

The Secret of Golden Island

By Natasha Farrant



Educational Resource Pack
4x Lesson Plans and Ideas
Suitable for: Ages 9+



Explore themes of:

- ✓ **The power of friendship:** Discover how Skylar and Yakov's partnership becomes a source of strength. Explore how their shared goals and support enable them to overcome obstacles and work together towards a common dream.
- ✓ **Challenges for child refugees:** Learn about the struggles child refugees face when adjusting to a new country. Discover the difficulties of adapting to a new culture, language and finding a sense of stability after leaving their home.
- ✓ **Recognising and responding to medical emergencies:** Through Skylar's grandpa's experience, learn how to recognise the signs of a stroke and the important steps to take, to respond quickly and to provide help and support.
- ✓ **Resilience in the face of adversity:** Follow Skylar and Yakov as they confront their fears and uncertainties. See how their determination and bravery help them face the difficulties in their lives and their quest for the island.

Subjects: • English • Geography • PSHE



About the book:

What will two children do to win an island?

Golden Island sits like a fortress in a swirling sea . . .

Yakov has fled to England to escape the war at home. Skylar's beloved grandfather is unwell.

When the two children meet, they recognise something in each other: a reckless desire to change things up for the better . . .

Then a competition is announced. To win a nearby island!

Yakov and Skylar are convinced the island will make everything better, but the odds are stacked against them.

An action-packed adventure from the Costa Award-winning author.

About the author: Natasha Farrant

Natasha Farrant is the author of the *Sunday Times* Children's Book of the Year, *The Rescue of Ravenwood*; Costa Award-winning novel, *Voyage of the Sparrowhawk*; best selling novel, *The Children of Castle Rock*; the acclaimed Bluebell Gadsby series and Carnegie-longlisted and Branford Boase-shortlisted young adult historical novel, *The Things We Did for Love*. She lives in London with her family and a small black cat, and would love nothing better than to have her own tiny island.





Contents

PRE-READING: COVER AND INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

LESSON 1:

EXTRACT 1: GOLDEN ISLAND (from CHAPTER ONE: pages 3-5) AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

ACTIVITY 1: MAP MAKING

ACTIVITY SHEET 1: A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

Objectives: Analyse the key features of maps and develop map-reading skills; engage in imaginative visualisation and design a detailed map of Golden Island by using the description from the text.

LESSON 2:

EXTRACT 2A: YAKOV (from CHAPTER TWO: pages 6-8); EXTRACT 2B: GOING TO ENGLAND (from CHAPTER THREE: pages 9-10) AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

ACTIVITY 2: THROUGH YAKOV'S EYES

ACTIVITY SHEET 2: DIARY OF A REFUGEE

Objectives: Learn about the realities of being a refugee; write diary entries from a refugee's perspective to explore and express the experiences and emotions associated with displacement.

ADDITIONAL NOTES PRODUCED BY THE REFUGEE COUNCIL

LESSON 3:

EXTRACT 3: EVERYTHING HAD CHANGED (from CHAPTER FIVE: pages 26-29) AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

ACTIVITY 3: RAISING AWARENESS

ACTIVITY SHEET 3: SIGNS OF A STROKE

Objectives: Understand what a stroke is and how it affects the body; recognise the importance of early intervention with the acronym 'FAST' and promote awareness through a classroom campaign.

LESSON 4:

EXTRACT 4: ISLAND TO WIN (from CHAPTER NINE: pages 53-56) AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

ACTIVITY 4: DESIGN YOUR DREAM ISLAND

ACTIVITY SHEET 4: MY ISLAND WISHLIST

Objectives: Discover and investigate various islands from around the world; create a wishlist for their own dream island, imagining what activities, features and items would make it the perfect place.

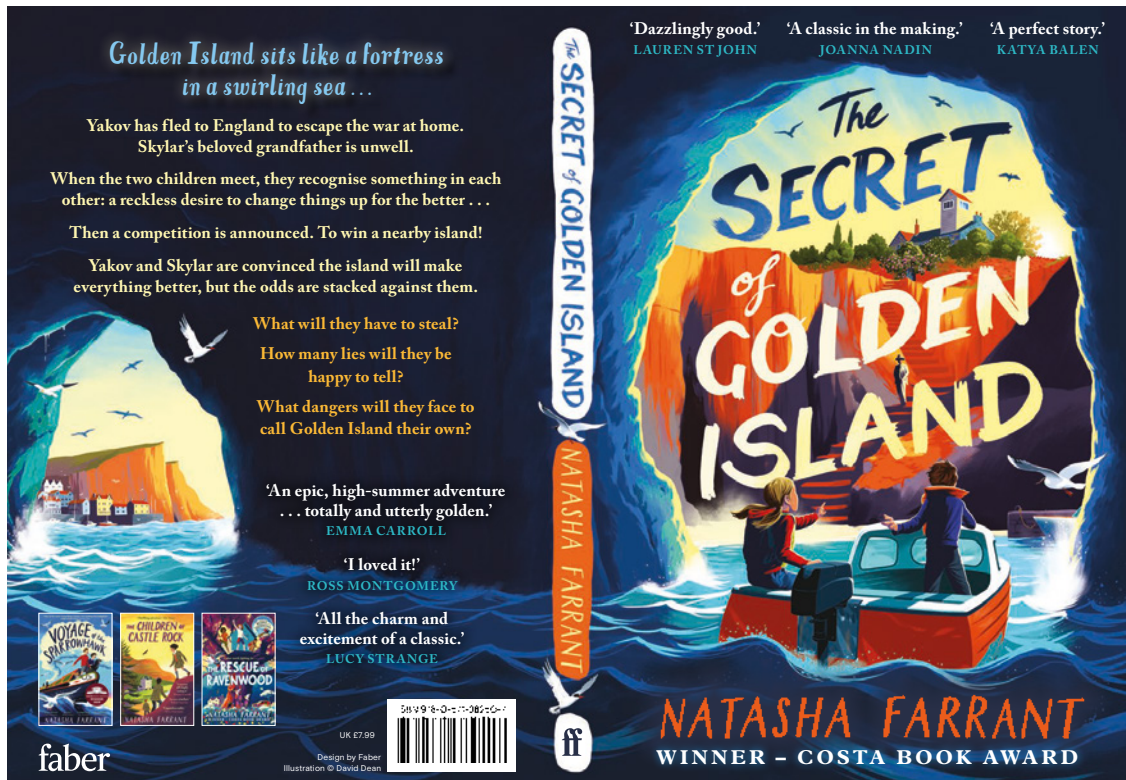
ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES AND INNOVATIVE IDEAS

