



# EK BOOKS TEACHER NOTES & RESOURCES

**Title:** Ruby and the Pen

**Author:** David Lawrence

**Illustrator:** Cherie Dignam

**Price:** ANZ \$18.99 | USA \$12.99 | CA \$14.99 | UK £9.99

**ISBN:** 9781922539380

**Publication date:** June 2023

**Audience age:** 8-12 years (Middle Grade Fiction)

**Key Curriculum Areas:** English, Science, The Arts, HASS



## SYNOPSIS:

*Ruby and the Pen* is the story of a 12-year-old, cartoon-drawing girl who buys a pen from a mysterious market stall. The pen has a magical power: whatever she draws, happens! Initially the pen protects Ruby from the meanest girls at her new school, but over time the pen's power becomes dangerous. Soon Ruby faces a difficult choice — the pen or her best friend.

As Ruby struggles to wean herself off the pen, she's faced with problems galore. Can she foil her headmaster's evil plan, and save an endangered species of bird in the process, relying on her own talents and working as a team with her friends? Or will she succumb to the pen's power?

Featuring hilarious illustrations, and with messages about bullying, teamwork and the environment, this is fast-paced, entertaining middle grade fiction that will resonate with kids everywhere. After all, who wouldn't want to fix all of their problems with the stroke of a pen!

## THEMES:

Fantasy - magic. Bullying. Teamwork. Environment. Humour. Family Relationships.

## SELLING POINTS:

- The first book in a new series that has been written so that it can be enjoyed by boys and girls (the author road-tested it on a 50/50 mix of genders). In this first book the central character is female, while the second features a male hero.
- Suitable for younger advanced readers and older reluctant ones.
- Perfect for kids who like elements of fantasy woven into a relatable world.
- Includes hilarious yet clever illustrations — Gary Larson style, for kids!

## AUTHOR MOTIVATION:

I was in lockdown during Covid, after all our performance work had been cancelled overnight, and the thought of having a magic pen that could change my circumstances was very appealing at the time! Thought this concept would also appeal kids being trapped at home. The original idea came from thinking of ways to turn the tables on bullies – and the saying 'The pen is mightier than the sword', popped into my head.

### AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR BACKGROUND:

**David Lawrence** penned his first book in 2007. Since then, he has written 12 fun-filled children's books aimed at engaging reluctant readers.

**Cherie Dignam** has always loved drawing and works in a variety of mediums. However, she is at her happiest with a good old-fashioned dip pen and ink.

### INTERVIEW:

#### AUTHOR

##### What is the inspiration for this story?

In a word: bullies! They come in all shapes, sizes and ages. Powerful people often get away with treating others poorly, and I've always thought, 'Wouldn't it be great if there was some way to even up the score?'

That's when the idea of a magical pen popped into my head! How cool would that be? Suddenly, the tables could be turned on the bullies with the stroke of a pen!

But then I thought: how would this affect the person in possession of the pen? All that power; so many temptations. Would friends treat you differently? Would you feel any sense of satisfaction for any of your achievements?

Mmm ... maybe we'd all be better off facing up to and (with the help of our friends) solving our own problems.

##### What was the most rewarding part of this project?

Thanks to the pandemic, all my live performance work was suddenly cancelled – I went from being very busy, to having nothing to do. Thankfully, writing *Ruby and the Pen* gave me a purpose during Covid. It gave me a reason to get out of bed each morning and made me feel a lot better about having to stay indoors for most of the day.

This project was a creative and fun outlet when I really needed one.

I especially enjoyed coming up with the cartoon ideas for Ruby to draw in the book. If only I could draw! (I am in absolute awe of amazing artists like Cherie Dignam!)

##### What was the most challenging part of this project?

The most challenging part of writing Ruby was not having a deadline. Deadlines can be scary, but they also provide a focus for creative types. For the first time in my life it was up to me to decide when the book was ready.

But every day questions would pop into my head like, 'Is it the right length?', 'Do the chapters need more cartoons?' and 'Should I run it past even more kids for feedback?' Happily I eventually stopped asking myself these questions, and handed it over to the Publisher for them to decide!

N.B. These questions and activities can be adapted to suit the experience and ability of students. Activities are linked to the Australian Curriculum.

## DISCUSSION:

### Before Reading

- Look at the cover of *Ruby and the Pen*. What do you notice? What does it make you wonder? How do you think the character is feeling? What do you think this story is about?
- Read the blurb. Discuss.
- If you could make a drawing become reality with a magic pen, what would you draw? Why?

## CHAPTER 1:

### Plot tension:

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELT1605](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1505](#)) ([ACELA1512](#))

**Opening line** – “Ruby stopped doodling and sat perfectly still on her bed.” (p.3)

**Closing line** – “After travelling about twenty metres she turned around to take one last look at the old man and his mysterious stall. However, they had both been completely enveloped by the swirling mist, giving the impression they had vanished into thin air.” (p.7)

- How does the opening line hook you in? What question/s does it leave you wondering about this character? How does it implore you to find out more?
- What impression does the closing paragraph leave the reader? In what ways does it encourage the reader to keep reading?

### Vocabulary:

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELA1493](#)) ([ACELA1498](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1508](#)) ([ACELA1512](#))

‘accentuated’, ‘indignant’, ‘rickety’

- Discuss and write down the meanings of the vocabulary terms. Write them in your own sentences.

### Literary Technique - Visual literacy:

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELT1594](#)) ([ACELT1603](#)) ([ACELT1599](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1508](#)) ([ACELA1525](#)) ([ACELT1611](#)) ([ACELT1617](#))

“Powerful foaming waves crashed over sleek dark rocks, and a brilliant bolt of lightning fractured the stormy grey sky.” (p.3)

“He had a weathered, leathery face and mischievous eyes, and he wore a purple robe covered in gold coloured images of moons and stars, with a matching brimless cap.” (p.6)

- Consider and discuss the language used to create a visual image in the reader’s mind. How does it make you feel? Circle the adjectives in each of the sentences.

### Literary Technique - Alliteration

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELT1599](#)) ([ACELT1600](#)) ([ACELT1605](#)) ([ACELT1606](#)) ([ACELT1791](#)) |

Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1512](#)) ([ACELA1518](#)) ([ACELA1829](#)) ([ACELA1830](#))

“Ruby angrily tossed the ‘Dodgy Dave’ drawing under the bed, on top of the ones of her mum’s previous boyfriends. They also had titles: ‘Caveman Carlos’, ‘Lazy Luke’, ‘Toupee Ted’ and ‘Bad Breath Barry’.” (p.4).

**Dodgy Dave, Caveman Carlos, Lazy Luke, Toupee Ted, Bad Breath Barry**

- Discuss the literary technique of alliteration and how the author has used this as a form of humour and for a memorable impact. Refer to the illustrations to identify the reference to the names. Do the alliterated words always need to begin with the same sound? Students can brainstorm some other possible funny alliterated names for these characters, and draw pictures to match.

