

CATH HOWE



Not
MY
Fault

Activity Ideas for KS2

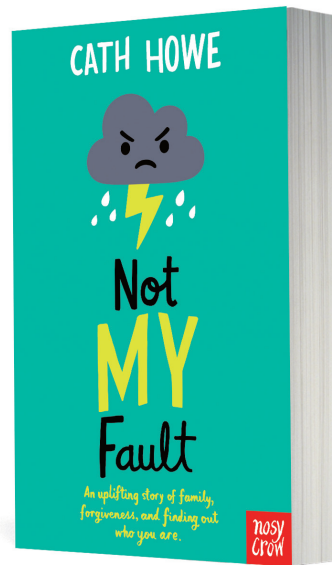
Not My Fault

Activity Ideas for KS2



“I really liked it! I could imagine being friends with the characters.”

*Summer,
aged 8*



“A thoughtful, subtle and gripping must-read.”

*Margaret Wallace-Jones,
The Alligator's Mouth*

About this pack

Not My Fault is written by KS2 teacher, Cath Howe. These activity ideas have been created to encourage children to explore the characters of the book through drawing, writing and drama exercises.

About the book

Maya and Rose won't talk to each other. Even though they are sisters. Not since the accident.

Maya is running wild, and Rose doesn't know what to do.

Now Maya and Rose have to go away together on a week-long school journey.

But will the trip – and a life-threatening adventure – fix their relationship ... or break it for good?

An uplifting story of family, forgiveness, and finding out who you are.

About the author

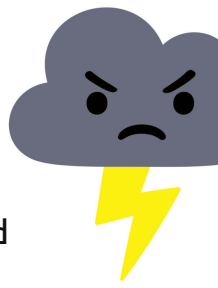
Cath Howe is an author and teacher working in South West London writing for, and working with, Key Stage 2 primary age children. Cath runs workshops in schools on everything to do with writing and performing. *Ella on the Outside* was her first novel for children. Follow Cath on Twitter: [@cath_howe](https://twitter.com/cath_howe)



Not MY Fault

www.nosycrow.com

Creative Writing Activities



Two Viewpoints

Not My Fault is written from two points of view. Maya and Rose are not alike and they think very differently about most things.

- Create a profile for each sister, comparing them both. Include their favourite activity, their best friend, phrases they often use, their key personality traits and what they think about different things e.g. School Journey, their family and their friends. What are the main differences between them?
- Choose an event we don't read about in *Not My Fault*. This could be abseiling, canoeing or the quiz night.
- Using your character profiles to help you, write about the event from both Maya and Rose's point of view. You could alternatively choose to write from the point of view of two other characters from the book, such as Archie, Dillon, Clemmy or Bonnie.
- Think about how your chosen characters experienced the event differently. Maybe one of your characters enjoyed the event and the other didn't like it at all. Who would they spend most of their time with?
- You could also write about an event in your life from two different points of view. For example, think about a trip to the park from both your point of view and your sibling or friend's point of view. How different are they? Why?

My Suitcase

In *Not My Fault*, Maya and Rose pack suitcases for their trip.

- Imagine packing your own suitcase for a school journey. Draw your suitcase and label what you would put in it.
- Write a monologue imagining you are busy collecting all the things you need to pack your suitcase. Are you the sort of person who forgets things? Or packs too much?
- Don't forget your favourite sweets, a book to read, a compulsory cuddly toy, your favourite clothing and the extra things that are special to you. For Rose, this would be her sketchbook. What would it be for you? Why is it special?
- Perform your monologue.

Leap of Faith

On the School Journey, Rose and Maya try out lots of new activities such as a sensory trail, building a shelter and a keep-fit challenge. It can be hard doing a new sport or activity.

- List some new things someone might learn to do such as playing a sport or learning an instrument.
- Have you ever done something for the first time which you thought you couldn't do?
- How hard did it turn out to be? Did you master it or did you give up? How do you feel about it now? What made you keep going?
- Write a list of five top tips for someone who wants to try something new. What advice would you give them?



Creative Writing Activities



Newspaper Report

In *Not My Fault*, there are two main events: Maya's accident on the roundabout before the story begins and the events on the island at the end of the book.

- Choose one of these events and write a newspaper report about it.
- First, make notes on all the information you have and invent the rest. What are the missing gaps? What do you think might have happened?
- Think about the structure of your report, including the following: the title, an introductory paragraph, the main story and a summary. You could also add an image to make the report more interesting.
- Use formal language and include both facts and opinions.

Extract: The Accident (p. 2)

Maya shouts, "I'm a Frisbee. Spin me!"