NATIONAL CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES (KEY STAGE 2/3)





Pre-reading: Cover and Introductory Questions



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Look at the cover closely. Which part do you find the most interesting and why does it stand out to you?
2. Who wrote this book? Have you read any other books by this author? If so, what did you like about them? Can you also find the illustrator's name on the front or back cover?
3. The cover shows two characters in a boat heading towards an island with a house. Who do you think these characters might be – friends, siblings, or even enemies? What makes you think so?
4. Why do you think the book is called *The Secret of Golden Island*? What kinds of secrets might the island have?
5. How do you think the characters will feel when they step on to the island? Do you think they already know about or have visited the island before? Or might it be new to them?
6. What do you think will happen in the story based on what you see on the cover?
7. The house on the island looks intriguing. What do you imagine the house on the island is used for? Could it be a clue to the island's secret? Also, what about the person coming down the steps? Do you think they will be welcoming or challenging for the characters? Why?
8. Does the cover make you want to read the book? What about it makes you feel that way?
9. Now, read the blurb (the summary) on the back cover. What new details does it add about the story? How does it build on what you see on the cover? What additional information does it provide?
10. After looking at the cover and reading the blurb, what questions do you have about the story? Make a list of your questions and see if you can find answers when you read the book.





Lesson 1

EXTRACT 1: GOLDEN ISLAND (from CHAPTER ONE: pages 3-5)

Far away from here, a mile out from Dead Man's Beach and just west of the market town of Broademouth, tiny Golden Island sits like a fortress in a swirling sea. There is a landing stage on its eastern side, but it is rarely used. All around the island, sheer cliffs and jagged rocks discourage visitors. The one tree visible from the mainland is a lonely sight, stunted and twisted, all its branches stretched inland, as if trying to escape. There is a house here but, apart from the curious lookout tower which juts from its roof, it is entirely hidden behind a garden wall.

In the depths of winter, when the wind howls and storms batter the cliffs, this can seem a desolate place. And yet, in the spring, pink roses tumble over the wall facing the mainland. Behind those walls, people say, anything can grow. They say that it is full of trees planted long ago – chestnut, oak, an ancient yew. That the scent of a particular honeysuckle could make you drunk.

All of this they say, but no one knows for sure, because this is a private island. It's been a long time since anyone but its owner sat beneath those garden trees, or lay in bed listening to the whisper of the waves. And even he hardly ever comes, though he does love the place. He lives so far away now! Aside from his rare visits, the island is home to birds – warblers, wrens, finches, pipits, gannets and gulls and cormorants and terns.

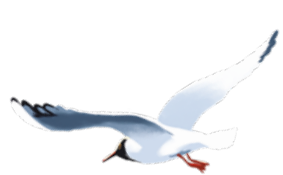
There are stories about Golden Island. Long ago, it was said that on nights when the moon was full, the tide would pull back far enough for a silver path to shine along the seabed, all the way from the island to the mainland. On darker nights – it was said – the ghosts of smugglers who once used the island as a hiding place rose from the ground all along the coast, bent on murder and revenge.

But these are old stories. Ours is new, and it begins on an ordinary Friday morning in the middle of May, on a school playing field, with a boy and a girl called Yakov and Skylar.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Describe the location of Golden Island. Where is it situated?
2. How does the island's appearance and atmosphere change from winter to spring?
3. What do the cliffs, rocks and jagged edges around Golden Island suggest about its character? Do these features make the island feel welcoming or dangerous?
4. Why do you think no one knows for sure what's behind the garden walls on Golden Island?
5. Could there be something unusual about Golden Island that makes the owner visit less often, even though he loves it? Or is it simply because he lives so far away?
6. Golden Island is home to many types of birds. Have you ever seen or heard of any of these before?
7. How does the description of Golden Island make you feel? Does it sound like a place you'd want to explore or would you rather keep your distance?
8. If you could visit Golden Island, what would you want to do first? Would you explore the hidden garden, climb the lookout tower or search for the legendary silver path? What do you think you might find?
9. Do you think there could be some truth behind the old stories about Golden Island or might they just be myths passed down over time?
10. When does the new story begin and who are the two main characters introduced?
11. Now, read the blurb (the summary) on the back cover. What new details does it add about the story? How does it build on what you see on the cover? What additional information does it provide?
12. After looking at the cover and reading the blurb, what questions do you have about the story? Make a list of your questions and see if you can find answers when you read the book.