**Discussion Questions and Comprehension:**

- Why are Ruby's mother and her boyfriend sending Ruby to boarding school?
- What does Ruby think of her mother's boyfriends? How do you know?
- What happened to Ruby's father?
- How did Ruby earn the money to buy the pen?
- Why do you think the antique 'Second Hand Treasures' stall appeared for Ruby?
- What happened when Ruby picked up the pen? What does the inscription, 'Manibus futuri' mean, and why might this be meant especially for her?

**CHAPTER 2:****Vocabulary:**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELA1493](#)) ([ACELA1498](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1508](#)) ([ACELA1512](#))

'haggard', 'vacantly'

- Write down the definitions of these terms. How do these words describe the character's traits?

**Literary Technique - Simile:**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELT1599](#)) ([ACELT1791](#)) ([ACELY1680](#)) ([ACELY1692](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELT1611](#)) ([ACELT1617](#)) ([ACELA1518](#))

"... he started coughing like a cat with a fur ball stuck in its throat." (p.8)

- What is a simile? What is the literal meaning and metaphorical meaning? Write your own similes to describe someone coughing.

**Discussion Questions and Comprehension:**

"Double, double toil and trouble, Fire burn, and caldron bubble." (p.8)

- Have you heard of this quote? What famous play, and by which writer, is it referring to? This literary technique is called 'allusion'. How does it relate to the bubbling of the ink?
- How does Ruby's mother feel about sending Ruby to boarding school? How does Ruby feel about leaving her mother behind?
- What was the plane trip like for Ruby? How did she handle the challenge? Could she have done anything differently?

**CHAPTER 3:****Vocabulary:**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELA1493](#)) ([ACELA1498](#)) ([ACELT1599](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1508](#)) ([ACELA1512](#)) ([ACELA1523](#)) ([ACELT1617](#))

'hefty', 'manicured', 'stern', 'immaculately', 'menacingly'

- Write down the definitions of the above terms. Use each one in a sentence to describe a particular appearance of a character or object.

**Literary Technique - Metaphors**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELT1594](#)) ([ACELT1603](#)) ([ACELT1599](#)) ([ACELT1605](#)) ([ACELY1680](#)) ([ACELY1692](#))

Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1518](#)) ([ACELT1609](#)) ([ACELT1795](#)) ([ACELT1611](#)) ([ACELT1615](#)) ([ACELT1617](#))

"She looked like a dog owner, whose disinterested Labrador was refusing to fetch a tennis ball." (p.15)

- The author has used the metaphor of an 'uncooperative' dog and its 'dissatisfied' owner to refer to Ruby and Sasha. What does this tell you about their relationship? Is there another metaphor you can think of to describe the way the characters feel about each other?

## Discussion Questions and Comprehension

### Character Analysis: Mr Oliver Lemon, Headmaster

*"His cheesy grin contrasted sharply with his angry eyes."* (p.12)

- What does this line tell you about the Headmaster of Hetherington Hall?

### Character Analysis: Sasha Sword

*"Suddenly Sasha's eyes lit up. She snatched Ruby's alligator pencil case out of her bag and held it above her head. 'Check this out!' she sneered. 'She's more like a three-year-old.'"* (p.15)

- What kind of personality traits does Sasha possess?
- What is your impression of the standards and facilities of Hetherington Hall? What specific language is used to give this impression?
- What did Sasha and Miranda do to upset Ruby?
- How do you think Ruby will respond to the bullies in the next chapters?

## CHAPTER 4:

### Vocabulary:

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELA1482](#)) ([ACELA1493](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1523](#)) ([ACELA1512](#))

*'probing', 'paraded'*

- Write the definitions for the vocabulary terms. Discuss that these are verbs to describe a specific action. Brainstorm and list synonyms for these verbs.

### Literary Technique - Idioms:

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELT1599](#)) ([ACELY1680](#)) ([ACELY1692](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1518](#)) ([ACELT1611](#)) ([ACELT1617](#)) ([ACELY1698](#))

*"trying to find a needle in a haystack"* (p.16)

- What is an idiom? What does the 'needle in a haystack' idiom mean? (ie. Searching for something that is extremely hard to find). How does Ruby innovate on this idiom? Brainstorm other ways to describe this idiom.

### Literary Technique - Similes:

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELT1599](#)) ([ACELT1605](#)) ([ACELT1791](#)) ([ACELY1680](#)) ([ACELY1692](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1518](#)) ([ACELT1611](#)) ([ACELT1617](#))

*"She smiled as the bird paraded back and forth, like a fashion model on a catwalk." "... as vibrant as a rainbow..."* (p.18)

- Considering the various quirks and features of the bird, write your own similes to describe it. For example, '... its face was as red as a blushing strawberry', 'chirpy like a cricket bouncing with energy'.

## Discussion Questions and Comprehension:

- Why did the bullies lie about throwing Ruby's pen out the window?
- Why do you think Miss Luxton believes / wants to believe Sasha and Miranda?
- Why would the other girls in the dorm pretend not to notice the bullies?
- What strategies did Ruby use to calm down?
- What was Ruby's cartoon idea?
- How does Ruby know that she can trust Fav to be her friend?
- Do you think Ruby will be worried about Sasha's threat?

## CHAPTER 5:

### Vocabulary:

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELA1493](#)) ([ACELA1498](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1508](#)) ([ACELA1512](#))

'sodden', 'receding', 'vacuous'

- Find and write the definitions of these terms and use them all in one sentence.

### Discussion Questions and Comprehension:

- What is meant by 'unwritten rules'? Who's rules are they? Do you think these rules apply to everyone equally?
- "Ruby's jaw tightened and she forcefully started typing a reply." (p.20) – What does this tell you about Ruby's feelings after she read her mum's email? How does the language 'show' and not 'tell'?
- Why didn't Ruby send her 'honest' reply?
- How does the author use humorous banter between Ruby, Fav and Mr Lemon, and between Ruby, Fav and the bullies?
- What are the main things that Ruby is upset about?
- What does 'The bullies seemed to have the teachers wrapped around their little fingers' mean, and how is this affecting Ruby's school experience?

## CHAPTER 6:

### Vocabulary:

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELA1485](#)) ([ACELA1826](#)) ([ACELA1779](#)) ([ACELA1828](#)) ([ACELT1791](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1513](#)) ([ACELA1829](#)) ([ACELA1830](#))

'hazchem', 'ricocheted', 'nougat'

- Pronounce these terms out loud. Identify the spelling patterns and particular phonemes in the words. Break down the words into sounds or syllables. List other words with similar phoneme patterns.

