

The Whitby Witches Scheme of Work – 1 week

Notes:

This scheme of work covers the first four chapters of *The Whitby Witches* by Robin Jarvis. The sheets and worksheets are available to download along with discussion questions to be used in Guided Reading sessions.

Week 1 Lesson 1

LO: To use information from a text to draw a setting

Read the first chapter “Difficult Cases” as a class, checking for understanding as you go. The town of Whitby is a character within the novel – arguably the main character. Pages 13 to 20 describe in detail Ben and Jennet being lead through Whitby for the first time. Ask pupils to highlight any passages or phrases that tell us more about the town e.g. *“A jumble of buildings with roofs of terracotta tiles, nestling snugly alongside each other like a queue of nervous bathers waiting for someone to take the first leap into the water.”*

Collate all the descriptive phrases and passages as a class and explain that today we are going to use this information to create an illustration of Whitby. Provide pupils with the materials they need e.g. watercolours and colouring pencils, and model how to sketch out the outline before adding details and colour. Ask children to think carefully about the colours they choose (do they know what ‘terracotta tiles’ look like for example?)

Plenary:

Once the paintings/drawings are dry/complete the pupils are to write the descriptive passages from the book on top of their painting or picture.

Week 1 Lesson 2

LO: To write a letter

Read the second chapter “Eurydice” as a class, checking for understanding as you go. In this chapter, we learn that Mrs Rodice wrote a letter to Miss Boston (pg. 29 & 30.) A ‘nasty, spiteful letter it was too.’ Ask:

- Given what we learn about Ben in this chapter, what might have Mrs Rodice’s letter said?
- What advice might she have given Miss Boston?
- What might the tone of her letter have been? (Cautionary? Funny? Advisory?)

SHARED WRITING – as a class generate ideas for the content of Mrs Rodice’s letter and start writing one together. Model the correct way to open a letter and consider the sort of vocabulary Mrs Rodice might use to talk about Ben. Remind pupils that we are writing as a character in the first person.

Send pupils to tables to write their own letter from Mrs Rodice to Miss Boston. (You may wish to provide some pupils with the template available for download.)

Plenary:

Return to the first chapter and recap on the description of Mrs Rodice. We know she has “sullen lips” and “small, irregular teeth.” What do we imagine her voice to be like? Ask the class to read their letter to their partner as if they were Mrs Rodice.

Week 1 Lesson 3

LO: To imagine two different viewpoints

Show the viewpoints grid (Lesson 3 worksheet, Ben vs. Jennet which is available to download) and model how to complete it as you read. Make sure all pupils understand what different viewpoints mean— then read the third chapter, “The Ladies’ Circle” checking for understanding as you go.

Pause after pages 60, 68 and 74 to recap on the events and ask:

- What is Ben thinking/feeling?
- What is Jennet thinking/feeling?
- How are Ben and Jennet’s points of view different at this stage in chapter?

Make sure pupils have plenty of time to add notes from the discussion to their viewpoints grid. Encourage them to write as Ben/Jennet in the first person e.g. “I am feeling _____” as this will make it easier when they come to write their diary entries tomorrow.

Plenary:

Pupils to compare grids with their partner. Having seen their partners work is there anything pupils want to add or change about their work?

Week 1 Lesson 4

LO: To write from two different viewpoints.

Today we’re going to continue from our work yesterday and write two short diary entries. First as Ben and next as Jennet. Recap on the other sorts of diary the class have read or written. As a class recap the key features of a diary entry:

- Written in the first person
- Includes private thoughts and feelings
- Often covers events in chronological order (but not always)

Ask pupils to look again at the viewpoint grids they completed yesterday and recap on the key events.

SHARED WRITING: Model writing a short extract from both Ben and Jennet’s diaries – *how will they be different? How will I change my vocabulary to make it clear to the reader these entries are from two different characters?* Write the first few lines of each diary together, taking ideas from the class before sending pupils to tables to create their own. Challenge pupils to write mirroring diary entries: both covering the same events but with different feelings and thoughts. Provide pupil with the diary entry template (available for download.)

Plenary:

Post-It Prediction: How will Ben and Jennet react to what happened during the Ladies’ Circle meeting? Write down your predictions on a post-it.

Week 1 Lesson 5

LO: To find clues in the text about a character

Read the fourth chapter, “The Aufwader” and check for understanding as you go. In this chapter we meet an important new character, Nelda. *What do we find out about her in this chapter?* Explain the terms “skimming and scanning.” These are useful techniques for finding information in a text. Ask pupils to skim the chapter to find information about Nelda’s family/appearance/life story. What questions are we left asking about Nelda and the Aufwaders? As a class discuss what this chapter tells us and the questions it leaves us asking. Jot down ideas on the board as children suggest them.

Pupils to complete the character profile grid for Nelda, including a sketch of what they think she looks like based on the clues in the text e.g. “wild, unkempt hair” (pg. 85.)

Plenary:

Set homework: pupils to read chapter five in time for the next lesson.

