

**Street Child by Berlie Doherty**

Set in the second half of the nineteenth century, *Street child* tells the story of a boy called Jim who, after a series of misfortunes, spends time in the workhouse as a child labourer and lives on the streets. The book is based on the true story of an orphan whose plight inspired Doctor Barnado to try to help street children, and led to the founding of his children’s homes. Exploring the novel enables children to discuss challenging themes including cruelty, injustice, resilience and humanity. It also enables children to develop an understanding of issues such as poverty and child labour.

**Aims of this sequence:**

- To empathise with a character and explore possible reasons for his actions and consider decisions he might make
- To explore narrative plot, settings, characters and draw inferences to aid understanding
- To write texts based on fictional experiences
- To write recounts from a character's point of view
- To write in a chosen form for a selected audience

**This teaching sequence is designed for a Year 5 or 6 class.**

<p><b>Overview of this teaching sequence.</b></p> <p>This teaching sequence is approximately 3 weeks long if spread out over 15 sessions. The book supports teachers to teach about character development, emotional response and changes of setting in narrative fiction. The narrative structure is carefully crafted and the characters are developed, offering readers a strong plot that is emotive, that they can relate to. Children can then use this model for their own story planning and descriptive writing.</p>	
<p><b>National Curriculum 2014 Links</b></p>	
<p><b>Reading: (Word reading / Comprehension)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and discuss a wide range of fiction</li> <li>• Read books that are structured in different ways</li> <li>• Identify and discuss themes and conventions</li> <li>• Discuss understanding and explore meaning of words in context</li> <li>• Ask questions to improve understanding</li> <li>• Draw inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions and justifying inferences with evidence</li> <li>• Identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning</li> <li>• Discuss and evaluate how authors use language</li> <li>• Participate in discussions about books, building on their own and others' ideas and challenging views</li> <li>• Explain and discuss their understanding of what they have read.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Writing: (Transcription / Composition)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan writing by identifying the audience for and purpose of the writing, selecting the appropriate form</li> <li>• Note and develop initial ideas, drawing on reading</li> <li>• Draft and write by selecting appropriate grammar and vocabulary</li> <li>• In narratives, describe settings, characters and atmosphere, integrate dialogue to convey character and advance action</li> <li>• Use a range of devices to build cohesion within and across paragraphs</li> <li>• Evaluate and edit by proposing changes to vocabulary, grammar and punctuation</li> <li>• Proof-read for spelling and punctuation errors</li> <li>• Perform their own compositions, using appropriate intonation, volume, movement so that meaning is clear</li> </ul>
<p><b>Speaking and Listening:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, responding to comments about the text</li> <li>• Ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and build vocabulary and knowledge</li> <li>• Listen and respond appropriately to adults and peers</li> <li>• Articulate and justify answers and opinions</li> <li>• Use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, imagining and exploring ideas</li> <li>• Participate in discussions, presentations, performances and debates</li> <li>• Consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to the contributions of others</li> <li>• Select and use appropriate registers for effective communication</li> <li>• Use spoken language to develop understanding through imagining and exploring ideas in discussion, role-play and drama</li> </ul>	

**Cross Curricular Links**

**History**

This novel links very well with a historical study of Victorian Britain. Children could also look at the change to children’s rights because of the actions of people like Dr. Barnado.

**PSHE**

It also provides links to the PSHE and citizenship curriculum, encouraging children to use their imagination to understand other people’s experiences, discuss their opinions and develop their sense of social justice and moral responsibility. Children could investigate street children in the world today by looking at this website. <http://www.streetkids.org/>.

Links to the establishment of UNICEF and the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child and the articles. Children could look at these articles and discuss relevance then and now.

Or could put in specific NC statements.....

**Teaching Approaches**

- Reading aloud and rereading
- Responding to visual images
- Visualisation
- Drawing and annotating
- Freeze-frame, thought tracking, hotseating, role-play
- Role on the wall
- For information on drama approaches, see resources
- Readers’ theatre/scripting
- Writing in role
- Text marking and word collections
- Story mapping
- Discussion
- Resources

**Writing Outcomes**

- Poetry
- Rewriting parts of the narrative as a play script
- Recounts (diary entries)
- Writing in role (choice of form and audience)
- Persuasive letter
- Newspaper report writing
- Character profile
- Caption writing
- Note writing
- Script marking

**Links to other texts and resources.**

*Despereaux,*  
*Because of Win Dixie*

**Links to other resources on the Power of Reading Website**

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**Session one:** Reading aloud, rereading and responding to a visual image

