

ENGLISH | KS3

The Fire Eaters

Activity Book for Key Stage 3



UPDATE V1.1, AUGUST 2014

Suitable for the New National Curriculum

KS3 English
(2014)



POD 1925

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Teacher's Introduction

This booklet has been created as a supplement for any scheme of work on the novel *The Fire Eaters*. These worksheets ensure that every chapter of the novel has its own unique task for pupils to complete, therefore making this booklet an invaluable tool for anyone teaching the novel.

The booklet features a vast array of tasks which vary from comprehension questions to media activities, and creative writing projects to challenging quizzes.

To maintain a level of differentiation there is often a more challenging task at the end of each chapter's activities, which provides an extension activity for the more able pupils of the class.

A brief commentary on some of the more difficult tasks has been included for teachers who are not so familiar with the novel.

Titles available from the same author:

- *Buddy* Activity Book
- *The Fire Eaters* Activity Book
- *Holes* Activity Book
- *Stone Cold* Activity Book
- *Tightrope* Activity Book

Update v1.1, August 2014

Front pages and formatting updated

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* resulting from minor specification changes, suggestions from teachers and peer reviews, or occasional errors reported by customers

Booklet Guidance

Teachers can find guidance here on the more challenging questions.
The title and chapter number of each task has been included to assist

McNulty

Chapter 1

3. Pupils will need a brief summary of Northern England dialect words *nowt*, *aye* and *bairn*.

Old Memories

Chapter 3

1. An explanation of World War II, and the Allied stationing in Burma, will help students in the understanding of the text.
4. McNulty's emotionally scarred character and the disturbing experiences from his fellow soldiers form an important part in the understanding of the novel.

Nuclear Threat

Chapter 4

1. A discussion and brief outline of the events of the Cold War will help as there is a separate worksheet included in the booklet which covers the novel.

Joseph and the New Kid

Chapter 5

3. Astute pupils will identify Joseph's underlying jealousy of Bobby as his fear of no longer spending so much time with Bobby.

Playing War

Chapter 9

4. The writer's subtle suggestion of mankind's inherent habit of carrying on childhood onwards, can be identified in this chapter

Ailsa's Family

Chapter 10

3. A description of the method of collecting coal from the sea would

A Prayer for Peace

Chapter 15

5. The writer repeatedly suggests that Bobby's father's smoking habit leads to illness.

An Unexpected Gift

Chapter 18

3. Joseph's character is one of the novel's most realistic creations, and his *good* points and his *not-so-good* points creates a character that is lifelike.

First Day Nerves

Chapter 19

3. Almond continues to remind the reader of the nuclear threat throughout the events of the story throughout the novel.

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Mr Todd**Chapter 20**

1. The writer portrays Mr Todd's strict and stern character through clothing.
3. A discussion of school physical punishment might be required to their understanding of this chapter.

Lesson in Pain**Chapter 24**

4. The two different types of "pain lessons" in this chapter would be lesson and Mr Todd's cruel physical punishment: a good example characters are.

Who Said What?

- A. McNulty's description of his rough sleeping.
- B. Mr Todd's cold welcome to the new pupils of Sacred Heart.
- C. Bobby's father's description of the war in Burma.
- D. Ailsa's recounting of the healing of the fawn.

A Prayer on the Beach**Chapter 30**

1. Bobby's interest in the healing of the fawn is due to a desire to help his father
4. The writer's use of dubious questions creates tension, as well as a foreboding doom.

An Unexpected Sighting**Chapters 31 and 32**

4. Bobby's mother's anxiety over her husband's health is apparent in
5. A discussion of the literary association of death and the sea is ad

Fond Memories**Chapter 35**

5. Pupils will need to understand that whereas the photograph protects Burma, it must also now look after him in his upcoming health of

Photo scandal**Chapter 36**

2. Pupils will need to relate to the fact that Daniel's father is often of photographs, as well as mentioning the fact that Daniel shows Bobby's father has taken in chapter 25.
3. Daniel's motive for the scandal is obviously due to Mr Todd's un Daniel and Bobby in chapter 20.