Activity 1: Map Making

- Start with a brief discussion about maps and their importance in exploration. Explain how maps help us understand and navigate different places, and how they can tell stories about the features and history of a location.
- Show different types of maps, including one from your local area so students can see and recognise some familiar places, as well as fantasy maps of settings from books to ignite their imagination.
- Point out the features of maps such as the key, which explains the symbols and colours used; the scale, which shows the map's proportion to real-life distances; and the compass rose, which indicates directions like north (N), south (S), east (E) and west (W).
- Depending on the time you have available, you might like to assess students' map-reading skills by guiding them to find specific locations using both cardinal and ordinal directions: northeast (NE), southeast (SE), southwest (SW) and northwest (NW).
- Read the extract describing Golden Island to the class. Discuss key features mentioned in the text, such as the cliffs, lookout tower, garden, the mysterious atmosphere and the types of nature found there. Ensure that students are aware that an island is a piece of land completely surrounded by water.
- Explain that they are going to create a map of Golden Island, based on this description.
- Ask them to close their eyes and imagine themselves stepping foot on the island. Encourage them to visualise the sights, sounds and feelings they might experience and to think about how the island's features influence their impressions.
- Discuss what students imagined and use their ideas to model how to draw a map of Golden Island on the board. Provide prompts to help students think about the layout, such as: "Where might the garden be placed in relation to the cliffs?" and "How will you show the swirling sea around the island?"
- After this, ask them to sketch rough drafts of what they have imagined on scrap paper, noting the positions of key features (e.g. cliffs, lookout tower, garden). Here, you may also want to look at some images of real islands to observe their topographical features, such as cliffs, beaches and the diverse flora and fauna.
- Once students have their rough drafts, have them refine and transfer their designs onto the activity sheet to create more finished versions of their maps. Allow students to be creative with their maps. They can include additional elements like imagined landmarks, such as those from the island's old stories, or decorative borders that enhance the map's story and appearance.
- To wrap up, reveal the map illustrated by David Dean on the inside cover of the book and compare it with the students' fictional maps of Golden Island. Talk about the similarities and differences between their creative interpretations and the 'real' depiction of the island.

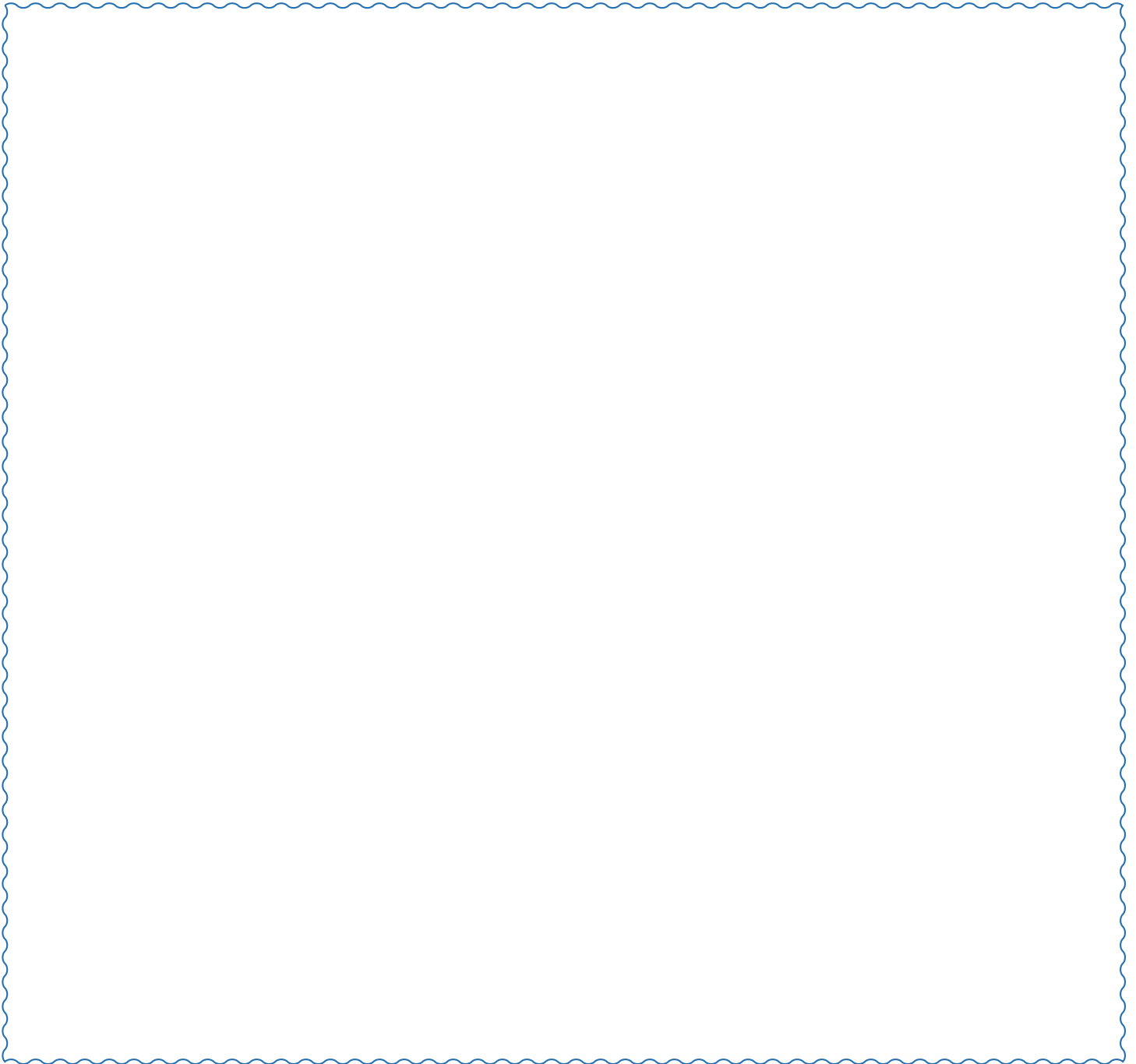




Activity Sheet 1: A Bird's Eye View

Your Task: Create a map of Golden Island based on the description provided.

Use the prompts below to guide you!



Imagine Golden Island from a bird's-eye view. How might it look from above?

Decide on the overall shape of the island. Will it be circular, jagged or another shape?

Where will you position features such as the house, beach, cove, gully, jetty and sea cave?

Which natural details, such as trees and birds, will you include on your map?





