The LIGHT in EVERYTHING
KATYA BALEN

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE PACK

Dear reader,

This educational resource pack is based on Katya Balen's unforgettable third novel *The Light in Everything* and is an ideal learning resource for children in Key Stage 2. It includes reading group questions and activities designed to keep children engaged and eager to discuss this book. Featuring themes of 'Fear', 'Family' and 'Belonging', this pack covers a wide range of subjects that are perfect for exploration within the classroom.

We hope you enjoy reading this stunning story and working your way through this pack.

ABOUT THE BOOK

From the author of October, October *comes a life-affirming story about blended families and learning to find room in your heart for new life and new love.*

Tom is still quiet and timid, even though his dad has been gone for nearly two years now. Zofia is the opposite. Inside her there's a raging storm that makes her want to fight the whole world until she gets what she wants. And what she wants is for scaredy-cat Tom to get out of her life. Tom hates loud, unpredictable Zofia just as much, but he's moving into Zofia's house. Because his mum and Zofia's dad are in love … and they're having a baby. Tom and Zofia both wish the stupid baby had never happened. But then Tom's mum gets ill, and it begins to look horribly like their wish might come true …

A story of learning to trust, trying to let go and diving into the unknown with hope in your heart, with a stunning cover illustrated by CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal-winner Sydney Smith.

Author Katya Balen

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READING GROUP QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES

FOR KS2 TEACHERS

INTRODUCTION

Suitable for: Age 9+

Explores themes of: ✓Fear ✓Family ✓Light ✓Wishes ✓Belonging ✓Anger

Subject Checklist: ✓Reading Comprehension ✓Creative Writing ✓PSHE ✓Speaking and Listening ✓Art, Design & Technology

CONTENTS

- **READING GROUP QUESTIONS**

  Objectives: To show understanding of the text and express opinions.

- **DISCUSSING KEY THEMES OF THE BOOK**

  Objectives: To explore themes of the book, taking a closer look at how they are presented in the story.

- **CREATIVE WRITING ACTIVITIES**

  Objectives: To analyse imagery in the book and use writing tools to enhance description in creative writing.

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READING GROUP QUESTIONS

- **PAGE 1:** When Zofia says, 'I sometimes feel like the storm blasted its way into me' what does she mean?
- **PAGE 22:** Zofia thinks that the word FERAL is her dad's favourite word to describe her. What does it mean?
- **PAGE 37:** Why doesn't Tom want Mum to meet anyone?
- **PAGE 44:** Why is Zofia so angry when she meets Tom and Fiona?
- **PAGE 48:** Zofia describes the water as being 'so cold it sets me on fire'. This is a paradox. Can you explain what a paradox is?
- **PAGE 57:** When Tom describes Zofia, she appears to be the exact opposite of him. Do they have any similarities?
- **PAGE 71:** Zofia is reluctant to get rid of the junk. What do you think it represents to her?
- **PAGE 103:** Marek describes Pablo, the dog, as 'half idiot and half tornado'. Is this a fair description?
- **PAGE 133:** What do you think Zofia sees in Tom's eyes?
- **PAGE 162:** Tom says he has folded his feelings away for a long time. Why is this a clever description?
- **PAGE 192:** Why is Dad so keen for them to have a joint project?
- **PAGE 208:** Tom doesn't think Zofia cares about the baby. Do you think he's right?
- **PAGE 223:** How does Tom know that putting a flag on Fiji is so important to Zofia?
- **PAGE 251:** Why does everything change when Tom and Zofia share their secrets?
- **PAGE 269:** Why does Zofia feel alone when she is surrounded by friends?
- **PAGE 300:** Why is Tom the bravest person Zofia knows?

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DISCUSSING KEY THEMES

***THE LIGHT IN EVERYTHING* EXPLORES SEVERAL DIFFERENT THEMES:**

✓*Fear* ✓*Family* ✓*Light* ✓*Wishes* ✓*Belonging* ✓*Anger*

ACTIVITY

Re-read and think about the following examples of action or character interaction taken from the book. Which theme do you think each example is mainly demonstrating? On the next page, choose the best box for each example and write the corresponding letter in that box.

