CONTENTS

Introduction 3
Teaching Highlights 4
Overview for Scheme of Work 5
Plot Summary 6–8
Lesson Plans 9–20
Student Resources 21–34
Self-assessment 35
Further Reading 36

Teaching materials written by Liz Miles

Acknowledgements
The author and publishers are grateful for permission to include the following copyright material in this resource:

Text:


Whipplesnaith (Noël Howard Symington): extract from The Night Climbers of Cambridge (Oleander, 2013), reproduced by permission of Oleander Press.

Images:

Illustrations: Artwork by Robin Lawrie

We have tried to trace and contact all copyright holders before publication. If notified, the publishers will be pleased to rectify any errors or omissions at the earliest opportunity.
INTRODUCTION

Summary
After a shipwreck, one-year-old Sophie is found floating in a cello case. An eccentric scholar, Charles, becomes her guardian. To escape being taken to an orphanage — and in her search for her cello-playing mother, who she thinks is still alive — 12-year-old Sophie flees to Paris with Charles. Here, Sophie befriends Matteo and other roof- and treetop-living children. In spite of a cover-up by the authorities, they eventually find Sophie’s mother’s whereabouts. But to get there they have to get past a dangerous group of roof-dwellers.

Key Themes
- **Victorian/Edwardian era** — the different status of children, women and the existence of orphanages; historical transport and clothes.
- **Missing persons and detective work** — the search for Sophie’s mother.
- **Parents/guardians** — the responsibilities of parents and guardians, and what it is to be a good one. (Charles is an eccentric guardian.)
- **Friendship** — between Sophie and Matteo, and how it develops.
- **Homes** — what a home is (Charles’s eccentric home; Matteo’s views on what a home is).
- **Music** — music takes Sophie onto another plane of existence/experience, and is the connection with her mother.
- **Potential** — Charles’s repeated saying is not to ignore life’s possibilities.
- **Lying** — both Sophie and Matteo tell lies, although Sophie feels very bad for lying to Charles.
- **Corruption** — lawyers and some policemen, including the police commissioner, are viewed as corrupt.
- **Breaking rules** — Sophie’s mother plays religious cello music faster than the norm; Charles brings up Sophie with few rules; the rooftoppers live by their own rules: for example, Matteo believes it is acceptable to take food from people’s window ledges, because it is outside and therefore ‘hunting’.

Level of Challenge
The novel is well suited to Years 7 and 8, with the main character aged 12. The language level is relatively simple and the plot fairly linear. For older children, there are many thought-provoking themes and events for challenging discussion, including the loss of a parent, single-parent families, theft, corrupt adults and violence.

Cross-curricular Links
Citizenship — liberties, human rights (including the convention on the rights of children), laws and the justice system.
Music — music over a range of periods, including great composers; understanding tempo and pitch.
History — its setting in Victorian/Edwardian Britain and links with the welfare and views of women.
Teaching Highlights
This Resource Pack contains 12 customizable Lesson Plans and 15 Student Resources to help you build a scheme of work. Teaching ideas include:

- **Children’s lives** – explore the theme of what makes a good parent or guardian, then debate the best outcome for an orphan in a Victorian/Edwardian setting (Lesson Plan 3)

- **Mood changes** – consider the author’s control of mood during a character’s train and boat journey (Lesson Plan 4)

- **Radio script** – explore the drama in dialogue, then write a radio script (Lesson Plan 6)

- **High drama** – compare the suspense in passages about hair-raising climbs, then write a similar suspense-filled passage (Lesson Plan 7)

- **Imagining characters** – critically examine the imagery used to describe characters (Lesson Plan 9)

- **Rooftoppers the Musical!** – identify main plot events, then plan a musical around them (Lesson Plan 10)
### Overview for a Scheme of Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson and focus</th>
<th>Skills covered</th>
<th>Related resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Lesson 1: Engaging the reader (opening)   | Considering the effectiveness of the opening sentence  
                                              | Analysing the main literary elements in the first chapter, from setting to suspense | Resources 1a, 1b   |
| Lesson 2: Characterization                | Exploring the features of a main character  
                                              | Empathizing with a character through role-play                                             | Resource 2        |
| Lesson 3: Theme: Parenting                | Considering the theme of parenting in the context of the story  
                                              | Debating the best outcome for a child character in a past setting                         | Resource 3        |
| Lesson 4: Mood changes                    | Examining how the author controls and changes the mood during a journey  
                                              | Writing a descriptive journey that includes changes of mood                                 | Resource 4        |
| Lesson 5: Character development           | Examining how the author creates atmosphere and tension  
                                              | Writing a Victorian ‘missing person’ poster that includes facts and inferences             | Resource 5        |
| Lesson 6: Dramatic dialogue               | Exploring dialogue through readings  
                                              | Writing a radio script                                                                      | Resource 6        |
| Lesson 7: Suspense                        | Comparing texts to examine how authors build suspense  
                                              | Writing an exciting non-fiction passage about climbing                                        | Resources 7a, 7b  |
| Lesson 8: Relationship                    | Examining a relationship by comparing the characters’ beliefs, background and actions  
                                              | Writing a diary entry, from a character’s perspective, about another character               | Resource 8        |
| Lesson 9: Imagery                         | Critically examining the language used to describe characters  
                                              | Writing a description of a new character                                                  | Resource 9        |
| Lesson 10: Plot                           | Identifying the main plot events  
                                              | Planning a musical around the plot                                                       | Resource 10       |
| Lesson 11: Ending and solutions           | Analysing the effectiveness of the ending  
                                              | Writing an epilogue                                                                       | Resource 11       |
| Lesson 12: Setting and writer’s views     | Examining how the author’s experience has influenced the setting  
                                              | Planning a story with an unusual setting  
                                              | Completing a self-assessment of skills                                                   | Resource 12, Self-assessment sheet |
## Rooftoppers