Dad waves to me and goes off to get the newspaper.

The ancient roundabout, like a flaky wooden plate, has curved metal bars to grip. Its top edge rears up. Its bottom edge has dug a sort of sandy trench.

It's always Maya's turn.

My sister lies face down, splayed like a star, her toes scudding the ground.

I push off. Wheeeeeeee.

"Harder!" she calls.

I look up at the sky, and I run alongside while she soars around the top.

My arms ache. Another heave.

"Harder!"

The plate rotates her down again. I'll show you!

"Oooaaargh!" she goes, just as I force my arms to push again and leap on.

An animal noise; a squeal. The roundabout judders.

I tumble off, staring over at my sister.

Maya lies bent like a strange puppet with her leg trapped underneath her body.

Nibble's Story

Archie sneaks his pet hamster away on School Journey in his lunchbox, but Nibble goes missing until the end of the story (p. 258):

"Look!" She opened the bag. There, on top of the notebooks and flower press and hat and phone, scabbling to climb up the lining of the bag, was a small brown furry animal. Nibble.

"He was back in the bathroom where we left him," Bonnie said.

"Wow, Bonnie. You're brilliant. I'll tell Archie... No, you can tell him."

So she did.

Archie looked as if he might burst. "He must have gone for a walk and come back. What did he find to eat, though?" he said.

"Oh, stop worrying. He's back. Give him some food and some water," I said.

"I can't believe it!" Archie hugged Bonnie, then me. "I can't believe he's coming home!"

Where has Nibble been since he was lost? Tell the story of Nibble's adventure! Think about what he might have seen. How did he find food? Did he make any friends? What does the world look like from a hamster's point of view?



Creative Writing Activities



Blame Poems

In the book, blame is passed around and the sisters won't accept responsibility.

• Use these phrases and add your own ending to each line to create a blame poem.

- a) It's not my fault if...
- b) It won't be my fault when...
- c) And it definitely wasn't my fault when...
- d) It couldn't be my fault if...
- e) It's certainly not my fault whenever...
- f) It would never be my fault if...
- g) But it is my fault if...
- h) It will be my fault when...
- i) It was my fault that time when...
- j) It could be my fault if...
- k) It's certainly my fault whenever...
- l) It would always be my fault if...

For example:

It's not my fault if...	<i>A tree falls over in a forest</i>
It won't be my fault when...	<i>The animals have to find new homes</i>
And it definitely wasn't my fault when ...	<i>The handle broke off your cup</i>
It couldn't be my fault if....	<i>I wasn't anywhere near</i>

- Now take away the first phrases all about 'my fault'.
- Your own end lines will become an interesting poem. For example:

A tree falls over in a forest
The animals have to find new homes

- Share your poems.
- What do these new poems highlight? How do they make you feel? Have you learned anything about blame and forgiveness? What happens if we stop focussing on passing the blame?



Drama Activities



Juries

- **Read Rose's confession from the beginning of *Not My Fault*:**

Maya shouts, "I'm a Frisbee. Spin me!"

Dad waves to me and goes off to get the newspaper.

The ancient roundabout, like a flaky wooden plate, has curved metal bars to grip. Its top edge rears up. Its bottom edge has dug a sort of sandy trench.

It's always Maya's turn.

My sister lies face down, splayed like a star, her toes scudding the ground.

I push off. Wheeeeeeee.

"Harder!" she calls.

I look up at the sky, and I run alongside while she soars around the top.

My arms ache. Another heave.

"Harder!"

The plate rotates her down again. I'll show you!

"Oooaaargh!" she goes, just as I force my arms to push again and leap on.

An animal noise; a squeal. The roundabout judders.

I tumble off, staring over at my sister.

Maya lies bent like a strange puppet with her leg trapped underneath her body.

- **Whose fault is the accident? Maya, Rose, grown-ups, the council, or Dad? Why do you think it is their fault?**

- **Read other moments in the story where Maya is behaving badly, for example: (p. 120)**

My heart pounded. I pulled off my whole duvet.

"Eugh!" We all flew to the edges of the room.

The crab had a pear-shaped thorny orange body and incredibly long legs like a spider. It was huge. I clenched my fists. I bit down hard on the inside of my cheek. Tears sprang in my eyes. "I... I... I..."

"Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Is it alive?" Tasha whispered. "I'm getting Miss Bruce."

"How are you not running around screaming, Rose?" Stevie said. "There's a crab in your bed; it's not normal!"

"Eugh, Rose, gross!" Clemmy said. She stepped back towards my bunk. "It's only got seven legs," she pronounced. "And it smells ... like old shells in a bucket."