### Discussion Questions and Comprehension:

- Compare the similarities and differences between Sasha's reaction to her pimple and Ruby's reaction to her inexperience with soccer. Which shows more resilience? What, if anything, could they have done differently?
- Think about a time you had to overcome an unfamiliar or challenging task / situation. What positive thinking strategies would be helpful? What did you learn from Bertie's advice?
- What is the purpose of Dougal's drone? What other ways could the drone be useful to him and Ruby?
- Why does Ruby think she is "so going to get it!" (p.29) after talking to Andre?

## CHAPTER 7:

### Vocabulary:

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELA1482](#)) ([ACELA1493](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1512](#)) ([ACELA1523](#)) ([ACELA1525](#))

'winced'

- Find and discuss the definition of 'winced'. Find other examples in the chapter where a character might have 'winced'. How does this word express feeling?



**Discussion Questions and Comprehension:**

- What kind of 'tone' do you feel Ruby's mum is expressing in her email? (e.g. happy, disappointed, hopeful, resentful, longing, excited).
- Why do you think Ruby chose to hide in the cupboard when Sasha returned with her voice back?
- Why might Ruby want to prove to Sasha that she can score a goal?

**CHAPTER 8:****Vocabulary:**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELA1493](#)) ([ACELA1498](#)) ([ACELT1596](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1512](#)) ([ACELA1523](#))

'manoeuvred', 'collided', 'concussion', 'dislocating'

- Discuss the definitions of the terms above. Find more in the chapter, and add your own vocabulary terms that relate to the game of soccer.

**Literary Technique: Visual literacy**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELT1594](#)) ([ACELT1599](#)) ([ACELT1605](#)) ([ACELY1680](#)) ([ACELY1692](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELT1611](#)) ([ACELT1617](#)) ([ACELY1699](#))

*"Right at that moment Sasha had the ball in defence, and decided to kick it as hard as she could up the field. The ball flew off her boot like a low flying missile. It hit an unsuspecting Ruby on the top of her head, ricocheted forty metres, and completely bamboozled the Monsetto goalkeeper."* (p.37)

- Imagine this scene in your mind. Highlight the specific parts of the language that show the reader the intent (or unintended consequence) of each character.
- Write another scene using visual literacy techniques for a partner to illustrate.

**Discussion Questions and Comprehension:**

- How did Sasha manipulate the coach, Miss Luxton, to keep Ruby from playing soccer?
- What do you think will be the consequences of the 'magic pen' in future chapters?

**CHAPTER 9:****Vocabulary:**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELA1482](#)) ([ACELA1493](#)) ([ACELA1498](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1512](#)) ([ACELA1523](#)) ([ACELA1525](#))

'contentedly', 'reminiscing'

- Discuss the meanings of these emotive verbs. Write these in a sentence and illustrate.

**Literary Technique: Show, Don't Tell:**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELA1482](#)) ([ACELA1493](#)) ([ACELT1594](#)) ([ACELT1596](#)) ([ACELT1599](#)) ([ACELT1605](#)) ([ACELT1791](#)) |

Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1508](#)) ([ACELA1523](#)) ([ACELA1525](#)) ([ACELT1617](#))

*"The school bully's shoulders were slumped, her face was flushed and she was staring miserably at the ground."* (p.38)

- How does the language used 'show' the reader how the character is feeling? How is this more effective than writing, 'The school bully felt miserable.'? Write another sentence 'showing' a miserable character.

**Discussion Questions and Comprehension:**

- Why is Fav reluctant to continue using the pen? Does Ruby feel the same way? Why or why not?
- Do you think Sasha deserved her punishment?
- Do you have your own conclusions to Ruby's questions about the real estate land; *"Who bought the land? What are they going to do with it? And why is Mr Lemon so happy?"* (p.39)
- How does Ruby feel about being asked to draw for the school magazine? Do you believe she will be successful at this role, based on what you know about her abilities?

**CHAPTER 10:****Vocabulary:**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELA1486](#)) ([ACELA1780](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1512](#)) ([ACELA1523](#))

'boring', as in *"... Sasha's eyes boring into the back of her head."* (p.43)

'composed', as in *"composed enough to speak."* (p.44)

- These terms are both homonyms (words that share the same spelling and pronunciation but have different meanings). Write both definitions for each word. Can you find more homonyms in the text, or add your own to a list?
- Create a graphic showing the differences between homonyms, homophones and homographs, and students provide examples of each.

**Literary Technique: Dialogue**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELA1494](#)) ([ACELT1596](#)) ([ACELT1603](#)) ([ACELT1599](#)) ([ACELT1605](#)) ([ACELT1791](#)) |

Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1501](#)) ([ACELA1512](#)) ([ACELA1525](#)) ([ACELY1699](#))

- Through the dialogue between Ruby and Andre, identify the parts of their speech that show the reader how each character feels, thinks, their interests, dislikes, sense of humour, way of speaking, impact on the other, and so on. Does the dialogue sound natural / casual or formal? Is the tone light and friendly, or heavy and serious?
- Write a short script with dialogue between two characters from the book, experimenting with tone, expression and feeling. Share.

**Discussion Questions and Comprehension:**

- How do we know there has been a power shift from Sasha to Ruby? Can you infer how Ruby might feel about this?
- What did you learn about Andre's parents? What did you learn about Ruby's father?
- Why do you think Ruby trusts Andre to share her feelings about her dad's death and how it has impacted on her family?
- What did you learn about Mr Lemon and Dodgy Dave? How do you think this will impact on the school and the land?

**CHAPTER 11:****Vocabulary:**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELA1484](#)) ([ACELA1498](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1508](#)) ([ACELA1512](#))

'frantically'

- This term is used twice to describe the actions of different characters. Write the meaning and some synonyms for the word, 'frantic' or 'frantically'.



**Literary Technique - Syntax:**

Years 3 & 4 English: (ACELT1596) (ACELT1603) (ACELT1599) (ACELY1680) (ACELY1692) | Years 5 & 6 English: (ACELA1501) (ACELA1525)

- Observe the arrangement, wording and spelling Ruby uses in her emails to her mum. How is language used differently in emails and text messages to handwritten letter writing?
- Compare the similarities and differences between text messages and handwritten letters in a Venn Diagram.

**Discussion Questions and Comprehension:**

- What might be meant by, *"Ruby smiled. For the first time in years, she felt like she had a purpose."* (p.49)?
- *"It concluded with the rallying statement: 'The world needs more trees, not more theme parks!'"* (p.54). Discuss the meaning of 'rallying statement', and how this line is trying to be persuasive.
- How do you think the team are feeling about publishing their articles in the school magazine? What are the aspects that could be seen as 'controversial'?

**CHAPTER 12:****Vocabulary:**

Years 3 & 4 English: (ACELA1493) (ACELA1498) (ACELT1791) | Years 5 & 6 English: (ACELA1512) (ACELA1523)

*'insincere', 'sour', 'scowls', 'smugly'*

- Discuss the definitions of these terms. Write a paragraph or short story about Dodgy Dave or Mr Lemon using all of these words.

