

Suitable for:
Ages 8+

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THE LAST KIDS ON EARTH and the DOOMSDAY RACE

Subject Checklist:

- ☐ Literacy ☐ Creative Writing
- ☐ Art, Design & Technology
- ☐ Drama ☐ Film

EXTRACTS AND NOTES FOR

KS2 TEACHERS & LIBRARIANS



EXPLORE THEMES OF

- Graphic Novels and Comics • Monsters
- Zombies • Adapting a Book for the Screen

CONTENTS

LESSON 1!

The Last Kids on Earth

Objectives: Use book covers and titles to make predictions about the series; design new book covers for the series and write corresponding blurbs.

LESSON 2!

Monster Zombie Chaos!

Objectives: Discuss how the writer and illustrator create a gripping opening to the series; illustrate a dangerous monster or zombie; create a Monster Apocalypse Survival Guide!

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LESSON 3!

Creating a Comic

Objectives: Identify characteristics and features of graphic novels and comics; identify and create examples of onomatopoeia; transform an extract into a comic.

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LESSON 4!

Adapting a Scene for the Screen

Objectives: Make comparisons between the books and the screen adaptation; create a storyboard adapting an extract for the screen; perform scenes in groups.

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Share your projects with us @FarshoreBooks and use the hashtag #LastKidsonEarth

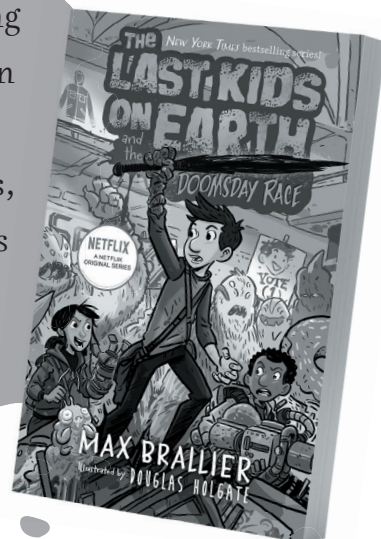
About the books

The Last Kids on Earth and the Doomsday Race

With his zombie-controlling powers growing stronger, Jack Sullivan and his buddies are road-tripping toward the mysterious Tower, where they must once and for all stop Rezzoch the Ancient, Destructor of Worlds, from descending upon our dimension. But their journey is sidetracked when they are swept up by the Mallusc, an enormous centipede monster carrying the world's largest shopping mall on its back.



On board, the kids discover a thriving monster society: Mallusc City! There, they encounter old allies as well as old foes, who are ruling over Mallusc City with an iron fist. Beating these bad guys in battle is not an option, but beating them in an election is . . . so Jack runs for mayor of Mallusc City! At first, proving his leadership skills just means shaking monster hands, kissing monster babies and promising to fill the water fountains with strawberry Nesquik. But when the Mallusc falls under attack, Jack must learn how to be a true leader before it's too late . . .



Previous books in the series . . .



LESSON !!

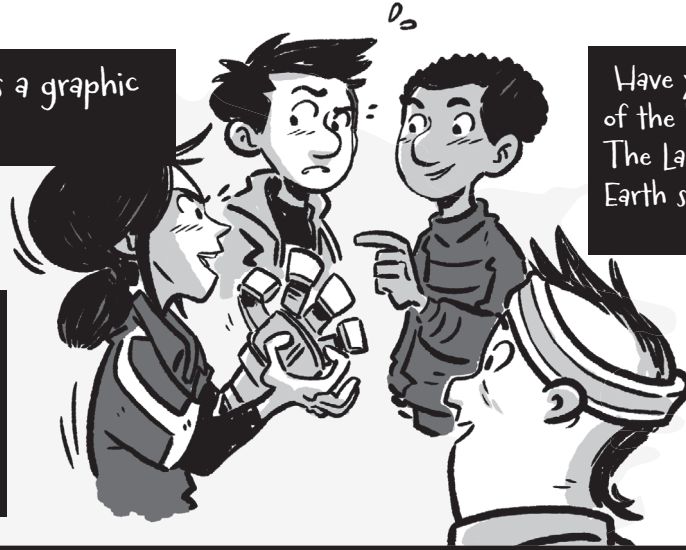
The Last Kids on Earth

What is a graphic novel?