### Plot Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Plot outline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Chapter 1** | A baby found floating in a cello case on its first birthday is the last to be rescued from a sinking ship. Fellow passenger scholar Charles Maxim lifts the baby into the rescue boat and names her Sophie. He is inexperienced with children but takes her to his London home. He tells Miss Eliot from the National Childcare Agency that Sophie is his responsibility, while Miss Eliot explains that this will be a ‘temporary arrangement’, and she will come and check on his ‘ward’.
|
| **Chapter 2** | Sophie grows to be stubborn, bookish and tall like Charles. To cope with sinking-ship memories she climbs things, such as wardrobes. Miss Eliot visits and is concerned about the untidiness and empty larder. When she is nearly eight years old, Charles makes Sophie trousers as she remembers her mother wearing them to play the cello. Sophie is sure her mother is still alive. She writes the ship’s name (the *Queen Mary*) on the wall in case her mother passes by and because, as Charles says, ‘never ignore a possible’.
|
| **Chapter 3** | Miss Eliot disapproves of Charles’s carelessness with money, late dinners, inky hands and broken hat, and for buying Sophie boys’ shirts and letting her get filthy. Charles thinks Sophie’s knowledge, ability to climb trees, etc. are more important. Miss Eliot says she’ll let things pass while Sophie is a child. On Sophie’s ninth birthday Charles takes her to a classical concert where she loves the cello-playing. Charles buys her a cello, which she practises on the roof.
|
| **Chapter 4** | For Sophie’s eleventh birthday, Charles cleans and paints the cello case she was found in. Sophie remembers her mother playing the cello and floating after the shipwreck, while Charles remembers only men in the ship’s band and did not see anyone in the water. Every night Sophie watches mothers below from the roof. On this night she draws a picture of her own mother. Every night she tells stories to herself of her mother returning.
|
| **Chapter 5** | On her twelfth birthday Charles gives her 12 books, and ice cream, which they eat on a four-horse carriage in the rain. Martin Eliot and a woman from the National Childcare Agency arrive to inspect the house and question Sophie. After they leave, Charles tells Sophie she belongs to the state, not him, and they intend to take her away. A letter from the Agency explains that Sophie will be taken to an orphanage. Charles weeps and Sophie smashes the cello case in anger. She finds the Parisian address of the cello maker under the case lining. Believing her mother might live in Paris, Charles and Sophie decide to escape to France.
|
| **Chapter 6** | At the railway station Sophie buys biscuits Miss Eliot would say are for ‘common children’. At Dover they go on a boat and Sophie is nervous of the sea. Charles says he can hear the murmuration of ‘two old friends’, the sea and wind, which is a ‘good omen’.
|
| **Chapter 7** | A horse-drawn carriage takes Charles and Sophie through Paris where ‘even the pigeons are more chic than in London’. From high above the Seine, a ‘pair of brown eyes’ watch them arrive at the Hotel Bost.
|
| **Chapter 8** | The hotel is cheap with no indoor toilet. Sophie’s room has a skylight that is rusted shut, so Charles says they will find some oil the next day. Charles says they will find a map and go to rue Charlemagne (the address of the cello shop).
|
| **Chapter 9** | At the shop, the French owner, Monsieur Estoule, recognizes the number on the cello case’s plaque, and remembers that the woman who bought it 15 years ago looked like Sophie. His younger assistant, Mr Lille, remembers her name (Vivienne Vert), how she wasn’t married and was poor. He explains that she knew only funeral music, from living near a church. The shop owner demonstrates how fast she could play by playing Fauré’s *Requiem* ‘like a rainstorm’.
<p>|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Plot outline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
<td>Charles and Sophie go to the police record office. The clerk says they have records of a Vivienne Vert who was in ‘minor trouble with the law … trespassing … loitering with tramps’. The clerk can’t give them access to the <em>Queen Mary</em> records due to protocol. The clerk then refuses to get Charles an appointment with the chief commissioner, but changes his mind when Charles threatens to reveal the receptionist’s comments about how the clerk fiddles the accounts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 11</td>
<td>Sophie oils her bedroom’s skylight hinge with olive oil and climbs up onto the rooftop. She takes off her nightgown and spins in the moonlight in her underwear. As she slips back into her room she sees something moving on the rooftops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 12</td>
<td>Later in the night, a boy drops into her room. Matteo tells Sophie to keep off his rooftops or he will hurt her. She explains that she needs them and feels she has been there before. He explains that she would be too ‘soft’, noisy and slow and people would see her. She asks to follow him, and he says she can if she can catch him. His rooftop running is faster than hers, so she loses him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 13</td>
<td>The next night, Sophie practises her rooftop running. By 2am she sees Matteo watching, so she does a cartwheel. She shouts that she won’t give up, then feels foolish when she shouts out, ‘Pax? Friends?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 14</td>
<td>At the police headquarters the commissioner explains that if Charles doesn’t abandon his search he will be jailed, and Sophie will be put in an orphanage. He says all women passengers and the papers were lost at sea. Charles believes the commissioner is lying and the records exist, but are hidden because of an insurance con. Sophie works out that the papers must be in the top-floor archive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 15</td>
<td>That night Sophie goes onto the hotel roof, feeling her mother is more real in Paris. She goes north in Matteo’s direction, tying shoelaces, etc. round chimney pots to show she is not afraid to leave her own rooftop. The next night Matteo appears and Sophie tells her story, saying lawyers will help them. Matteo explains that Paris’s lawyers are corrupt – he can hear them and all of Paris’s music from his roof on the law courts. Sophie plays part of the <em>Requiem</em> on her cello, and he thinks he might have heard it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 16</td>
