

CATH HOWE

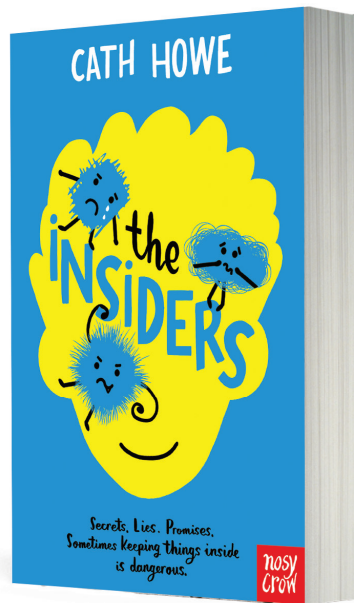
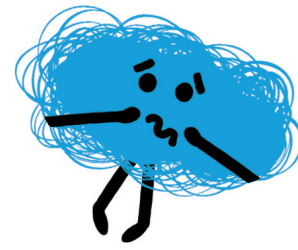


Activity Ideas for KS2

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The Insiders

Activity Ideas for KS2



Secrets. Lies. Promises.
Sometimes keeping things inside
is dangerous.

About this pack

The Insiders is written by KS2 teacher, Cath Howe. These activity ideas have been created to encourage children to explore the characters of the book through creative writing and PSHE exercises.

About the book

Callie, Ted, Zara, and Nico are best friends. More than friends – they're like family to each other. But since being embarrassed at school in a practical joke gone wrong, Ted has stopped talking to the rest of the gang.

And when Callie, Zara and Nico discover that someone has been living in their school, and sleeping in the building at night, they decide to investigate – without Ted.

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), or visit her website: www.cathhowe.com



Creative Writing Activities



Kenopsia Stories

Think of a busy place such as a shopping centre, a skatepark, a bus garage, an airport or an ice rink. Imagine it on a dark night, when it is really quiet. A place that is usually busy feels weird when it is deserted. There's a word for this: 'kenopsia'.

Write a story where a group of children find themselves in this place. How does the quiet influence the story? How do the children feel? What might happen to them in the story? Use the below extract from *The Insiders* for inspiration.

(p. 63)

I lay on the beanbags staring up at the walls. The beanbags smelled pongy from all the kids who had flopped on them in library lessons. Beyond the dark playground were the fences and behind those the dark shapes of houses. I'd been using the torch on my phone but only a little bit.

At night, the whole library turned green. My arms and legs turned green too, like being under the sea. The infants had made monster mosaics for the walls, from plaster and broken cups and plates. Some had eyeballs on legs. They gleamed and glinted. The eyes seemed to move.

I didn't mind being among the books. I'd found the one on rockets I'd chosen in library period, but it felt wrong to take it off the shelf. I could put the librarian's desk lamp on again, but that was too bright. It felt risky.

School Stories

Callie, Zara and Nico find a hole in the fence leading to the school playground and decide to explore. According to Callie, the school 'felt so different from daytime; risky ... mysterious.' (p. 35)

Using *The Insiders* as inspiration, create a story where three characters go inside a school at night through an open window and discover something exciting and surprising. Make the three characters very different from each other. What do they find? How do the three characters react differently to what they discover?

Creative Writing Activities



Newspaper Report

In *The Insiders*, Ted accidentally starts a fire at the school (pp. 208 – 215). Create a newspaper report from the night of the fire with interviews from the main characters.

- First, make notes on all the information you have. Are there any missing gaps?
- You could ask a few people in the class to play Ted, Callie and Billy. Hot-seat each character to find out more about what happened that night.
- Think about the structure of your report, including the following: the headline, sub-headings, pictures, and snippets from your interviews with the witnesses.
- Use formal language and include both facts and opinions.

Animal Viewpoint

Write from the viewpoint of the badger who dug the hole in Callie's garden (p. 58). Badgers are wild solitary hunters.

Choose one of the below to describe from the badger's point of view:

- The gardens at night (p. 26)
- The boy in the tree (p. 29, p. 58, p. 106)
- The summerhouse (pp. 25 – 26)
- The events of the fire (pp. 208 – 215)

Alternative Viewpoint

Write the events of the fire (pp. 208 – 215) from Zara or Nico's viewpoint.

- First, think about what we learn about Nico and Zara's characters from the story and make some notes about them.
- For Nico, look at his general character and the confiscating of the skateboard incident in Chapter 14.
- For Zara, look at her general character and the Maths Challenge in Chapter 29.
- How would these characters view the fire scene? What do you think they are thinking as they watch it unfold?

Billy and Ted

At the end of *The Insiders*, Ted and Billy have become unlikely friends.

Write a scene between the two of them where they are sorting things out in the caretaker's office. What do you think they would talk about? How do they interact with each other now?

Creative Writing Activities



The Special Hoodie Poem

Look at the scene where Billy explains to Callie about his hoodie. (p. 175)

Write notes for yourself about where the hoodie came from, what it looks like and what it means to Billy. Think about what risks Billy takes when he runs to get it back. He is determined to climb the scaffolding even though he's terrified and can't make it to the top!

Plan your own poem about Billy's hoodie.

First, look at your notes about what Billy does and says.

Write your poem as if you are talking to the hoodie:

You came from.....

You look like.....

You're special because.....

Your sleeves are.....

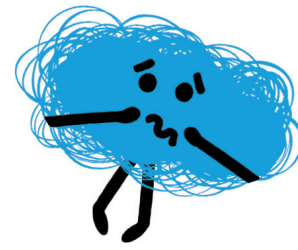
Your colour is.....

My Poem

Choose a piece of clothing you really love, maybe a hoodie or a different piece of clothing such as trainers or a hat.

- First write:
 - Where did you get it?
 - Describe it in as much detail as you can. Remember to include details about the style, fit, fastenings and colours.
 - What is it worth to you?
 - What would you swap for it / sell it for?
 - What would you do to get it back if someone took it?
 - How do you feel when you wear it? Do you feel lucky, almost as if it gives you superpowers?
- Draw this piece of clothing.
- Write a poem inside your drawing, finding interesting ways to write the words e.g. curling them round a sleeve, words growing smaller up to the edges etc.

PSHE Activities



All About Ted

Ted has learned to climb very high and watch what is going on in the gardens and playground. Look closely at his character. Why do you think he does the things he does in this story?

Think about why Ted:

- Tells his mum he doesn't need to go to Callie's after school (p. 9)
- Becomes the 'night visitor' (p. 7)
- Visits Billy in the library at night (pp. 128 – 129)
- Stops talking to Callie (p. 123, pp. 157 – 159, pp. 191 – 192)
- Takes Billy's hoodie and starts the fire (p. 198, pp. 208 – 215)

What happens to Ted and Callie's friendship throughout the book? How do they become so distant? What have you learnt about friendship from the story?

Bullying

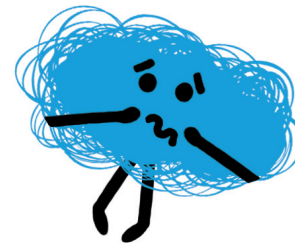
Bullying can be a range of different actions, both spoken and physical.

- Discuss with a partner:
 - How Kingsley treats Billy (pp. 94 – 99)
 - How Billy treats Ted before the class assembly (p. 4)
 - How Ted takes revenge (pp. 127 – 130, pp. 208 – 215)
 - How Mr Dunlop treats his class (p. 15, p. 89)
- Is physical bullying always the worst kind? Is Ted a bully or a victim?
- What do we find out about the impact of bullying in *The Insiders*?
- Write about your opinion of the actions of these characters and the outcome of their actions in the story.

Character Studies

- Describe Callie, Billy, Nico, Ted and Zara.
- Sketch each one.
- What would each one carry in their pockets?
- Who is your favourite character in the story and why?
- Write about why you like them.
- Do you see any of your own traits or experiences in the characters of *The Insiders*?