Cross-curricular links

Science:

- Evolution and adaptation
- Dinosaurs and the Triassic era

Music:

- Watch the video tour of Whitby and compose a piece of music to go with it.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?>

English (see plans)

Text types:

Diary Entry

Letter writing

Geography

- Case study of Whitby. Research and create a promotional leaflet for the town.
- Map work—can you plot Jennet and Ben's route from Leeds to Whitby?
- Whitby is part of the "Jurassic Coast" - so now is the time to learn all about fossils!
- Captain Cook started his voyage in Whitby. Find out more about this famous explorer



PSHE/Philosophy

- What is good/evil?
- Are we inherently good or do we need rules and sanctions to teach us to do the right thing?
- Do animals understand right and wrong or is that a human quality only?

History

- Find out more about the Whitby Smugglers
- Pendle witch trials
- Create a timeline of Whitby's history:
<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/whitby-abbey/>
- A historical study of the Abbey through the ages

Art

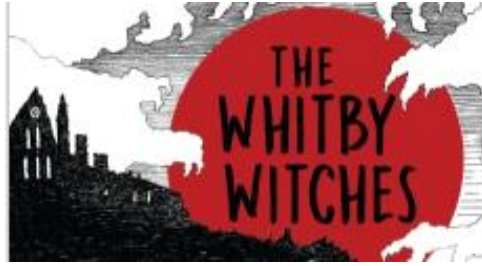
- Watercolour painting of Whitby (see plans)
- Detailed observational drawing of the Abbey

Design Technology

- Create a "Hand of God" like the one found in Whitby using papier-mâché

RE:

- Find out more about the contemporary pagan movement "Wicca"

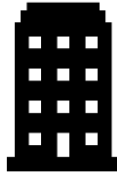


Discussion Questions

1. DISCUSS: “The town of Whitby is the main character in *The Whitby Witches*.” Explain your answer.
2. It’s very common for children’s authors to use orphaned children as the main characters in their novels (think Harry Potter, Alex Rider, Lyra in *His Dark Materials* or Sophie in *The BFG*.) Why do you think this is?
3. If you could be any character from *The Whitby Witches* who would you be and why?
4. Which character do you think has learnt the most over the course of the story: Ben or Jenet? Explain your answer.
5. At what point in the story did you as a reader become suspicious about Rowena Cooper?
6. Who is the Empress of the Dark?
7. If you could ask Robin Jarvis one question about his book what would you ask? (*Have a look at the Q&A section at the back of the book and see if your question has already been answered!*)
8. *The Whitby Witches* is the first in a trilogy of books. What predictions can you make about what might happen in the next book?
9. Why do you think Aunt Alice prefers the term “wise woman” to “witch?”
10. How would this story be different if it weren’t set in Whitby? What role does the town play in the novel?
11. Does *The Whitby Witches* remind you of any other books you’ve read?
12. What questions do you still have at the end of the book?



Rodice's Children's Hostel



"For the children of parents who are dead, indifferent or inside."

Rodice's Children's Hostel

Dreary Lane

Leeds

LS6 2N4

Dear Miss Boston,

I am writing with a grave warning about Ben. _____

Unfortunately, this is not the only incident that's been caused by this child.

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs Rodice



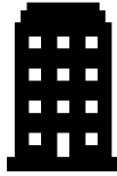
LO: To imagine two different viewpoints

As your teacher reads chapter three, “The Ladies’ Circle”, think about the events from the perspective of Ben and Jennet. What might they be thinking? What emotions might they be feeling? How will their perspectives be different?

	pg.52 - 60	pg.60 - 68	pg.69 - 74
Ben	What is happening? What’s he feeling? What’s he thinking?	What is happening? What’s he feeling? What’s he thinking?	What is happening? What’s he feeling? What’s he thinking?
Jennet	What is happening? What’s she feeling? What’s she thinking?	What is happening? What’s she feeling? What’s she thinking?	What is happening? What’s she feeling? What’s she thinking?



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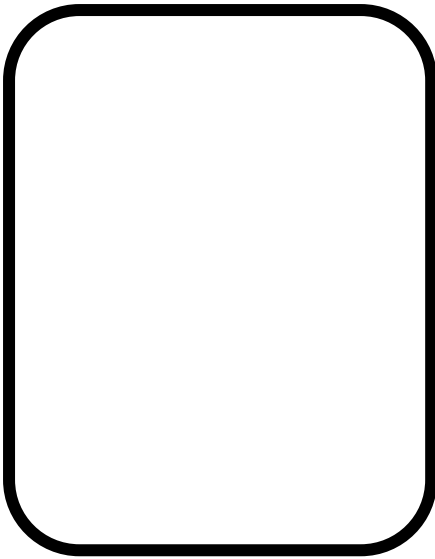
Unfortunately, this is not the only incident that's been caused by this child.

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs Rodice



LO: To find clues in the text about a character



Skim read pages 83 – 90 – the section when Ben meets Nelda for the first time. What do we find out about her in this chapter? What questions are we left with? Fill in the character profile and add an illustration of Nelda using the information about her appearance in the text.

Name: Nelda

Age: _____

What I've learnt about Nelda so far:

Questions I have about Nelda: