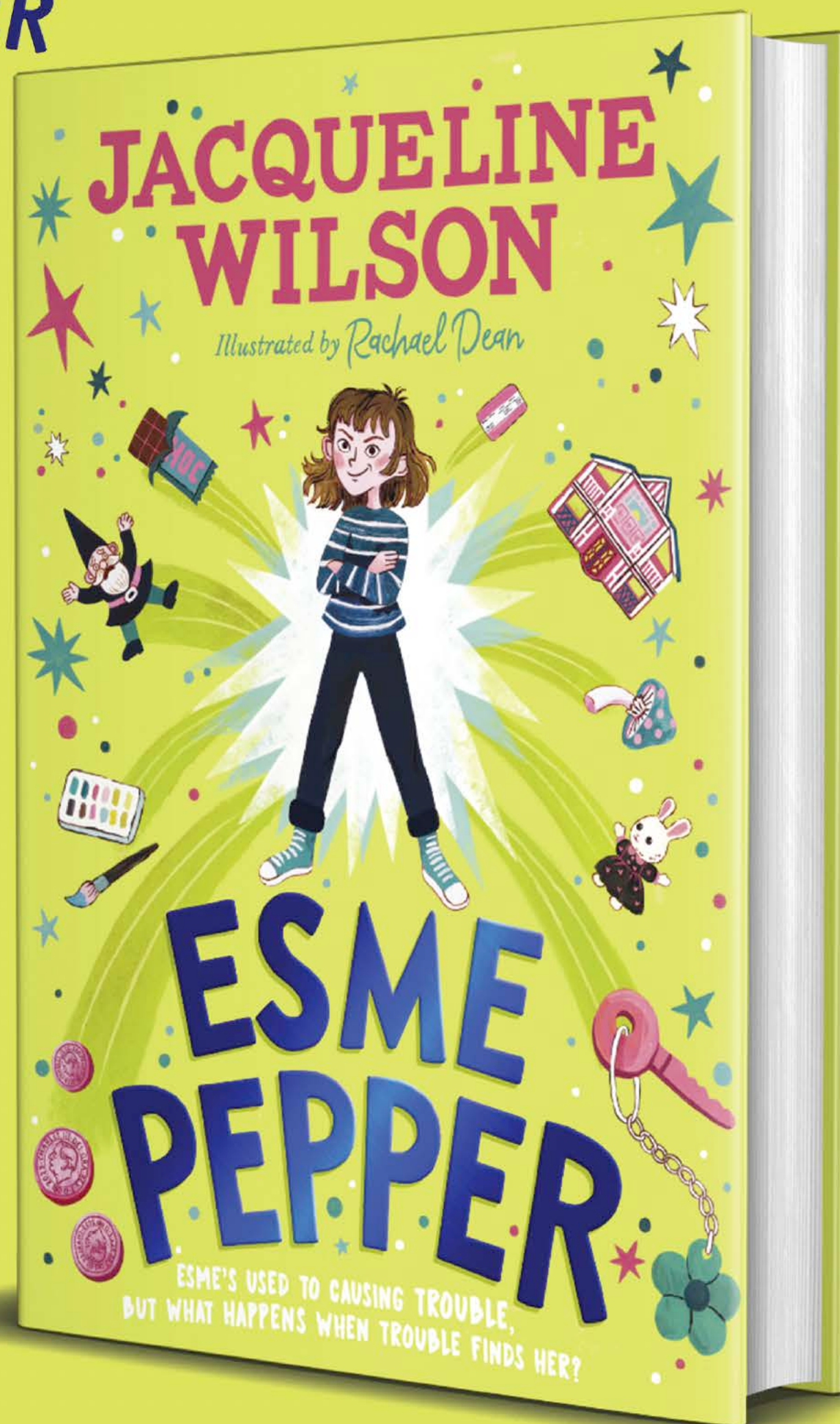


ESME
PEPPER



SCHEME OF WORK

PERFECT FOR:

Students aged 8+; a moving, heartwarming story about a young girl who is fostered; drama and playscripts; back to school poetry; Victorian children; joining a plucky, brave girl as she navigates a new school, a new home and the true meaning of family.