Lesson 2

EXTRACT 2A: YAKOV (from CHAPTER TWO: pages 6-8)

Picture the scene. It's the last period before lunch, which for Albatross Class of Broademouth Middle School means PE, and football. The ground is wet from weeks of rain, but the players don't care. The game is patchy, fast and loud, the mud-spattered teams yelling as they race up and down the pitch.

In the middle of all this is Yakov.

Small for his age but quick on his feet, pink from running, black hair falling over his eyes, absolutely concentrating. He's meant to be playing left wing, but Mr Roberts (the PE teacher) has pretty much given up enforcing positions. This is more about enthusiasm than game plan.

There's a minute of play left, and the score is five all. Everything rides on this kick, but does Yakov falter? He does not!

There's a scuffle at the other end of the pitch, a scream, then shouting – some fight has broken out. Other players are distracted, but not Yakov! Another feint, left this time. Yakov kicks. Keeps dives. The ball curves right and into the back of the net, just before the final whistle.

GOOOOOALL!

Yakov's team goes wild. They race towards him, they jump on him, they hug him. Someone even kisses him. For a few seconds, his world is a warm and happy blur. Overcome by the sheer perfection of that goal, he gives in to the praise. This is where he belongs – on a football pitch with his friends.

Oh. The world returns to focus as Yakov remembers. These are not his friends.

His friends are far away, scattered across continents by war.

EXTRACT 2B: GOING TO ENGLAND (from CHAPTER THREE: pages 9-10)

Yakov measured his life in days now.

Eighty-five days since the war started, leading to nine days with Mama and his sister Anoushka and a lot of friends and neighbours in the cellar turned air-raid shelter of their apartment building back home. Seventy-six days since the sirens stopped long enough for them to pack all they could fit into their very small car, and leave their city home for safety in a friend's borrowed country house.

'To wait it out,' Mama said, though no one knew how long that wait would be, or even what exactly they were waiting for.

Seventy-six days since they left the city, and fifty-four since the morning when, with the war showing no sign of ending, Mama announced a new plan. No more waiting in the country. Thanks to her English father, they all held British passports. Now they would go to England, to live with Mama's sister Nina and her carpenter husband John. Highcliff, their tumbledown home near the sea, was a few miles away from Broademouth.

'We will build a brand-new life,' Mama had said, tossing her long red hair like a brand-new life was what she had always wanted.

Fifty-three days since Anoushka declared that rather than go to England to study, she would stay home and train to fight, and fifty-two and a half days since another plan was hatched. The family, already separated from their old life, would be separated from each other. Anoushka would join the army, Mama would stay where she was to be near Anoushka 'in case anything happens to her', and Yakov would go to England without them.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is happening in the football game in the first extract? How does Yakov help his team win?
2. Even though Yakov's team is celebrating his winning goal, what is he feeling like on the inside?
3. Why does Yakov have to leave his home and move to England?
4. How long has the war been going on in Yakov's home country?
5. Who does Mama say Yakov will live with when he arrives in England?
6. Imagine arriving in a new place without your family like Yakov did. How would you feel?
7. When Yakov thinks about his family and friends back home, what do you think he misses the most?
8. What big changes does Yakov's family have to deal with because of the war? How does the war affect their lives?
9. Do you think Yakov will find it easy to adjust to his new life in England? What kinds of challenges might he face as he settles in?
10. With conflicts and wars happening around the world today, how do you think young people like Yakov, who are forced to leave their homes because of these crises, are helped and supported?





Activity 2: Through Yakov's Eyes

- Begin by sharing the two extracts with the class to provide an introduction to Yakov and his story, including why he was forced to leave his home country due to war. Use these extracts to set the scene for understanding Yakov's experiences and emotions.
- Discuss Yakov's feelings in depth, emphasising the stark contrast between his team's excitement after the football match and his own sense of despair.
- Explain to students that Yakov is a child refugee. Define 'refugee' as a person who has been forced to escape and leave their home country because of war, persecution or other reasons like natural disasters or climate change, in search of safety and a better life in another country.
- Talk about how situations like Yakov's happen all around the world today, affecting many families and communities. For further support, the pack includes two pages of notes from the Refugee Council with additional facts and statistics about children and forced migration to assist with your teaching.
- Highlight how the war has changed Yakov's family: his sister Anoushka staying behind to train for the army instead of studying, his mother remaining with her and Yakov arriving alone in a new country.
- Ask students to imagine themselves stepping into Yakov's shoes and consider how it might feel to come to a new country, without their family. What challenges might they experience?
- Record their range of responses on the board. These could include:
 - Feeling lonely or missing their family and friends
 - Worrying about being in a new and unfamiliar place
 - Struggling to understand a new language or culture
 - Feeling nervous about making new friends
 - Facing difficulties with schoolwork or adapting to a different education system
 - Encountering hate and prejudice or feeling like an outsider due to others' words and actions
- Develop empathy in students by discussing each of these feelings and challenges in detail. For a deeper understanding of Yakov's struggles, read more of Chapter Three (pages 9-16), where Yakov shares his experiences in his own words.
- Following this, ask students to write a series of diary entries from Yakov's perspective, capturing his thoughts and feelings at different stages of his journey.
- Start by having them write an entry for when Yakov first hears from his mama that he will be moving to England alone, without his family.
- Next, ask them to write an entry describing Yakov's feelings as he arrives in England and faces the challenges of starting over in a new country.
- Finally, have them write an entry reflecting on how Yakov feels after scoring the winning goal in the football game, contrasting his external success with his inner struggles.
- Bring the class back together for a group discussion where they can share their diary entries and use this time to reflect on the importance of respecting and understanding refugees.



Activity Sheet 1: Diary of a Refugee

In this activity, you'll write three diary entries from Yakov's perspective.

Imagine yourself in Yakov's shoes as you describe his feelings and experiences at different points in his journey. Use your imagination and empathy to explore his thoughts and emotions.

