



THE GOOD THIEVES

SCHEME OF WORK

PERFECT FOR: Ages 9+; an exciting adventure story set in New York about a group of brave children who will do anything to right a terrible wrong; plucky and courageous characters; creative writing opportunities including newspaper articles, persuasive adverts, poetry, monologues and balanced arguments; and exploring themes of family, justice, good vs. evil and friendship.

KEY FOR CROSS-CURRICULAR OBJECTIVES:

English: Reading comprehension; Creative Writing;
Poetry; Writing in Role; Writing to Entertain and Inform

Design Technology & Art

Drama, Speaking and Listening

Computing

Science

Maths

Music

Geography

PSHE & Citizenship





SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES	COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS	EXTRA ACTIVITIES
<p>Reading: Comprehension</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retrieve information from the text and use this to make predictions. - Discuss an author’s use of language <p>Drama, Speaking and Listening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand and empathise with a character’s feelings and attitudes by completing a Role on the Wall activity. <p>Geography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use maps to locate places and landmarks. - Extend geographical thinking by researching the climate of a location. <p>Design Technology & Art</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use a range of materials to create a class display, exploring how stories can support and comfort us. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Before beginning the story discuss the following: What is a thief? Can a thief be good? Is stealing ever right? 2. Look at the front cover. What can you see? Use the front cover to make a prediction about the story and predict what might happen. 3. Read the first chapter. What are your first impressions of Vita? Which words and phrases give us clues about her personality? 4. What evidence is there on page 3 to suggest that the story is not set in the present? 5. The answer is ‘Sorratore’. What might the question be? (page 10) 6. Use the information on pages 14 and 15 to draw and label a picture of Vita. 7. Read to the end of page 28. Using what you already know about Vita, predict what her plan will be. 8. What is renunciation? Do you think Grandpa is lying because he feels foolish? (page 45) 9. Does Sorratore remind you of any other characters in a children’s story? Why? What makes him an effective, frightening villain? Collect any words and phrases to support your ideas. 10. How does the author personify New York and bring the various buildings and settings to life throughout these chapters? 	<p>Using the information from these chapters, complete a Role on the Wall activity. Draw an outline of Vita. On the inside of your drawing write down everything you learn about her and her family. On the outside, record any questions you might like to ask her. You may wish, in a different colour, to write down her feelings during these chapters, too.</p> <p>Use a map to locate New York and calculate how long it would take to travel there by boat and by airplane. In small groups, research the average temperature and rainfall in New York throughout the year and present your findings in a bar chart or line graph.</p> <p>On page 9, the author talks about how stories can help and support us. What does this mean? As a class create a display entitled, ‘The Stories That Help Us’, using photographs, artwork, book covers, poems and writing to share a story that is special to you and discuss how and why it has helped you, changed your thinking or comforted you.</p>



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<p>Reading: Comprehension</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Define vocabulary, thinking carefully about its meaning and impact. - Use a dictionary to look up the meaning of unknown words. <p>Writing to Entertain and Inform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write an advert, thinking carefully about persuasive techniques and how to make your advert engaging. <p>Music</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluate a piece of music and use it as a stimulus for creating a piece of artwork in response to themes explored in the book. <p>Physical Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perform a dance using a range of movement patterns. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a spider diagram of words, themes and ideas that link to 'justice'. How does the notion of justice apply to the story so far? What is an injustice? Have you ever experienced an injustice? 2. Write a dictionary definition for the following words in Chapter 5: <i>mingling</i>, <i>naïve</i>, <i>skeptical</i>. Can you use them in a sentence of your own? 3. Why is 'Ask for it back!' written in italics? How should this be read? What might Silk be thinking and feeling when she says this? (page 51) 4. Why does Vita hesitate on page 76? 5. Find and copy a word on page 88 that is similar in meaning to 'talk to'. 6. Which words and phrases on pages 88 to 89 capture the beauty of Samuel's movement? Why are they effective? 7. How can someone's face be like 'a door slamming shut'? What might Grandpa be thinking and feeling? (page 93) 8. How is 'glee' similar to 'triumph'? How is it different? (page 94) 9. Can you find two synonyms for 'cross' on page 99? What impression do these words give of the lions? 10. How does the author create a sense of tension in Chapter 9 and suggest that Vita is in danger? 	<p>Arkady describes his desire to create 'an animal ballet'. What might that look like? Listen to 'The Carnival of the Animals' by Camille Saint-Saëns. Use this to paint a picture of an animal ballet, inspired by Arkady's description.</p> <p>Create a persuasive, colourful advert to encourage families to visit Arkady's circus, referring to some of the spectacles and sights you might see there. Remember to include powerful adjectives, a slogan and rhetorical questions.</p> <p>On pages 88 to 90, the author describes Samuel's acrobatic movements and the circus setting. Listen to 'Entry of the Gladiators' by Julius Fučík. Now, in small groups create a dance to replicate this scene. Use a range of twisting, tumbling movements at different levels of height and perform expressively, developing different ways of travelling and moving.</p>



