



# THE WILD WAY HOME

SOPHIE KIRTLEY

Educational  
resource  
pack

Dear reader,

This educational resource pack is based on Sophie Kirtley's stunning debut novel *The Wild Way Home* and is an ideal learning resource for children in Key Stage 2. It includes sneak peeks from the text, with corresponding reflection questions and activities to keep children both engaged and entertained. Featuring themes of 'The Stone Age', 'Friends in the Wild', 'Courage' and 'Family', this pack is perfect for use in the classroom or at home.

We hope you enjoy your adventure back to the Stone Age.



## ABOUT THE BOOK

When Charlie's longed-for brother is born with a serious heart condition, Charlie's world is turned upside down. Upset and afraid, Charlie flees the hospital and makes for the ancient forest on the edge of town. There Charlie finds a boy floating face-down in the stream who is injured, yet alive. But when Charlie sets off back to the hospital to fetch help, the forest has changed. It's become a place as strange and wild as the boy dressed in deerskins – because Charlie has unwittingly fled into the Stone Age, with no way to help the boy or return to the present day. Or is there?

What follows is a wild, big-hearted adventure as Charlie and the Stone Age boy set out together to find what they have lost – their courage, their hope, their families and their way home.

Author Sophie Kirtley







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## CONTENTS

- **SNEAK PEAK 1: THE STONE AGE (taken from Deadman's Cave)**

*Objectives:* Identify how life was different in the Stone Age; sketch an array of Stone Age cave wall pictures.

*Subject Checklist:* ✓ Literacy ✓ Art, Design & Technology ✓ PSHE ✓ History ✓ Citizenship

- **SNEAK PEAK 2: FRIENDS IN THE WILD (taken from Stuck)**

*Objectives:* Consider how the writer presents the theme of friendship in the story; create a friendship map.

*Subject Checklist:* ✓ Literacy ✓ Art, Design & Technology ✓ Geography ✓ PSHE ✓ Citizenship

- **SNEAK PEAK 3: COURAGE (taken from Lynx)**

*Objectives:* Reflect on a time you were afraid and how it made you feel; write a spirit song that gives you courage.

*Subject Checklist:* ✓ Literacy ✓ PSHE ✓ Drama ✓ Art, Design & Technology ✓ Citizenship

- **SNEAK PEAK 4: FAMILY (taken from Promise)**

*Objectives:* Discuss how your family has changed over the years; write a reflection inspired by a family photo or memory.

*Subject Checklist:* ✓ Literacy ✓ PSHE ✓ Art, Design & Technology





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## SNEAK PEAK 1: THE STONE AGE (taken from Deadman's Cave)

They're not just pictures, they're pictures that tell stories: there's a hunter who bounds long-legged in a leap. The hunter's chasing a red deer, a hart with massive antlers, and the deer's fast too, I can feel the strength of its muscles in the curve of the line. And there's another deer ahead, a young one, smaller antlers, less strong, less sure; he's looking back over his shoulder. But the young deer doesn't see the hunter or the spear, the spear that's arcing from the hunter's empty hand, straight towards the deer's panicky heart. 'Spea!' I murmur. The torch fades and goes out.

### REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- What story is being told by the pictures on the cave wall? Why is Charlie so excited by this discovery?
- The Stone Age can be divided into three parts. Which era of the Stone Age do you think these pictures could be from?
- What dangers would our Stone Age ancestors have faced? Can you think of examples?
- Why would people in the Stone Age choose to live near a river and surrounded by forest?
- What else does Charlie learn about life in the Stone Age from Harby? Can you think of examples?

### ACTIVITY: CHARLIE AND HARBY

- You might not know this, but *The Wild Way Home* is inspired by a Mesolithic site at Mount Sandel in Northern Ireland; a place the author played in as a young girl. In fact, the spot you are standing on right now may once have been stood upon by real Stone Age people! Isn't that amazing?







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- In these adventures with Harby, Charlie learns a lot about what life was like in the Stone Age. On the table below, identify similarities and differences between Harby's and Charlie's lives in their separate eras. Try to use examples from the story to back up your points.

	<b>SIMILARITIES</b> between Charlie's and Harby's lives	<b>DIFFERENCES</b> between Charlie's and Harby's lives
<b>DIET</b> What do they eat and drink? Where do they source food and drink?		
<b>COMMUNICATION</b> Can they read and write? How do they communicate with others?		
<b>LIVING CONDITIONS</b> Where do they live? What resources and amenities do they have?		
<b>CLOTHING</b> What do they wear and why? Where do they get their clothing from?		

- Finally, ask for permission to temporarily stick a piece of paper to the wall. Imagine that you have gone back in time and this is the wall of a cave in the Stone Age. Either recreate the pictures and story that Charlie finds on the cave in the Sneak Peek above or design your own using a dark pencil.







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## SNEAK PEAK 2: FRIENDS IN THE WILD (taken from Stuck)

'I'll help you, Harby.' I joggle his arm gently. 'When we get off this stupid ledge, we'll do it together – we'll find Mothga, we'll find your home, we'll make safe.'

