

The Explorer Katherine Rundell

Starter activities

Group discussion: survival kit



- Children should be able to:

“ listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers; articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions; consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others.

- 1 List the following items on the board: box of plasters; pocket mirror; small box of matches; bottle of water; pocket knife; tube of antiseptic cream; plastic sheet; chocolate bar; piece of rope; mosquito net.
- 2 Explain that the children should imagine they've just crash landed in the Amazon jungle. The four of them are the only survivors. They have five minutes to gather supplies from the burning plane. They must decide, together, what they need most and least from the list on the board. They can only take eight items.
- 3 Divide the class into groups of four. Ask the groups to number the items from 1–8 in order of priority.
- 4 Each group takes turns to feed back to the rest of their class, explaining the reasons behind their priorities.

The groups should discuss and agree their decisions.

Starter activity 1

Group discussion: find a leader



Resources required: Photocopy master (PCM) 1 (for reference only)

- Children should be able to:

“ articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions; consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others; participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play improvisations and debates.

- 1 Photocopy PCM 1 (the following pages give main character profile information: pages 29–30; 35–37; 145–149)
- 2 Divide the class into groups of four and explain that each group has to choose one of the three older children from the story (Con, Lila or Fred) to be their leader.
- 3 If groups are struggling, hand out the character summaries on PCM 1.
- 4 Ask one child in each group to feed back to the class, explaining their reasons.

This activity could be expanded into a main activity, by asking children to go into role as the character they have chosen as leader and to write or deliver an oral presentation on why they are the best candidate.

Starter activity 2

Main activities

A letter home



Resources required: Photocopy master (PCM) 1 (for reference only)

Children should be able to:



write for a range of real purposes; identify the audience for and purpose of the writing; select appropriate grammar and vocabulary; use a wide range of devices to build cohesion within and across paragraphs



link ideas using adverbials of time, place and number.

- 1 Explain that the children are going to write a letter home from the perspective of Con, Lila or Fred. They will need to think about the characters' relationship with their parent(s) or carer at home. Hand out PCM 1 for reference if needed.
 - 2 Explain that children should try to use adverbials of time, place or number in their letters where possible. Give examples on the board to support understanding.
- T** Ask children to write one letter about a specific event, explaining what happened.
- S** Ask children to write various letters, focusing on how their chosen character feels about what is happening, and how they are affected.
- D** Ask children to write replies to their letters from the letter recipient, changing the perspective to reflect the recipient's personality.

Main activity 1

My Amazon survival guide



Children should be able to:



write for a range of real purposes; use organisational and presentational devices to structure text, for example, headings, bullet points, underlining; select appropriate grammar and vocabulary



use modal verbs to indicate degrees of possibility.

- 1 Explain that children are going to write their own guides for surviving in the Amazon jungle, based on what they have learned.
 - 2 Encourage children to use headings to organise their guides. Here are some examples of headings they could use: Making a den; What to eat / What NOT to eat; Creating a map; How to build a raft; Survival top tips!
 - 3 Encourage children to use modal verbs throughout their writing. Explore how modal verbs can contribute to meaning in their survival guides.
- T** Ask children to work in groups to compile a guide, with individuals writing the content for one of the headings, and then putting all the sections together.
- D** Ask children to use as many different writing styles as they can: instructions; labelled diagrams; non-narrative; narrative; etc.

Main activity 2

Plenary activities

Fronted adverbials



Resources required: Photocopy master (PCM) 2

• Children should be able to:



select appropriate grammar and vocabulary, understanding how such choices can change and enhance meaning; use a wide range of devices to build cohesion within and across paragraphs.

- 1 Photocopy PCM 2 and distribute it to the class.
- 2 Explain that fronted adverbials are used to link sentences and paragraphs. Adverbials of time express when something happened (*later, next, before*), where something happened (*nearby, under, by*) and the order in which things happened (*firstly, secondly*).
- 3 Ask children to add fronted adverbials to each of the sentences on the PCM. These can be adverbials of time, place or number.

You could write examples of adverbials on the board to help. Remind children about adding a comma after fronted adverbials.