<td>On the rooftops the next night, Matteo says he learned to read in an orphanage, describes the best and worst roofs to live on and how he never goes on the ground in case he gets caught. Sophie spots a girl swinging on a lamp post. Matteo uses the word ‘we’ but angrily says he meant ‘me’. Sophie has to step across a gap to a crumbling roof. She is scared but Matteo helps her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 17</td>
<td>They have to use a tightrope to get across to Matteo’s roof. Matteo balances for her. Her fear disappears when they stop halfway and she looks down at the city’s magnificence. They hold out seeds for the birds and whistle. Sophie is thrilled that the birds come and seem to approve of her, and that she is up in the centre of the sky.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 18</td>
<td>At Matteo’s rooftop home he explains that he eats pigeons, and he used the outer feathers to make a waterproof sheet tent. Although cold, he won’t go to an orphanage. He explains that he did once, after a fight, but didn’t like the imprisoning bars and that it was ‘hell’. He shoots a pigeon with an arrow and cooks it, then makes Sophie a bone fork so her fingers do not get burnt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 19</td>
<td>At night on the roof Matteo explains he is hungry as rainy days make hunting harder. He mentions eating a candy cane ‘from Anastasia and Safi’. Sophie asks who they are but he says ‘Nobody.’ She gives him raisins and chocolate and he asks her to bring more food. Charles explains lawyers are unwilling to take a case against the police commissioner. He realizes Sophie is lying over breakfast. She admits to having a ‘food-based secret’. Charles leaves a large parcel of food for Sophie. Later, while Matteo and Sophie are eating the food on the roofs she hears the <em>Requiem</em> from the Gare du Nord station.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Plot outline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 20</td>
<td>Sophie has been told to wait in the Tuileries Garden. She has left a note for Charles saying she has gone to bed early. Blonde-haired Anastasia and dark-haired Safi, who does not speak, appear. Anastasia says Matteo thinks he is 14; Sophie thinks Anastasia is about 13 and Safi 10 or 11. Anastasia explains more: the girls sleep in hammocks in the tallest tree and are tree-dwellers; boys on the station roofs are gariers and bad; sky-treaders like them and Matteo are children who live outside but are not homeless, unlike homeless street children. They explain they will get the help of a fighter who always wants money before going to the station. They all head off for the Pont de Sainte Barbara.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 21</td>
<td>Matteo explains that he and Sophie are going to dive to gather coins that people drop over bridges. (Anastasia and Safi can’t swim.) They dive in the icy water. Matteo explains that the gariers are ‘bad dirt’ (tree dust is good dirt, dried blood is bad dirt). They all set off for the cathedral (Notre Dame).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 22</td>
<td>Anastasia explains there was a fight with the gariers a few years ago. She and Safi moved into the trees but Matteo stayed as the roofs are all he has. Matteo nearly died from the fight and had to go to an orphanage. They climb Notre Dame and meet Matteo. Gérard appears – he wants the money to buy candles. Gérard has unusually good hearing and demonstrates his singing ability. They head off to the station at two o’clock, the time Sophie heard the music last.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 23</td>
<td>While sitting on a roof to listen for the music, Sophie asks questions and finds out that when rooftoppers grow up most go down and live ‘wildish’ lives; other rooftoppers have lived up there in the past; there are probably about 30–40 rooftoppers now.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 24</td>
<td>On their way home Sophie recognizes a roof and Matteo says it is the police headquarters. Matteo holds Sophie’s ankles so she can look through the window into the archives. As the sun will be up soon they decide to come back tomorrow and Matteo will teach Sophie to pick the lock. Sophie finds out that a flock of starlings is a murmuration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 25</td>
<td>Charles asks where she was that night. Sophie explains she did not go on the streets and explains that she did not tell him in case he would not let her go out. Sophie asks why her mother has not looked for her. Charles explains that there was no list of survivors, and her mother would have believed it if someone told her that her child was dead – because adults don’t believe extraordinary things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 26</td>
<td>Sophie leaves a note telling Charles she is going to the police headquarters. Matteo opens the archive room window with a penknife. Sophie finds a file on the Queen Mary in a Divers (‘jumble’) cabinet. Inside is the cello player’s address and name (George Greene) but there are only men in the band’s photo. Safi speaks – pointing out how alike the cello player and Sophie are.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 27</td>
<td>The cello player’s address (rue de l’Espoir) is the knife-carrying-gariers’ headquarters. Feeling courageous with the hope of finding her mother, Sophie insists on setting off over the roofs there. Charles agrees to go via the streets and meet her and the rooftoppers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 28</td>
<td>The gariers attack the rooftoppers and there is a fight, and Sophie is involved too, kicking, and throwing a slate tile. The last garier runs off, leaving two unconscious gariers on the rooftop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 29</td>
<td>At the rue de l’Espoir, Charles climbs a drainpipe to join the others. Sophie shouts ‘Vivienne’ but there is no answer. Charles gives Sophie her cello and she plays, faster and faster. When she stops playing, the music continues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 30</td>
<td>They follow the sound of the music over the rooftops. They reach a wide gap so Charles asks Sophie to curl into a ball, and he throws her across. Matteo catches up but slips and Charles saves him with his umbrella. On the rooftop opposite they see a woman sitting on a box playing a cello.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 31</td>
<td>Sophie jumps over to the roof and approaches the woman who stops playing. Sophie explains she is mother-hunting and thinks she might be ‘the thing I’ve been looking for’. Charles watches as the mother kisses her daughter, holds her in her arms and spins so they are ‘like one single laughing body’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 1