Harby stares at me with those eyes that are black and forever-deep, like the unexplored parts of the sea.

'I help you, Cholliemurrum,' he whispers hoarsely, joggling my arm back with his pinchy fingers. 'We find DaRA. We find your home. We make safe.'

'OK,' I say, smiling through my teary eyes. And I hold my hand up for a high five.

### REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- How does the writer show the friendship between Charlie and Harby? Pick out some words from the Sneak Peek.
- What is so special about their relationship? How do they help each other through the story?
- Who are Charlie's other friends? What adventures do they all have together in the wild?
- What qualities make a good friend? Why are friends so important?
- Which places are special to you and your friends? What happy memories do you have in these places?





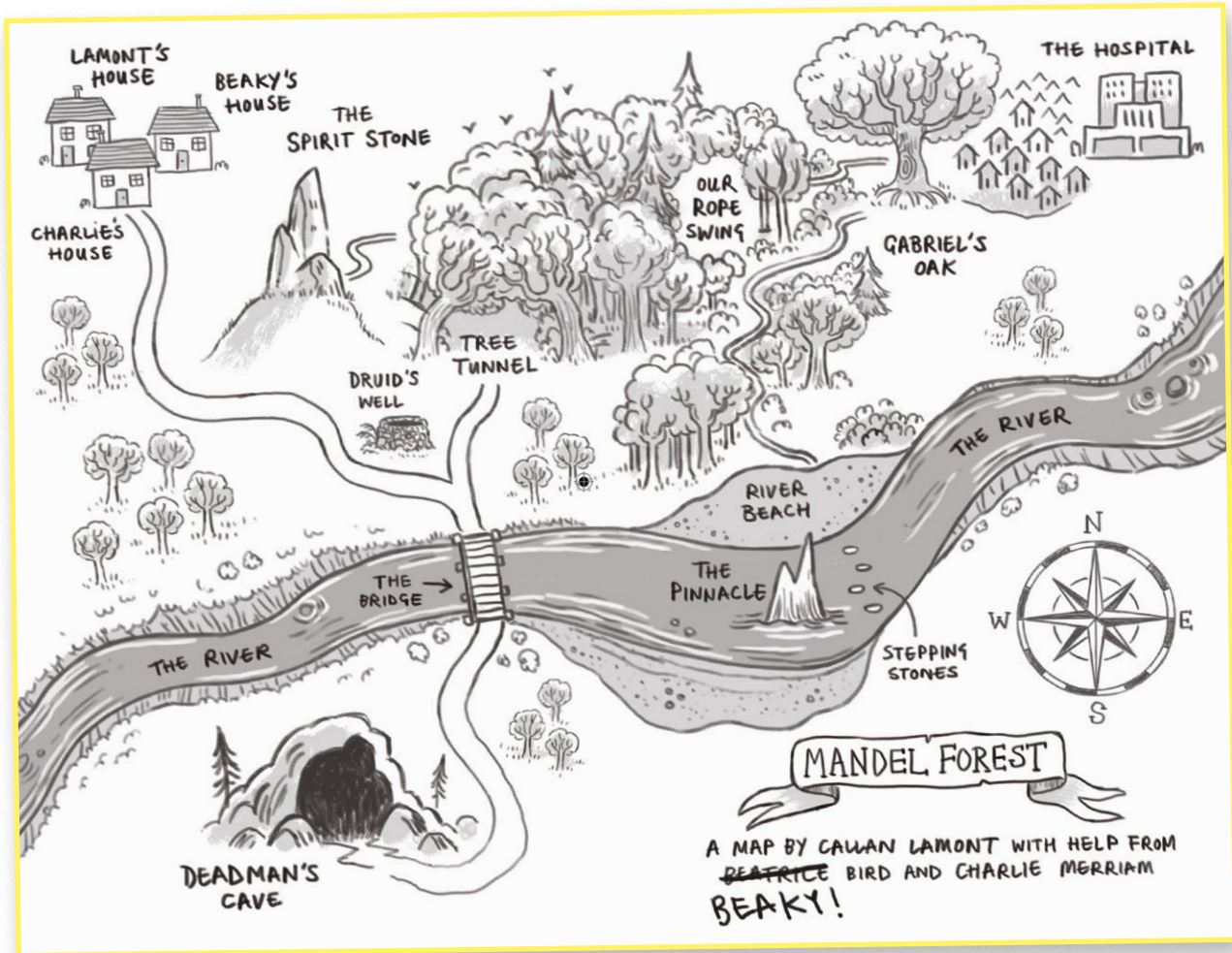


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## ACTIVITY: FRIENDSHIP MAP

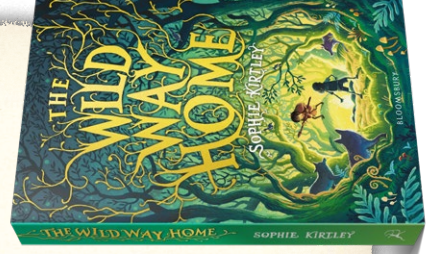


- Mandel Forest is one of many special places that make up Charlie's home. It is here that the adventure with Harby takes place, but it is also where Charlie spends a lot of time exploring with other friends. Using the map that Callan and Beaky help Charlie to create for inspiration and the map outline on the next page, design your own friendship map of places that you and your friend(s) love to go.
- Your map could span a big distance, or everything could be within one village, town or city. Try to include elements of the natural world, for instance, Charlie's map includes a river, a river beach and a tree tunnel. You can also use your imagination to give places their own history or even a magical element if you like! The friends do this with Deadman's Cave.
- Share your map with someone and explain the importance of each place to you and your friend(s).