Plenary activity 1

Definitions quiz



Resources required: Photocopy master (PCM) 3

• Children should be able to:



select appropriate grammar and vocabulary, understanding how such choices can change and enhance meaning



explain the meaning of words in context

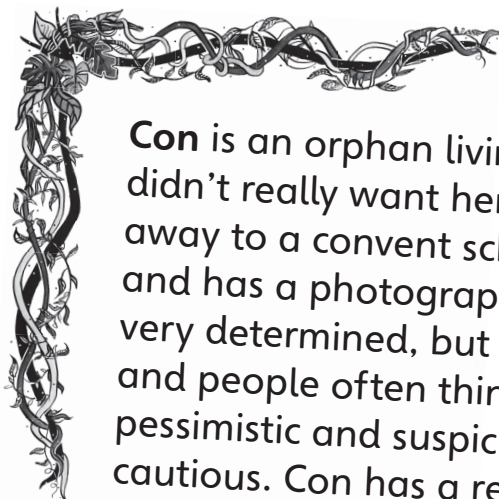


use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary.

- 1 Photocopy PCM 3.
- 2 Explain that you are going to play a quick word quiz, using some of the unusual vocabulary from the story.
- 3 As you read out the questions on PCM 3, children guess the word being described.
- 4 To make it easier you could write the answers on the board in a random order, so children have to match the correct word to the definition being read out. Or for a more able class, write the first letter of each answer on the board instead.

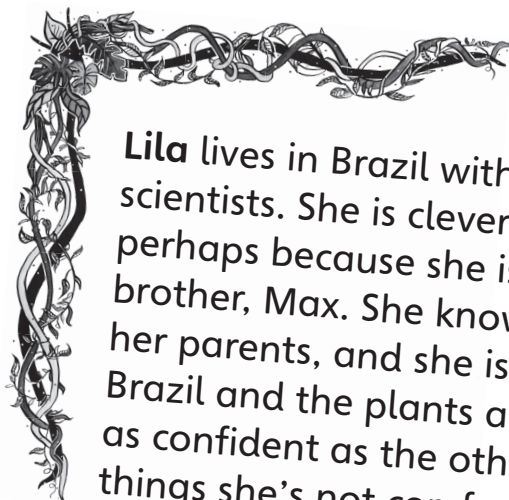
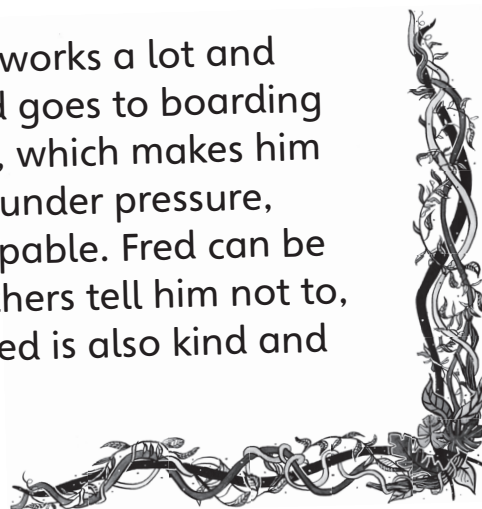
This can be played as a whole class, in small groups or in pairs.

Plenary activity 2



Con is an orphan living with her great-aunt, who didn't really want her. Every summer, Con is sent away to a convent school. She has travelled a lot, and has a photographic memory. She is brave and very determined, but can be a bit bad-tempered, and people often think she is rude. She is sometimes pessimistic and suspicious, which makes her a little cautious. Con has a real strength of character, so once she gives something a go, she usually succeeds at it.

Fred lives in England with his dad, who works a lot and doesn't have much time for him, so Fred goes to boarding school. He's tall for his age and mature, which makes him seem older than he really is. He is calm under pressure, makes decisions carefully and is very capable. Fred can be proud, so will often do things even if others tell him not to, which makes him quite independent. Fred is also kind and thoughtful and works well in a team.



Lila lives in Brazil with her mama and papa, who are scientists. She is clever and kind, as well as maternal: perhaps because she is used to looking after her younger brother, Max. She knows a lot about the natural world from her parents, and she is more familiar than the others with Brazil and the plants and animals that live there. Lila is not as confident as the others, and doesn't push herself to do things she's not comfortable with, but is always positive and optimistic. Lila is a great team player.