



TEACHERS' RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED FOR

Upper primary/lower secondary
(ages 8+)

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KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **Learning areas:** English
- **General capabilities:** Language, Literature, Literacy, Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capability, Ethical Understanding

REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

- Develop critical and creative thinking
- Analyse how language and writing evoke mood, tone, tension and characterisation
- Encourage creative and imaginative writing
- Discussions around self-belief and independence

THEMES

- Adventure, magic and imagination
- Alternate worlds and fantasy
- Anxiety, confidence, hope and fear
- Relationships and family
- Society
- Personal and social ethics

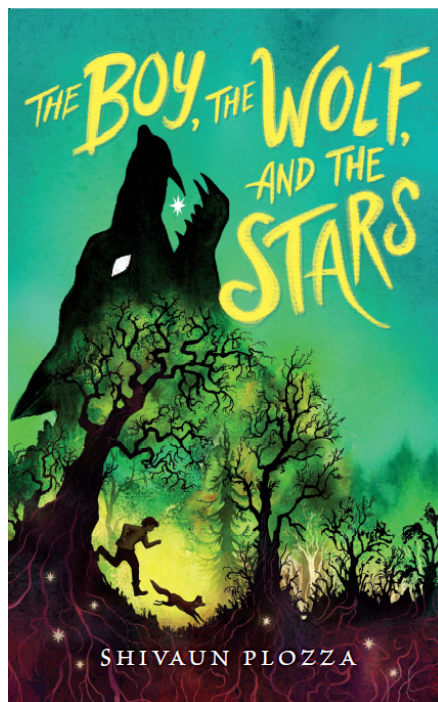
PUBLICATION DETAILS

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The Boy, the Wolf and the Stars

Shivaun Plozza

PLOT SUMMARY

Every night Ulv is cloaked in total Darkness. Twelve hours ruled by the ravenous, clawing Shadow Creatures, beasts made of shadow and evil.

Young Bo is charged with a monumental task: freeing the land of its curse by returning the Stars to the sky. He must find three magical keys spread across the land – keys that will unlock the cage holding the wolf who ate the Stars.

But there's another motive, beyond saving Ulv. If Bo releases the Stars, he can make a wish of his own and maybe find the mother who left him behind . . .

The Boy, the Wolf and the Stars is a sweeping, timeless adventure, an introduction to a brilliant new world with the feel of an instant classic.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Shivaun Plozza is an award-winning Children's and YA writer.

Her critically acclaimed debut novel, *Frankie*, was a CBCA Notable Book, shortlisted for the Inky Awards, Highly Commended at the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards and won the YA category of the Davitt Awards. Her second novel, *Tin Heart*, was released in March 2018 – both Shivaun's books have sold into multiple territories.

Her short story 'The Point' is part of *Where the Shoreline Used to Be*, an anthology of YA fiction, and 'The Challenge' is part of the footy-themed collection for children *Speccy-tacular AFL Stories*. Other short works have appeared in various journals, magazines and anthologies. When she's not writing she works as an editor and manuscript assessor.

Her first middle-reader fantasy, *The Boy, the Wolf and the Stars*, was simultaneously published in the US and Australia.

AUTHOR'S INSPIRATION

When I was young I was afraid of the dark. I was afraid of a lot of things – I still am – but night time chilled me to the bone. I slept with the light on but I was still terrified of the shadows. What was hiding there? What dangers couldn't I see?

I'm no longer afraid of the dark, but I still feel afraid sometimes. I have an anxiety disorder that makes navigating the world tricky but I've learnt positive ways to challenge my fears. When I sat down to write this book I wanted to look back at my younger self and ask: Where did your fear come from? What do I know now about facing anxiety that I wish my younger self had known?

In writing this story, I came up with a world where night time was something truly to fear – complete darkness filled with evil creatures that are shadows come to life! I put a boy, Bo, in the middle of this world and challenged him to find a way to end the night-time curse.

To make things harder for Bo, I set off a magical plague, a deadly sickness swarming the land, destroying everything in its wake and chasing people from their homes (I honestly didn't mean to be so topical).

Not everyone behaves well when their life is disrupted by this plague – it brings out the worst in a lot of the characters. They lash out at each other and they refuse to let empathy guide their actions, instead falling back on fear's best friend – hatred. That's why this is a book about the heartache of being let down by the people we're supposed to be able to trust the most.

But there are also characters who rise up to be their best self, like Bo, who discovers that the best defense against fear is love and that the best way to face your fears is with good people by your side. That's why this is also a book about the families we build around us when we open our hearts to the unexpected.