# MY FRIENDSHIP MAP







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## SNEAK PEAK 3: COURAGE (taken from Lynx)

My spirit song rises into the dark, like it's made of more than me, and as I sing I half hear Dad singing too ... and Mum ... like how when one wolf howls all the wolves howl together, answering each other's call.

'... row your boat,  
Off into the night ...'

As I stare into the lynx's eyes, tangled images flash through my mind: Dad and me fishing in our star-sparkled river. Dad's warm safe cuddle. A moth flying moon-bound and white in the dark of night. A birthday wish. A brother.

'... and if you meet a wild lynx ...'

### REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- How does Charlie show courage in this extract? How does their spirit song help them?
- Can you think of other times when Charlie and other characters are brave in the story?
- Why does Charlie run away at the beginning of the story? What is Charlie afraid of?
- Why is it difficult to face our fears sometimes? What uncomfortable emotions does fear give us?
- How does Charlie's friendship with Harby give Charlie courage? How do the friends help each other face their fears?







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## ACTIVITY: SPIRIT SONG

- Close your eyes and think about a time that you were afraid and wanted to run away from a situation. You might have stood face to face with something frightening like Charlie does with the lynx, it could be a time you were worried about a family member or friend, or anything else that made you feel scared. Reflect on how your body and mind felt at the time.
- Then, think about a time you showed courage. What or who gave you courage? What did you learn about yourself from this experience? How did your body and mind feel?
- When Charlie is afraid, the spirit song reminds Charlie of family times and this is a comfort and gives Charlie courage. Write down the lyrics to your own spirit song. It might be a song you know that reminds you of family, friends or home, or you could make up your own. Write your song in colours that make you feel strong and positive and include sketches to decorate it.
- Finally, curl up in a ball on the floor with space around you to move. Think about that memory of being afraid and how it made you feel. Then, start singing your spirit song quietly at first, then getting louder and louder, stretching your body up into a confident pose or even a dance. Sing your spirit song with a big smile on your face, thinking about how courageous and awesome you are! Remember this spirit song when you next feel afraid or worried about something.

## MY SPIRIT SONG

BY .....







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## SNEAK PEAK 4: FAMILY (taken from Promise)

The warm smells of lunch rise up the stairs. I pick up the photo of us from twelve years ago. Today we'll take another photo, of all of us together, our family; we'll be different but still really the same. In today's photo, I'll be the one cuddling the tiny, newborn baby, I'll have a goofy grin on my face and a heart full of love. And when I hold my little brother, Dara Merriam, for the very first time, I'll make him a promise, the same promise that Harby made to Mothga, right here, so very very long ago.

*Make safe*, I'll whisper in Dara's little ear. And I will.

### REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- What does 'make safe' mean? Why does Charlie describe it as a promise to Dara?
- What do Dara and Mothga have in common? What about Charlie's and Harby's parents?
- What has Charlie learned about family over the course of the text? Can you think of examples?
- Why is family so important? How is everyone's family different?
- What promise would you like to make to a family member and why?







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## ACTIVITY: FAMILY PHOTO REFLECTION

- As Charlie finds out in the text, families change over time, that's just a part of life. Sometimes change can be a bit scary but it's also very exciting too.
- Ask someone at home to help you find a family photograph taken when you were much younger. Or close your eyes and think of an early memory you have of your family and draw a picture of it instead. Remember, families come in different shapes and sizes so your picture or memory might have lots of people in it, or it may be just you and one other person. Either way, be proud of your family!
- With a family member or friend, discuss:
  - How long ago the picture was taken or when the memory is from.
  - What brought your family together for the picture.
  - How your family has changed since the picture.
  - How your home and where you live has changed since the photo was taken.
  - What may change over the coming years and why this is exciting.
  - Why you love and are grateful for your family.
- Use these discussion points and the next page to help you write a reflection about family, home and change. If you are happy to, present your picture at school or to your family and read your reflection to them. Afterwards, put your picture and reflection on display in your bedroom to remind you to face change with courage just like Charlie does!

You've now reached the end of this  
resource pack for *The Wild Way Home*

We hope these notes have proved to be a useful and fun  
introduction to the themes and ideas found within this book.

We would love to see examples of any work created as a result  
of this pack, so please do email them over to us on:

[childrensmarketing@bloomsbury.com](mailto:childrensmarketing@bloomsbury.com)

or share on Twitter tagging us at

[@KidsBloomsbury](https://twitter.com/KidsBloomsbury) [@KirtleySophie](https://twitter.com/KirtleySophie)





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## MY FAMILY PHOTO REFLECTION

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing a reflection.