

TEACHING RESOURCE PACK
FOR AGES 9+

THE
BOOK
OF
STOLEN
DREAMS

DAVID FARR

THE BOOK OF STOLEN DREAMS

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NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Explore Themes of: Adventure ✓ Books and stories ✓ Libraries ✓ Values and morals ✓ Justice ✓ Leadership and tyranny ✓ Democracy ✓ Courage ✓

Subject Checklist: Literacy ✓ PSHE ✓ Citizenship ✓ Art and design ✓

The activities included here are suitable for the classroom or library sessions.

ABOUT THE BOOK

When Rachel and Robert are passed a stolen book by their librarian father, they have to go on the run and protect it at all costs. With their father captured and everyone hunting for the Book, they must uncover its secrets and track down the final, missing page.

But the cruel and calculating Charles Malstain is on their trail. When the children discover the astonishing, magical truth about the Book, they resolve to do everything in their power to stop it falling into his hands. For if it does, he could rule forever.

Step inside the pages of an immortal adventure and discover a truly unforgettable journey of wonder, courage and magic...





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CONTENTS:

Theme 1 – A moral compass

Activities: Match statements and values; create a moral compass.

Objectives: Discuss personal values and beliefs.



Theme 2 – Important news

Activities: Write a note to Rachel.

Objectives: Make inferences and predictions based on information in the text.

Theme 3 – The power of books

Activities: Invent a rare book with magical powers and design its front cover.

Objectives: Come up with imaginative story ideas; consider the power of books and reading.



Theme 4 – Leadership and elections

Activities: Write an election speech.

Objectives: Consider what personal values and qualities a good leader should have; write persuasively.

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BOOK COVER PROMPTS:

1. What do you notice about the front cover?
2. What genre do you think this book fits within?
3. How old do you think the main characters in the book are?
4. What do you think the book might be about?
5. Does the front cover remind you of any other books you've read?

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THEME 1: A Moral Compass

EXTRACT 1 (p. 54)

Judith coughed again. She spoke slowly, her voice barely audible.

“Rachel. My darling daughter. You and Robert will be alone now. I have always taught you to have a strong moral compass. You must use it now to save your father. There is a reason he wanted to steal the Book. Find out why! Do whatever you can to help him. I know you, more than anyone, can do it.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What is a ‘compass’? What do you think a ‘moral compass’ might be?
- What does Rachel’s mum, Judith, want her to do?
- Why do you think the author has used a capital letter to begin the word ‘Book’?
- Can you find a sentence which suggests that Judith trusts Rachel and believes in her?
- Why do you think Rachel’s dad, Felix, may have stolen the Book?
- How do you feel as a reader at this point in the story?

Activity: My moral compass

A *compass* is a tool that helps you to find your way. It can tell you if you’re going in the right direction or the wrong direction.

A *moral compass* is your internal sense of what’s right or wrong. Your moral compass can help guide you when you have to make a difficult decision.

Your values and beliefs make up your moral compass. Have a look at the values below and discuss with your class what each one means.

Loyalty	Honesty	Courage	Equality	Generosity
Fairness	Respect for others	Kindness	Perseverance	
	Tolerance	Self-Respect	Success	

Now, read the comments in the table on the next page and decide which of the values each one shows.