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Fire Eater Anagrams

- JOSEPH CONNOR
- AILSA SPINK
- ESCAPOLOGIST
- BURMA
- MISS BUTE
- MUSHROOM CLOUD
- KEELY BAY
- LUBBOCK
- GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Who am I?

1. McNulty
2. Ailsa
3. Bobby's mother
4. Miss Bute

Jam and Tea**Chapter 40**

2. Astute members of the class will identify how the rundown shack and mental state of McNulty.
5. The writer uses McNulty's ominous warnings to prepare the reader for the Crisis that affects all the characters for the rest of the novel. McNulty's character could be compared to other examples in literature and the Delphic oracle, King Lear's fool, etc.

Protests**Chapter 42**

4. Pupils will need to realise that Bobby and Daniel are protesting in London.

Religion Misused**Chapter 43**

3. An explanation of hypocrisy and irony would be useful here when teachers' use of religious sayings.

Freedom Cry**Chapter 44**

- b) The beautiful description of the autumn afternoon continues the theme throughout the novel of the beauty of the world and the threat of nuclear developments of the time. The emotive description of Bobby's experience of freedom while running home from school.

An Older Brother**Chapter 45**

Joseph Connor is one of the novel's most realistic characters, his mix of many "bad points" can fuse a discussion about people that pupils know. This duality. Students will need to be encouraged to look back over the character development in order to complete this exercise.

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Test Results

Chapter 46

1. The setting of the beginning of the chapter clearly indicates to the reader that the trip went, positive images and sense experiences are described, and the Burns family have received.

Escapology on the Beach

Chapter 51

4. McNulty's request can be seen as a pre-emptive example of his desire for escape. McNulty's prophet-like figure, hinting at the chaos threatening the world, is identified in this chapter. The escapologist seeks an end to the madness. His character symbolizes the foolishness of the world's political situation.

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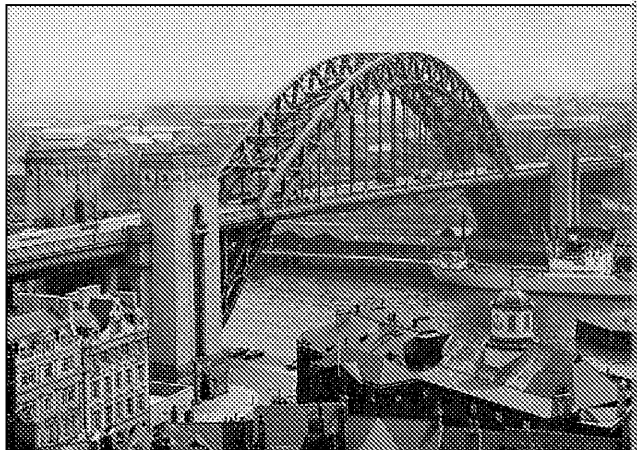
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McNulty

Chapter 1

1. Using words from the first chapter, write a description of McNulty.
2. Find **five** facts that we are given about McNulty's appearance.
3. What do we notice about the way that McNulty talks?
4. A quotation is an exact piece of writing taken from the text. "I wanted to escape" (page 6) is a quotation that tells us about McNulty. A quotation must always be inside inverted commas. Find a quotation that shows us how strange McNulty is to the other people in the novel.



Newcastle in 1962, when the novel is set

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THE LIFT RIDE

Chapter 2

1. How does the writer describe the person who operates the lift (page 10). Use a quotation from the text.
2. Find a quotation that describes his daily work? (page 10)
3. Describe the view from on top of the bridge. (bottom of page 11)
4. Draw a picture of this view, using the text on page 11.

Old Memories

Chapter 3

1. Explain what was happening in the world when Bobby's dad first met McNulty.
2. Find a quotation that shows us how the war affected McNulty.
3. Write a paragraph explaining how McNulty was treated during the war.
4. How has this cruelty affected the character of McNulty?
5. Write a diary entry by Bobby's dad, after finding the injured McNulty. Describe his emotions at seeing such cruelty.