Note: You might put more than one letter in some boxes!

A. Zofia sees Dommo and Halima playing on the beach without her. (p9-10)

B. Tom and Zofia go to the festive market with Fiona and Marek. (p54-55)

C. Tom says goodbye to Mrs Adams. (p75)

D. Marek shows Tom his new room. (p97-98)

E. Zofia sneaks into Tom's room when he's at school. (p116-118)

F. Marek and Fiona show Tom the baby's scan picture. (p125)

G. Zofia finds out that there's something wrong with the baby. (p147)

H. Zofia shuts Tom in the cabin. (p171-172)

I. Tom impresses Zofia when they come back from the boat yard. (p215)

J. Tom, Zofia and Fiona play computer games. (p235-236)

K. Tom and Zofia share hot chocolate and truths in the middle of the night. (p 250-251)

L. Zofia saves Tom from drowning. (p294-296)

M. Everyone joins together to make a thousand paper cranes. (p310-312)

N. Dad and Zofia make it to Fiji. (p319)

DISCUSS

- Were there times you chose a different box to others in your group? What does this tell you about the themes?
- Discuss with your group why you chose to put each example where you did.
- Now write the corresponding letter for each example in ALL the theme boxes it fits into.
- Which scene fitted in the most boxes?

FEAR	FAMILY	LIGHT
WISHES	BELONGING	ANGER

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A CLOSER LOOK AT FEAR

SCAN ME FOR PAPER CRANE INSTRUCTIONS

EVERYBODY EXPERIENCES FEAR IN THEIR LIVES

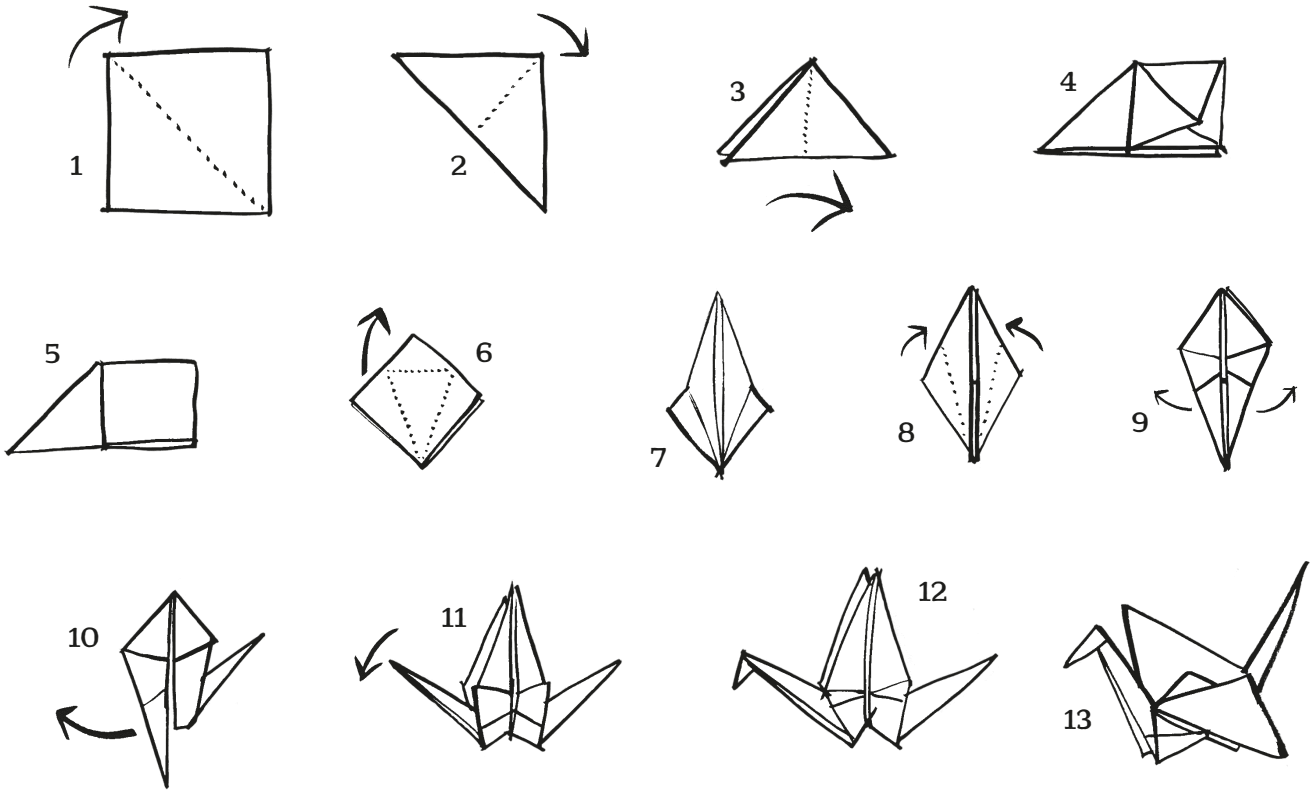
- Zofia feared being left out and changes to her family.
- Tom feared his father and the dark, as well as many, many other things.

ACTIVITY

Tom controls his fear by making things out of paper.

Write some of your fears on the origami template provided on the next page and then fold it to make a crane either using the instructions printed on the inside of the book and shown below or by watching the more detailed instructions found by clicking here or scanning the QR code above.

Whilst making the crane, imagine it taking care of your fears and helping you deal with them.



ORIGAMI TEMPLATE

Take extra care when handling scissors or ask an adult to help with this part

Did you know:
The art of folding paper is called ORIGAMI and it originated in Japan.

In Japan some people believe that if you make a thousand origami cranes, you can make a wish and it will come true.

Questions:
If you made a thousand cranes, what would you wish for?

What do you think Zofia and Tom would wish for? Do their wishes change as the book progresses?

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A CLOSER LOOK AT FAMILY

ALL FAMILIES ARE DIFFERENT

- Some families are really big and some have only two people in them. Sometimes we are born into a family, sometimes our family is chosen for us, sometimes people join our family through choice and sometimes our friends can be considered our family too.

- Both Tom and Zofia find it very difficult to adapt as their families make some very big changes. The ways they react couldn't be more different though.

ACTIVITY

Did you notice that there is virtually no dialogue in *The Light in Everything*?

Why do you think the author made the choice to avoid speech?

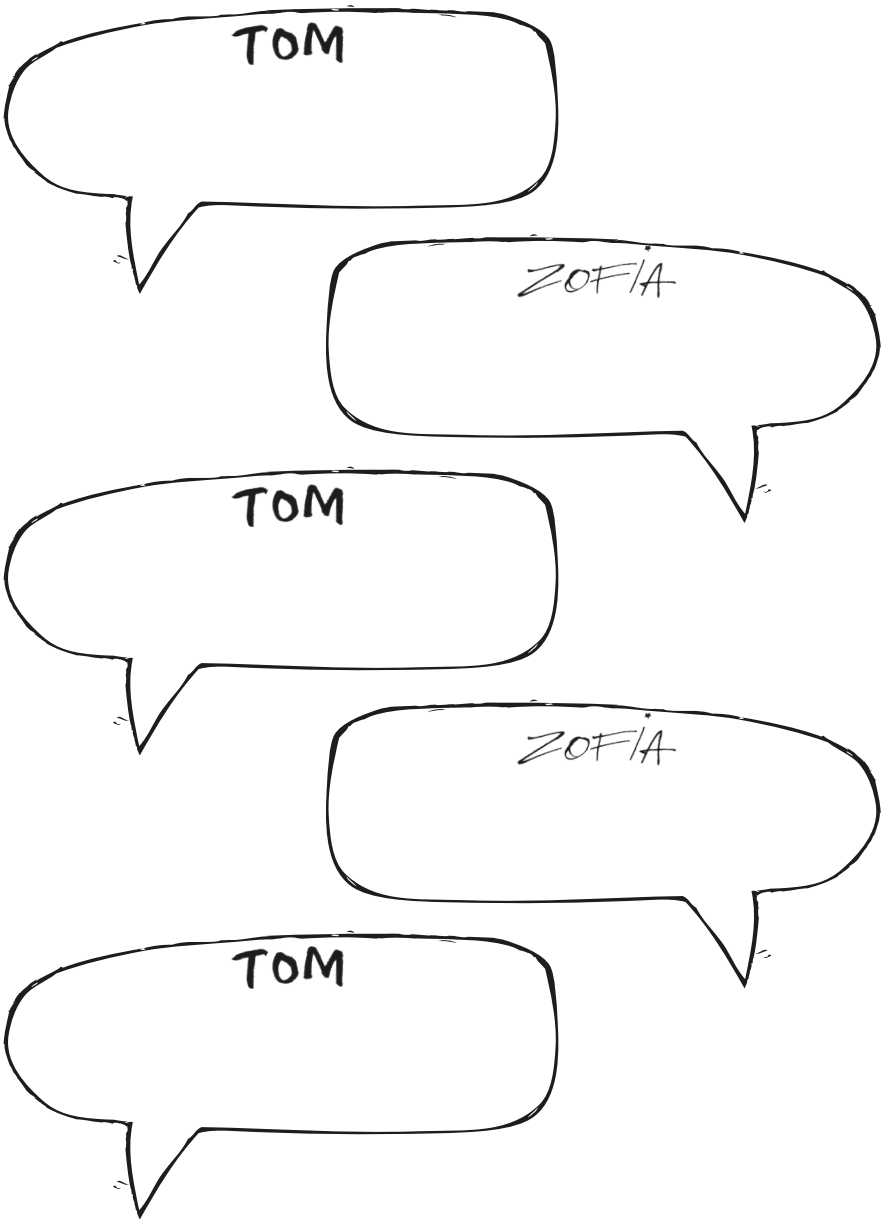
- Think about the kitchen scene on p99–101 when Tom and Zofia's two families become one. Tom and Fiona have just moved in with Zofia and Marek, and there is a new baby on the way.

- Use speech bubbles to create a dialogue between Tom and Zofia.