**Literary Technique / Humour - Puns:**

Years 3 & 4 English: (ACELT1599) (ACELT1605) (ACELT1606) (ACELT1791) (ACELY1680) (ACELY1692) |

Years 5 & 6 English: (ACELA1512) (ACELA1518) (ACELT1611) (ACELT1617)

*"The headmaster held up the Hetherington Herald from the previous day. It had his photo underneath a headline that said: 'Lemon Tries to Squeeze Juicy Deal!'"* (p.58)

- The author has used puns to highlight the name (Lemon) and the nature of his greedy actions in a humorous headline. Brainstorm more words relative to 'lemons' and write an alternative headline. (eg. sour, yellow, citrus, lemonade, bomb, burst, etc)

**Discussion Questions and Comprehension:**

- *"But Bertie had simply given her a wink and said, 'Hey, no use crying over spilt milk!'"* (p.58). What does this saying usually mean, and how might it help Ruby in her situation with the Headmaster?
- Do you think the Headmaster's decision to expel Ruby was fair? Why or why not?

**CHAPTER 13:****Vocabulary:**

Years 3 & 4 English: (ACELA1485) (ACELA1826) (ACELA1779) (ACELA1828) | Years 5 & 6 English: (ACELA1512) (ACELA1513) (ACELA1829) (ACELA1830)

*'coiffed', 'profusely', 'demonstrably', 'unreservedly'*

- Write the words and their definitions. Break the words into syllables and sounds. What digraphs and trigraphs can you find?

**Literary Technique - Metaphors:**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELT1594](#)) ([ACELT1596](#)) ([ACELT1603](#)) ([ACELY1680](#)) ([ACELY1692](#)) |

Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELT1609](#)) ([ACELT1795](#)) ([ACELT1611](#)) ([ACELT1615](#)) ([ACELT1617](#)) ([ACELY1699](#))

*"He wore the expression of a boy in a dentist's waiting room who hadn't cleaned his teeth since the last visit." (p.62).*

- A metaphor is a figure of speech to represent an object or action symbolic of something else. How does this metaphorical line symbolise how Mr Lemon is feeling in that moment? What kind of expression might be on his face? Think about a time you may have felt this way. Turn to a partner and replicate the expression, or draw it!

**Discussion Questions and Comprehension**

- What makes the scenario of the teachers celebrating Ruby's expulsion humorous? Is this realistic?
- How is the author portraying the 'adults' in the book?
- How does the author portray the distinctions between Mrs Amaro and Mr Lemon? (p.60)
- Why did Mr Lemon go back on his decision to expel Ruby? How did he behave?
- Did Mrs Amaro help Ruby achieve her goal?
- Do you think the theme park could be good for the community? If yes, in what ways? If no, why not?
- Do you think Ruby is, in fact, in control of the pen? Or is it the other way round? How is this changing the relationships amongst the girls?

**CHAPTER 14:****Vocabulary:**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELA1493](#)) ([ACELA1498](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1508](#)) ([ACELA1512](#))

*'sceptical', 'hapless', 'elusive', 'jubilantly'*

- Discuss the definitions of these terms. How do they all express an emotive quality? Draw and label an emotive picture for each word.

**Discussion Questions and Comprehension:**

- Allusion: What or who is a 'Cheshire cat'? Which literature text does this come from?
- How have Ruby's emails to her mother changed? How has her attitude towards the other students changed? How would you describe Ruby's manner now?
- Why do you think the ink bottle doesn't do what Sasha wants it to do?

**CHAPTER 15:****Vocabulary:**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELA1498](#)) ([ACELY1680](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1512](#))

*'predicament', 'endangered'*

- Write the definitions of the words. How might they relate to each other? Write a sentence about the Gouldian Finch using both of these terms.

**Discussion Questions and Comprehension:**

- How is the pen making Ruby feel 'emptiness'? In her mind, what is she really struggling with? How does she begin to turn this around?
- Retell the events of the stinging bees. Do you think Sasha has learned her lesson about the pen yet?

**CHAPTER 16:****Vocabulary:**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELA1484](#)) ([ACELA1498](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1508](#)) ([ACELA1512](#))

'desolate', 'gingerly'

- Write the definitions of these terms. Now, find some possible antonyms and write these down.

**Discussion Questions and Comprehension:**

- How are the friends all working together to achieve a common goal?
- In small groups, brainstorm some ideas for how Ruby and her friends can stop the bulldozer from 'terminating' the trees.

**CHAPTER 17:****Vocabulary:**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELA1498](#)) ([ACELT1606](#)) ([ACELT1791](#)) ([ACELY1680](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1512](#)) ([ACELT1617](#))

'trajectory', 'callous(ly)', 'feisty', 'enthusiastically'

- Discuss the meanings of the terms. Include these words in a poem about the events of the chapter.

**Literary Technique - Hyperbole:**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELT1599](#)) ([ACELT1605](#)) ([ACELY1680](#)) ([ACELY1692](#)) |

Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1508](#)) ([ACELA1518](#)) ([ACELA1523](#)) ([ACELT1611](#)) ([ACELT1617](#))

*"Ruby darted through the hole in the picket fence and plunged into the sea of green trees and bushes."* (p.84).

- Hyperbole is an exaggerated statement, not meant to be literal, and used in emotive / emphasised situations or dialogue.
- Highlight the parts of the statement that are not meant to be taken literally.
- How does this language create a greater impact on the reader? Re-write this sentence using more literal terms and compare the 'emotive' effectiveness. For example, 'Ruby climbed through the hole in the picket fence and ran into the group of green trees and bushes.'

**Literary Technique - Onomatopoeia**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELT1600](#)) ([ACELT1606](#)) ([ACELT1791](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1512](#)) ([ACELT1611](#)) ([ACELT1617](#))

*"Ruby thought she heard a sound. Pitter patter, pitter patter, pitter patter."* (p.85).

*"Chirp, chirp. Chirp, chirp."* (p.86).

- Onomatopoeia are words that represent, and imitate a sound. What is the 'pitter patter' representing in the story? What other things could be represented by a 'pitter patter' sound?
- List other onomatopoeia sounds that could have been heard in the forest.

**Discussion Questions and Comprehension:**

- What is the purpose of 'protesting'? How were the protestors successful in achieving their goal?

**CHAPTER 18:****Vocabulary:**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELA1493](#)) ([ACELY1680](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1508](#)) ([ACELA1512](#))

'curator', 'lectern'

- Discuss the meanings of these terms. Draw a picture of where you might find a 'curator' and where you might find a 'lectern'.