Diary Entry 1: Leaving Home

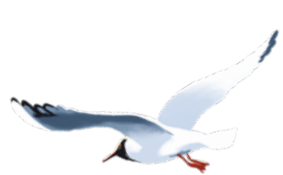
(How does Yakov feel when he learns he has to move to England alone, without his family? What worries or fears might he have?)

Diary Entry 2: Arriving in England

(What makes it hard for Yakov to adjust to life in a new country? What challenges does he face?)

Diary Entry 3: Scoring the Winning Goal

(Even though Yakov scores the winning goal, what emotions does he have inside? Why does he feel this way?)



Additional Notes from The Refugee Council

Terms:

A person seeking asylum / a child seeking asylum – a person who is forced to leave their country because they are at serious risk if they continue to live there. For example, they might be killed, tortured, or experience other forms of abuse that would be against what we all accept as human rights standards. They need to flee to seek safety in another country because they are no longer safe on their own. Some will travel by plane and land at the airport; however, not all can do this. Some will travel for days or months, for example, on foot or using buses. Some people seeking asylum use small boats to cross seas, at great risk to their lives.

Some children lost their parents or were separated from their families because of war, and they would – just like adults – be forced to leave their homes and seek safety in another country.

It is important to remember that a person who is fleeing their country to seek safety might not have their documents with them or permission to travel or arrive in a country. Countries that welcome refugees understand that people are fleeing to save their lives rather than making a choice to leave their home because they would like to live somewhere else.

Making a claim for asylum – a formal process where a person seeking asylum asks the government of the country they arrived in to allow them to stay because they cannot return to the country they came from. They need to make a formal application and explain why they need protection, including providing evidence and information about why they need protection. It is not an automatic right, and people need to meet specific criteria that are set out in law.

Refugee – someone who has made a claim for asylum, and this claim has been accepted by the government of the country they arrived in. It means that they could explain and prove that they would be at risk if they were to be returned to the country they fled from. A person can be a refugee for a range of reasons, e.g. because of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion (such as working as an opposition to the government or belonging to a specific group that might not be welcomed in the country: people who are gay, or people who are at risk because of their gender). To be a refugee, a person has to meet the legal definition of a refugee set out in the 1951 Refugee Convention.

1951 Refugee Convention – it is an international treaty, i.e. a part of international law that many countries worldwide agreed to follow and respect. It is a set of rules and guidelines about how countries should treat people who are refugees to make sure we have a shared understanding of refugee rights and responsibilities. The Convention was proposed to better protect people who need asylum, and the painful experience of World War II influenced the decision to draft it.

Context:

We continue to see that more and more people are forced to flee their homes, including children. The number of children who are in this situation has doubled in the last 10 years, and we now have 43.3 million children (more than the population of Canada!) who have had to leave their homes and families and become refugees.

Children are dramatically overrepresented among the world's refugees. In 2022, children made up less than one third of the global population but more than 41 percent of the world's refugees. Nearly 1 in 3 children were refugees in 2020; for adults, the proportion was less than 1 in 20.

The UK accepts a minimal number of refugee children. In the last year, there were just 3,412 applications for asylum from children, and many of those children came from Afghanistan, where the situation is very bad for children, e.g. girls are not allowed to go to school.