PSHE Activities



The Insiders Trial

The Insiders is a book about choices:

- Callie, Zara and Nico decide to go under the fence (p. 27)
 - Callie and Nico decide to go inside in search of the skateboard (pp. 76 – 89)
 - Billy decides to stay in school for the week (pp. 39 – 45)
 - Ted decides to spy and to take revenge (pp. 127 – 130, pp. 208 – 215)
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- Hold a trial, hot-seating each character as a witness and asking them to explain the choices they made.
 - Who do you think is to blame for the things that happened? Who do you sympathise with most and why? Who made a mistake?
 - Ted is suspended from school for a week. What do you think of this punishment?
 - Should Billy have been punished too? What about Callie, Nico and Zara?
 - Who should pay for the damage to the new classrooms?
 - Hold a class vote to decide the verdict of your trial.

Drawing Activity

School Map

- Draw a ground map of a school. It could be a real school or an invented one.
- Add all the places you know about: library, classrooms, hall, office, lunch area, cloakroom, art room, changing rooms, practice room, toilets, staffroom, headteacher/senior teacher's office, playground, garden and sports areas.
- Maps make great starting points for stories. Discuss with a partner your ideas for plots in this school at night.

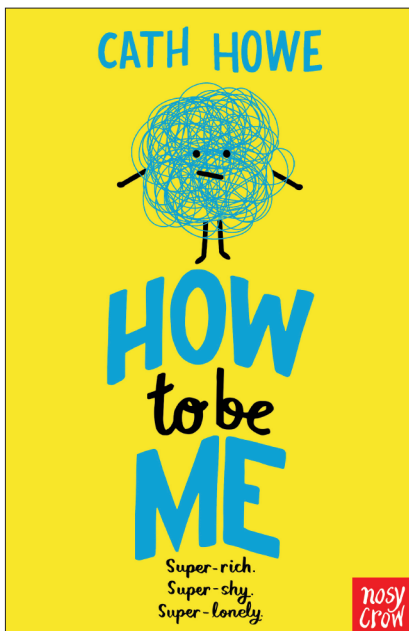
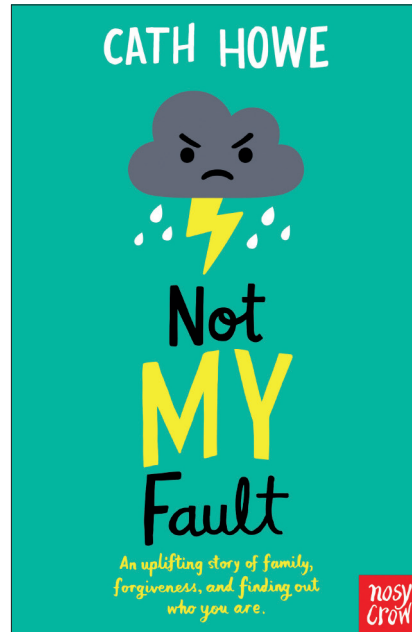
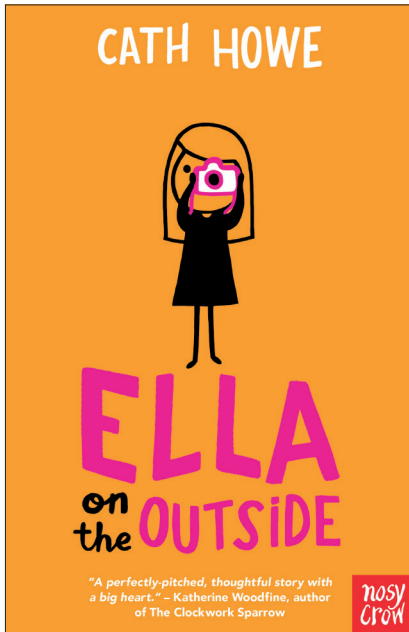
We hope you enjoyed these activities!



We would love to see your work.

Share it with us [@NosyCrow](#) [#TheInsiders](#)

Don't miss Cath Howe's other books, *Ella on the Outside*,
Not My Fault and *How to Be Me*.



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