And there's lots of fun too. *The Boy, the Wolf and the Stars* is filled with weird and wonderful creatures (like dragon-worms and Colossal Spit-Mouth Slugs and carnivorous forests), and weird and wonderful characters (like Un-Kings and Shadow Witches and sassy foxes).

So although this book is about fear and anxiety, something we've all experienced lately, it's mostly about overcoming fear and the unexpected ways we can find our own light in the darkness.

Most importantly, this is a book about the warming and enduring power of friendship.

WRITING STYLE

- Think about the two voices in the novel – the main narrative voice and the voice of the Scribe in the True Histories of Ulv. How are the voices different and what techniques are used to achieve this difference?
- Think of a news report you have seen recently and write the same event in these two different voices.
- Compare and contrast the voices used here to the voice/s used in another fantasy novel you have read.
- Think about how the author uses descriptive language to create atmosphere in the 'horror' or 'action' scenes. Choose your favourite metaphors or similes and discuss how they describe the scene and create the atmosphere.



- Write a scene of your own using metaphors and similes to build atmosphere.
- How is the Dark – a visual concept – shown/expressed on the page in the descriptions?
- Discuss what tense is used in the storytelling. What is another way this story could have been told? Take your favourite paragraph from the book and re-write it in a different tense.
- How does the book's title relate to its content? Does the title reference any other books or films that you can discover?
- The relationship between Nix and Bo is very important in the novel. Have you ever had a pet who feels like a friend? Do you have any family stories of a much-loved animal? Write or draw your experience.
- Do some of your friends feel like family? Write what you think family is and how your closest friends might fit that description.
- Every family is different! Write or draw yours and share with the group.

KEY STUDY TOPICS

TEXT TO REAL WORLD CONNECTIONS

- Read the note from the author here. Where in the story can you see that the author has used fantasy to reflect on worries we might have in the real world?
- Covid 19 has caused huge changes in our lives recently. How does this story reflect some of the worries and concerns that Covid has created?
- What anxieties and uncertainties are young people your age dealing with today? Have you ever felt any of the same emotions as Bo? What did you do to overcome them?
- There are many superstitions, fake cures and 'fake news' being spread around that relate to Covid-19. Can you think of an example from the novel where rumour and fake news make things worse? Using real-world prior knowledge write a persuasive text convincing the characters that the information is wrong.
- This novel discusses how fear spreads with misinformation and with people not engaging critically with what they're being told. Find some untrue things in the book (like what the Irin villagers say about the Korahku) and talk about the negative effects of those untruths and how they affected the characters involved.
- Have you wondered why people might have to flee their homes? Do you know of a group of people who have had to escape danger? What danger were they fleeing and what did they have to overcome to get to safety? What would you have done in their place? Present your findings in the form of an information text.
- Write a short story from the perspective of a fun side character like the Un-King or the Scribe.
- How does the story of Selene compare with the story of Bo? Or the story of Tam compare with the story of Bo? Consider their different situations and write several diary entries for each showing what their motivations might be.
- Tam's story is incomplete in the novel. Write a story about what you think happened after the novel ended.
- The Un-King's story is incomplete in the novel. Write a story about what you think happened after Bo left him.
- Choose an incident in the story and write it from a different perspective. Use any character mentioned in the story.
- What does the cover tell you about the tone and content of the book? Would you have designed or illustrated the cover differently? Design your own alternate cover for the book.
- Is there an ethical dilemma in the book? What is it and what would you have done if faced with the same dilemma?
- Interview one of the characters for a newspaper profile.
- Mock up the front page of a newspaper or web news site featuring key events that occurred during the novel. What would make the front cover story at why?

