

The bestselling author of *The Night I Met Father Christmas*

# BEN MILLER



The Boy  
Who Made  
The World

# Disappear

Teacher Resources



## INTRODUCTION

**Suitable for:** Ages 8+

**Includes:** Illustrated extracts from the text + corresponding discussion questions and activities

**Themes:** Flaws; Black Holes; Destiny; Time Travel

## CONTENTS

### EXTRACT 1: Flaws (taken from Prologue)

**Objectives:** Understand what flaws are and that everyone has them; reflect on your strengths and flaws and discuss them.

**Subjects:** Literacy, RSHE

### EXTRACT 2: Black Holes (taken from Chapter One)

**Objectives:** Demonstrate your knowledge of black holes by filling in a fact sheet; act-out scenarios with your own black hole.

**Subjects:** Literacy, Art, Design and Technology, Science, RSHE, Drama

### EXTRACT 3: Destiny (taken from Chapter Fourteen)

**Objectives:** Explore the idea of destiny and what it means to you; write a postcard from yourself 20 years' in the future.

**Subjects:** Literacy, RSHE, Art, Design and Technology

### EXTRACT 4: Time Travel (taken from Chapter Fifteen)

**Objectives:** Imagine what the world will look like in the future; sketch a selfie to show your experience of time travel.

**Subjects:** Literacy, RSHE, Art, Design and Technology

## ABOUT THE BOOK



Harrison tries his best to be good. He doesn't steal, he always shares with his sister and he never cheats at board games, but Harrison also has a BIG flaw... He can't control his temper!

So when he's given a black hole instead of a balloon at a party, Harrison jumps at the chance to get rid of everything that makes him cross. But when it's not just things he hates that are disappearing into the black hole but things he loves, too, Harrison starts to realise that sometimes you should be careful what you wish for...

## EXTRACT 1: FLAWS (Taken from Prologue)

at night instead of just chucking them on the floor.

Sometimes.

So, I hear you ask, if Harrison was so good, what Bad Thing could he possibly have done?

Well, you see, as kind and honest and good and big-hearted as he was, Harrison had a BIG flaw. He couldn't control his temper.

Most of the time, he was very well-behaved. But once in a while something would really annoy him. And then . . . well, then, he would Kick Off.

'Euuurrghhhhh!' Harrison would groan, in pure frustration. His head would lower, like a bull about to charge. His cheeks would redden, his brow would furrow, his eyes would narrow and he would clamp his jaws so tight it was a wonder he didn't snap a tooth.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What does the word 'flaw' mean? Can you think of any synonyms for it?
- What is Harrison's 'BIG flaw'? What kinds of problems can it cause him? What strategies does he learn to control it?
- What 'Bad Thing' does Harrison do? Why is he still described as a 'good' person? Explain your ideas.
- Do you agree that good people can do bad things? Can you give any examples? Discuss your ideas.
- If you had to pick one, what would you say is your 'BIG flaw' and why?

### ACTIVITY: MY STRENGTHS AND MY FLAW **Subjects: Literacy, RSHE**

- Start by going around the class one at a time, with everyone giving one strength or positive quality they possess. For example, 'I am generous'. When everyone has had a go, reflect: did you find this difficult or easy? Why?
- Next, discuss your 'BIG flaws' together. Talking about our weaknesses can be harder than talking about our strengths. But remember, we all have our flaws, it's part of what makes us human! Your teacher will begin by telling you about their BIG flaw. Then, tell the class what you think your flaw is. Afterwards, write an honest reflection about 'My Strengths and My Flaw' on your worksheet, up to and including question 6 only.
- Finally, feedback your answers together, thinking about what they have in common, then go back and answer question 7. Hopefully by the end of the lesson, you will feel better about your flaw and more confident about strategies you can use to cope with it in future. Remember, by sharing our flaws, we realise that everyone has them and no-one is perfect!