Focus: Engaging the reader (Chapter 1)

Objective: To examine the success of the opening chapter in engaging the reader’s interest

Engage

- After reading Chapter 1, display and read the comments on Resource 1a. Explain that they are extracts from reviews of Rooftoppers. Ask the students whether they agree with any of the comments, and why.

Explore

- Hold a class discussion on the effectiveness of the first and last sentence of Chapter 1. Discuss the image of the opening sentence and why it might draw the attention of a reader browsing in a bookshop. Why might they want to read on to the second sentence? Next, discuss the effectiveness of the last sentence and why it might make the reader want to read the next chapter. Talk about its meaning by asking: Why was the beginning of Sophie’s new life not ‘perfect’? In what ways did it show ‘potential’?

- Give out copies of Resource 1b. Ask the students to consider how successful the opening chapter is in setting the scene, introducing characters, developing the reader’s curiosity, etc. You might want them to work in groups, with each member of the group considering one or two factors, making notes and copying down quotations. Then each factor could be discussed as a group and a score agreed for each. Encourage students to think about other factors that they think are linked to its success, for example the narrative viewpoint and the language.

Follow-up

- Report judgements to the class and have a class discussion on which elements were most successful, and ways in which the opening could have been more effective.

- Students could write two or three paragraphs of a story opening that begins with a shipwreck, and with one survivor rescuing another.
Lesson 2

Focus: Characterization (up to the end of Chapter 4)
Objective: To examine a character through role-play

Engage
- Display Resource 2 and ask students to identify the speaker. Do they agree with Charles’s views? Encourage students to explain why or why not.

Explore
- Ask the students to imagine that a journalist has come to interview Charles about his experience as Sophie’s guardian, from when he saved her from the shipwreck to her eleventh birthday. Encourage each student to prepare a few journalist’s questions and to revise the kind of language Charles would use to talk about Sophie. Students then take turns to role-play Charles and the newspaper journalist.

Follow-up
- Feed back on how the students felt when they were role-playing Charles. How do they feel about the character, and why?
- Ask the students to write up a newspaper report about Charles and Sophie’s life together, based on their role-play interviews.
Lesson 3

**Focus:** Parenting (up to the end of Chapter 5)

**Objective:** To consider the theme of parenting in the context of a historical setting

**Engage**
- Ask the students in what period of history they think the story is set. Refer to their views in Lesson 1 (Resource 1b) too.

**Explore**
- Display the images on Resource 3 and elicit how the novel is probably set around 1900 – the Victorian/Edwardian period. Ask the students to work in groups to use books or the Internet to research Victorian views on girls and their education in wealthier families, and consider how these might have affected the Agency’s decision to move Sophie to an orphanage. Focus on themes drawn from the inspectors’ concerns in Chapter 5: reading; mathematics; cooking skills; health; posture (‘you slouch’); blackboard; cleanliness; trousers.