- Think about what they would like to say to each other.

- What would their voices be like?

- What words and phrases do you think they would use in this particular situation? Remember, we all choose different vocabulary for different situations depending on how we are feeling, who we are talking to and what we are talking about.



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A CLOSER LOOK AT ANGER

ANGER PLAYS AN IMPORTANT PART IN *THE LIGHT IN EVERYTHING*

- Nearly all the main characters get angry in the story and they all show it and deal with it in different ways.
- Fiona doesn't ever seem to get angry. Does this mean she doesn't have anything to get angry about?
- It is natural and perfectly normal to feel anger. We all do! But there are some people in Tom's life who show this anger in ways that are harmful and totally unacceptable. Who are they?
- Tom's dad is clearly a very angry person and so is Zofia. They both behave very badly but does this make them equally bad?
- Think particularly about Zofia's anger. Do you think she can help the way she behaves? Does she have reasons to act the way she does? How does she work to control her anger? What else could she do?

ACTIVITY

Using the template on the next page, create a mind map that investigates anger.

- Think about some different things people can get angry about and all the different ways they show this anger.
- Which acts of anger are acceptable and which are not?
- How does one person's anger affect those around them?

ANGER

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CREATIVE WRITING ACTIVITIES

Katya Balen uses a lot of imagery or detailed description in her writing.

There are many tools that can be used to build imagery. Which ones do you know?

Can you link the writing tools below to the right meaning?