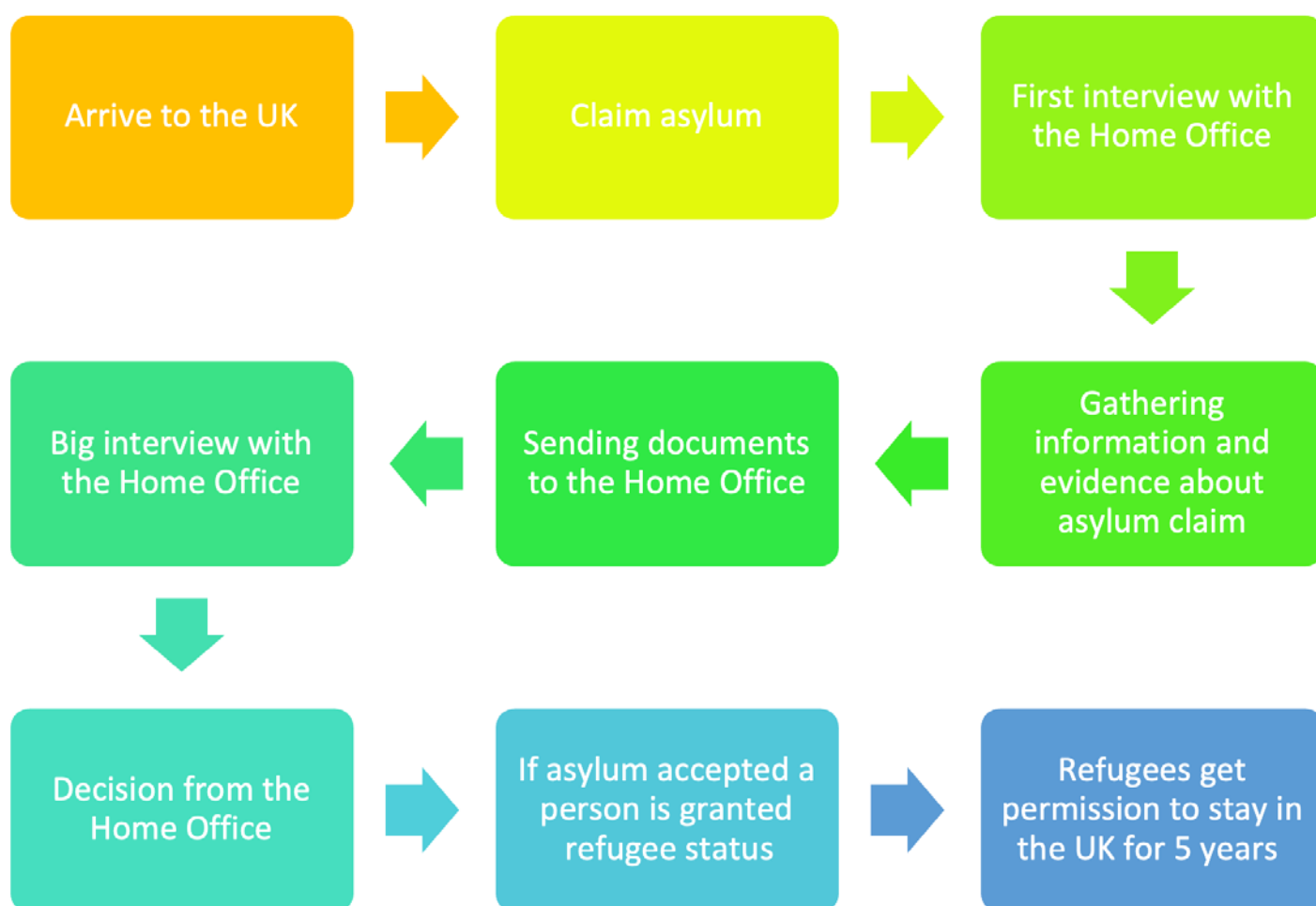


Most refugees, including children, move to countries close to their homes. Indeed, 75% of world refugees are hosted in low- and middle-income countries (e.g. Iran, Colombia, Pakistan), and only a small proportion of world refugees reach Europe or the UK.

What happens to children when they claim asylum in the UK?

- Children and adults go through the same asylum process when they claim asylum in the UK. The only difference is that children get extra support with their asylum claims because of their age.
- The law in the UK, which explains when a person can be recognized as a refugee, is the same for adults and children.
- In the UK, people who make a claim for asylum can ask for a lawyer to represent them. Because refugees often leave with next to nothing, they will not have money to hire a lawyer, and they are not allowed to work. This is why most of them would rely on a government program called Legal Aid that gives people in the UK who are on low income (so not just refugees) access to legal representation. People seeking asylum, including children, can use Legal Aid.

A simplified explanation of the asylum process for children:



You can print out our asylum process map to learn in more detail about stages that a child claiming asylum in the UK need to go through: <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/information/resources/separated-children-asylum-process-journey-map/>



Lesson 3

EXTRACT 3: EVERYTHING HAD CHANGED (from CHAPTER FIVE: pages 26-29)

When the weather changed in autumn, they swapped the Zephyr for Grandpa's workshop where, with help from Yakov's uncle John, they built new fittings for the little boat's cabin. As the days grew longer they began to plan new trips, beginning on the first Saturday of the Easter holidays. They would take a picnic. There would be pickles, and Nan's famous chocolate cake. It was going to be wonderful.

And then, on the last Friday of term, everything had changed.

The mother of one of Skylar's ex-friends was taking a group of girls to the city on a shopping trip. Inexplicably, she asked Mum if Skylar would like to go too. Later, Skylar would feel ashamed, but she did want to go. She wanted to go so much. It was such an age since anyone had asked her to do anything, she almost didn't care that it was her friend's mum and not the actual friend who had done the asking.

'It's OK, pet,' Grandpa said when she tried to explain. 'You need your friends. We'll go next weekend.'

Except they hadn't gone next weekend, or any other day after that, because while Skylar was out shopping, Grandpa had had his stroke.

He had stayed in hospital for nearly a month. To Skylar's despair, they had not let her visit. Too upsetting, Mum had said – Grandpa couldn't walk, he could barely talk, the left side of his body was almost completely paralysed. Three weeks ago he had come home and she had seen him then, with her parents. Everyone said he was much better, but he still struggled with walking and talking, and the left side of his face drooped, almost like it had melted. Skylar had sat quiet as a mouse on a chair in the study, which was his bedroom now that he couldn't manage the stairs. 'How's my best girl?' he had said, in his strange new voice, before drifting back to sleep, and she had cried all the way home.

Everyone told Skylar that Grandpa's illness was not her fault. That even if she had been with him, he would still have had the stroke. She didn't know if that was true, but she did know this: if she had been with him, she could have got help for Grandpa sooner. The stroke had happened in the Zephyr, as he moored up after going out alone. It had taken a full ten minutes for fishers in another boat to notice and to call the emergency services.

Skylar knew how important it was for stroke victims to get medical attention quickly, because she had looked it up online. Grace knew too. She had said as much during the football game, to put Skylar off because she was marking her – It's your fault your grandpa can't even walk or talk, she had said. Then, when Skylar tried to ignore her, she had done a cruel imitation of someone walking like they were drunk, drooling and going round in circles.

That was why Skylar had hit her, and she wasn't even a tiny bit sorry. But Grace's words had been horribly close to the truth.

If Grandpa had received medical attention quicker, he might not be so ill now. Skylar would never forgive herself for not being with him when he needed her.

But she would find a way of making it up to him.





DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How would you describe the bond between Skylar and Grandpa? What makes their relationship special?
2. What activities do they enjoy doing together?
3. How do you think Skylar felt when she found out Grandpa had a stroke?
4. Can you explain what a stroke is? (A stroke happens when blood flow to a part of the brain is interrupted, which can cause sudden loss of brain function.)
5. Why was Skylar unable to visit Grandpa in the hospital? How do you think this made her feel?
6. What are some of the changes that a stroke caused in Grandpa's health? How did it affect him?
7. Why does Skylar feel guilty about not being there for Grandpa during his stroke? Do you think it's fair for her to feel this way, even though it wasn't her fault?
8. Why is it important to get medical help right away if someone is having a stroke?
9. Do you think Skylar's reaction to Grace was right? Why or why not?
10. What do you think will happen next? How might she find a way to make it up to Grandpa?