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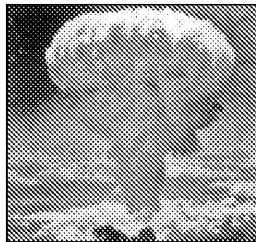
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NUCLEAR THREAT

Chapter 4

- 1. What new tests were made in the USA and Russia and what caused this cause?**
- 2. How does Bobby's dad react to this news? What does it say about his character?**
- 3. Why would Australia be a safe place for Bobby's family?**
- 4. What happens at the end of the chapter to maintain the nuclear threat?**
- 5. Imagine that you have just heard on the news that a nuclear explosion has begun involving your country. There is the threat of a nuclear explosion destroying your home, family and friends. Write an entry for this day, describing your fears and concerns about the nuclear threat.**



The "mushroom cloud" effect caused by a nuclear explosion

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Character Studie

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- ◆ When we write about a novel we must use a quotation to make our point.
- ◆ For example, if you want to say that McNulty is a strange and unusual person, you would write your answer like this:

McNulty

McNulty is a strange and unusual person. This is shown by the fact that he describes him as "he was a small, wild-eyed, bare-chested man" (p. 2).

You must always place the quotation within inverted commas.

You must also show the page number that your quotation is from (p. 6).

Task:

Main Characters

1. Copy the example quotation above into your book.
2. Now find a quotation that tells us something about a character. Write your answer in the same format as the example.
3. Then find a quotation that tells us something about another character.
4. Finally, find a quotation that tells us something about the Attendant's character.

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Joseph and the New Kid

Chapter 5

1. Make a bullet point list of all the details we learn about Joseph in this chapter.
2. How does Joseph behave towards Bobby?
3. What does the reader learn about Joseph's feelings towards school?
4. What information are we given about the "new kid"?
5. Write a dramatic monologue - a piece of writing revealing the opinions of a character - from Joseph's viewpoint. How does he feel about Bobby's academic success? Could he be jealous?

Worried for the Future

Chapters 6 and 7

1. Describe Bobby's feelings about the chance of a nuclear war.
2. What does the reader learn about the character Ailsa?
3. Describe the mysterious noise that Ailsa claims to hear. How was this included in the chapter?
4. What does Bobby's dad decide to do next Sunday?
5. At the end of chapter seven Bobby fills in his diary with notes about the events of his day. Rewrite the diary entry, this time using full short sentences with more detailed descriptions of what happened.

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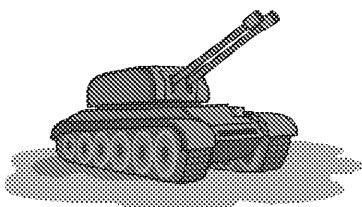
Taunting Daniel

Chapter 8

1. Make a list of all the new information in this chapter that the reader learns about the character Joseph.
2. Is Bobby comfortable with the taunting of Daniel? Find support your answer.
3. Draw this table into your exercise book, filling in the Joseph and Daniel.

	Joseph	
Family Life		
Behaviour		
Language		
School Life		
Social Skills		

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PLAYING WAR

Chapter 9

1. Clearly explain what Bobby and Joseph go into the pines to do.
2. What imaginary battles have the kids played over the years in from the text to support your answer.
3. Find a quotation from the chapter that shows Bobby's conce another war.
4. Why has the writer portrayed Bobby and Joseph as "playing w hinting at?
5. Do you agree with the concept of war? Write a three paragra your opinions on the subject of war. Clearly explain the reaso

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Ailsa's family

Chapter 10

- 1) Name all the members of Ailsa's family, including their h
- 2) Explain how Ailsa's family earn money. How do we know of their income for a long time?
- 3) How does Ailsa show her generosity in the chapter?
- 4) Find a quotation from the chapter that reveals Ailsa's family dad.
- 5) Using the text on page 47, draw a picture of Ailsa's home detail of the drawing, working closely with the exact text

COLLECTING COAL

Chapter 11

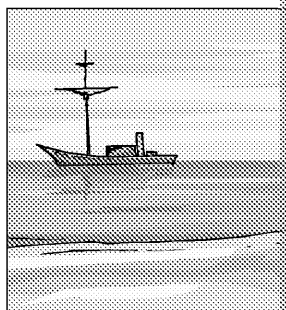
In this activity you are presented with *answers*, from which you can create questions.