Have you read any of the books from The Last Kids on Earth series?

What about a comic?

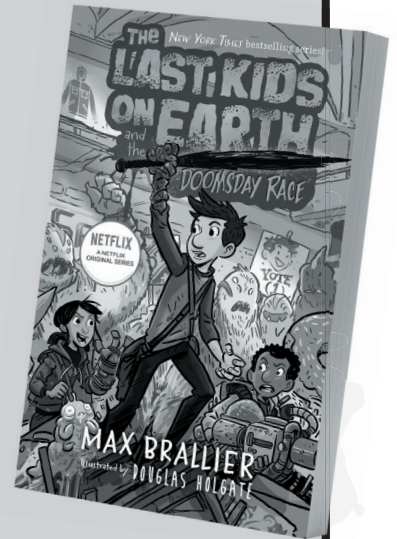
Have you read any graphic novels or comics?



Cover Clues

Take a few moments to look over the cover of the seventh book in the series of *The Last Kids on Earth*. Think about the following questions:

- What is interesting about the book's title?
- What illustrations have been included?
- What colours have been used to make the book eye-catching? Check the cover online to see the colours used.
- Write a few sentences explaining what you like about the book cover using the sentence starters below:



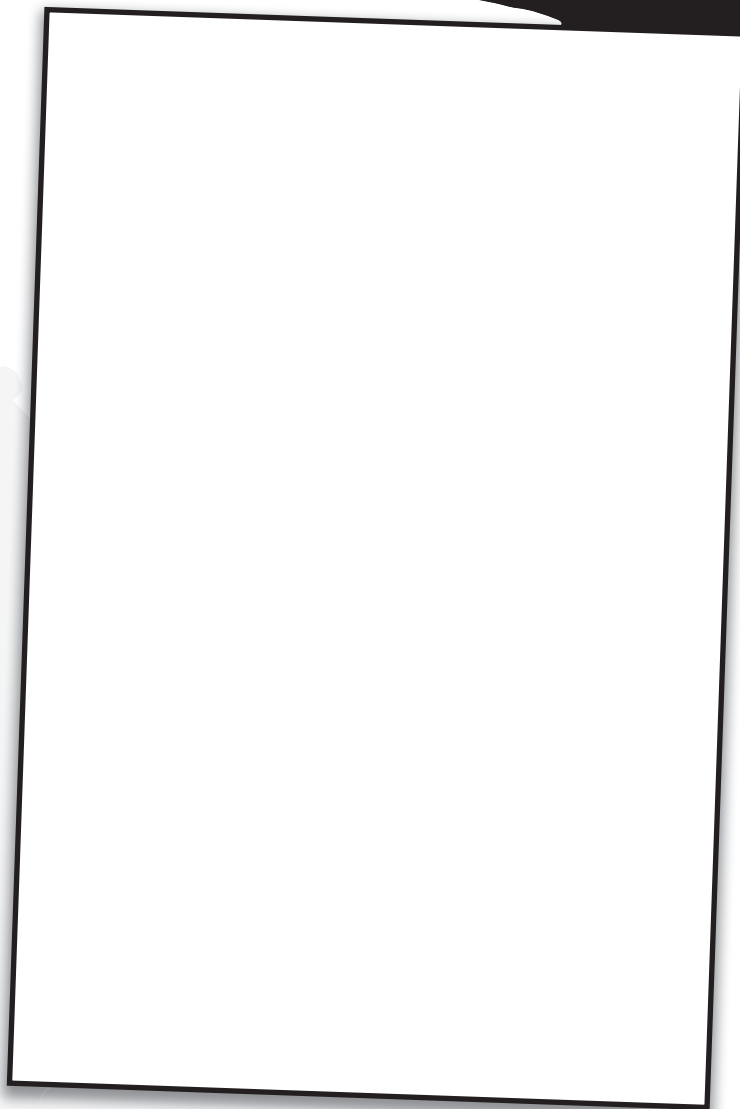
Activities: Getting to know the series

- Get started by looking over the Book Title Jumble on the next page, talking through definitions for each word. Then, see if you can work out the titles of each of the previous five books using the stem *The Last Kids on Earth and the ...*
- Discuss the titles you have come up with together; what is exciting about them? What might each book be about?
- Finally, come up with your own title, cover, and blurb for the next book in the series. Think about how you can make your cover eye-catching and distinct from the other books in the series. Your blurb should be a brief description of what the book is about, enticing kids just like you to read it!

THE LAST KIDS ON EARTH and the

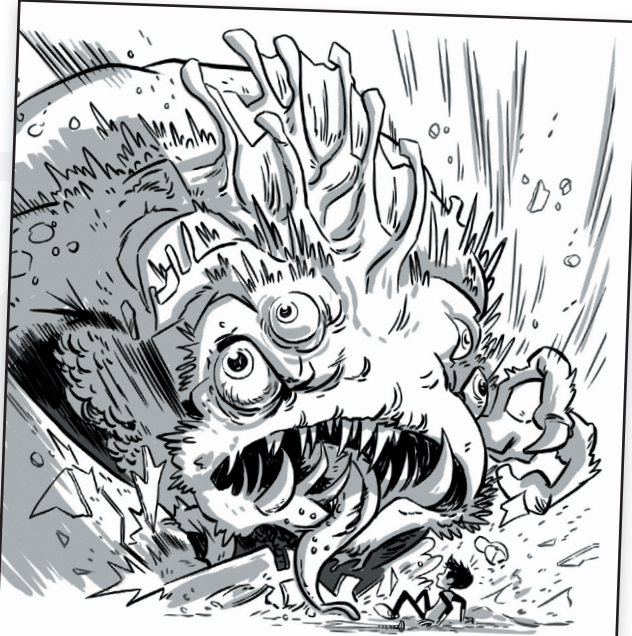