# REFLECTING ON MY STRENGTHS AND MY FLAWS

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Name 3 of your strengths or best qualities:

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2. Give examples of times you have shown these strengths or qualities:

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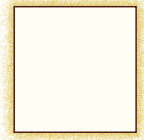
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3. What would you say is your 'big flaw'? Draw an emoji to show how you feel about this flaw:

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4. Give an example of how this flaw can get you into trouble:

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5. What strategies could you use to help you cope with this flaw?

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Fill in the blanks in the sentences below:

6. Despite my flaw, I know I am still a good person because

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Everyone has flaws because

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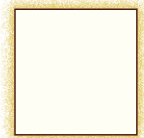
Answer Q7 after your class discussion

7. How do you feel about your flaw now that you have shared it? Draw an emoji to show it:

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## EXTRACT 2: BLACK HOLES (Taken from Chapter One)

'My pleasure' said Shelley. 'He deserves it.'

Harrison reached out his hand, took hold of the string and pulled the balloon towards him. It was pitch black, like a piece had been cut out of the universe. He blew at it, to see if it bobbed backwards like a balloon should, but instead it loomed ever so slightly closer.

'I wouldn't do that, if I were you,' Shelley warned. 'In fact, best not to touch it.'

Harrison's father gave her a quizzical look.

'In case it pops,' said Shelley, smiling a big, innocent smile.

'Well? What do you say, Harrison?' asked his mother.

'Thank you,' said Harrison politely.

'You're most welcome, Harrison,' said Shelley with a glint in her eye. 'You are most welcome indeed.'



*Harrison reached out his hand, took hold of the string and pulled the balloon towards him.*

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What does Harrison receive at the birthday party and why? What do you like about the illustration?
- What is a black hole? Can you name any scientists famous for their research into black holes?
- List all the things that Harrison puts in his black hole and why.
- What would you like to put in a black hole if you could? Note: You're not allowed to say your teacher!
- How does Harrison's feelings towards the black hole change over time? What does he learn from his experiences?

### ACTIVITY: BLACK HOLE FACT SHEET **Subjects: Literacy, Art, Design and Technology, Science, RSHE, Drama**

- Throughout the story, Harrison learns a lot about space and especially black holes; hopefully you have too! Show what you have learned from Harrison's adventure by completing the 'Black Hole Fact Sheet'. Try to complete as much as you can without any help, but if you get stuck use the book, and then a partner to help you. Go through the answers together as a class.
- In groups, create something that represents a black hole using any objects in the classroom. Thinking back over your fact sheet, act out these 3 scenarios with your black hole:
  1. Feeding your black hole with something to make it grow
  2. The black hole's pull becomes extremely powerful and starts sucking in the whole room and school
  3. You get sucked into the black hole and try to make it spin in order to try and get out
- Afterwards, discuss: how did acting-out these scenarios help you to understand black holes? What is your favourite black hole fact that you have learned so far?

## MY BLACK HOLE FACT SHEET

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

In the story, Harrison's black hole is the size of a \_\_\_\_\_ but black holes can come in all different \_\_\_\_\_. Black holes \_\_\_\_\_ in everything around them because of their strong \_\_\_\_\_. This means that they are very \_\_\_\_\_. Black holes get their name from the fact that not even \_\_\_\_\_ can escape them. As a result of this they are actually \_\_\_\_\_ to the eye.

A lot of what we know about black holes comes from the scientist \_\_\_\_\_. Two other awesome scientists \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ came up with the theory that a spinning black hole might form a \_\_\_\_\_. In the story, this is what Harrison uses to go back in time and fix the damage his black hole has caused.

Fortunately for us, the chances of getting sucked into a black hole are virtually \_\_\_\_\_. So, no need to worry!

EINSTEIN-ROSEN

SUCK

GRAVITATIONAL PULL

BRIDGE

LIGHT

NATHAN ROSEN

DESTRUCTIVE

STEPHEN HAWKING

INVISIBLE

ALBERT EINSTEIN

BALLOON

SIZES

ZERO

## EXTRACT 3: DESTINY (Taken from Chapter Fourteen)

anger can be good. Important, even. *I'm* angry. But it's about what you do with your anger. I don't *lose* my temper, I *use* it.'

She placed a hand on Harrison's shoulder and he looked up into her sharp green eyes.