- Encourage the students to debate whether they agree with the committee’s view of Charles’s ability to look after Sophie, in that ‘certain elements of her upbringing have been absolutely unsuitable for a female child’ (page 43). Half the class should argue for the views of the committee; the other half should argue for Charles’s and/or Sophie’s views.

**Follow-up**
- Extend the class discussion to ask whether they think any of Charles’s parenting would be unacceptable in our more liberal, contemporary world (e.g. writing on walls; giving Sophie a gulp of whisky).
- Students could write a letter to the committee to persuade them to let Sophie stay with Charles, with suggestions of any support they think would help Charles with his parenting.
Lesson 4

Focus: Mood changes (up to the end of Chapter 7)

Objective: To explore the changes of mood during Sophie's rail and boat journey, and to write a similar description of a journey

Engage
- Together, read the passages in which there is change of mood, from page 55 on the train 'The carriage was beautiful...' to page 58 on the boat 'tried not to panic'. Discuss how Sophie is feeling and what adjectives, verbs or imagery add to the safe, comforting mood or the scary, worrying mood (e.g. 'fat as a goose's stomach', 'like a trumpet of hope', 'smelt wild', 'rumbled', 'gripped').

Explore
- Provide the students with Resource 4 to help them examine the journey in Chapter 6 and note words or phrases that show the changing moods at each stage of the journey, including humour, suspense, sadness, panic, loneliness, etc. Ask them to focus on how Sophie feels and how they as the reader feel too.

Share the students' work as a class, identifying how the mood changes, and how the author uses descriptions of the settings and other characters, plus Sophie's own feelings, to control the mood. Discuss ways the contrast of moods could be exaggerated or enhanced with different vocabulary.

- Ask the students to use the discussion to plan their own descriptive journey that includes mood changes and two types of transport. Encourage them to plan the stages of the journey and then add descriptive phrases that they can use for each stage, appropriate to the moods.

Follow-up
- Ask students to write up the description of their journey in full, using their plans and notes to help them.
- Students could write a diary entry, in role as Charles or Sophie, describing their journey. Remind them to write in the first person (using the pronouns I/we) and to include thoughts and feelings as well as recounting events.
Lesson 5

Focus: Character development (up to the end of Chapter 10)

Objective: To examine the development of Sophie’s mother’s character, and to write a missing person poster

Engage

- Play a recording of part of Fauré’s *Requiem* or cello music, such as *Élégie* for cello and orchestra Op. 24 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=inGXqq2VoAQ). Explain that these pieces were written for church services to honour the dead. Ask the students to imagine how the music would make them feel if it was played much faster.

Explore

- Ask the students to gather in groups and work as detectives to find out as much as they can from what they have read so far about Sophie’s mother. As well as focusing on what they discover in Chapters 9 and 10, ask them to look back at pages 11–15, 26–28 and 46–49. Their notes should be listed under three headings – Fact, Memory (Sophie’s memories) and Maybe (inferences) – with quotations to back up their ideas.

Follow-up

- Students should work independently to plan and write a missing person poster for Sophie’s mother for the late-Victorian public. Give them Resource 5 as a template or starting point. Alternatively, encourage them to use ICT to plan and design their own poster. Point out that it must catch the attention of passers-by. Remind them to use design features and language appropriate for Victorian/Edwardian England.

- Ask the students to predict whether Sophie’s mother is still alive, what she was doing on the boat, and what happened to her after the shipwreck.

- Students could research the life of early female cello players. Ask them to find out when female cello players became accepted as the norm.
Lesson 6

**Focus:** Dramatic dialogue (up to the end of Chapter 15)

**Objective:** To explore the drama in dialogue and to write a radio script

---

**Engage**

- Display **Resource 6**. Explain how it demonstrates the layout required for writing radio scripts. Briefly discuss the features and look carefully at the example with the students, ensuring they understand them.

**Explore**

- Ask the students to work in pairs, taking turns to read the dialogue between Matteo and Sophie in Chapters 12 and 15. Pause to discuss how their dialogue shows their changing relationship and feelings towards one another. Ask the readers if they felt the words seemed realistic as spoken words.

---

**Follow-up**

- Tell the students to pick either Chapter 12 or Chapter 15 and turn it into a radio script, featuring sound effects and dialogue between Sophie and Matteo. Point out how in a radio play every word counts, so they need to condense the dialogue and insert details in the dialogue that are given by the narrator in the book. Challenge the students to improve the words of each character to increase the pace and drama.

- Ask the students to perform, with a partner, their radio scripts to the class. Encourage the class to feed back on the strengths of the scripts and to suggest how they might be improved.