**Discussion Questions and Comprehension:**

- Why has the 'surge of warm energy' disappeared from Ruby's pen? Where did it come from in the first place?
- What did Mr and Mrs Amano gift the school for Ruby? What does a 'full scholarship' mean? How do you feel about Ruby being able to stay at Hetherington Hall?
- What change can you see in Sasha?

**CHAPTER 19:****Vocabulary:**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELA1482](#)) ([ACELA1484](#)) ([ACELA1493](#)) ([ACELA1495](#)) ([ACELA1498](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1512](#)) ([ACELA1523](#))

'brightly', 'noiselessly', 'slowly'

- These terms are adverbs (describing an action). Use these in your own sentences. Make a list of more adverbs or find some in the text.

**Literary Technique - Visual Literacy:**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELT1594](#)) ([ACELT1599](#)) ([ACELY1680](#)) ([ACELY1692](#)) | Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1525](#)) ([ACELT1611](#)) ([ACELT1617](#)) ([ACELY1699](#))

*"The sun shone brightly as powerful, foam-crested waves crashed over the sleek dark rocks on the beach below."* (p.92).

- How does the language allow the reader to visualise the setting? How does this line evoke the senses?
- Students can paint a picture as they visualise these words, using a suitable medium like watercolour paints and pencils.

**Discussion Questions and Comprehension:**

- What is the significance of Adelaide and Ruby throwing the keys and pen into the water where Bertie died?
- How does the closing line, 'Goodbye Dad, I love you', make you feel? How do you think Ruby is feeling?

**Further Discussion Questions:**

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELT1596](#)) ([ACELT1603](#)) ([ACELT1599](#)) ([ACELT1605](#)) ([ACELY1680](#)) ([ACELY1692](#)) |

Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELT1608](#)) ([ACELT1613](#)) ([ACELT1609](#)) ([ACELT1610](#)) ([ACELY1699](#)) ([ACELY1703](#)) ([ACELY1713](#)) ([ACELY1801](#))

- What are the main themes of the story? What important messages does the author intend to portray?
- The author was also inspired by the quote, 'The pen is mightier than the sword'. Discuss.
- What did you learn about Ruby? How did her behaviours and feelings change throughout the story?
- What did you learn about some of the other characters? How did the bullies change by the end of the story?

- The magic pen could be considered as a motif; a recurring element that has a symbolic significance to the story. Discuss what the magic pen represents for Ruby.
- How did the magic pen help Ruby understand that she had the control to make things better for herself and her mum the whole time?
- What do you like about the illustrations? How do they convey humour? What medium is used? (pencil, watercolour and dip pen). How does the style or artistic technique suit the nature of the story?
- Do you have a favourite scene or writing technique? Why did you choose this?
- What did you learn about the responsibility of 'power'?
- What did you learn about your own power to make a difference in the world? Does this require magic?
- How does teamwork help build friendships and achieve a common goal?
- What do you think will become of the pen in the future? (read the Epilogue for a clue).
- If you could solve any problem in the world with magic, what would it be, and why?

## CHARACTERS:

Ruby West

Adelaide, Ruby's mother

David Sykes (Dodgy Dave), Adelaide's boyfriend

Mr Oliver Lemon, Headmaster

Miss Atkinson, teacher

Mr Chol, teacher

Miss Luxton, boarding house mistress

Miss Vermin, teacher

Sasha Sword, bully

Miranda, bully

Faviola, friend

Andre Amano, friend

Dougal Marshman, friend

Rosemary Arrow, journalist

- Who is your favourite character? Why?
- Who is your least favourite character? Why?

## Character Analysis:

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELA1493](#)) ([ACELA1498](#)) ([ACELT1594](#)) ([ACELT1604](#)) ([ACELT1605](#)) ([ACELT1791](#)) ([ACELT1794](#)) ([ACELY1680](#)) ([ACELY1692](#)) |

Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1508](#)) ([ACELA1524](#)) ([ACELA1525](#)) ([ACELT1611](#)) ([ACELT1612](#)) ([ACELT1800](#)) ([ACELY1703](#)) ([ACELY1713](#)) ([ACELY1704](#)) ([ACELY1714](#))

Use the following acronym (STEAL) to identify features of Ruby or another chosen character from Ruby and the Pen. Find parts of the text to show the way they **S**peak, **T**hink, **E**ffect on others, **A**ct and **L**ook.

**Speech** – what does the character say? How do they speak?

**Thought** – what are the character's thoughts and feelings?

**Effect on others** – how do people react to the character?

**Actions** – what does the character do?

**Looks** – what does the character look like?

- Choose a character to create a character profile page, including a name, picture, adjectives / descriptive language to describe their appearance, personality traits, interests, dislikes, and so on.
- Use the STEAL method to develop your own character when writing a narrative.

Structure Format / Writing Style:**Writing style: Fantasy genre**

The fantasy genre is revealed in the first chapter, where the 'Second Hand Treasures' stall mysteriously appeared, along with the elderly man and the pen.

*"Ruby tentatively picked it up, and without any warning a surge of warm energy flowed through her fingertips, then spread throughout her entire body. All her problems seemed to disappear, and it felt like she was wearing an invisible suit of armour." (p.6).*

- What were the magical properties and capabilities of the pen? Which 'drawing' did you find most impressive?

**Structure Format**

The beginning and ending of each chapter keep the reader engaged throughout, with rising action and emotive language.

For example:

**Beginning:** *"Ruby arrived at the vast green hedge, and desperately started probing inside its dense, prickly foliage." (Ch.4, p.16).*

**Ending:** *"Andre burst out laughing and over his shoulder Ruby could see Sasha giving her a filthy look. I am so going to get it!" (Ch.6, p.29).*

- How does the 'hook' of the opening and closing lines of a chapter assist in structuring a narrative?

**THEMES:****Family relationships:****Chapter 1**

*"The angry voice belonged to her mother's latest boyfriend, David Sykes." (p.3)*

- What does this opening chapter tell us about Ruby's family dynamics and how she feels about her mother's boyfriend? What language is used to show Ruby's feelings, both about the new boyfriend and about her father?

*"Ruby tried to think of the most accurate words to describe her mother at the moment, and the first ones to pop into her head were 'lost', 'broken' and 'a complete mess.'" (p.4)*

- Discuss what might be meant by the terms 'lost', 'broken' and 'a complete mess' to describe Ruby's mother. Why would Ruby use these words, considering their family situation?

**Chapter 18**

*"Straight away she could see a difference in her mother's eyes. The sparkle is back!" (p.88).*

- How has Adelaide re-connected with Ruby? What was it that Ruby wanted from her mum all along?

**Humour:****Chapter 2**

*"Well spotted, Sherlock Holmes!" (p.8) (sarcastic)*

*"His eyes bulged, his face turned bright red and he started coughing like a cat with a fur ball stuck in its throat." (p.8) (deadpan)*

*"Here's a gift you can get your teeth into and give your drawings a bit more bite" (p.9) (pun)*



- Discuss how the author uses different kinds of humour to show the characters' personalities, and to keep the reader engaged.