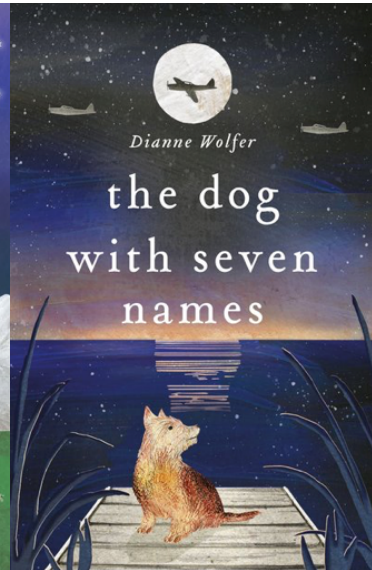
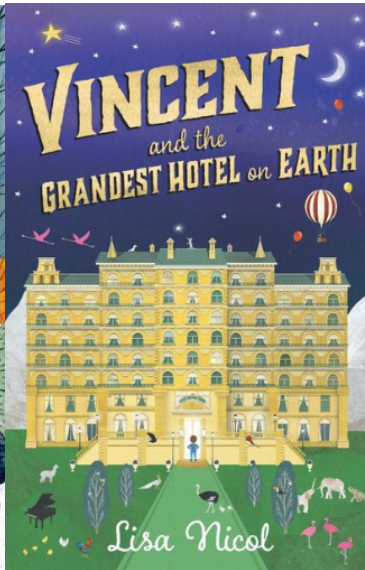
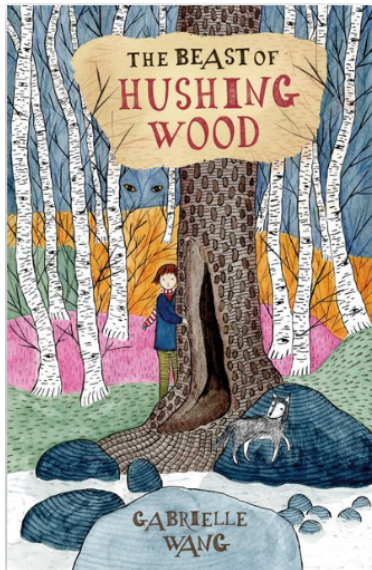
Bo's actions at the beginning of the story have huge consequences. Write a reflective piece about a time you have made a decision that has changed things for you or your family.
- Why has the author used wolves in this story? Can you think of other stories and fables that feed into how we feel about the characters simply because they are wolves.



- How would this story look from the wolves' POV? Choose a scene and re-write it from both wolves perspectives.
- Choose your favourite scene featuring Nix and write it from Nix's POV.
- The author has built a rich alternate world for her characters to live in, including its own history. Choose one aspect of that world and write your own entry for the True Histories of Ulv using the Scribe's voice.
- Choose an event from your own history and write it using the tone and voice of the Scribe.
- Some parts of the world are only touched on briefly. Take a setting, like the carnivorous forest, and set a bonus scene there. You can write the story or draw a comic.
- If you found yourself transported to Ulv during the events of the novel, where would you go and what would you do?
- Choose two characters who have opposing ideas (like Bo and the Shadow Witch or Bo and Galvin). Write a letter exchange between the pair in which each character tries to persuade the other to change their mind.
- Write a persuasive essay from the perspective of one of the antagonists. For example, present Galvin's opinion he should be given the stars rather than Bo.
- Using the map in the book as a guide create a map of Bo's specific journey. Mark out the locations where certain scenes took place.
- The ending is a little open ended. Write or draw a scene set after the novel finishes. What do you think happens next?



FURTHER READING FROM PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA



The Beast of Hushing Wood
by Gabrielle Wang

A lovely blend of action, fable and magic realism.

Ziggy lives in a tiny town deep in Hushing Wood, where strange things are happening. The townspeople are fighting, Ziggy feels like something is hunting her, and her beloved woods have become dark and hostile.

When Raffi and his grandfather arrive in town, Ziggy finds herself drawn to them. But are they there to save Ziggy, or are they the hunters?

Vincent and the Grandest Hotel on Earth
by Lisa Nicol

A marvellous ride that will delight readers.

The Grandest Hotel on Earth is wilder than the African savanna, more fantastical than Disneyland and more magical than Shangri-la.

So when Vincent meets the hotel's young Florence he sets off on a path leading into his most wondrous dreams. Before long, he is torn between right and wrong and friendship and family . . .

The Dog with Seven Names
by Diane Wolfer

The heart-warming story of a golden-eyed dog in a time of war.

A tiny dog, the runt of the litter, is born on a remote cattle station. When Elsie finds, names and loves her, the pup becomes a cherished companion.

Life is perfect ... until War arrives.



ORDER FORM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	SCHOOL YEAR	RRP	QUANTITY	TOTAL
The Boy, the Wolf and the Stars	Shivaun Plozza	9781760893453	8+	\$16.99		
The Beast of Hushing Wood	Gabrielle Wang	9780143309178	8+	\$16.99		
Vincent and the Grandest Hotel on Earth	Lisa Nicol	9781760890681	8+	\$16.99		
The Dog with Seven Names	Diane Wolfer	9780143787457	8+	\$16.99		
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