- Ask the students to record performances of their scripts, including sound effects and music too, for a podcast ‘trailer’ of the book.
Lesson 7

Focus: Suspense (up to the end of Chapter 17)

Objective: To examine how the author builds suspense and to write a similarly tense passage

Engage
- Display Resource 7a and read the Extract A together as a class. Explain that it was written in the 1930s for a group of Cambridge students whose dangerous pastime was free-climbing buildings at night.

Explore
- Discuss and compare the extracts on Resource 7a as a class, examining their purpose, audience and how the authors attempt to hold the reader’s attention (e.g. through detail, suspense, a sense of danger), while also informing the reader.
- Compare Extracts A and B with the tightrope passage (Chapter 17, from “A tightrope.” It was …’ on page 135 to ‘Halfway along, he slowed and stopped.’ on page 138). Ask: Does Katherine Rundell build suspense into this passage? How? Could there be more suspense or exciting detail? Ask for ideas on how to improve the passage.

Follow-up
- Ask the students to write their own non-fiction passage about free-climbing or rooftop climbing, including detail and suspense to hold the reader’s attention. Challenge the students to use first-person narrative, like the extracts on Resource 7a. Display the image on Resource 7b to stimulate students’ ideas.
- Ask students to rework a few paragraphs from Chapter 17, adding as much suspense as they can.
Lesson 8

Focus: Relationships (up to page 174)

Objective: To examine two main characters and their relationship

Engage
- Ask the students to suggest definitions for friendship. Start them off with words from C S Lewis: "Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another: “What! You too? I thought I was the only one.”"

Explore
- Display the word cloud in Resource 8 and consider some of the words in the context of Matteo and Sophie. Ask students to find quotations or passages from the story showing the characters' links with these words. For example, for 'truth/lies': Matteo lies about which is the last gap to his rooftop (page 132); Sophie lies about why she doesn’t want breakfast (pages 158–159) but feels uncomfortable about lying to Charles later (page 172). Are the similarities and differences relevant to their friendship (e.g. Matteo lies to encourage Sophie to get to his rooftop, while Sophie lies to keep Matteo’s existence a secret, partly to protect him).

Follow-up
- Ask students to work alone to write a personal diary entry in role, as Matteo, writing after the meal Sophie brought from Charles, and explaining exactly what they think of Sophie and why they are prepared to help her. Alternatively, students could create a diary entry as above but in role as Sophie, writing about Matteo and why she might trust him.
- Invite students to predict what Matteo and Sophie’s relationship might be like in the future. Students could write a dialogue between Matteo and Sophie that takes place 20 years after they first met on the rooftops.
Lesson 9

Focus: Imagery (up to page 200)

Objective: To examine how imagery and other language devices are used to describe characters

Engage
- Explain that some authors use real photographs to inspire their descriptions of characters. Show Resource 9 and ask the students how they would describe these characters in a novel of their own. Note the words on the board.

Explore
- Ask students to work in groups to examine descriptions of the characters of Matteo, Anastasia, Safi and Gérard. Ask them to scan the novel for descriptions and note down words or phrases that they think are effective, or less so, in bringing the characters to life in a three-dimensional way.

Follow-up
- Share the students’ findings as a class, identifying imagery, such as similes and metaphors. Discuss how descriptions could be improved; for example, more on the facial expressions of a character, on how they sit or stand. Discuss how the imagery has to fit the Victorian period; for example, ‘as confident as a rock star’ would not be suitable.
- Ask the students to write a paragraph describing another rooftopper, using one of the photos on Resource 9 for inspiration.
- Ask the students to extend their descriptive paragraph with a monologue (or dialogue with another character) in which the new rooftopper reveals more of their character through their speech and choice of words.
Lesson 10

Focus: Plot (up to the end of Chapter 24)

Objective: To consider the main events of the plot so far and use them to plan a musical version of the story

Engage

- Play the trailer for the stage musical *Oliver!* It can be found easily on the Internet. Explain to students that they will be planning a musical version of *Rooftoppers*.

Explore

- Give each student a copy of *Resource 10* and together discuss the quotation at the top. Explain that they will be identifying main stages in the plot, and then considering where songs and music could be introduced in a musical version of the story. Give students time to jot down – in chronological order – the main events on *Resource 10*.

Follow-up

- Ask the students to gather in groups and discuss their list of main events, and together agree on which events in the plot could be scenes for songs, orchestral music and/or dance. Encourage them to write down the theme of the song, or ‘feel’ of the music.

- Ask the students to choose a point at which they imagine a character, or characters, singing a song. Challenge them to write the lyrics for the song, pointing out that they can be inventive with the language. They could write the words to fit an existing tune they think would be appropriate.

- Ask the students to write a paragraph explaining whether the theme of music is important in the novel.
Lesson 11

**Focus:** Ending and solution (Chapters 25 – 31)

**Objective:** To consider the effectiveness of the story ending and write an epilogue

---

**Engage**
- As a class, read and discuss the endings to plays by Shakespeare on Resource 11. Talk about how the epilogues and final speeches round up the feelings and/or focus on themes of the play, and speak directly to the audience. Explain that they often tie up any loose ends too.