#### Chapter 4

*"She quickly drew an embarrassed-looking bird with some angry cats on a modelling runway. At the bottom she wrote, 'Sorry, I thought this was a BIRD-walk!'" (p.18) (sarcastic)*

- How would you describe this kind of humour? Create a poster / meme of an animal on a 'catwalk' and write a funny caption to match.

#### Chapter 13

*"So you set no content restrictions whatsoever, and then expelled my client because some of her satirical cartoons were included?" (p.61).*

- What kind of comedy is 'satire'? How were Ruby's cartoons 'satirical'?

### Bullying / Resilience:

#### Chapter 3

*"Check out the jumper, Miranda," said Sasha, reaching out and examining the texture of Ruby's pullover. 'I'm guessing "home-brand"!' Miranda burst out laughing and said, 'What about the hairstyle?'" (p.14)*

- What are the typical behaviours of a bully? How do Sasha and Miranda show some of these? Do you think Ruby's reaction to their taunting was a good approach? Why or why not?

#### Chapter 5

*"Private Loser reporting for duty, sir!" said Ruby, snapping to attention and giving a salute. Fav burst out laughing and pulled out a chair, as Sasha shot them a filthy look." (p.20)*

- How does Ruby use humour to 'not let the bullies get to her'? Is it important to be popular? What kinds of things are important in a friendship?

#### Chapter 7

*"She pushed send and raced over to put on her shoes, but stopped when she realized someone had fastened the laces together in a huge, tight knot. 'Looks like you might be tied up for a while!' mocked Sasha from the doorway." (p.31)*

- Sasha has played a prank on Ruby. What is the difference between a harmless prank and a dangerous prank? What kind of prank would you consider tying up someone's laces?

*"And here's Sasha ... and because she calls me Poo-by ... here's a bird ... dropping a poo on her head!" (p.33)*

- This time, Ruby is in control and has used her pen to plan a prank on Sasha. Is this an appropriate or effective way to solve her 'bullying' problem? Or is it just a harmless prank?

### Friendship:

#### Chapter 15

*"Fav, I'm sorry for being a total diva and a terrible friend," said Ruby. 'I really screwed up.'" (p.74).*

- How has Ruby demonstrated that she has reflected on her actions and the impact it had on her friendships? What does it mean to have open communication? How important is forgiveness?

**Environment:**

Years 3 & 4 Science: ([ACSSU044](#)) ([ACSSU072](#)) ([ACSSU073](#)) ([ACSHE050](#)) ([ACSHE062](#)) ([ACSI053](#)) ([ACSI054](#)) ([ACSI065](#)) ([ACSI057](#)) ([ACSI215](#)) ([ACSI068](#)) ([ACSI069](#)) ([ACSI060](#)) ([ACSI071](#))

Years 5 & 6 Science: ([ACSSU043](#)) ([ACSSU094](#)) ([ACSHE081](#)) ([ACSHE100](#)) ([ACSI231](#)) ([ACSI090](#)) ([ACSI221](#)) ([ACSI093](#)) ([ACSI110](#))

Years 3 & 4 HASS: ([ACHASSI052](#)) ([ACHASSI073](#)) ([ACHASSI053](#)) ([ACHASSI054](#)) ([ACHASSI075](#)) ([ACHASSI056](#)) ([ACHASSI078](#)) ([ACHASSI059](#)) ([ACHASSI081](#)) ([ACHASSI061](#)) ([ACHASSK088](#)) ([ACHASSK090](#)) ([ACHASSK091](#)) ([ACHASSK092](#))

Years 5 & 6 HASS: ([ACHASSI094](#)) ([ACHASSI122](#)) ([ACHASSI095](#)) ([ACHASSI096](#)) ([ACHASSI125](#)) ([ACHASSI098](#)) ([ACHASSI099](#)) ([ACHASSI128](#)) ([ACHASSI101](#)) ([ACHASSI130](#)) ([ACHASSI131](#)) ([ACHASSI132](#)) ([ACHASSI105](#)) ([ACHASSK113](#)) ([ACHASSK118](#)) ([ACHASSK144](#)) ([ACHASSK145](#))

**Chapter 4**

*"The bird was as vibrant as a rainbow, with a red face, a deep purple chest and patches of light blue, yellow and two different shades of green." (p.18)*

- Why do you think Ruby has a special connection to this bird?
- Have you ever seen a unique-looking bird around your environment? How can we find out more about caring for our wildlife?
- Research the Gouldian Finch or another rare species and complete an infographic including life cycle, habitat, statistical facts, images and calls to action, with references.

**Chapter 14**

*"After damage was sustained by a smaller bulldozer, the developer is replacing it with a much larger one. Nicknamed 'The Terminator', this gigantic levelling machine will arrive on site in a few weeks' time. It is expected to complete the job five times quicker, but critics say it will cause considerably more environmental harm ..." (p.70).*

- What is the role of the Mayor in managing environmental sustainability and protected land in the area? Why is it important to follow the rules and laws set by government organisations, such as local council?
- What would be the impacts on the environment using a large bulldozing machine? Research the reasons for and effects of 'logging' in bushland areas. How does logging cause harm to the wildlife?
- Are there ways to protect the natural environment?
- Investigate birds and other wildlife in your garden or local area. What do you notice about their habitats? Where do they source their food? What do they need for shelter and breeding? What can you do to attract more birds and insects to your area? Experiment with different methods / resources at varying intervals. How will you record and evaluate your data?

**Chapter 15**

*"Incredible. They don't normally live around here," said Fav. 'Ruby, that bird ... is a Gouldian Finch!' (p.76.) ... 'It's an endangered bird! Mr Lemon can't clear that area if there's an endangered species in the habitat!'" (p.77).*

- Do you believe this statement to be true? What can you find out about protected species, especially the Gouldian Finch? What do you think will happen in the next chapters?

**Chapter 16**

- Find out more about environmental organisations such as The Wilderness Society and the World Wildlife Fund. How can you raise the awareness of these organisations? Consider running a fundraising campaign at your school or local club. What research is needed and who can help?

*"With the whole world looking on, the Hetherington council is under extreme pressure to stop the theme park development, especially with a local election coming up next month." (p.81).*

- Ruby and her friends have been able to reach the attention of their local council, as well as on a global scale. What specific actions did they take to do this? Consider an important topic / issue to you and your local area – what can you do to make a change?

## Fantasy / Magic:

### Chapter 5

*"She immediately raised her eyebrows, as sitting in front of her was a drawing. It was definitely her style, but she could not remember sketching it. It was a girl's face, with flowing hair and a nose that had a small pimple on the end of it. In her handwriting, underneath it, were the words, 'She's gonna blow!' Ruby looked at the eyes in the drawing. They were cruel, just like ..."* (p.25)

- How did Ruby's pen re-appear in her pencil case? How did the pen control Ruby to draw a picture of Sasha? Or did the 'magic' come from Ruby herself? Discuss the possibilities of the 'power' of the pen.