'When I was your age, I wanted to study science. And I wasn't allowed to because I was a girl. That made me angry. But instead of kicking and screaming and shouting, I used my anger to build this . . . an Einstein-Rosen bridge, so I could travel to the future and become an astronomer!'

'Like your grandmother,' said Harrison helpfully.

'Excuse me?' asked Shelley, not quite understanding.

'She built a . . . Steinway-Moses . . . One of these things too.'

'You really don't know who I am, do you?' asked Shelley.

'Of course I do,' replied Harrison hesitantly. 'You're Shelley.'

'I'll give you a clue: Garibaldi.'

Shelley fished in her pocket and pulled out a half-eaten biscuit.

'About thirty seconds after I arrived, this hit me right in the back of my neck,' explained Shelley, handing it over. 'I think it belongs to your sister.'

For a moment, Harrison couldn't even begin to understand what Shelley meant. Then, suddenly, he realised what she was trying to tell him . . .

'The postcard said: "To Shelley" and "From Shelley",' he said slowly.

'That's right,' said Shelley, with an

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What does Shelley mean when she says, 'You really don't know who I am, do you?' Explain your ideas.
- Explain what an Einstein-Rosen bridge is. How do Shelley and Harrison both use one in the story?
- What is Shelley trying to teach Harrison in the text and why?
- What does the word 'destiny' mean? Do you believe in it? Can you think of any synonyms for it?
- How does Shelley fulfil her destiny? What about Harrison? Explain your ideas.

### ACTIVITY: YOUR APPOINTMENT WITH DESTINY **Subjects: Literacy, RSHE, Art, Design and Technology**

- Page 172 includes a postcard that Shelley has written to herself which says, 'Don't forget your Appointment With Destiny!'. On your tables, discuss what this means and why Harrison is confused by it.
- Then, close your eyes for a few moments and think about what the word 'destiny' means to you. Try to imagine yourself in 20 years' time, visualising where you want to be, what you want to do, and what kind of person you hope to become.
- Opening your eyes, imagine that you are yourself 20 years in the future. Use these ideas to write a postcard to your younger self, giving tips and advice about how to fulfil your destiny. For example, you might tell your younger self to believe in yourself more, or to keep working hard so you can go and work or study in another country. Don't forget to date your postcard 20 years from today's date, add colour and small illustrations around your text that link to what you have written.
- Take your postcard home and discuss it with a friend or family member. Then put it in an envelope writing on it the future date on which it is to be opened. Keep it somewhere safe and in 20 years' time, open it up and keep your appointment with destiny!

## MIND-MAP OF THE SENSES

A large rectangular frame containing a mind map structure. At the top left is a small square box. To its right are four vertical lines. A horizontal line is positioned below these vertical lines, extending across the width of the frame. The area below the horizontal line is empty, intended for drawing or writing.



## EXTRACT 4: TIME TRAVEL (Taken from Chapter Fifteen)

hand over hand, closer and closer to the black hole.

He stretched out his hand . . .

His heart began to beat faster.

What if something went wrong? What if he fell inside and never got out?

*Keep calm*, Shelley said.

He had to keep calm!

Sweet and sour, sweet and sour . . .

He touched its edge . . .

Then – *whoosh!* – he took off, as if he was sliding head-first down the world's biggest water slide!

Harrison was thrown left and right and up and down as he rushed through space and time, faster and faster!

He saw Blue barking . . . then a giant piece of broccoli . . . Hector Broom, flicking

his elastic band . . . swimming pools and textbooks rushing past him so fast he had to close his eyes . . .

And, finally, way off in the distance, he glimpsed his parents, waving to him . . .

But, wait, were they waving hello or goodbye?

Suddenly he was rushing away from them, out past stars and galaxies and galactic clusters . . .

Out into darkness.

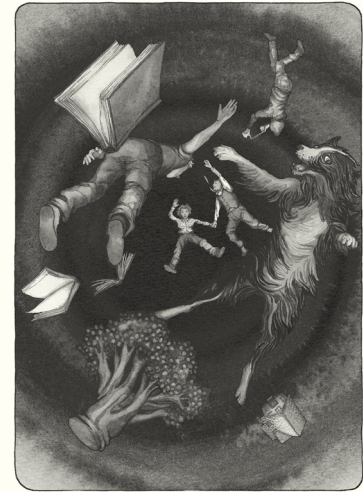
And then everything stopped.