**Learning Objective:**

**\*To be able to take part in a whole-class or group discussion, contributing ideas.**

**\*To be able to use a written text or illustration to collect information**

- During shared reading, read the preface 'Tell me your story, Jim' aloud to the children.
- Ask them to work with a partner and, giving them a copy of this section of the story, ask them to think about what this tells them about Jim. Who do we think this is? When and where do they think this story is taking place? Model using the text to find inferential evidence to support ideas and responses.
- Collect the children's ideas together and scribe them on a flipchart/ IWB file or onto the first page of a class reading journal.
- Explain that this extract is from a book set in Victorian Britain.
- Organise the children into mixed-ability groups and give each group a copy of an image depicting Victorian Britain, e.g. of the homes of the poor, working-class streets or poor children.
- Ask them to look closely and discuss the images in groups and make notes about what they can see and what it might have been like to have lived then. This could be done on large sheets of paper with the image in the centre, or on sticky notes, or using an IWB.
- During the plenary, ask each group to report back to the class about their image, saying what they noticed.

\*\* This website provides helpful links to Victorian resource material: <http://www.schoolhistory.co.uk/primarylinks/victorian.html>

**Session two:** Reading aloud, visualisation, drawing and annotation

**Learning Objective:**

**\*To learn how to make notes to show what has been deduced from a text**

**\*To be able to respond imaginatively to a text**

- Begin the session by reading aloud Chapter 1 'The Shilling Pie'.
- Ask the children what we have found out so far about the family from this chapter and make notes on a flipchart as children make contributions. Then reread the last section from 'But the pie has grown cold ...'.
- Ask the children to close their eyes and try to visualise the scene as you read it.
- Talk with them about the things that Jim could hear and how they think he might have been feeling.
- Then ask the children to work with a partner and draw a picture of a scene from this chapter. They might choose the last scene of the family at night or perhaps draw Jim running through the streets with his penny pie.
- When they have drawn their picture, ask them to annotate it to show what is happening and how Jim is feeling.
- Encourage the children to use the text to support their responses and ideas.

**Session Three:** Reading aloud, Drama: freeze-frame, Captions and Discussion

**Learning Objective:**

**\*To use drama techniques to explore a key moment in a plot**

- Begin the session by reading Chapter 2 'The Stick Man'.
- Have a whole-class discussion about what is happening in this chapter. Is Mr Spink right or wrong to ask the family to leave?
- Organise the children into groups of five and ask them to choose a scene from this chapter to portray using 'freeze-frame' and ask them to think of a caption for their freeze-frame, for example 'No rent, no room...' or 'The Stick Man arrives.'
- The children could write their caption on a large sheet of paper and place it in front of their freeze-frame.
- Ask each group to show their freeze-frame to the rest of the class and discuss the ways they have portrayed how the members of the family are feeling. You may choose to take digital images and annotate these for later use.
- Then, working in the same groups, ask the children to talk about what the family could do to escape their situation and what they themselves might do in a similar position.
- End the session by giving each child a sticky note and asking them to write down their idea about what Jim and his family should do next. The sticky notes can be collected and stuck in the class reading journal.

Read Chapter 3 'Rosie and Judd' before the next session (either as a class or independently).

**Session 4: Role-play, Modelled, shared and supported composition and writing in role**

**Learning Objective:**

**\*To learn to use drama techniques to explore feelings**

**\*To show that they understand points of view by writing in role**

- Discuss with children the reasons why Jim's mother left his sisters at the big house.
- Working collaboratively, ask the children to imagine that they are Emily and Lizzie, left behind at the big house, and role-play an imaginary conversation between the two girls.  
*How would they feel about being left there?*  
*What might they be thinking about their mother and brother?*
- Then give each child a piece of notepaper and use modelled, shared and supported composition techniques to support the children in writing a note, in role as one of the sisters, to their mum, showing how they feel about not being able to look after her when she is ill, and their fears for the future.

Read Chapter 4 'The Workhouse' before the next session.

**Session 5: Readers theatre and scripting**

**Learning Objective:**

**\*To contribute to decisions about ways to perform a text**

**\*To learn to perform a text and make it come alive**

- Give each child a copy of the first three pages of Chapter 3 from 'Jim and his mother walked for most of that day' until: 'The boy pushed his cart out and slammed the door shut'.
- During shared reading, use an enlarged version of the text displayed on a flipchart or IWB to demonstrate how to mark this up as a script.
- Giving individual children sections of dialogue or narration to read.
- Ask children to work collaboratively to mark their own scripts to show the parts that they will be reading.
- Rehearse the reading and then discuss with the class ways this could be improved, for example by reading some parts all together, some parts loudly and some softly, or by adding sound effects.
- Provide guided support as appropriate. Then perform the script again.
- Discuss with children what they know about how Jim was feeling at this point in the story.