### Chapter 11

*"Sasha held up the empty bottle triumphantly, but her smug look quickly disappeared as the bottle refilled itself with ink."* (p.50)

The bottle of ink remains intact, despite Sasha's efforts to destroy it. Discuss the possibilities and impacts for both Sasha and Ruby, considering this magical power.

## Teamwork:

### Chapter 9

*"... I looked for a teammate, because our coach always says "pass to a player in a better position", but everyone was covered so I took the shot and luckily it curled into the top right corner. But the goal was set up by the defensive pressure of our players up the ground, so the whole team deserves the credit ..."* (p.40)

- How does Andre show good teamwork and sportsmanship? What are the benefits to working or playing in a team?

### Chapter 11

*"The school magazine meetings took place three times a week..."* (p.52).

- Re-read this scene as Ruby discusses what she enjoys about the school magazine meetings. How does this team show their 'camaraderie'? What does that mean?

## Taking short cuts / Cheating:

### Chapter 12

*"'Nobody stands in my way,' she whispered as she pulled a piece of paper from the top drawer. Ruby sketched Dodgy Dave with bundles of money stuffed in his pockets, being arrested by the police, and added the word 'Busted!' underneath it. She leant back in her chair and inspected her drawing with a cold smile."* (p.55).

- Did Ruby make the right decision to solve the problem of Dave? Why or why not? How does the power of the pen impact on others around her? What should she have done instead after Dave threatened her?

### Chapter 14

*"As the team jogged towards the coach's box, Sasha looked across at Ruby and snarled, 'Cheat!'"* (p.66)

- How is Ruby cheating in the soccer game? What consequences usually occur from cheating? In this instance, do you think it's ok for Ruby to cheat? Why or why not?
- How is Ruby using her pen to threaten Sasha?  
What do you think of Ruby's behaviours? Are they justified, or is she taking advantage of her 'power', just like Sasha used to do?

**Problem solving:****Chapter 18**

*“But ... using the pen doesn’t really solve anything. It only papers over the cracks, or ends up making things worse ...” (p.87).*

- What did Ruby learn about solving her problems? What can be gleaned from her journey with the pen? What are your thoughts about a ‘quick fix’? What does ‘papers over the cracks’ mean? How did the pen make things worse?

**WRITING ACTIVITIES****Narrative writing:**

Years 3 & 4 English: (ACELA1491) (ACELA1492) (ACELA1498) (ACELT1601) (ACELT1791) (ACELT1607) (ACELT1794) (ACELY1682) (ACELY1683) (ACELY1694) (ACELY1695) | Years 5 & 6 English: (ACELA1505) (ACELA1522) (ACELA1523) (ACELA1525) (ACELT1611) (ACELT1612) (ACELT1798) (ACELT1618) (ACELT1800) (ACELY1701) (ACELY1704) (ACELY1705) (ACELY1714) (ACELY1715)

Use the building blocks of writing to create great pieces of writing.

Reference: [www.sevenstepswriting.com/what-are-the-seven-steps](http://www.sevenstepswriting.com/what-are-the-seven-steps)

**Step 1: Plan for Success** – brainstorm ideas, concepts, themes and plotlines.

**Step 2: Sizzling Starts** – start at an exciting moment to grab the reader’s attention.

**Step 3: Tightening Tension** – create tension and drama with a problem, build up momentum so the strongest challenge comes last, then the character can triumph in the end.

**Step 4: Dynamic Dialogue** – get to know your characters as they talk, walk and even stalk. Quotes from experts or celebrities can be powerful.

**Step 5: Show, Don’t Tell** – use the characters actions to show the reader their personality and feelings.

**Step 6: Ban the Boring** – ban boring events like bed, breakfast, bus trips. Make sure each sentence is engaging and important to the story.

**Step 7: Exciting Endings** – the end should have a punchline, like a joke. It could be a call to action, plot twist or leave the reader with a question and a lasting impression.

- Idea 1: Write a narrative with yourself in Ruby’s place, where you have come across a magic pen. How would you use your power? Who and what challenges would you face? How would you tighten the plot tension? What exciting ending occurs? Make sure to include a range of literary devices, humour and figurative / descriptive language. Re-read, edit and share.
- Idea 2: Write the next story (as an innovation on the Epilogue), where the pen is re-discovered by someone new (Xander). What happens in this adventure?
- Idea 3: Write a ‘magic pen’ story from the perspective of someone or something else. For example, from the view of the bully, the bird, the old man at the ‘Second Hand Treasures’ stall, or the pen itself, etc.

**Article writing – The School Magazine:**

Years 3 & 4 English: (ACELA1478) (ACELA1479) (ACELA1490) (ACELA1491) (ACELA1492) (ACELA1793) (ACELA1494) (ACELA1496) (ACELA1498) (ACELT1596) (ACELT1603) (ACELT1604) (ACELT1601) (ACELT1791) (ACELT1607) (ACELY1675) (ACELY1676) (ACELY1688) (ACELY1678) (ACELY1690) (ACELY1691) (ACELY1682) (ACELY1694)

Years 5 & 6 English: (ACELA1504) (ACELA1505) (ACELA1518) (ACELA1522) (ACELA1523) (ACELA1524) (ACELA1525) (ACELT1608) (ACELT1613) (ACELT1609) (ACELT1610) (ACELT1611) (ACELT1612) (ACELT1798) (ACELT1618) (ACELT1800) (ACELY1699) (ACELY1709) (ACELY1704) (ACELY1707) (ACELY1714) (ACELY1717)

- Students can brainstorm different segments that could be included in a school magazine. For example, reports on sports, clubs, academic activities, special events or excursions, or news reports. Students work in groups and each pick a topic for their school, and write a report that might be published in the newsletter or magazine.

- Be sure to include the 5W+H (who, what, when, where, why, how), engaging introduction, events and conclusion, interesting language (maybe even some jokes), and photos / drawings to support the text.

### Persuasive Text

Years 3 & 4 English: ([ACELA1478](#)) ([ACELA1490](#)) ([ACELA1793](#)) ([ACELT1596](#)) ([ACELT1603](#)) ([ACELT1791](#)) ([ACELT1607](#)) ([ACELY1675](#)) ([ACELY1678](#)) ([ACELY1680](#)) ([ACELY1690](#)) ([ACELY1692](#)) ([ACELY1682](#)) ([ACELY1685](#)) ([ACELY1694](#)) ([ACELY1697](#))

Years 5 & 6 English: ([ACELA1504](#)) ([ACELA1518](#)) ([ACELA1522](#)) ([ACELA1524](#)) ([ACELA1525](#)) ([ACELT1613](#)) ([ACELT1609](#)) ([ACELT1795](#)) ([ACELT1615](#)) ([ACELT1610](#)) ([ACELT1612](#)) ([ACELT1798](#)) ([ACELT1618](#)) ([ACELT1800](#)) ([ACELY1698](#)) ([ACELY1701](#)) ([ACELY1703](#)) ([ACELY1711](#)) ([ACELY1713](#)) ([ACELY1801](#)) ([ACELY1704](#)) ([ACELY1714](#))

“The world needs more trees, not more theme parks!” (p.54).