I stared at the patches of crimson and crusty mottled green on the crab's spiny back. It would take so many paint colours to try to blend that. "It's dead," I said.

Just a dead thing from another world. The crab didn't scare me now. I knew Maya had put it there.

- **Why do you think Maya is behaving like this? What kind of reaction or response is she hoping for?**
- **Now think about the climax of the story, when Maya and Bonnie go to the island. Whose fault are the events on the island at night?**
- **Hot seat some characters from the story and ask them whose fault it is. How do you think each character would respond? Would they take responsibility or blame someone else?**
- **Once you have heard from the characters, vote on whose fault you think it is.**



Drama Activities



After the Rescue

Extract (pp. 241-251)

Bonnie grinned. "We are definitely in an emergency!"

"I'll ring Dad. He won't be so cross with us," I said.

Rose bit her lip.

I tapped in Dad's number.

The phone rang. Then: *I'm not available right now... Please leave your name and number...*

I stopped the call. We looked at each other.

"Mum then," Rose said.

"You?" I tried.

"No, you!"

I tapped the number. It began to ring. "Hello."

Mum's voice, rising strong. "Hello?"

I did a big breath. "Mum, we're on an island and we're stuck and there's Rose and me and Bonnie and it's very cold..."

"Maya! Is that you? You're where? Is this a joke?" Mum's voice turned into a shout, as if she might explode. "Maya, are you all right? Did you say Rose is with you? Put her on. Oh, my God, are you all right?"

I handed the phone to Rose. "It's not a joke," Rose said. "Please listen, Mum."

I put my ear to the phone too. I could hear Mum breathing fast. "Stay where you are."

I woke up to the sound of a roar, like a motorbike. My sister's face was lit up bright by a white light scanning the mouth of our cave.

I wasn't scared. "Wake up," I told Bonnie, tugging at her sleeve.

Rose sprang up, went to the cave mouth and waved the silver blanket, her whole body lit in light. I put my arm round Bonnie, so she wouldn't be scared. "I think they've come to get us." The massive bright light lit us all now, like aliens landing, blasting our eyes into the back of our heads. A boat was bouncing on the waves, coming towards us. I couldn't see any people, just black blurs.

Bonnie gripped my hand.

"We're like pirates," I said. "Mr Goodman will have a parrot. Ooh arr!"

The lifeboat bounced up on to the sand and we all stepped back because it was so enormous and orange. A man jumped out in a big padded yellowsuit, becoming a normal shape and calling out, "Rose, Maya and Bonnie, isn't it? You're going to be fine; we just need to get you all warm."

- Create an episode of a children's TV documentary about the island rescue, featuring interviews with the characters who have things to say about the rescue.
- Start by creating your own set of questions for Maya, Rose, Bonnie, Clemmy, Miss Bruce, Mr Goodman and write out the script. Think about what each character saw. How do they feel about the event? What happened after the rescue?
- Think about the key facts, different points of view and how everything was resolved.
- Choose an interviewer and camera operator and film the show.



Drama Activities



Improvisation

There are lots of arguments throughout the book: between Maya and Rose, their parents and teachers.

- How do people look when they're having an argument?
- What things do we all say in arguments?
- Have an argument with a partner where you use phrases like the ones below but ending with names of fruit. The argument might be about breaking something or making a mess.
- Think about your body language. Act out a position for each phrase to show tension and anger.
- Try to have your argument without laughing.

I am sick and tired of apples and pears

How dare you melon apple banana

This is the last time I'm going to kiwi fruit

It's about time you nectarines

How can you possibly grape

But it wasn't me who melons

I don't believe you satsuma

How many times do I have to watermelon

You're not even listening to my strawberries

Drawing Activities

The Two Suitcases

The children are going away on their School Journey.

- Sketch, label and describe the contents of the suitcases of two very different children from *Not My Fault*.
- You could use Maya, Rose, Dillon, Bonnie, Clemmy or Archie.
- What do you think each character would pack and why?

Mapping the Story

Draw a map of all the important places in the story and label it.

- Include: Whitesands Centre, The Island Hang Out, The Education Centre, The Beach, The Canteen, The Cabins, The Island, The Caves, The Causeway.



We hope you enjoyed these activities!



We would love to see your work.
Share it with us [@NosyCrowBooks](https://www.instagram.com/NosyCrowBooks) [#NotMyFault](https://www.instagram.com/NotMyFault)

Don't miss Cath Howe's first book, *Ella on the Outside!*



Find more resources on our website:
www.nosycrow.com/activity-sheets



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