ROAD COSMIC
PARADE SKELETON
NIGHTMARE BEYOND
BLADE ZOMBIE
KING MIDNIGHT

My Book Blurb



LESSON 2!

Monster Zombie Chaos!



chapter one

That's me.

Not the giant monster.

Beneath the giant monster. The kid on his back, with the splintered bat. The handsome kid, about to get eaten.

1

Forty-two days ago, I was regular Jack Sullivan: thirteen years old, living an uneventful life in the uninteresting town of Wakefield. I was totally **not** a hero, totally **not** a tough guy, totally **not** fighting giant monsters.

But look at me now. Battling a gargantuan beast on the roof of the local CVS pharmacy. Life is crazy like that.



Right now, the *whole world* is crazy like that. Check the shattered windows. Check the wild vines crawling up the side of the building. All of these things are not normal.

2

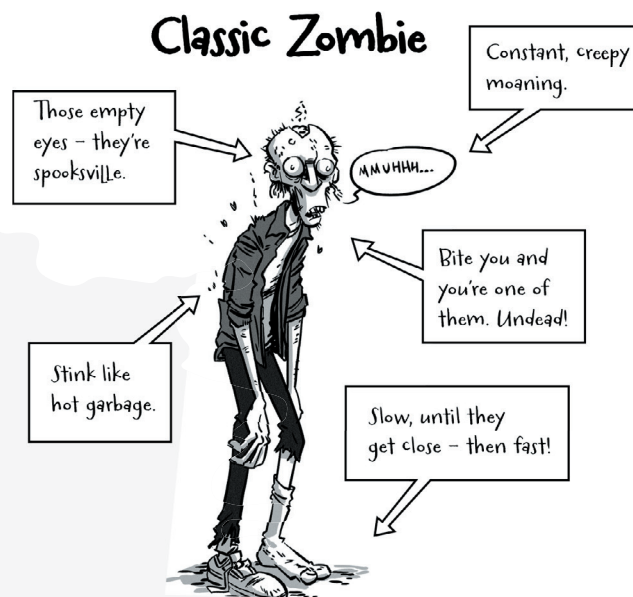
Extract taken from *The Last Kids on Earth*.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What details do you notice about the giant monster from the extract?
- What do you think it would sound and smell like? Can you do an impression of it?
- What characteristics make a scary monster? Can you think of any others you have read about or seen?
- How does Jack describe himself in the extract? What do we learn about him and the town of Wakefield?
- How does the writer create humour in these opening pages? What makes you want to read on?