- Students write a persuasive article, create a poster or digital presentation, for or against, the above statement. They need to include an introductory paragraph with their opinion, supporting arguments and a conclusion to sum up their reasoning.
- Alternatively, students can advocate for environmental care by researching what can be done to preserve protected areas, including giving attention to consumer products and spreading awareness amongst family and friends. Create a persuasive poster / digital graphic with a catchy / attention-grabbing title, an impactful cartoon illustration and a call to action or social media hashtag to raise awareness to a wide audience.
- Students could consider sending their argument as a letter / email / social media post to their local council or wider organisations.

## DRAMA ACTIVITIES

### Exploring Tone in Dialogues / Script Writing

Years 3 & 4 Drama: ([ACADRM031](#)) ([ACADRM032](#)) ([ACADRM033](#))

Years 5 & 6 Drama: ([ACADRM035](#)) ([ACADRM036](#)) ([ACADRM037](#)) ([ACADRR038](#))

- Choose a scene of dialogue between two or more characters from Ruby and the Pen.
  - Read the speech with a partner, making sure to use an expressive tone of voice.
  - Read the speech again, this time change the tone in your voice (eg. from upbeat to dramatic). How does this change the ‘feel’ of the story?
  - Re-write the dialogue with a different tone. How will you re-phrase their words?

### Stick Puppet Role Play

Years 3 & 4 Drama: ([ACADRM031](#)) ([ACADRM032](#)) ([ACADRM033](#)) | Years 5 & 6 Drama: ([ACADRM035](#)) ([ACADRM036](#)) ([ACADRM037](#))

Years 3 & 4 Visual Arts: ([ACAVAM111](#)) ([ACAVAM112](#)) | Years 5 & 6 Visual Arts: ([ACAVAM115](#)) ([ACAVAM116](#))

Draw your chosen characters onto paper, cut out and attach with a pop stick. Now watch your drawings magically come to life! Role play your favourite scenes and share as a presentation. Students might like to work in groups.

### Ruby and the Pen Theatre Show

Years 3 & 4 Drama: ([ACADRM031](#)) ([ACADRM032](#)) ([ACADRM033](#)) ([ACADRR034](#))

Years 5 & 6 Drama: ([ACADRM035](#)) ([ACADRM036](#)) ([ACADRM037](#)) ([ACADRR038](#))

In groups, students create a 5 – 10 minute ‘re-telling’ or theatre show of their favourite / most significant parts of the book. They can wear or produce their own props and costumes. Focus on demonstrating emotion. Will they use any special effects, music, imagery, etc to accompany their performance?

## Magic Show

Years 3 & 4 Drama: ([ACADRM031](#)) ([ACADRM032](#)) ([ACADRM033](#)) ([ACADRR034](#))

Years 5 & 6 Drama: ([ACADRM035](#)) ([ACADRM036](#)) ([ACADRM037](#)) ([ACADRR038](#))

- Students might like to perform a magic show, using a pen or other props and equipment. Watch the video to learn how to perform pen tricks: [12 VISUAL Pen Tricks Anyone Can Do | Revealed - YouTube](#)

## VISUAL ARTS ACTIVITY

### Dip Pen Sketching

Years 3 & 4 Art: ([ACAVAM110](#)) ([ACAVAM111](#)) ([ACAVAM112](#)) ([ACAVAR113](#))

Years 5 & 6 Art: ([ACAVAM114](#)) ([ACAVAM115](#)) ([ACAVAM116](#)) ([ACAVAR117](#))

- Experiment with dip pen or fine liners, watercolour paint and pencil, like the illustrator, Cherie Dignam, uses in the book, *Ruby and the Pen*, to create a black and white picture of your favourite scene. Explore how to create light and shade, humour and expression with your media. What art techniques and small details will add interest and variety to your image? Compare to other artworks and artists that use a similar style.

## SCIENCE

### Invisible Ink Experiment

Years 3 & 4 Science: ([ACSSU046](#)) ([ACSSU074](#)) ([ACSHE050](#)) ([ACSHE061](#)) ([ACSHE062](#)) ([ACSI053](#)) ([ACSI065](#)) ([ACSI066](#)) ([ACSI0215](#)) ([ACSI069](#)) ([ACSI071](#))

Years 5 & 6 Science: ([ACSSU077](#)) ([ACSSU095](#)) ([ACSHE081](#)) ([ACSHE098](#)) ([ACSI0231](#)) ([ACSI086](#)) ([ACSI0104](#)) ([ACSI090](#)) ([ACSI0221](#)) ([ACSI091](#)) ([ACSI093](#)) ([ACSI0110](#))

- Watch the video to learn how to make your own magic invisible ink and write a secret message or drawing: [Write Secret Messages With Invisible Ink! - YouTube](#)
- Predict, observe, evaluate and record results. Compare variations using two methods.

Materials needed include water, lemon juice and an iron, or baking soda, water, rubbing alcohol and turmeric, plus a cotton tip and paper.

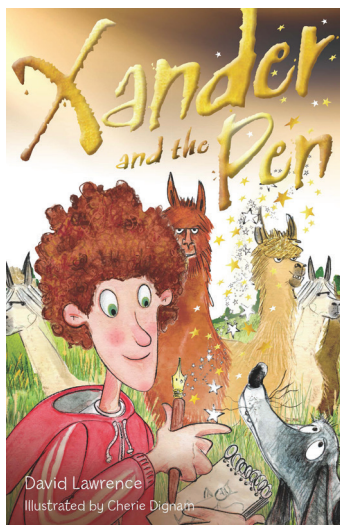
Science involved: "Acid-base reactions occur when an acidic or alkaline component of the ink can be made visible by a special chemical (indicator) that changes colour depending on if it is in an acidic or alkaline environment. Similarly, oxidation-reduction reactions can be used, in which a chemical compound changes colour depending on its redox state. You can also make use of the fact that some chemical compounds are sensitive to heat or light and change colour once they are exposed to these conditions." Reference and full instructions: [Secret Messages With Invisible Ink! | STEM Activity \(sciencebuddies.org\)](#)

### Comparison Texts

Frankie Fish series – in that it's humorous stories about kids set in a real world, except that they have access to a time machine.



## MORE MIDDLE-GRADE FICTION COMING IN 2023!



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