---

**Explore**
- As a class, discuss the ending of the story by debating: 'The ending of the story is very satisfying as it resolves all that has gone before.' Encourage students to pair up, with one student agreeing and the other disagreeing with the motion. Gather as a class to discuss the outcome of the paired debates.

---

**Follow-up**
- Ask the students to write an epilogue, said by Matteo or Charles, and directed to the reader. Explain that it could focus on the theme or feelings at the end of the story. It could also tie up the loose end of Matteo: *What will he do next? How does he feel?*

- Ask the students to write a review of the story, focusing on its ending and how successful it is.

- Ask the students to plan a prequel to the story, covering Matteo's early life and how he came to be a rooftopper.
Lesson 12

Focus: Theme and writer's views

Objective: To examine how the writer’s experience has influenced her writing

Engage
- Ask the students if they have ever been in – or can recall – a particular place that they felt was especially awesome (in the true sense of the word, of inspiring awe or wonder). It might be a dramatic landscape, up high, or deep in the earth, or an atmospheric building, or on a high diving board or precipice. Encourage students to describe feelings that were generated, such as fear, thrill, secrecy, power.

Explore
- Display Resource 12 and read the extract of the author’s interview as a class. Ask the students to imagine an alternative world in a place where people do not usually live, and to make notes for the setting of a novel. If necessary, suggest ideas such as the London Underground, attics or caves. Encourage them to think about who lives there, why they are there, and what problems there might be associated with living there.
- Ask students to plan a story based on their unusual setting, listing main characters and a timeline of events for the plot.

Follow-up
- Ask students to write a first chapter of their story, in which the strange world is discovered or introduced.
- Distribute the Self-assessment sheet. Ask students to reflect on the skills that they have practised, and to assess their levels of confidence in using these skills. Ensure areas of uncertainty are highlighted and targets for improvement are incorporated into future planning.
Reviews of Chapter 1

Extract A
‘A baby floating in a cello case after a shipwreck is a powerful image – it grabbed my attention straight away.’ Alisha, aged 13

Extract B
‘Survivors from a shipwreck makes an exciting beginning to a story. The question is – what will happen to them? So I had to read on to find out.’ Harry, aged 12

Extract C
‘Chapter 1 made me want to read on. Charles is a fascinating character from the start.’ Amy, aged 14
## Resource 1b

### Chapter 1 score sheet

Use the grid below to help you decide whether Chapter 1 is a successful story opening.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors that make a successful story opening</th>
<th>Notes and quotations</th>
<th>Score out of 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Powerful first sentence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interesting character(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong images</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting (place and time)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curious/exciting events or other elements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspense (worrying or frightening elements)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engages the reader (so the reader wants to read on)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What else do you think makes this chapter a good story opener?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________
Rooftoppers: Lesson 2

Resource 2

Wise words

Who says the words below? Do you agree with them?

‘Anyway, no human is perfect. Nobody since Shakespeare.’
[page 8]

‘Only weak thinkers do not love the sky.’
[page 23]

‘never ignore a possible’
[page 14]

‘life is the hardest thing in the world!
That is a thing people should mention more often.’
[page 27]

‘Music is mad and wonderful.’
[page 20]
Resource 3
Life in 1900
**Resource 4**

The journey

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><img src="image1.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td><img src="image2.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td><img src="image3.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td><img src="image4.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td><img src="image5.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td><img src="image6.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td><img src="image7.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td><img src="image8.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td><img src="image9.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Resource 5

Missing

Complete this missing person poster for Sophie’s mother.

MISSING

Have you seen Vivienne Vert?

Research an old photo or draw your own portrait showing what you think Vivienne Vert looked like.

Facts about Vivienne Vert:
•
•
•
•

We believe that
•
•
•

We beg you to help because …

If you know this person or can help in any way, please contact:
Resource 6

How to lay out a radio script

SCENE 1
INSTRUCTIONS FOR SOUND EFFECTS AND/OR MUSIC SHOULD BE IN UNDERLINED CAPITALS

MATTEO: Dialogue is right of speaker, whose name is in capitals, followed by a colon.

SOUNDS ETC CAN BE INSERTED MID-SPEECH LIKE THIS

Continue the speaker’s dialogue here.

SOPHIE: A new speaker starts like this. If the scene finishes with people still speaking, add this instruction…

FADE

SCENE 2
MATTEO: Insert instructions for speech in capital letters in brackets, e.g. (PAUSE). The instructions for speaking could include: (LOW) which means quietly; (OFF) which means the speaker is talking away from the microphone, so sounds further away, e.g. to indicate he has just come into a room.

ENDS

Example
SCENE 1

DISTANT SOUNDS OF HORSE AND CARRIAGE PASSING ALONG STREET AND FADING IN DISTANCE OVERLAPPED BY A TOWN CLOCK BELL RINGING 2 O’CLOCK.