Activity: Design Your Own Dangerous Creature!

- Look at the 'Classic Zombie' from the book on the right. What is creepy and gross about zombies? What makes them difficult to defeat? Have a go at doing your best zombie impression!
- From zombies, to Dozers, Winged Wretches, and the almighty Acid Blarg, Jack Sullivan has his work cut out staying alive! Using all of these crazy creatures for inspiration, design your own dangerous monster or zombie and label its features and characteristics just like the writer and illustrator have done on the right.
- Introduce each other to your new monsters and zombies and discuss the kinds of danger they pose in the monster apocalypse!



Introducing the dreadfully dangerous . . .

Activity: Monster Apocalypse Survival Guide

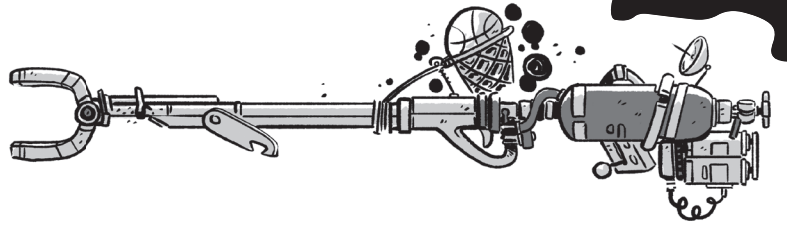
- Based on what you know about the books or on your own imagination, imagine what it would really be like to be one of the LAST KIDS ON EARTH! Write a diary entry noting down your thoughts and feelings. What would your plan of action be?
- Fill in the Survival Item List below. What things would you need to survive the monster apocalypse and why?
- Finally, write a Survival Guide for other kids who might face a monster apocalypse one day. Your instructions should be **clear** and **concise**, be listed in the **correct order**, be presented in an appropriate **layout** (you might want to include lists and images), and be written in a **tone** that is appropriate for your audience.

Monster Apocalypse Survival: 5 Items I need and why

Item	Reason
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	



Survival Guide



LESSON 3!

Creating a Comic

These two little monsters must have been *very eagerly* awaiting the arrival of someone to trade with, because they move with incredible quickness.

A folding table is hurled from the dinosaur's mouth, followed by a big suitcase. Then a long rope, made from what looks like monster hair, is unfurled, and the two monsters descend.

"A pair of post-apocalyptic Rapunzels," June says. "Rad."

In a flash, the table is unfolded, the suitcase is unpacked, and items are on display. "Gaze upon our wares!" one monster shouts.

"All prices negotiable!" the other quickly adds.

"It's a little monster yard sale," Dirk says. "Cute."

We're jostled aside as dozens of monsters hurry off the gangplank, rushing towards the table. Johnny Steve is among them, using his walking sword to navigate the rocky ground.

But as we get close, I realise that a monster yard sale – which sounds like the most amazing thing *ever* – is actually kinda dull. I take a quick peek at the objects for sale: an old microwave, some dinged-up silverware, and piles of musty old books.

I'm less interested in this lousy little roadside sale – and more interested in *why* the Mallusc stopped. Why now? Why here? I can't imagine it stopped because it wanted to buy a busted toaster.

"Let's find out what the Mallusc is up to," I say, and the four of us hike toward the front end of the great creature. Walking its length, I notice the many scars and scrapes and wounds that mark her rough skin.

Far ahead, I see a wide river running perpendicular to the Mallusc's path. A bridge, dotted with abandoned cars, crosses the river. As we near the front, the Mallusc lets out a sudden, earth-trembling WAIL! And then –

SMASH!