KEY FOR CROSS-CURRICULAR OBJECTIVES:

English: Reading Comprehension; Creative Writing;

Writing to Entertain and Inform

Drama, Speaking and Listening

Design Technology & Art

History

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SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES	COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS	EXTRA ACTIVITIES
Reading: Comprehension - Analyse an author's style of writing and identify different techniques and vocabulary used. - Describe relationships between characters. Drama, Speaking and Listening - Understand a character by completing a Role on the Wall activity. Writing in Role - Empathise with characters by writing an inner monologue. - Explore the difference between what a character says and does. Poetry - Interpret and perform a poem. - Write a poem in the style of Steven Camden.	1. Why do you think Mrs Parsons is 'sighing heavily'? What impression do you get of her? (page 1) 2. Read to the end of Chapter 1. What can you infer about the relationship between Esme and her mum? What sort of lives do you think they lead? 3. Do you think it's Esme's fault that her mum has been arrested? Why might she feel responsible? (page 17) 4. Alesha tells Esme that she has a 'vivid imagination'. What does this mean? How does Alesha feel about Esme? (page 27) 5. Use the information on pages 36 and 37 to draw and label a picture of Pops. What impression do you get of him? 6. <i>Esme does not like herself.</i> Do you agree with this statement? Why? Why not? (page 45) 7. Read to the end of Chapter 3. Does your opinion of Mrs Hawes develop and change at all during this chapter? What role might she play in the rest of the story? 8. Read to the end of page 58. How do you think Pops will react? What might he say? 9. What might Esme be thinking and feeling on page 70 when she starts fidgeting? Do you think Esme really is an unkind, rude child? Why might she be behaving like this? 10. What are your impressions of Esme? Do you think readers will like her? Why? Why not? Use evidence from the story to support your ideas.	Complete a Role on the Wall activity. Draw an outline of Esme. 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. What might Mrs Chambers and Alesha be thinking and feeling in Chapter 2? 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 what they are feeling? Spend some time exploring and performing the poem 'Fraud' by Steven Camden. What do you like about it? Is there anything puzzling or confusing about it? How does the poem link to the story? Do you think Esme feels like a fraud too? Perhaps you could write your own poem in the style of 'Fraud', imagining you are Esme?



SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES	COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS	EXTRA ACTIVITIES
Reading: Comprehension - Define vocabulary, thinking carefully about its meaning and impact. - Retrieve information. Writing in Role - Empathise with a character by writing in role. - Emulate a character's voice and personality. Drama, Speaking and Listening - Understand and empathise with a character's thoughts, feelings and attitudes and express these through use of role-play. History - Conduct research into what life was like for Victorian children.	1. Write a dictionary definition of the following words from Chapter 6: <i>scarpered, perils, lurked, dithered about, flinch, fondly</i>. 2. What is Mum's 'cardinal rule'? Why might she have it? How has it affected Esme? (page 81) 3. Esme decides that she actually quite likes Mr Hastings. Why? How is he different to the other adults in Esme's life? Would you like him as a head teacher? (page 111) 4. Read to the end of Chapter 8. Esme is certainly having a tough first day at school! What advice would you give her? How should she deal with Joseph? What could the other children in the class do to support her? 5. Why are the boys 'subdued'? What does this mean? What might they be thinking and feeling? (page 129) 6. Esme mentions that Mrs Hawes is 'artful' when it comes to avoiding questions. What does this mean? What might Mrs Hawes be hiding? Are Esme and Mrs Hawes similar in any way? (page 136) 7. Mrs Hawes's cheeks have 'gone pink' on page 141. Why? What might she be thinking and feeling? 8. The girls are 'envious' of Esme. Why? What does this mean? Do you think Esme will tell them the truth? (page 153) 9. What do you think has happened to Joseph's forehead? Are there any clues about what could have happened? (page 154) 10. <i>Esme needs to start asking for help.</i> Do you agree with this statement? Why? Why not?	In a group of three, re-create the events from pages 93–95. Think about who will play Esme, Pops, and Mrs Hawes. Perform the scene, each time considering another character's perspective. You could even turn this part of the story into a playscript to help your performance. Esme is going to be learning about the lives of Victorian children. Conduct research into what life was like for children in the Victorian period. You may wish to contrast the lives of rich and poor children, find out about child labour and the dangerous jobs some children had to do, discover what Victorian schools were like, learn about workhouses and finally learn about the work of Dr. Barnardo. Can you re-tell Chapter 10 from Mrs Hawes's point of view? What might she say about the events? How might she feel about Esme and Pops? Use this as an opportunity to explore Mrs Hawes's personality further, perhaps making predictions about her home life. Think about how you can capture her personality in your writing.



SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES	COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS	EXTRA ACTIVITIES
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. Drama, Speaking and Listening - Create a Conscience Alley to explore what motivates a character's decisions. Poetry - Interpret and perform a poem, using expression, actions and musical instruments to convey meaning.	1. Why do you think Esme wants to sort out everything for herself? Does she trust the adults around her? (page 161) 2. Esme asks Mr Hastings if he still likes her. What might this suggest about Esme? Is she as tough and independent as she wants people to believe? (page 163) 3. Esme begins reading <i>The Secret Garden</i> in class. What can you find out about this story? How are Esme and Mary similar? (page 176) 4. What do you think the doll's house might symbolise for Esme? Why is it so important to her? (page 183) 5. How do you think Pops will react to the toy rabbits? Why do you think Esme stole them? Was it the right thing to do? (page 187) 6. Pops keeps forgetting Esme's name. Why might this be? Are there any clues that might explain what's happening to Pops? (page 189) 7. Why do you think Esme really has a pain in her tummy? What might she be thinking and feeling? (page 202) 8. Mrs Hawes suspects that Esme has been punishing herself. What does this mean? What advice would you give to Esme? (page 205) 9. Role-play the conversation between Mrs Hawes and Pops on page 231. Think about their body language and facial expressions as they talk about Esme. 10. How does the author create a sense of tension and excitement on page 243? Is it successful?	Create an Emotions Graph to plot Esme's changing thoughts and feelings throughout these chapters, including: <i>facing Joseph, Pops forgetting things, making the ice-creams for the gnomes, going shopping, stealing the toy rabbits, running away...</i> Imagine you are Esme on page 185. What should you do? As a class, create a Conscience Alley. One side of the class should persuade her to steal the rabbits. The other side should persuade her not to. Take it in turns to play Esme walking through the alley of voices. Write a paragraph exploring your decision and feelings. Starting a new school is an important theme. Spend time exploring some 'back to school' poems like: 'What Did You Do At School Today?' by James Carter, 'Please Mrs Butler' by Allan Ahlberg, 'Cakes In The Staffroom' by Brian Moses, and 'The Schoolkids' Rap' by John Foster. Work in groups to perform the poems, thinking about how you can use your voice, actions and musical instruments to convey the feeling of the poems.



SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES	COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS	EXTRA ACTIVITIES
Reading: Comprehension - Identify and discuss the main themes in the story. - Create character profiles. - Summarise information. - Make comparisons within and across books. Writing in Role - Empathise with a character by writing in role. - Emulate a character's voice and personality. Drama, Speaking and Listening - Rehearse and perform a scene from the story, thinking about characterisation and body language.	1. Summarise the events in Chapter 18 in six sentences. Now try and summarise them in three sentences, then one. 2. We discover on page 258 that Pops has got dementia. What can you find out about dementia and how it affects people? 3. Read to the end of page 268. What do you think Mrs Hawes is going to do? What might she be thinking and feeling? 4. Esme describes Joseph as a 'total dinosaur'. Why does she do this? Has your opinion of Joseph changed at all throughout the story? (page 276) 5. How might the story have changed if Mr Brown was a stricter, more effective teacher? What sort of things might have happened? What wouldn't have happened? 6. Do you think Mrs Hawes has changed her opinion about Esme's mum? Why? Why not? (page 291) 7. Why do you think Esme is so protective of her mum? 8. How has Esme changed and developed during the story? What important lessons do you think she has learned? 9. Which of these do you think is the most important theme in the story? Think of examples in the story where each of these themes is pivotal: <i>family, guilt, lying, making friends, starting a new school, the power of art.</i> 10. Describe each of these characters in the story using one word only and explain your word choice: <i>Esme, Pops, Mrs Hawes, Joseph, Mr Hastings, Mr Brown, Mum.</i>	Write a diary entry in role as Esme at the end of the story. How would she reflect on what's happened? What are the most important things she's learned about the world around her, her mum, Pops, Mrs Hawes, Joseph, and how we treat each other? If you liked this story, you might also like these books by Jacqueline Wilson: <i>The Suitcase kid</i> <i>The Illustrated Mum</i> <i>The Story of Tracy Beaker</i> Afterwards, create a Venn diagram and compare one of the stories with 'Esme Pepper'. Can you spot any similar themes, settings or characters? What makes each story special? Choose a favourite scene or moment from this story and turn it into a playscript. Think carefully about how a playscript is set out and structured and use the artwork to help inform your stage instructions. Afterwards, work in small groups to rehearse and perform your playscript, thinking about how you can use your body language and facial expressions.