Before the next session, read Chapter 5 'Behind Bars', Chapter 6 'Tip' and Chapter 7 'The Wild Thing'.

**Session 6: Drawing, annotation and discussion**

**Learning Objective:**

**To be able to work collaboratively collecting information from a visual image**

**To be able to demonstrate their understanding of a text through drawing and annotation**

- Have a whole-class discussion about what they have found about Jim's life in the workhouse and note the information they find on a large sheet of paper.
- Model how to use evidence from across a text to support ideas and retrieve helpful information.
- Organise the children into groups of three or four and give each group an illustration showing a scene of life in the workhouse, stuck onto a large sheet of paper. See resources for images of life in the workhouse.
- Ask the children to talk in their groups about what they can see in the image or how it makes them feel and then ask them to make notes around the image on the paper.
- Share these as a class.
- Then ask children to make their own annotated drawing of Jim in the workhouse.
- Ask them to write a caption for their drawing. Encourage discussion of the finished drawings, focusing on what Jim would have been missing about his life before entering the workhouse.
- Finish the lesson by asking the children to write on a sticky note one of the things that Jim would be missing about his life before he entered the workhouse. The sticky notes can be collected and stuck into the class reading journal.

\*\*In a separate PSHE or philosophy session, you could pose the question 'What is a home?' and encourage the children to explore this idea.

\*\*In a history session, the children could find out more about life in the workhouse.

**Session 7: Conscience alley**

**Learning Objective: To use drama techniques to explore a character or a key moment in a plot**

- To use drama techniques to explore a character or a key moment in a plot
- Begin the session by reading aloud Chapter 8 'The Carpet Beaters'.
- During the shared part of the lesson, talk with the class about reasons why Jim should try to escape from the workhouse and reasons why he should stay.
- Then organise the class into two lines facing each other and, with one child in role as Jim walking along the conscience alley,

ask the children to call out from one side reasons why he should escape from the workhouse and, from the other, reasons why he should stay. For example, they might say, 'Stay, you've got a roof over your head!' or 'Go, this is no way to live!'.

- In shared writing draw a table on the IWB like so:

Go	Stay

- Ask children to give reasons for each argument.
- Children then go on to write a letter to Jim giving him advice and opinions on whether he should stay or go.
- Collect some of their ideas on post its together and keep them in a class journal.

### Session 8: Visualisation, text marking and collaborative poetry writing

#### Learning Objective:

**To recognise the ways that the writer has used language to create atmosphere**

**To learn to use the language in a narrative text as a starting point for poetry writing**

Reread the last paragraph of Chapter 8 'The Carpet Beaters', which begins 'Jim crept forward', asking the children to close their eyes and visualise the scene while you read.

- Then ask them which words or phrases helped them picture what was happening.
- Using an enlarged version of the text displayed on a flipchart or an IWB, highlight these words and phrases as the children identify them.
- Talk with them about how these word choices help us imagine how Jim is feeling.
- Ask the children to turn to a partner and think of other words and phrases to add to this list to show what is happening and how Jim is feeling. Note these words and phrases on the flipchart.
- Model how the words collected can be used to create a list poem, for example:

*Escape*  
*Invisible,*  
*Gliding,*  
*Weak and panting,*  
*Darting*  
*Hiding*  
*Breath bursting*

- Use shared techniques to explore ways to improve the order of the words and phrases listed.
- Then ask the children to work collaboratively and, using the word collection to help them, write list poems about Jim's escape.
- With response partners, the children could work to improve their poems.
- Use guided writing to support groups of children writing and redrafting poems.

\*\* In a separate dance session, the children could explore Jim's feelings of fear and relief as he escapes from the workhouse. Read on to Chapter 11 'The Spitting Crow' before the next session.

### Session 9: Hotseating, writing in role and shared and guided writing

#### Learning Objective:

**To use hotseating to explore a character's story**

**To think about the ways that drama helps you think about complex ideas**

**To understand a character's point of view and infer their motivation**

Read Chapter 10 'Lame Betsy' and Chapter 11 'The Spitting Crow'.