SYMBOLISM	Giving human traits or characteristics to something that is inhuman.
PERSONIFICATION	Likening something to something else to assist description.
METAPHORS	Making no literal sense but still having an understood meaning.
HYPERBOLE	A group of words, headed by an adjective, that describe a noun or pronoun.
ADJECTIVE PHRASES	Using one thing to represent another.
SIMILIES	Describing something as something it isn't for emphasis.
IDIOMS	Exaggeration for effect.

ACTIVITY 1

Have a look at the following examples taken from *The Light in Everything*. Can you work out which writing tool is being used in each one? Do any of them use more than one writing tool?

EXTRACT	WRITING TOOL	EXTRACT	WRITING TOOL
The storm is stretching itself and waking up. (p1)		Just the three of them. No space for me to squeeze in between them. (p56)	
I could see every thought sketched on her face. (p38)		She is driving me up the wall and round the bend. (p59)	
[The seaweed] trails behind him like some sort of gymnastic ribbon. (p39)		We might not use the rickety three-legged chairs … (p71)	
[He has] dark hair that is way too long and nibbled-down nails. (p43)		… with a splash like a gunshot. (p83)	
I must have been swimming for about three days … (p49)		The van skids off and spits gravel at the windows. (p99)	

EXTRACT	WRITING TOOL	EXTRACT	WRITING TOOL
…when they think they've pu t their foot in it. (p115)		Tom picks at his chips like a baby sparrow. (p203)	
He sees people who are about four million per cent sicker than me every day. (p128)		A thousand tiny outfits are tucked away in a chest of drawers. (p208)	
The sea is bright today. (p139) (Tom is in a good mood.)		All the seams will be glued with super-special water-proof glue. (p218)	
I put a padlock on the thoughts and I throw away the key. (p182)		Nobody is calling me scaredy-cat. (p229)	
(The dark) would bite and snap. (p183)		Zofia lets an ocean tumble out of her … (p299)	

ACTIVITY 2

Think about the sandy setting of the seaside cottage. How would the way Zofia sees it differ from the way Tom sees it?

- Zofia knows it very well because she has lived there all her life, but to Tom it is all very new.
- Think about all the tiny details that Zofia will be familiar with and also the bigger picture that Tom would be taking in.

Use imagery and some of the writing tools we have looked at to write a beautiful description of the seaside by the cottage.

You can imagine you are either looking at it through Tom's fresh eyes or Zofia's familiar ones.

- Remember to use all your senses when you are describing a setting.
- What would it look like, sound like, smell like and feel like to be standing by the sea.
- Taste is not always appropriate, but it might be in this case as the air down by the sea has a very particular salty taste!

Before you start, use the grid on the next page to create a word bank for each of the senses and get your ideas flowing.

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SIGHT	SMELL	SOUND	TOUCH	TASTE

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You've now reached the end of this resource pack for *The Light in Everything*

We hope these notes have proved to be a fun and insightful 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

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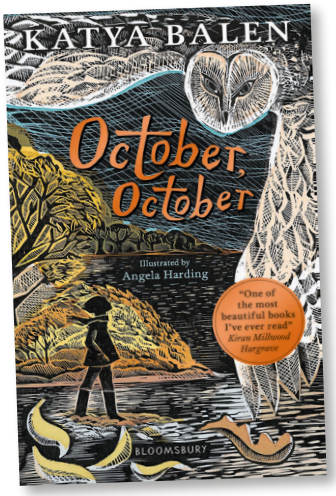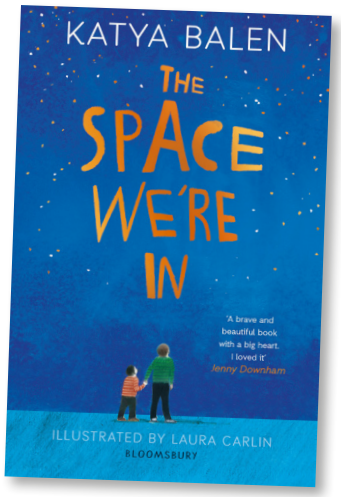
Don't miss the wonderful resources that we have available for Katya Balen's other two brilliant books! Click on their cover images below to download them today ...