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<p>Reading: Comprehension</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss feelings that characters have for each other and describe relationships - Discuss characters' motives and reasons for their actions <p>Drama, Speaking and Listening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider and experiment with body language and facial expressions to convey a character's thoughts and feelings. - Create a Conscience Alley to explore a character's thoughts and feelings and what motivates them to make a difficult decision. <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 and what they might be feeling. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has anyone ever taken something that belongs to you without your permission? How did you feel? What did you do? How might Vita be feeling on page 106? 2. Look at the description of the circus setting on pages 112-123. Imagine you are Vita and make a list of everything you can see, hear, taste, touch and smell. 3. Think about Kawadza and his treatment of Samuel. Why does he behave in this way? Will he change his mind? (page 117) 4. Read page 123. Why do you think Sorrotore is at the circus? Thinking about what you know about him, what might he do when he sees Vita? 5. What do you think motivates Vita to help Silk on pages 134-135? 6. Read Chapter 12. Tony is kind. Do you agree with this statement? Why? Why not? Do you trust him? 7. What does the verb 'spat' tell us about Silk and how she feelings about stealing? (page 151) 8. When Sorrotore gets worried, he gets mean. What does this mean? How can being worried, nervous or anxious impact upon our decision-making? (page 156) 9. What do you think Dillinger's warning on page 157 means? What might Sorrotore be planning? 10. How is the relationship between Silk and Vita developing and changing? Use evidence from the text to support your ideas. 	<p>Look at page 107. What should Vita do? As a class create a Conscience Alley. One side of the class should be voices persuading Vita to tell someone. The other side of the class should persuade Vita to keep her secret. Take it in turns to play Vita walking through the alley of voices. How do you feel? Write a paragraph exploring your decision.</p> <p>In a group of four, re-create the events from Chapter 12. One of you should play Vita, one should play Samuel, one Arkady and one of you should play Sorrotore. Perform the scene four times, considering another character's perspective. How will you change your body language and facial expression?</p> <p>Look at Chapter 12. What might Vita and Silk be thinking as they face the two boys? Choose one of the characters and write an inner monologue to show their thoughts and feelings. Now, act out the scene in pairs, taking time to pause and share your character's inner monologue.</p>



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<p>Reading: Comprehension - Analyse an author’s style of writing and identify different techniques and vocabulary used.</p> <p>Writing to Entertain and Inform - Write a balanced discussion guide exploring the arguments for and against keeping animals in circuses.</p> <p>Maths - Use a Venn Diagram to compare and contrast the two main characters.</p> <p>Design Technology & Art - Explore the work of Leonid Afremov and then use these to paint a piece of artwork inspired by the New York setting.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why does the author compare the conversation between Vita and her mother to a thunderstorm? What effect does this have? (page 158) 2. How is the word ‘swept’ similar to the word ‘walked’? How is it different? Who might sweep into a room? (page 167) 3. Use the descriptions in Chapter 14 to draw and label a picture of the Plaza Hotel. Which words and phrases help show the hotel’s opulence? 4. Look at page 80. How is Silk feeling? Which words and phrases help us empathise with her? 5. What is ‘selfastonishment’? Have you ever felt like this before? Why? (page 187) 6. The author describes Arkady’s shoulders as being ‘hunched’ on page 195. Why? What does this tell us about him? 7. How does the description of the setting and weather on page 199 add to the atmosphere? Which words and phrases helped you to see the setting in your mind? 8. Read to the end of page 201. What do you think the final part of Vita’s plan will be? 9. Do you think Vita meant to drop her red note book? If so, why? (page 208) 10. How has Vita shown determination throughout the story so far? Give examples to support your ideas. 	<p>Should animals be forced to work in circuses? Hold a class discussion about this question and collect people’s responses and ideas. Carry out research into circuses and their treatment of animals. Write a balanced argument, explaining the reasons for and against animals working in circuses. Summarise your own views in a conclusion.</p> <p>Use a Venn Diagram to compare and contrast Vita and Silk. How are they similar? How are they different? What about their experiences and relationships? Now, write a few paragraphs explaining your ideas.</p> <p>Look at Leonid Afremov’s paintings of New York landscapes. What techniques does he use to capture the setting? Using a similar style, bold colours and a range of materials, create a piece of artwork inspired by the events in these chapters.</p>