The bridge is instantly demolished as the Mallusc slams her head downward, through the bridge, plunging her face-parts into the river water below.

Ice-cold water splashes us as the Mallusc pushes her head deeper into the water.

162

163

Extract taken from *The Last Kids on Earth and the Doomsday Race*.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Which characters are present in this extract? What is your impression of them?
- How is the Mallusc described? How does the writer convey her size?
- What is an onomatopoeia? Can you spot an example of onomatopoeia in the extract? Can you think of any other examples?
- Can you name any other characteristics or features of graphic novels and comics?
- Summarise in a line or two what is happening in this extract.

Activity: Onomatopoeia

When words sound like what they mean, this is called onomatopoeia. Some books – especially comic books – use onomatopoeia, sometimes for comic effect, sometimes to shock the reader.

Can you match the following words to the sounds they describe?



BOOM

RUSTLE

THWACK

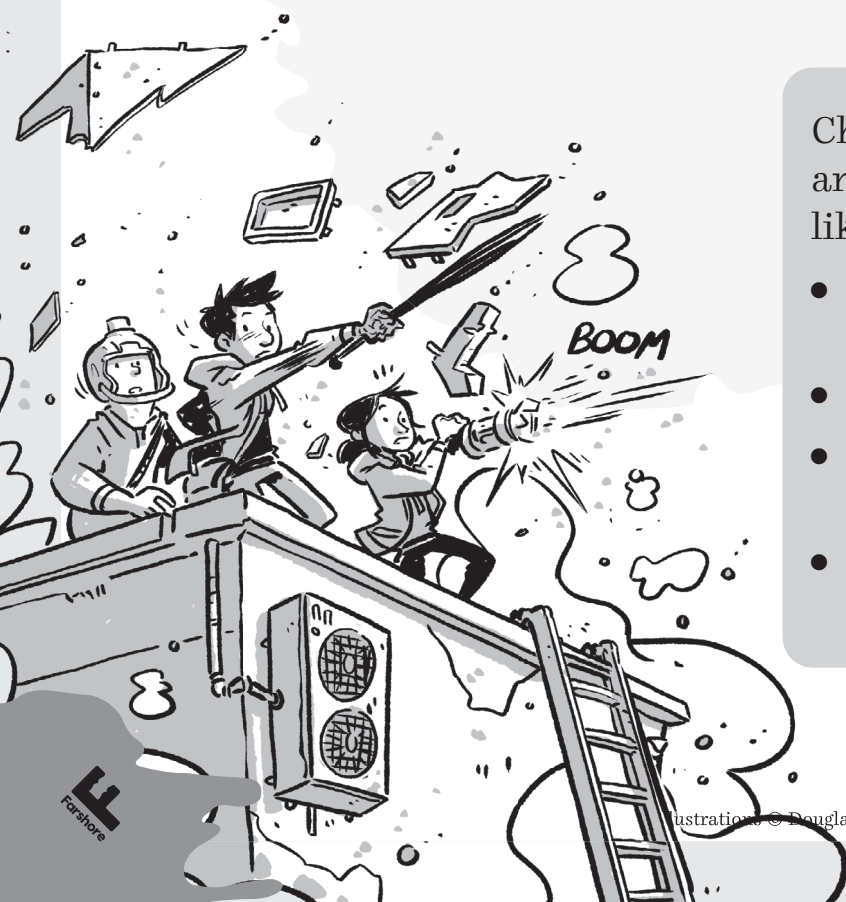
SPLASH

DIVING INTO WATER

AN EXPLODING FIREWORK

LEAVES UNDERFOOT

A BUMP TO THE HEAD



Choose one of the following things and invent a new word that sounds like what it means!

- A window shaking because zombies are approaching!
- A door being shut violently
- The sound of a strong wind on a dark night
- A flood of water coming down a hill

Activity: The Mighty Mallusc

- *The Last Kids on Earth* series is full of amazing illustrations that help to bring Jack and his friends' adventures to life. You can even witness the mayhem in full colour in the recent graphic novel *Thrilling Tales from the Treehouse!*
- Now it's your turn to put your skills to the test and transform the extract you just read into a comic book page.



- To begin, read over the extract again as a class, highlighting **six key points of action** and **important dialogue**. Remember, you have a limited amount of space for illustrations and dialogue in a comic, so you must be selective in what you include!
- Plan the contents of each box of your comic, then bring the extract to life in colour by filling in the comic template below.
- **CHALLENGE:** can you include an example of **onomatopoeia**?

Key Points of Action

My LKoE Comic!

The comic strip template consists of six rectangular panels arranged in three rows. The top row has two panels, the middle row has two panels, and the bottom row has two panels. Each panel contains a faint, stylized illustration of a person in a dynamic pose, likely a superhero or character from a comic book. The panels are outlined with thick black borders.

LESSON 4!

ADAPTING A SCENE FOR THE SCREEN

I spot the Victory Geyser – that means we’re careening back toward the centre of the mall. “Hey, uh, bad guys!” I call up. “This sounds like a Thrull and Ghazt problem, so if it’s cool, I’m just gonna hop off and –”

“Not so fast!” Ghazt snarls, and his heavy paw slaps down on to my hand. “You won’t be getting off yet!”

“How about we *all* exit this absurd conveyance?” Thrull says, then –

SNAP!

A huge crack suddenly appears in the monorail – and I realise Thrull’s bone-whip has just slashed clean through the track. At once, it’s collapsing – the track crumbling, the monorail tilting, everything plunging to the ground.

I leap off – aiming for anything soft. I get lucky – and land on a giant Build-A-Bear teddy. I roll into a sitting position just in time to see Ghazt hit the floor.

An instant later, the falling monorail lands. The entire weight of the car comes crashing down on Ghazt.

Thrull laughs.

Behind him, dozens of skeleton soldiers are

stepping into the mall. *Talk about bad to worse.*

I spot Ghazt, curled beneath the crashed monorail. His body is twisted all wrong. Strange blood – part rat, part monster – begins to pool around him.

“COME HERE!” Thrull barks.

His bone-whip snaps out, seeking and finding Ghazt. It tightens. Thrull yanks Ghazt up into the air and then slams him back down so hard that the mall quakes.



Extract taken from *The Last Kids on Earth and the Doomsday Race*.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Can you spot examples of powerful verbs in the extract? What is the effect of them?
- How has the illustrator presented Thrull? Which words would you use to describe him?
- What is happening in the extract? How do you think Jack is feeling at this point?
- Have you watched the Netflix adaptation of *The Last Kids on Earth*?
- What decisions might have to be made when adapting a graphic novel or comic for the screen?

Activity: Comparing the Books to the Adaptation

- If you're able to, watch the trailer or the opening few minutes of the Netflix adaptation of *The Last Kids on Earth* series. Discuss: is it how you imagined? What similarities and differences does it bear to the book?
- Adapting a book for the screen means lots of important decisions need to be made in order to reach a new audience. Compare **differences** between the book and the screen version of the series using the table below and the example to help you. See if you can include **at least two ideas** for each box.

The Book

The Screen

CHARACTERS and DIALOGUE i.e. how they are presented and what they say	Eg. Images of characters are static	Eg. Characters will be animated
ACTION and the PLOT i.e. the storyline and what happens		
SETTING i.e. where and when the action happens		
STRUCTURE i.e. how it is put together		

- You are now going to transform the extract from pages 290–291 into a storyboard for the screen! Begin by acting out and reading out the extract in small groups together; this will give you an idea of the key moments to capture on screen and action or dialogue you might leave out.
- Design your storyboard for this scene including a line in each box explaining what is happening, then **act them out** again in your groups. Reflect on how you approached this task and your adaptation. What impact will your changes have on the audience's experience? Did you find this exercise easier or trickier than creating a comic? Discuss your ideas.

SCREEN ADAPTATION STORYBOARD by

1.	2.
3.	4.
5.	6.

Don't forget to share your projects with us @FarshoreBooks
and use the hashtag #LastKidsonEarth