For example: ANSWER: Collect coal from the sea.

The question could be "What does Bobby help Ailsa's family do in the chapter?"

There are no fixed correct questions, but they must be connected to the text. The more detailed, the better!

- a) ANSWER: Bare-legged.
- b) ANSWER: Black gold.
- c) ANSWER: A joke.
- d) ANSWER: Indifferent to school.
- e) ANSWER: Lasses learning.
- f) ANSWER: Wonderful.



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My Own Chapter

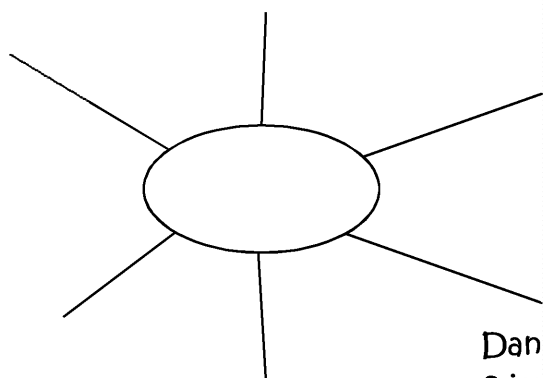
Sometimes when we read a novel we can be let down with what happens, but that something different had happened to the characters. Good readers can produce their own ideas for what events could occur in a story.

With the person sat next to you discuss all the different possibilities for what could happen in your next chapter of *The Fire Eaters*. Here are some ideas to get you started.

- Could you use a character that hasn't appeared in the story yet?
- Maybe you could give a minor character a major role within the chapter?
- What could be the funniest, scariest, or most interesting thing that could happen?

Draw and complete this brainstorm. Can you devise the most interesting storyline in the class? Once you have finished this you can write your own chapter of the novel!

Bobby's first day at school



Daniel's friend

MISSING PUNCTUATION

These two paragraphs have punctuation missing. Copy the paragraphs into your notebook, inserting the missing capital letters and full stops. All words are included.

the book i am reading is called fire eaters it is written by
the author the main character of the novel is bobby, who is
a new school

bobby's best friend is joseph connor, yet he is three years old
bobby also knows a girl called ailsa, who collects coal in
her father and her brothers yak and losh

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Daniel's Family

Chapter 12

Copy the table below into your exercise book, filling in information about Daniel's family that is provided.

Family Member	Details
Daniel	
Paul	
Pat	
Paul's brother	
Daniel's Sister	



The Horror of War

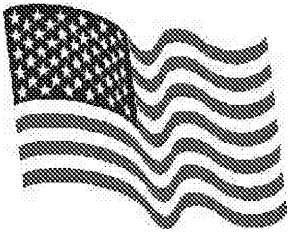
Chapter 13

- 1) Using the text from chapter 13, draw the gas mask shown, carefully labelling the picture with questions.**
- 2) Describe the photographs that are in the photo book.**
- 3) Explain why one of the photographs reminds Bobby of his dad.**
- 4) Looking at page 60, what images of war is the book trying to show? How can we understand the suffering of soldiers like McNulty?**
- 5) Bobby's dad calls his son "privileged", what does this mean?**

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THE COLD WAR

The Cold War was the open yet restricted struggle that developed between the United States and the Soviet Union (Russia). The *Cold War* because there were no actual weapon attacks (which is normal *hot war*). The war was fought by using other methods than as economic pressure, selective aid, diplomatic tricks, propaganda assassinations. The conflict lasted from 1947 until the collapse in 1991. The Cold War saw the first nuclear arms race in history.

This nuclear weapons race took place in many technological areas, resulting in many scientific discoveries. Particularly amazing was the field of rocketry, which led to the marvels of space travel. Almost all the rockets to launch humans and satellites into orbit were originally military.