- Talk with the children about Rosie's story: What might have happened after the night Jim's mother arrived? Why did Rosie and Judd lose their jobs? Is Rosie telling the truth about what happened to Emily and Lizzie? Why might she lie?
- Model thinking and composing questions that they might want to ask Rosie about that night and
- Then ask the children to work with a partner to compose questions.
- With one child in the 'hotseat' as Rosie, ask individuals to pose their questions.
- After this, give each child a small origami book to represent Rosie's diary, and use shared and guided writing to support

children to write an entry in role as Rosie, describing what happened to her after Jim's family arrived at the Big House: why she lost her job, what happened to Jim's sisters and how she feels about seeing Jim again.

- End the session by discussing with the class the ways that the activity helped them to write in role.

**Session 10: Role on the wall, drawing and annotation**

**Learning Objective:**

**To use evidence from the text to collect information about a character and infer their feelings**

- Ask the children to talk with a partner about what they have found out about Shrimps.
- Give them a copy of the extract from Chapter 12 which starts 'One of them was a red haired pokey sort of boy' and ends 'I'll talk to him today I'll find out what he's called that's what'.
- Ask them to reread this section together and highlight the information they find about Shrimps. Then tell them to draw an outline sketch of Shrimps', noting what they have found out about him so far around the edge of their sketch. This could include what he looks like and how he tries to earn money.
- Then ask them to think about what they know about how Shrimps' feels about his mother and his wish for a brother, and write comments on his feelings inside the outline sketch.
- Ensure that the children are able to back up their opinion with inferential and deductive evidence from the text.

Read Chapter 13 'The Lily', Chapter 14 'The Waterman's Arms' and Chapter 15 'Josh' before the next session.

**Session 11: Freeze-frame, thought tracking and book talk**

**Learning Objective:**

**To use drama techniques to explore a character's feelings**

**To show their understanding of a character's situation by writing in role**

- Talk with the class about what it was like for Jim on board The Lily – brainstorm some of the phrases the children say.
- Working in pairs, ask the children to freeze-frame a scene from this chapter, perhaps showing Jim shovelling coal.
- Ask some pairs to voice their thoughts in role.
- Ask the children to write these on large thought bubbles in role giving reasons for their thoughts and feelings – these can then be added to the class display or journal.
- Children can then draw the image of the Lily using charcoals or pastels.

\*\*In a history session, the children could find out about child labour. Visit the following website:

<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/IRchild.htm>. On these web pages, it is possible to read first-hand accounts and interviews with Victorian working children.

Note: It is important to check the suitability of any extract given to children from this site, because the content is variable.

Before the next session, read on to Chapter 20 'The Green Caravan'.

**Session 12: Story mapping**

**Learning Objective:**

**To learn to retrieve the main locations and events from a text**

**To learn the ways that a story map can help track a character's journey through a narrative**

- In shared writing, talk with the class about all the places that Jim has been to during the story.
- Make a list of these locations and then demonstrate how a character's journey through a book can be depicted with a map of the story.
- Ask the children to make their own story maps to show Jim's journey from his room in the overcrowded house he shared with his mother and sisters, to the circus.

Before the next session, read on to Chapter 26 'Goodbye Bruvver'.

**Session 13: Discussion, modelled, shared and guided writing and Individual writing**

**Learning Objective:**

**To show a character's feelings by writing in role**

- Discuss with the class what Jim would have liked to have told Shrimps about what they could do together in the future to be like 'bruvvers' and what he could tell him that would 'make his ears tingle'.
- Through modelled, shared and guided writing, write the letter to Shrimps that Jim would have written (if he could write!), showing how he feels about him.

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### **Session 14: Storytelling and role-play**

#### **Learning Objective:**

**To tell a story using story maps as notes**

**To use drama strategies to explore key moments in a plot**

- Begin the session by reading the end of the story.
- Discuss with the children what they know about how Barney feels about hearing Jim's story and seeing the street children, referring to the drama and storytelling in the last session.
- Ask them to write Doctor Barnado's diary with a full account of the story he heard from Jim, what he saw on the streets and what he thinks he might do about this situation. This could be done through shared writing and when the children work independently, with you focusing on a guided group.
- End the session with a 'Tell Me' discussion.

### **Session 15: Continuing the story**

**To consider how the story could be continued**

**Write in the style of the story**

- Ask children to think about what could have happened after meeting Dr Barnado. Where could he have gone and what could have happened to him?
- Ask children to continue the story in the same style as the original.