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<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"> - Interpret and perform a poem, using expression, actions and musical instruments to convey meaning. - Use voice and body language to convey how a character is feeling. <p>Design Technology & Art</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retrieve information about a setting and use this to create a technical blueprint of the layout of Hudson Castle. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why does the author refer to the minutes ticking by on page 210? What does it tell us about Vita? 2. Why is everyone surprised when Silk takes Arkady's hand? What might her facial expression look like at this point in the story? (page 220) 3. What might Samuel be thinking and feeling as he looks up at the 'vast brick wall'? (page 225) 4. What evidence is there on page 227 that Vita is both frightened and impressed by Samuel's daring climb? 5. Why has the author included two questions in italics on page 234? What effect do they have? 6. Why does the author include a flashback in Chapter 20? What do you feel is the most important information in this chapter? Why do you think the author has waited until now to reveal this? 7. Summarise Vita's plan in Chapter 20 in three sentences. Do you think it is a good plan? Will it work? 8. Why does Vita feel warmth 'spread up her stomach to her face'? (page 244) 9. Read page 253. What do you think might be written on the papers? How do you predict Vita will cope with her disappointment? 10. Did you feel frightened or excited at the end of Chapter 21? Why? Why not? 	<p>Create an Emotions Graph to show Vita's changing thoughts and feelings during these chapters. You may wish to refer to: <i>the events in Grand Central Station, the horse ride, seeing the castle for the first time, finding the boat called Lizzy, Sorrotore arriving.</i></p> <p>Imagine you are Silk. Rehearse the line, 'I didn't realise they'd be so big!' (page 217). Think of a scale from 1-10, 10 being the most afraid. How can you change your voice and expression as you move through the scale?</p> <p>Look at the poem 'February Evening in New York' by Denise Levertov. Discuss what you like and dislike about it, anything that puzzles you and what the poem reminds you of. Work in small groups to perform the poem, thinking about how you can use your voice, actions and musical instruments to convey the feeling of the poem.</p> <p>Use the information on pages 101-103 and Chapters 20 and 21 to create a technical drawing of Grandpa's castle. Can you create a labelled birds' eye view of the castle?</p>



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A MIRACULOUS,
UNTHINKABLE,
UNSENSIBLE THING!

SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES	COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS	EXTRA ACTIVITIES
<p>Reading: Comprehension</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. <p>Writing to Entertain and Inform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write a newspaper report, thinking carefully about layout and features for this type of writing. - Plan and write a playscript based on a favourite scene. <p>Music</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use your voice and instruments with control and expression to create an exciting soundscape based on the fight between Vita and Sorrotore. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Summarise the events in Chapter 22 in six sentences. Now summarise them in three sentences, then one. 2. Explain why Arkady calls out, 'I've found it!' on page 266. 3. How does Vita's mood change on page 278. Why? 4. How did you feel during the fight between Sorrotore and Vita? What were you imagining? What could you see in your mind? (pages 282-284) 5. What is the most important piece of information on page 297? Summarise it in one sentence. 6. Why are Grandpa's eyes shining like emeralds on page 299? How might he be feeling as Vita tells her story? 7. Look at page 300. Summarise in a table how each child has helped throughout the story and what their talents are. 8. What do you think Vita has learnt over the course of the story? Make a list to show your ideas. 9. When you have finished reading, have a class discussion and make a list of the things that you liked about the story, anything that confused you and what the story reminded you of. 10. Which of these do you think is the most important theme in the story? Create a table to summarise how each theme applies to the story: <i>Power, justice, greed, grief, right and wrong, lies, family, children vs adults.</i> 	<p>On page 310, Vita sees a newspaper article and the words 'BUSINESSMAN', 'HUDSON' and 'INFERNO'. What might the newspaper article say? Plan and write a report to summarise the final events in the book.</p> <p>Create illustrated character profiles for Vita, Grandpa, Samuel, Silk, Sorrotore and Arkady. Include information about their personality, relationships and how they develop as the story progresses.</p> <p>In small groups, create an exciting soundscape to accompany the battle between Vita and Sarrotore on pages 282 to 284. How can you use body percussion and your voices to create the sound of Vita's rage and beating heart, the exploding bottles and the thrashing water?</p> <p>In small groups, work together to turn your favourite scene from the story into a playscript, remembering to include stage directions. Rehearse your playscript and perform your piece to the class.</p>

