



**Scottish
Book Trust**
inspiring readers and writers



10 expressive arts activities for any book

Fun, creative activities tying expressive arts into any book

CFE Levels First to Second

Age 5-11

Resource created by Scottish Book Trust

scottishbooktrust.com



Scottish Book Trust is a registered company (SC184248)
and a Scottish charity (SC027669).

Contents

About this resource	2
Getting started: choosing a character.....	2
Learning activities	2
Further resources	9

About this resource

The activities in this resource have been designed so that they can be used with almost any fiction text. The resource is not a linear progression of activities but rather a range of ideas from which teachers can pick and choose.

If you are taking part in [Reading Schools](#), the activities in this resource could support delivery of Key Area:

- 2.2.2: Interdisciplinary book projects
- 2.3.4: Opportunities for learners to respond to what they're reading

Getting started: choosing a character

To start you off chose a character from the book and create a profile for them. What does the book tell you about their likes or dislikes? You may have to work it out from their actions or the things they have around them. Who are their friends? What do they eat? What are their clothes like? What artist would they like? What kind of music do they like?

Learning activities

Activity 1: Can you be a designer?

Solve a design problem for a character in the book.

Early level (EXA 0-06a)

- Design a piece of tableware for your character e.g. a plate, bowl or mug.

- Design and decorate a plate for a character in the book. You can use paper, paper plates, card or clay.
- What do they do in the story? What can you tell about the character from the descriptions or actions? What do you think their favourite colour might be?

First level (EXA 1-06a)

- Design a bedroom for your character. Think about what they would need.
- Create a mood board to reflect your design ideas.
- Draw a plan of the room from above and detail the layout.
- Design a pattern for the bedding and wallpaper.

Second Level (EXA 2-06a)

- Design a bedroom for your character. Think about what they would need.
- Create a mood board to reflect your design ideas.
- Draw a plan of the room from above and detail the layout.
- Draw a 3D one point perspective drawing and create the room in full colour.

Activity 2: Time to dance

Devise or learn a dance inspired by a character and the time period or world they are set in. You could have a celebration tea dance themed on the book. Make up or learn a dance that would suit the characters.

Early level (EXA 0-08a, EXA 0-09a)

- Create a happy dance.
- Devise four different dance moves.
- Practice each move to a beat of four or eight.
- Repeat the pattern to create a dance.

Early level (EXA 1-08a, 1-09a, EXA 1-10a)

- Create a happy dance using percussion or music to set the rhyme.

- Working with a partner, use travel, turn, jump, gesture, pause and fall to create a short dance.
- Perform the dance for friends.

Second level (EXA 2-08a, 2-09a, EXA 2-10a)

- Create a celebration dance in pairs using percussion or music to set the rhythm.
- Investigate a range of dance styles, features and cultures and learn a short dance.
- Discuss coordination and control and demonstrate it in dance sequences.
- Create and rehearse a short original dance piece, comprising several sequences, to music or a rhythm.
- Teach the dance to another pair and perform to friends.

Activity 3: Compose a soundscape

Compose a soundscape for all or part of the story. First, choose part of the book and identify the types of sounds that match the action. Use found materials and musical instruments to make sounds to match actions and record it.

Early level (EXA 0-17a, EXA 0-18a)

- Explore loud and quiet, rhythm, fast and slow using voice, clapping or tapping.
- Using simple percussion, create sounds to accompany the story.

First level (EXA 1-17a, EXA 1-18a)

- Explore musical ideas using voice, instruments and technology to create different sounds, rhythm, pitch and dynamics.
- Create a soundscape by adding tuned/ un-tuned percussion to enhance the story.

Second level (EXA 2-18a, EXA 2-19a)

- Explore musical ideas using voice, instruments and technology to create different sounds, rhythm, pitch and dynamics.
- Create a soundscape by adding tuned/un-tuned percussion to enhance the story.
- Experiment with sounds to match descriptions from the story.
- Record sounds on iPad or phone.
- Edit sounds to follow the story line.
- Play the soundscape to your classmates to see if they can identify the part of the story it accompanies.

Activity 4: Add character

Add a character to the story. It could be a made up character, or pupils could add themselves to the story. Plan and write a script then act out their new interactions with the existing characters.

Early level (EXA 0-13a, EXA 0-14a)

- Use facial expressions to convey the feelings described in the story.
- What would happen if you were in the story? How would you feel? What would you say or do?

First level (EXA 1-13a, EXA 1-14a)

- Use voice and movement to respond to a character from the story. Can you show feelings and emotions in your response?
- Have a go at writing a short script using the story as a starting point.
- Act out the new scene for your classmates.

Second level (EXA 2-12a, EXA 2-13a, EXA 2-14a)

- Write a short script adding a new character to the story.
- Convey the new character's feelings using movement and body language.

- Use expression and voice to convey the action of the characters.
- Land your character in different parts of the story and improvise their response to the action.

Activity 5: A time or place for art

Look at and discuss art from the time period, country or town the book is set in. Use it as a stimulus for your own artwork.