Activity 3: Raising Awareness

- Begin by talking with the students about how amazing their brains are. Explain that the brain helps us think, feel, move and learn.
- After highlighting the brain's incredible functions, explain that, like any other part of the body, the brain needs to be healthy to work properly.
- Tell the students that sometimes the brain can have problems if it doesn't get enough blood flow. When this happens, it can lead to something called a stroke. During a stroke, the brain can't work like it should, which means it can't do its usual jobs like thinking, moving or speaking.
- Refer to the character of Grandpa in the story, who has experienced a stroke, and read the extract to illustrate how the stroke has affected him.
- Discuss not only the physical impacts of the stroke on Grandpa but also the emotional effects on him and on other characters like Skylar, who feels guilty about not being there when it happened.
- Emphasise that Skylar isn't to blame for what happened to Grandpa. However, she is right to know that getting quick medical help is very important when someone is having a stroke. This is because fast treatment can make a big difference in helping the person recover and preventing long-term damage.
- Highlight that the word 'FAST' is important because it is also a helpful acronym used to recognise and identify the three most common symptoms of stroke (see provided activity sheet). It stands for:
 - Face weakness: Check if one side of the person's face is drooping or if they can't smile evenly.
 - Arm weakness: See if the person can raise both arms or if one arm drifts down.
 - Speech problems: Listen to see if their speech is slurred or if they have trouble speaking clearly.
 - Time to call 999: If you notice any of these signs, call for help right away.
- Share with the students that, inspired by the story, they will create a classroom campaign to raise awareness about strokes and use the acronym 'FAST' to help others learn how to recognise the signs and respond quickly.
- Divide the class into small groups and tell them that, now that they know the signs of 'FAST,' they can present them in a way that will help others remember them. They can choose from making a poster, giving a presentation, designing an interactive display or using another creative format of their choice.
- Give groups time to brainstorm and plan their projects. Encourage them to be creative and think about how they can make their presentation engaging and informative.
- Following this, allow students time to work on their projects and circulate the room to offer support, answer questions and provide feedback. Once complete, have each group present their project to their peers. Afterwards, engage the class in a discussion, asking them to reflect on what they have learned.
- To take this further, encourage students to share their projects with other classes and consider setting up a display in a shared area of the school to raise awareness about strokes. You could also collaborate with organisations such as the Stroke Association to arrange guest speakers or workshops.





Activity Sheet 3: Signs of a Stroke

What does FAST stand for?

F - Face Weakness

Check: Is one side of the person's face drooping? Can they smile evenly?

Tip: Pay close attention to their mouth and eyes. Notice if one side is lower than the other.

A - Arm Weakness

Check: Can the person raise both arms?

Tip: Ask the person to raise both arms. Observe if one arm stays up or falls.

S - Speech Problems

Check: Is the person's speech difficult to understand?

Tip: Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence and listen for any unusual patterns in their speech.

T - Time to Call 999

Check: If you see any of these signs, call for an ambulance and medical help immediately.

Tip: The quicker you act, the better the chance of recovery. Don't wait!





Lesson 4

EXTRACT 4: ISLAND TO WIN (from CHAPTER NINE: pages 53-56)

*The person who had come out of the door in the wall was a man, about sixty years old, bald and wearing blue overalls.
None of these, however, were the most interesting thing about him.*

*The most interesting thing about him was what he was carrying: a large sign on a pole, which he planted in the ground
by the door before going back into the garden.*

‘Gosh!’ said Skylar, reading the words on the sign through the binoculars. ‘Wow! Oh, wow!’

‘What does it say?’ demanded Yakov.

Skylar handed him the binoculars. Yakov squinted through the lens – adjusted the focus wheel – there!

He had wanted something big, and here it was.

Three life-changing words, hand-painted, with a web address underneath.

ISLAND TO WIN!

For a short, shocked while, Yakov and Skylar were too dumbfounded to speak.

ISLAND TO WIN!

‘What does it mean?’ asked Skylar at last.

Yakov shook his head. ‘I don’t know.’

‘The website,’ Skylar murmured. ‘Do you have a phone? I do, but zero data.’

‘Same,’ said Yakov. ‘But at home there is Wi-Fi.’

‘Then let’s go!’

It was a simple website. Four photographs on the home page, one for each season. Pale spring sunshine and the island covered in golden gorse, a cove basking in summer sun, autumn trees lit like flames in the walled garden and, in winter, the single wild tree with its inland-twisted branches, black against a white sky.

All beautiful, but it was the next page which interested them, laid out like a newspaper advertisement.

Skylar whispered the words out loud.

TO WIN!

DO YOU DREAM OF HAVING
AN ISLAND OF YOUR OWN?

THEN SEARCH NO FURTHER THAN
THE LEGENDARY GOLDEN ISLAND!

INTERESTED PARTIES SHOULD
PRESENT THEMSELVES
FOR AN OPEN VISIT

ON FRIDAY 24TH MAY AT 10.00
ON GOLDEN ISLAND

(NO TIMEWASTERS PLEASE)





DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did the man who came out of the door look like? Can you describe his appearance?
2. What was written on the sign that the man placed in the ground?
3. How did Skylar and Yakov first react when they saw the sign?
4. Why did they want to go home right away?
5. How would you feel if you found out you could win an island?
6. What kind of things would you want to know about it?
7. How do you think winning an island could completely change Skylar and Yakov's lives?
8. Do you think the island will be easy or hard to win? Why?
9. What kinds of challenges do you think Skylar and Yakov might face as they try to win the island?
10. If you had the chance to 'win' any island in the world, which one would you pick and why?





