copy out words/phrases that suggest this. 5. Why does Phoebe say 'it was as if I was the mother and she were the child'? (page 125) 6. Using the descriptions of Edwardian clothing on pages 139–140, sketch your own versions of these outfits. Annotate your drawings carefully, using details from the passage. 7. Why does Perry sometimes behave in a way that seems unusual and can get in him in trouble, like on page 143? Is he really being as naughty as Mr. Thomas Brown thinks he is? 8. Becks' eyes 'widen' on page 149. Why? What do you think is going through her head? 9. Explain why each of the children desperately want to stay in their little cottage (page 158), rather than swap to another one. 10. Based on his actions and behaviour in the final pages of chapter 8, what kind of person does Mr. Thomas Brown seem to be? Can you describe him in your own words? Compare your description with a friend's.	Use a shoebox to create a 3D model of one of the rooms in the holiday cottage. Re-read the room descriptions in chapter 6 so that you remember all the key details. Use a variety of materials to create your miniature room. Write a letter from Nina, addressed to the new occupiers of the cottage. What has her life been like? What are her reasons for leaving? You may want to reference the artwork, the colourful decoration, the basic nature of the facilities, the railway, and her friendship with Mr. Thomas Brown. You could start with: <i>To whomever it may concern.</i> Using the facts about steam trains shared on pages 160–163 (and other research from books and the Internet), create a PowerPoint presentation to share your findings. Can you use slide transitions and animations to liven up your research?



WEEK 3 (CHAPTERS 9–12): SECRETS AND LIES

SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES	COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS	EXTRA ACTIVITIES
Reading: Comprehension - Use clues to make predictions - Retrieve information - Identify how language choices, structure and punctuation contribute to meaning - Explore classic texts and respond to these in various ways Creative Writing - Write a short story inspired by events in the novel Drama, Speaking and Listening - Take part in a debate to explore character behaviour and motivation History - Explore Edwardian literature and learn about daily life in this period	1. 'I don't think you're really the type to be giving the sheets a scrub in the kitchen sink, dear' (page 178). Do you think Mo has made an accurate assessment of mum's character? 2. Perry says, 'the whole world's gone mad' (page 184). What are the various things he might be referring to, both in this chapter and others? 3. Why do you think the newt funeral might mean so much to Phoebe? What could it represent? 4. How has the author set the scene for a perfect family outing in the way that Forest Lake is described? 5. The action scene in which Becks falls into the water is told in a dramatic way (page 203). What types of words, sentences and punctuation marks help to create this sense of drama? 6. 'It felt so odd saying Amelie's name' (page 213). Why does Phoebe feel this way after only a few days away from home? 7. How would you describe Phoebe's thoughts and feelings as she helps Becks sneak out to meet Jake? (pages 214–217) 8. There is a sense that many of the family members have secrets from each other at the start of chapter 12. Think about all of the chapters you have read so far – who has secrets, and what are they? Is anyone telling lies as a result? 9. Why is the age difference between Jake and Becks significant? What are the problems that this age gap may cause? 10. 'Just your sister, indeed.' Why does Ann the firewoman respond like this to Perry? (page 245) What issue is she raising? Do you think there are still jobs that are seen as for men or women only?	Do you think parenting is easy? Do you think Phoebe's mum and dad have different parenting styles? Think about these questions and who you would consider the 'better' parent. Then, split into two groups and hold a debate on this issue. Phoebe enjoys exploring Nina's bookcases and discovers a range of classic texts. Try reading another Edwardian children's book like <i>Peter Pan</i>, <i>The Secret Garden</i>, or <i>The Little Princess</i>. You could create a storyboard of the book you read or write a review to share with the class. Plan and write a short story called <i>A Perfect Day Gone Wrong</i>, inspired by Beck falling into the lake during their idyllic family day out (pages 203–205). Try to lull the reader into a false sense of security by making the day seem almost too perfect to start with.



WEEK 4 (CHAPTERS 13–16): DESPAIR AND DELIGHT

SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES	COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS	EXTRA ACTIVITIES
Reading: Comprehension - Use clues from the text to infer what characters are thinking and feeling - Make predictions - Find evidence to support your ideas Writing to Entertain - Write a speech to deliver to your headteacher using a range of persuasive devices Geography - Use atlases and other sources to locate remote islands Creative Writing - Write descriptions of settings, using a range of figurative language and interesting vocabulary	1. Mum says to Phoebe: 'You're so inclined to live in this imaginary world of yours' (page 249). Do you agree with this summary of Phoebe? Is it necessarily a bad thing? 2. On page 250, look for phrases where the author has shown and not told us how Becks is feeling just before/during reading the note from Jake and directly afterwards. 3. What evidence can you find on page 256 to support the view that Phoebe doesn't really believe that her dad is on a desert island? 4. Phoebe says to her dad that she has nobody else in the family but him to rely on (page 264). Do you think this is true? 5. Why does Mum call Phoebe's spelling 'very imaginative'? (page 271) 6. What do we learn about what it can be like to live with autism on pages 279–281? 7. In chapter 15, Phoebe shares the ideas for her Edwardian story. What do you notice about the characters and their resemblance (or differences) to her own family? 8. Why do you think Phoebe and Mr. Thomas Brown have formed such a close connection and become good friends? Why has Mum offended him so deeply by trying to pay him for his help? 9. Becks has a theory that Dad has 'done a runner' to get away from debt collectors. Thinking back to all we know about Dad, how likely or unlikely do you consider this theory to be? Write a short statement to explain your views. 10. The final line of chapter 16 reveals that all the children are in agreement about wanting to return to the railway, despite their mother's views. What do you predict will happen next?	Robinson Crusoe named his island the <i>Island of Despair</i>. Come up with two alternative island names using contrasting abstract nouns (one positive and one negative), and then write a short descriptive piece about each one. Can you use similes, metaphors and personification to bring your islands to life? Use atlases, the Internet and information texts to find out about the most remote islands in the world. Select a couple to research. Find out about their population, natural features and distance from the nearest big city. Can you discover any totally uninhabited islands? Perry describes trips to the railway as 'hugely educational' in order to convince his mum they should keep going there. Plan an exciting and brand new school trip, which is educational in different ways. Put forward your arguments to your teacher or headteacher in a persuasive speech ready to deliver in class or assembly.