Harrison opened his eyes.

There was Cygnus again. Only it wasn't spinning any more!

It hadn't worked!

Then Harrison realised he wasn't wearing his oxygen mask.



*Harrison was thrown left and right, and up and down, as he rushed through space and time.*

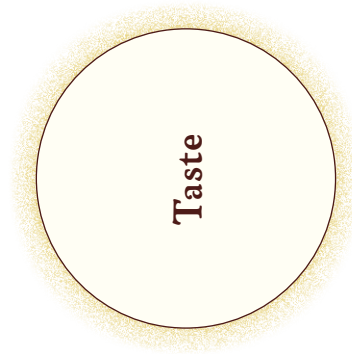
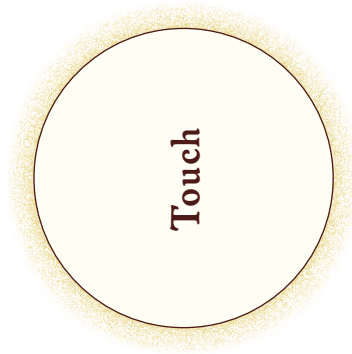
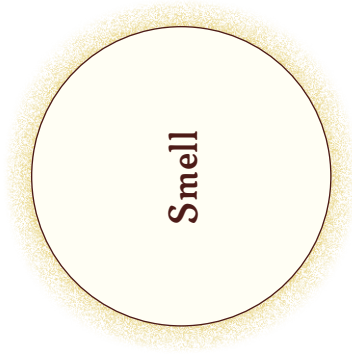
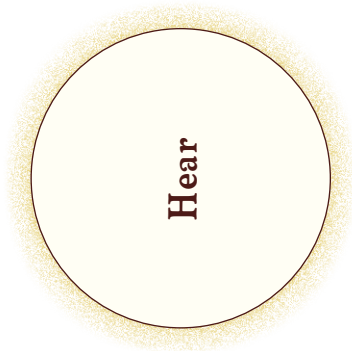
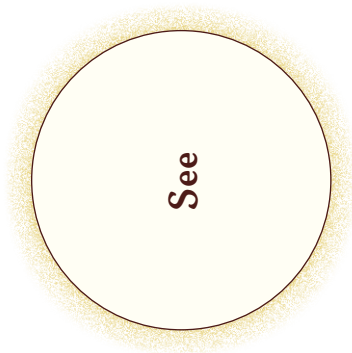
### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What is happening to Harrison in the extract? How does the illustration add to the story?
- Which emotions and sensations do you think Harrison is experiencing and why? Explain your ideas.
- What does Harrison realise when he finally gets his bearings? What has he managed to do?
- What do you think Harrison has learned from his experiences? How has his adventure changed his outlook?
- If you could travel through time, where and when would you travel to and why? What would you find when you get there?

### ACTIVITY: A SELFIE FROM THE FUTURE **Subjects: Literacy, RSHE, Art, Design and Technology**

- Imagine that like Harrison and Shelley, you find a way to travel through time! Close your eyes for 1 minute and picture how the world might have changed in 50 years' time. Visualise; where are you? What is the weather like? Who is there? How do they dress? How do people travel and communicate? How have people's habits and lifestyles changed?
- Open your eyes. Still imagining you are in the future, make some notes on the 'Mind-map of the Senses' to help you imagine what life is like in the future.
- Finally, imagine that you take a selfie of yourself in the future to bring back to the present day and show your friends and family. Use your Mind-map to help you sketch this photograph which could be taken anywhere in the world, and include a brief post or caption below describing where you are and what you're doing. **WARNING:** make sure you don't take up too much of the picture; that's a rookie selfie mistake! We want as much detail of the future as possible!

**MIND-MAP OF THE SENSES**



## MIND-MAP OF THE SENSES SKETCH