WINDOW HINGE OPENING SLOWLY. GIRL’S MUFFLED SCREAM.

MATTEO: (OFF) Stop it! Arrête! Stop crying, Sophie!

SOPHIE: (BREATHLESS) I’ll scream! My uncle’s next door! Who are you?
Extract A
As you pass round each pillar, the whole of your body except your hands and feet are over black emptiness. Your feet are on slabs of stone sloping downwards and outwards at an angle of about thirty-five degrees to the horizontal, your fingers and elbows making the most of a friction-hold against a vertical pillar, and the ground is precisely one hundred feet directly below you.

If you slip, you will still have three seconds to live.

from *The Night Climbers of Cambridge* by Whipplesnaith

Extract B
Though I was able to wedge my fingertips into a few small openings in the crack, the face on either side was utterly devoid of features to stand on. At one point, the only edge of rock I could use to stand on was located at shoulder height and I needed to make a powerful kick just to get my foot up onto this hold. Underneath the roof itself, I had to duck my head down inside the curl of this granite wave, while wedging two fingertips of each hand straight up into the crack above my head. In order to keep my feet from skating off the smooth surface of the rock, I needed to maintain a perpendicular angle with my feet pressed flat against the vertical wall below. Moving from this rock-surfing position involved strenuous yet delicate tai-chi like dance steps to coordinate finger moves and foot shuffles. After trying countless combinations of hand and foot sequences, my strength and concentration were nearly spent.

from *Climbing Free – My Life in the Vertical World* by Lynn Hill
Resource 7b

The rooftops
Good friends?

How similar or different are Matteo and Sophie? In what ways do they help or support each other? Think about some of the words in the cloud below, before adding notes to the table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Differences</th>
<th>Similarities</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Resource 9

Victorian orphans
Resource 10

The musical

Song placement in a musical is not arbitrary! Irving Berlin said that he evaluated potential projects by looking for the ‘posts’ – points in the story that demand a song. Call these key moments whatever you like, but they are the places where characters have some emotional justification for singing. Think about your favourite musical; the songs all have something to say, expressing important feelings or concerns of the characters. Joy, confusion, heartbreak, love, rage – at the points or posts where these life-defining feelings break through, characters can sing …

from *How to Write a Musical* by John Kenrick

• Plot the main events of the story on the timeline.
• Identify events that are good ‘posts’ for songs, noting who would sing the song and what it would be about.
• Identify events that might require orchestral music (e.g. the shipwreck) or a dance without singing (e.g. a dance version of the rooftop fight).
Resource 11

Epilogues

from *King Lear* by William Shakespeare

ALBANY:

The weight of this sad time we must obey;
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.
The oldest hath borne most: we that are young
Shall never see so much, nor live so long.

from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* by William Shakespeare

PUCK:

If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumber’d here
While these visions did appear.
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream,
Gentles, do not reprehend:
If you pardon, we will mend:
And, as I am an honest Puck,
If we have unearned luck
Now to ’scape the serpent’s tongue,
We will make amends ere long;
Else the Puck a liar call;
So, good night unto you all.
Give me your hands, if we be friends,
And Robin shall restore amends.
**Resource 12**

**Interview with the author**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where did the idea for <em>Rooftoppers</em> come from?</td>
<td>I was climbing on the rooftop of an Oxford college, a few years ago, and I saw an old beer bottle (I think someone repairing the tiles had probably left it there) and I thought – wouldn't it be fantastic if people did actually live up here, on rooftops, and nobody knows because nobody ever looked hard enough?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From an interview with Katherine Rundell, *The Guardian*, 14 April 2014

Katherine Rundell on the rooftop of a college in Oxford
### Self-assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>You practised this when:</th>
<th>I can do this very well</th>
<th>I can do this quite well</th>
<th>I need to practise this</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can analyse the effectiveness of elements of an opening chapter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can explore a character and identify their main traits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can role-play a main character and empathize with their views</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can explore the theme of parenting in the context of a historical setting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can identify how the writer creates changes in mood during a fictional journey</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can plan a descriptive journey and think of effective vocabulary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can gather and infer information about a character</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can compose a poster appropriate for a Victorian/Edwardian audience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can identify what dialogue reveals about characters, their feelings and relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can write a radio script</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can compare non-fiction extracts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can draw on the language of suspense to write an exciting non-fiction passage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further Reading

*Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens
A story that follows the life of Oliver, an orphan in Victorian London, who runs away from a workhouse and becomes involved with an underworld of thieves.

*Coram Boy* by Jamila Gavin
Set in eighteenth-century England, this story is about Toby, saved from an African slave ship as a child, and Aaron, the deserted son and heir to an estate. The boys' lives become linked with the Coram Man who collects unwanted children to deliver to the safety of the Coram Hospital in London, but who in fact murders them or sells them into slavery.

*Northern Lights* by Philip Pullman
This is the first book in a trilogy in which young Lyra, who believes she is an orphan, is a courageous heroine in a world where adults cannot be trusted.