Early level (EXA 0-07a)

- If using a picture book, use the illustrations as a stimulus for your own artwork.
- Discuss the images using simple artistic language including colour, shape, line, pattern and express likes and dislikes.

First level (EXA 1-07a)

- From the character description can you work out what kind of art they would prefer.
- Identify art styles that could be in the book. Respond to artists' work by sharing thoughts and feelings towards the work of at least one artist and one designer.
- Create your own artwork in the style identified in the story.

Second level (EXA 2-07a)

- From the character description can you work out what kind of art they would prefer.
- Identify art styles that could be in the book. Respond to artists work by sharing thoughts and feelings towards the work of at least one artist and one designer.
- Create your own artwork in the style identified in the story.
- Hold an art exhibition that is themed around the book. Display your work alongside the work of artists that inspired you.

Activity 6: Make a playlist

Make up a music playlist for a character to enjoy. Make a playlist based on the theme of the book.

Early level (EXA 0-16a, EXA 0-18a)

- Learn and sing nursery rhymes that your character would enjoy or that match the book.

First level (EXA 1-18a, EXA 1-19a)

- Make a playlist of songs for a character.
- Discuss the themes in the book and use the mood to help set the tone for a playlist.

Second level (EXA 2-18a, EXA 2-19a)

- Make a playlist of music for a character.
- Discuss the themes in the book and use the mood to help set the tone for a playlist.
- Discuss music used in film to create atmosphere.
- Make up a playlist that matches the story line of the book.

Activity 7: What happens next...

Plan and create an alternative next chapter then act it out.

Early level (EXA 0-13a, EXA 0-14a)

- Read part of the book then pause to allow the children to act out the emotions and actions they feel will happen next.

First level (EXA 1-13a, EXA 1-14a)

- Read part of the book and pause at a cliff hanger.
- Improvise the next scene of the story.

Second level (EXA 2-13a, 2-14a)

- Read part of the book and pause at a cliff hanger.
- Improvise the next scene of the story.
- Read the next part of the story and compare the two story lines. Which one works best? Are they similar? Are you surprised?

Activity 8: Can you be an illustrator?

Early level (EXA 0-02a, EXA 0-06a), **First level** (EXA 1-02a, EXA 1-06a),

Second level (EXA 2-02a, EXA 2-06a)

Respond to a description from the book and draw the character, setting, action or event. Select a descriptive section and set a task to draw what is described by the text. Allow the children to experiment and select their own media and style appropriate to stage.

Activity 9: In the mood

Early level (EXA 0-05a, EXA 0-09a, EXA 0-13a, EXA 0-18a)

First level (EXA 1-05a, EXA 1-09a, EXA 1-13a, EXA 1-18a)

Second level (EXA 2-05a, EXA 2-09a, EXA 2-13a, EXA 2-18a)

Use the mood of the book to inspire a piece of music, short performance, artwork or dance. Focus on feelings and emotions. Talk about the mood, tone, and pace of the book. Generate and display a class word bank of the feelings and emotions.

Can the word bank be reflected in an art form? Can you reflect the shape of the story in the book in your work? Is there a lot of repetition? Is there a big climax? It can be as simple as pace, fast or slow.

Colours are known to reflect mood. Discuss the choice of colours in hospitals compared to funfairs.

We show our emotions through body language. Can body language be used to reflect the story?

Music is used in film to set the scene and emotion. Can you identify the feeling a piece of music evokes?

Activity 10: Bring the book to life

Early level (EXA 0-02a, EXA 0-05a, EXA 0-06a, TCH 0-09a)

First level (EXA 1-02a, EXA 1-05a, EXA 1-06a, TCH 1-09a)

Second level (EXA 2-02a, EXA 2-05a, EXA 2-06a, TCH 2-09a)

Create a 3D version of the book in the class. Add sensory experiences with sounds, smells and textures. Include mirrors for children to use to become part of the installation. This can be done in a number of ways to suit your setting.

Use a tent or partitions to create a space and then turn it into a room from the book. Create a space under a desk that reflects a setting from the book. Place a table or desk against a wall and create the world on the surface, on the wall and even underneath the desk. Collect or make your own objects from the story.

Using a cardboard box as a frame, create a mini world representing the book. You can close it off and create viewing windows. Use sounds, smells, textures, excerpts from the book in your installation. Add little speech bubbles or labels with instructions for users on how to interact and use the installation.

Further resources

- All our resources can be filtered by curriculum area, including [Expressive arts](#)
- Our [Authors Live on Demand broadcasts](#) contain broadcasts with renowned illustrators, including draw-a-longs you can join in with in your classroom!
- Our [Books for your art classroom book list](#) contains our top picks of books for young people to learn, discuss and engage with visual art
- [National Theatre of Scotland's Education Portal](#)
- [Royal Scottish National Orchestra's School and Nursery Programmes](#)
- [Scottish Chamber Orchestra's Schools Programmes](#)

- [Scottish Ballet's School and Community Workshops](#)
- [Scottish Opera's Opera for Schools](#)