WEEK 5 (CHAPTERS 17–20): TUNNEL VISION

SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES	COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS	EXTRA ACTIVITIES
Reading: Comprehension - Identify the effect of specific language choices - Create thought bubbles to explore character thoughts and feelings Drama, Speaking & Listening - Interpret, prepare and perform a poem, using expression, actions and instruments to convey meaning Creative Writing - Write an informal letter that reveals character thoughts and feelings Writing to Inform - Write a newspaper report to describe and recount a key event in the novel	1. Perry surprises his sisters by trying to talk to Dad on the payphone (page 338). Using page 339 and your own ideas, explain how each family member shows their sadness about Dad in their own way. 3. Between page 340 and 342, the moods of the children change as their walk progresses. Re-read both pages and note down any verbs and adjectives that create a specific mood on each page. How are the word choices different? 3. Create thought bubbles for Becks and Phoebe as they realise Perry has run into the railway tunnel (page 350). What might they be thinking and feeling? How might this compare to Perry's thoughts and feelings? 4. The author makes the tunnel scene on pages 352–354 really exciting by making certain language choices. Copy down any words or phrases that create tension, and then see if you can use your favourite ones in a suspenseful scene of your own. 5. On page 358, Mum says that she treats all of the children 'the same'. Do you agree with this statement? 6. Choose one word that describes how Phoebe feels when she finds out about her dad. Explain why you have made this choice. 7. When you read Mum's explanation about why Dad did what he did, how does it make you feel? Do you view him differently as a result? 8. Phoebe's special field seems different now. How has the mood of the place changed on page 408? Can you spot the use of personification? 9. Can you explain why Perry likes robots so much? 10. How has the author built up tension on the final page of chapter 20?	Write your own newspaper report about Dad being arrested and charged with stealing money from his employer. Think about key features of report texts, such as the 5Ws, formal language, and quotes from witnesses. Include a snappy headline, too! Write an informal letter from Phoebe to her dad in prison. What tone do you think she would adopt? What does she want to say to him or ask? Remember to try and capture Phoebe's 'voice' as you write, as well as her mixed emotions. Read the classic poem by R.L. Stevenson called '<i>From a Railway Carriage</i>'. In small groups, divide up the lines and prepare a performance, using voices, actions and percussion instruments. Try to get across the excitement and wonder of the child, as well as the speed and motion of the train. You could even write your own version, using the original as a template.



WEEK 6 (CHAPTERS 21–24): RESCUE MISSIONS AND REUNIONS

SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES	COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS	EXTRA ACTIVITIES
Reading: Comprehension - Use a Role on the Wall to consider character thoughts and feelings - Make predictions, using clues from the passage and knowledge of the characters - Consider key themes and symbols in the story - Make comparisons within and across texts Design Technology and Art - Design and create a deck of Top Trumps cards Creative Writing - Write a flashback scene that fits the narrative and character development Geography - Use maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to locate countries and describe features studied	1. Read to the end of chapter 21 and then create a Role on the Wall for Phoebe. Inside the outline, write words and phrases that reveal her thoughts and feelings, and on the outside of the figure, jot down the words that describe how she seems to others at this point. 2. What do we learn about Perry from pages 428–430? Summarise your findings in note-form. 3. Read to the end of page 432. Make a prediction about what will happen next, and how the main characters will be affected. 4. Look out for short sentences on page 436. How do they help to build up a sense of urgency and tension? 5. After the dramatic events of chapter 21, why is Perry's reaction to seeing Phoebe for the first time (page 440) quite an amusing one? 6. Despite being hailed as a hero, why do you think Phoebe feels as if she had 'a black hole inside'? (page 453) 7. 'Tickled pink' and 'slap-up meal' are two idioms used by Mr. Thomas Brown (pages 460–461). What other idioms can you think of or discover? Create a list of some popular and less well-known ones, ready to share with a partner or the class. 8. Using the information from page 464, write a short flashback scene in which Nina and Mr. Thomas Brown are much younger and out dancing. Use the descriptions of Nina's painting to help inspire you! 9. Why do you think they are waiting 'apprehensively' to visit Nina? (page 470). Write down the pros and cons for going to the care home. 10. What do you think is the most important theme in the story: family, forgiveness, friendship, acceptance, journeys? List them in order of importance and explain your decision. In groups, select one theme to explore by creating a collage or spider diagram.	Now that you have finished the story, you know each of the characters very well. Design a set of top trump cards featuring each of the main characters (you may even want to include Daisy!). Select key characteristics that you will use to grade each character and add a picture and design features. Then play your game with a friend. Design a map covering the key locations in which the story takes place. Think about the landmarks you want to include (such as the railway station, the cottage and Forest Lake). Where else would be interesting to include? Create a key and draw from a bird's eye view. Jacqueline Wilson has re-imagined the classic Edwardian story '<i>The Railway Children</i>' by E. Nesbit. Why do you think re-tellings exist? Watch the original film or read the original story and compare it with '<i>The Primrose Railway Children</i>'. What are the key differences and similarities? Can you think of any other classic stories that have been re-imagined, or that you might like to re-imagine?