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THEME 1: A Moral Compass

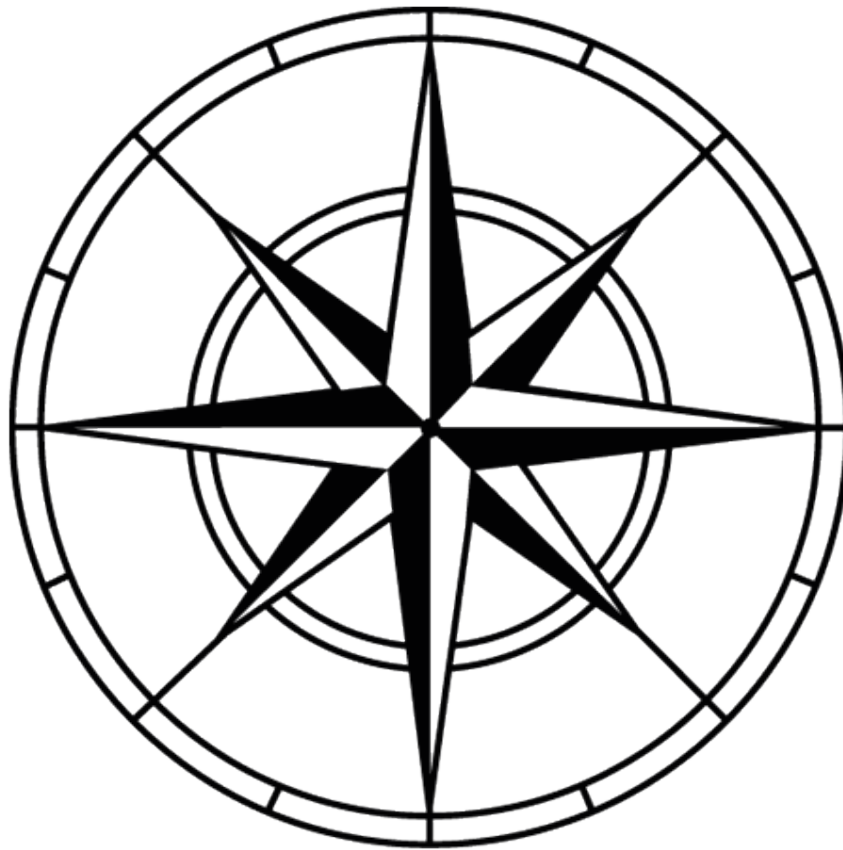
Comment	Values shown
'I want to get better at basketball so I practise for half an hour every evening.'	
'At breaktime, somebody in another class was spreading rumours about my friend. I went up to them and asked them to stop.'	
'When we were on a school trip, my classmate had forgotten her snack so I gave her some of mine.'	
'I think everybody has equal rights and should be treated fairly.'	
'My neighbour and I have very different views but we are friendly and polite to each other.'	
'My friend was nervous about singing a solo in the school play, so I helped her practise and encouraged her.'	
'I take care of myself and ask for help when I need it.'	

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THEME 1: A Moral Compass

Everybody has different values and beliefs. Think carefully about which values are most important to you. Choose your top 4 values to add to your moral compass:



When you have completed your moral compass, share it with a friend or classmate. Can you explain why each of the values you've chosen is important to you?

Your values and beliefs are likely to change and evolve over time. You might even change your mind after talking to your classmate! You can add extra values to your moral compass or change your values any time.

As you continue to read the novel, think about what values Rachel and Robert share. Are they similar to yours? Are there any characters who have lost their moral compass? Do you think they can get it back?



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THEME 2: Important News

EXTRACT 2 (p. 237)

That's when Rachel saw the headline on the newspaper.

It was a daily paper called *The Clementine*. There were several copies in the rack. The headline concerned the assassination attempt on Charles Malstain two days before:

PRESIDENT IN NEAR MISS!
TERRORISTS ARRESTED!
ATTACK FOILED!




Rachel approached and quietly took a copy. She looked up to see Josef in close conversation with a uniformed man behind a desk. Was that Clive? Rachel sat down and looked at the front page of the paper. There was a black and white photograph. Charles Malstain was getting out of a limousine. He was surrounded by men in suits, all with their right hands inside their jackets.

Bodyguards, Rachel thought to herself. She'd seen their type before.

She studied Malstain closely. He had a clenched smile, shoulders hunched. Dark receding hair, slicked back. Tiny eyes that somehow seemed to look both left and right. Beside him was a thin nasty-looking man with a cold stare. Next to him, a giant with a massive moustache. And finally, a young and strangely handsome man stood at the very edge of the photograph, smoking.

Under the photograph, there was a caption: PRESIDENT CHARLES MALSTAIN OF KRASNIA AND HIS HEAD OF SECRECY AND COMMUNICATIONS JOHANNES SLICK ARRIVING FOR TRADE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE PORT CLEMENT GOVERNMENT, HOTEL EXCELSIOR, SHORTLY BEFORE THE ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT. APRIL 17TH.




The penny dropped. Rachel froze. She looked around at the luxurious foyer. This was the very same hotel where Charles Malstain had nearly been killed two days ago.

Rachel's hand trembled slightly. She felt like she had entered an enemy camp without realising. If this was really where Charles Malstain stayed, how could Rachel be sure that his spies were not still here? And what about the tyrant himself? Where was he?!

Rachel's head went very cold despite the warm, scented air of the lobby. She was about to get up and warn Josef when she saw something in the photograph that made her heart leap with astonishment.

Amongst the crowds that had gathered to welcome Charles Malstain were a group of protestors, with placards saying things like *Justice for Prisoners*, *Brava is a Prison* and *Free Our Friends!*



And among those protestors was a face. A young boy's face. Pale, with many freckles. The sort of face that gave you chocolates for Christmas but with one missing.

Her brother Robert.