Activity 4: Design Your Dream Island

- Display a range of images of notable islands on the board (e.g. United Kingdom, Iceland, Hawaii, Madagascar, the Galápagos Islands) and check with students to see if they know any of them.
- Use a world map or globe to point out the locations of these islands around the world.
- Ask students what they know about islands and if they have any favourite islands they've heard of.
- Explain to students that each island around the world has its own unique geography, climate and natural environment. Discuss how some islands are idyllic and offer picturesque landscapes with serene beaches and lush greenery, while others are rugged and remote, featuring dramatic landscapes and rare wildlife.
- Refer to Golden Island in the book and highlight that it is a private island which is not open to the general public. Share that there are many secret or hidden islands around the world with similar exclusivity, shrouded in mystery and often only accessible to a select few.
- Revisit the extract and explore how Skylar and Yakov react to the possibility of winning their own island. Talk about their excitement, curiosity and the sense of wonder they experience at the thought of owning such a place.
- Invite students to imagine what they would do if they had the chance to win their very own dream island. Encourage them to consider how they would design and use their imagined island, what features they would include and the activities they would enjoy there.
- Describe how, in the book, each of the candidates in the competition wants to win the island for very different reasons. For example, Dr. Solomon hopes to turn it into a conservation area to protect animals, while others have different ideas, like creating a writing retreat or a family home.
- Prompt them to consider whether their island would be similar to any of the characters' visions from the book or would it be something different? Would it be a private place just for you and a few friends or would it be open for everyone to visit?
- Next, distribute the activity sheet, which includes a wishlist template for them to design their dream island.
- As students start to fill in their wishlists, encourage them to be as creative and detailed as possible. Remind them to think about what makes their island unique and how they can incorporate their personal interests and passions into their designs.
- Conclude the activity by having students share their dream islands with the class. Facilitate a discussion about their choices and what inspired their designs, highlighting the variety of ideas and the creativity involved.





Activity Sheet 4: My Island Wishlist

What name would you give to your dream island? _____

List and describe three features you want on your island:

Feature 1: _____ Feature 2: _____ Feature 3: _____

Description:

Description:

Description:

Describe three activities you would enjoy doing on your island:

Activity 1: _____ Activity 2: _____ Activity 3: _____

Description:

Description:

Description:

Draw what your dream island would look like:

A large rectangular area enclosed by a blue wavy border, intended for drawing the dream island.



Additional Activities and Innovative Ideas

Author Study and Q&A Session: Arrange an in-person or virtual Q&A session with the book's author, Natasha Farrant, if possible. Before the session, ask students to research her life and come up with interesting questions about her inspiration, writing process and the experience of creating a book. This interactive opportunity will let students learn directly from the author, offering a behind-the-scenes look at how stories are made and the magic of being a writer.

Create an Island Survival Guide: At one point in the book, contestants are tasked with spending a night on Golden Island in total darkness, completely cut off from their phones and the internet. To help them navigate this challenging scenario, create a survival guide focusing on what gear they should take with them, how to build a shelter and keeping safe.

Write a Sequel Scene: Challenge students to write a scene that could follow the book's ending, imagining what happens next for Skylar and Yakov. Encourage them to explore how the events of the story have changed the characters and how their new experiences might shape their future actions.

Competition Video: On the website in the book, the island's advert looked like a newspaper advertisement. Upgrade it by making a fun and engaging video that highlights the island competition by including visuals of it to grab people's attention. Make sure to show why winning the island would be an amazing opportunity and encourage viewers to imagine themselves there.

Send a Postcard: Create a postcard from Golden Island as if you've just won the competition. Include details about the island's unique features, your exciting experiences and why it's a fantastic place to visit. Use creative writing and illustrations to make your postcard engaging and descriptive.

Helping Refugees: Find out how national organisations, such as the Refugee Council, help refugees in settling into their new country. Research their programmes and initiatives on how they support refugees through services like housing, education and community integration. Highlight specific success stories or impactful projects to illustrate the positive effects of their work.

Redesign the Cover: Discuss David Dean's cover illustration and brainstorm your own design that represents your vision of the book's characters, settings, and key moments. Create a new cover that captures the essence of the story and reflects your personal interpretation of its themes and imagery.

Book Soundtrack: Make a playlist of songs that students think would suit the book as a soundtrack. For each song, students should explain how it matches specific scenes or themes from the story, showing how music can reflect and enhance the book's emotions and narrative. This activity helps students connect music with storytelling and engage more deeply with the text.

Illustrate the Characters: Have students draw what they imagine the characters from the book look like. They should base their illustrations on descriptions from the text and their own interpretations of the characters' personalities and roles.

Emotions Graph: Create an emotions graph for Skylar and Yakov, tracking their feelings and development throughout the story. Include major events that impact their emotional state and plot significant moments that influence their decisions.





National Curriculum Objectives (Key Stage 2/3)

English

Reading – comprehension

Pupils should be taught to:

- maintain positive attitudes to reading and understanding of what they read by:
 - continuing to read and discuss an increasingly wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks
 - recommending books that they have read to their peers, giving reasons for their choices
 - identifying and discussing themes and conventions in and across a wide range of writing
- understand what they read, in books they can read independently, by:
 - drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence
 - predicting what might happen from details stated and implied
 - summarising the main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph, identifying key details that support the main ideas

Writing: composition

Pupils should be taught to:

- plan their writing by:
 - discussing writing similar to that which they are planning to write in order to understand and learn from its structure, vocabulary and grammar
- develop positive attitudes towards and stamina for writing by:
 - writing narratives about personal experiences and those of others (real and fictional)

Spoken language

Pupils should be taught to:

- develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas
- participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play/improvisations and debates

Geography

Geographical skills and fieldwork

Pupils should be taught to:

- use maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to locate countries and describe features studied
- use the 8 points of a compass, 4- and 6-figure grid references, symbols and key (including the use of Ordnance Survey maps) to build their knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world

PSHE (taken from Programme of Study for PSHE education: KS1-5)

Shared responsibilities

L4. the importance of having compassion towards others; shared responsibilities we all have for caring for other people and living things; how to show care and concern for others

Mental health

H23. about change and loss, including death, and how these can affect feelings; ways of expressing and managing grief and bereavement

Keeping safe

H44. how to respond and react in an emergency situation; how to identify situations that may require the emergency services; know how to contact them and what to say.