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THEME 2: Important News

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What is Port Clement's daily newspaper called?
- Can you give three features of Charles Malstain's appearance?
- What does the phrase 'the penny dropped' mean? What does it mean in this context?
- How do you think Rachel feels when she realises she is in the hotel where Charles Malstain was nearly assassinated two days ago? Underline any sentences that suggest how she feels. Why does she feel this way?
- What is a 'protestor'? Do you think Rachel has seen protests in Krasnia before?
- Can you draw the photograph that Rachel sees in the newspaper? Use the information in the extract to help you.

Activity: Write a note to Rachel

Do you think Rachel should tell Josef what she has seen in the newspaper? Discuss with your class.

If you could enter the book and pass a note to Rachel at this point in the story, what would you say to her? What information or advice would you give her? Would you try to warn her about anything? Write a short note to Rachel in the space below:



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THEME 3: The Power of Books

EXTRACT 3 (p. 350)

The library was in ruins. Every area had been torn apart in the army's futile attempt to find the Book. Massive bookcases were toppled like dead trees on a forest floor. Thousands of volumes lay trodden on and torn open. Loose pages flapped off empty shelves. The air was thick with dust and glue. It was like a bomb had hit.

"Oh, Robert." Rachel's eyes filled up with tears. "What would Father think?"

"Come on."

Robert led her through the ruins. They stepped carefully over ancient texts and scrolls. Robert used the few signs that remained on the walls to navigate his way.

"Look," he said. "Zoology. Remember? We're going the right way."

Rachel did not remember, but she felt a deep and lasting admiration for a brother who had travelled half the world to save his father's life and was now back where it all began.

"Not far now."

They turned a corner and climbed over a huge flattened bookcase of plant biology and herbalism. Robert paused, his nose twitched, and he took a right, leading Rachel through a small passageway and up a staircase whose steps had been ripped up so they had to balance carefully on the joists beneath.

They paused.

In front of them was a small doorway. The door was hanging diagonally on one hinge. It was old oak, carved with small pictures of grapes, harps and angels. The velvet curtains had been ripped off. They lay at the foot of the door, trampled and torn.

And on the door, it read:

RARE BOOKS ROOM.

BY INVITATION ONLY.

"You are invited," Robert said quietly, and Rachel nodded.

They stepped through, ducking under the broken door.

Rachel gasped. The beautiful little room was devastated. The cabinets were smashed, all the rare books taken out and thrown around the room. The oak panelling had been completely removed and all the wood piled up at one end.

Only the tiny window high in the wall remained undamaged.



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THEME 3: The Power of Books

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What does the word 'futile' mean? What does it mean in this context?
- How does the author describe the toppled bookcases in the library?
- Why do Rachel's eyes fill with tears when she sees the library?
- Why does Rachel feel admiration for her brother?
- Can you predict what might happen next in the story?
- Imagine you were asked to build a new library for your town. What would your library look like? What books would it contain?




Activity: Invent your own rare book!

The Book of Stolen Dreams is a magical book. It has the power to open the gates to the dead and allow people to live forever. Invent your own rare book with a special power!

Begin by deciding on a magical power for your book. Perhaps it could give its reader the power to travel back in time or hear other people's thoughts? Now, see if you can think of an intriguing and mystical title for your book such as 'The Book of Lost Moments' or 'The Book of Unspoken Stories'.

Finally, design a book cover for your magical book in the template on the following page. (You might like to read the description of the cover of The Book of Stolen Dreams on page 36 to give you ideas.) When you have drawn your front cover, tell a friend about your book and its special powers. What adventures might you go on with your magical book?



CLASS DISCUSSION:

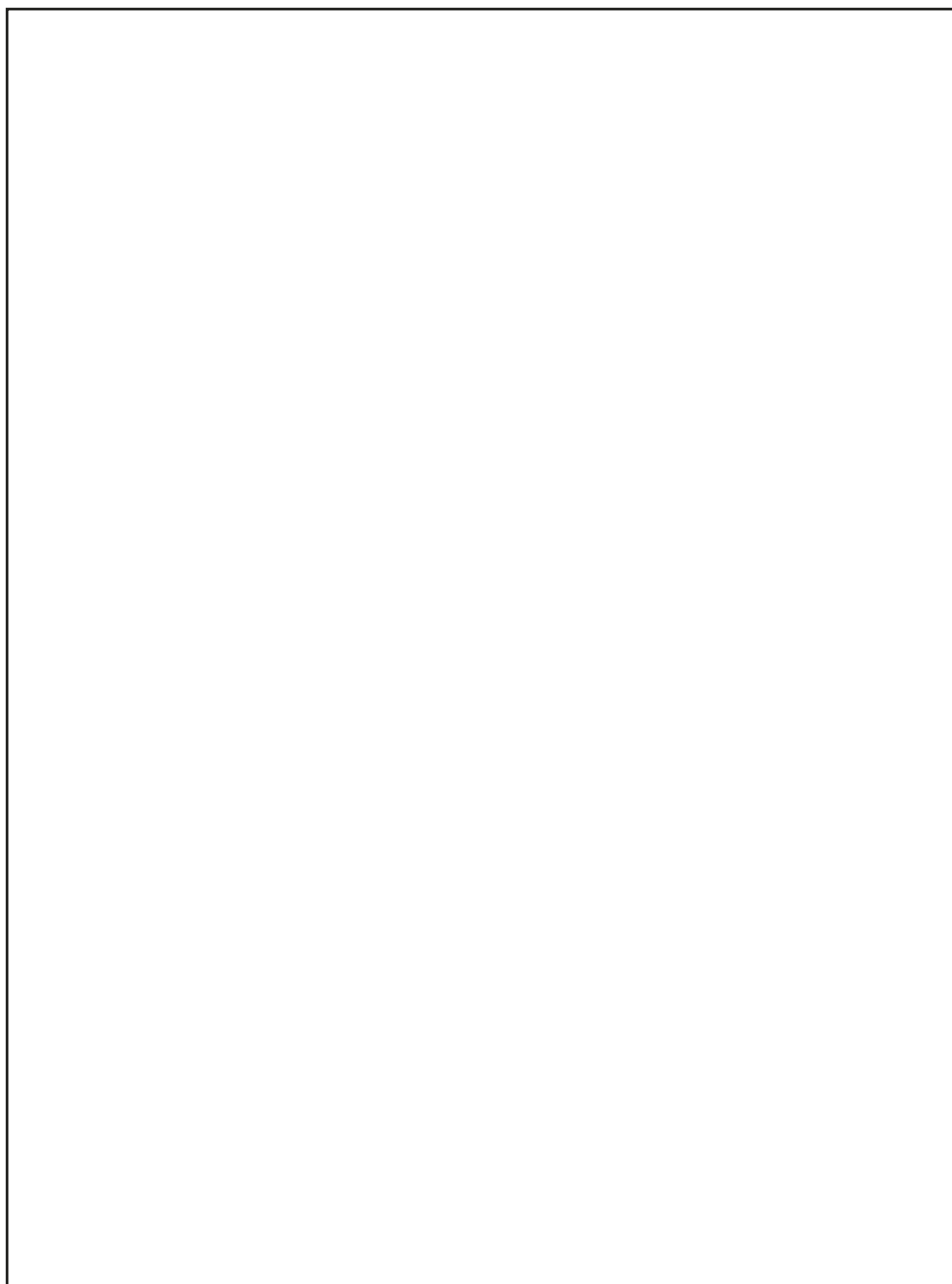
- Do any of the books on the bookshelf in your classroom have special powers? Can they take you back in time or allow you to hear other people's thoughts?
- Discuss the power of books and reading. What does reading mean to you?
- Do you agree with the statement, 'All children should have access to a good library'? Why?

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Invent your own rare book!





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THEME 4: Leadership and Elections

EXTRACT 4 (p. 376)

JULY 20TH

ELECTIONS TO BE HELD!

It was announced today that elections will be held across Krasnia to vote in a new government.

These will be the first ever elections in the history of the country. Constanza Glimpf said that this was a great day for her beloved land. “Gone are the emperors,” she said. “Gone are the evil tyrants! Now is the time for the people to speak!”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What is an election? Do you know how often elections are held where you live?
- What does the word ‘tyrant’ mean? Who is Constanza referring to when she says, ‘evil tyrants’?
- How do you think Rachel and Robert feel when they read this newspaper article?
- What changes do you think the people of Krasnia hope for?
- Who would you like see as the next elected leader of Krasnia?
- What qualities do you think a good leader needs?

Activity: Write an election speech

Imagine you are running in the election to be the leader of Krasnia. If you win, you will be in charge of rebuilding the country!

Write a speech to the people of Krasnia persuading them to vote for you. Tell them about yourself and your vision for Krasnia. What are your values and beliefs? (You might like to refer back to activity 1 in this pack.) What would you do if you were elected leader? Perhaps you could tell your audience how you would improve education, healthcare, food, housing, libraries and public places. How will you be different to Charles Malstain? What freedoms will the people of Krasnia have that they didn’t have when he was leader?

Share your speech with your class. Can you persuade them that you would be the best leader for Krasnia?