After the atomic bombings of Japan, at the end of the Second World War, people were nervous and began to worry about the future of our world. *What was a Third World War? How far would the nuclear bombing go?* *Fire Eaters* it is easy to see how concerned people were during this period of constant fear of a nuclear attack, as well as his father's stories of war. It paints a vivid picture of this uncertain period in modern history.

TASK

1. Why was this war called "The Cold War"?
2. What methods were used to fight this war?
3. What discoveries were made in this period?
4. Why were people so afraid during The Cold War?

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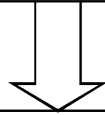
An
Unit

The Meeting

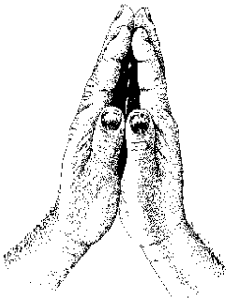
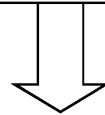
Chapter 14

Draw the flowchart cells below, carefully summarising the that Bobby and Daniel discuss. Now add new cells to the correct sequence of topics in the two boys' dialogue.

Bobby explains why Joseph behaves the way he does



Bobby tells Daniel that they will both be attending same school - Sacred Heart



A Prayer for Peace

Chapter 15

1. Describe what was “running through” Bobby’s mind when he awoke.
2. What is a “CND symbol”?
3. Find a quotation that reveals Bobby’s prayer in Chapter 15.
4. Explain what Bobby is praying for.
5. Why do you think Bobby’s dad is heard coughing? What could the writer be planning for the story later?

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Sunday in Newcastle

Chapter 16

Copy these three paragraphs into your books, insert words that are jumbled up in the box below.

Bobby and his father went to _____ early on a _____
They then had _____ at The _____, where
hard-boiled _____. They then caught a bus to
of McNulty.

It was _____ and very still in the city, whilst father
_____ walked around the shops. After looking at
items in a joke _____, a mysterious travelling woman
dad a "_____ for all ills".

They almost give up looking for _____, when the
_____ of fire blazing under the Newcastle _____
leads his son in the _____ of the flames...

eggs	plume	son	cold
	Newcastle	direction	
	McNulty	bridge	cure
		novelty	shop



Coatsworth Cinema, Newcastle

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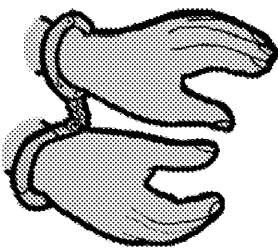
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Escapology

Escapology is the practice of escaping from restraints (like handcuffs and chains) or other traps. Escapologists have been known to make dazzling escapes from straitjackets, cages, steel boxes, barrels, bags, burning buildings, fish-tan and many other perils, often with combinations of dangers.

Some escapologists' tricks are achieved by illusionists' tricks, whilst others are genuine acts of strength and daring. The most legendary escapee is Harry Houdini. In 1913, he introduced his most famous trick, the Chinese Water Torture Cell, in which he was suspended down in a locked glass and steel cabinet full with water, in front of a live audience.



A modern day example of an escape artist is David Blaine, who performs many death-defying stunts. In 2003 he commenced a 44 day fast, during which he remained sealed inside a transparent plastic capsule suspended 30 feet in the air over the River Thames in London. He completed the challenge, surviving only on water and grimace.

Task

Create your own escapologist character. Give your character a name, describe their physical appearance and explain some of their escapologists' tricks that your character can perform.

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Avoiding the Past

Chapter 17

Using the text in chapter 17, can you find a quotation to support these statements?

- a. Fire eating is a very dangerous stunt.
- b. McNulty does not want to recognise Bobby's dad.
- c. McNulty hears strange noises.
- d. McNulty wants to avoid the past, deliberately not remembering.

Why do you think McNulty does not want to remember the past?
What have we learnt about his character in this chapter?

An Unexpected Gift

Chapter 18

- 1) What do Bobby's parents find so "miraculous" about the chapter?**
- 2) In what manner does Joseph first speak to Bobby?**
- 3) Why is the reader so surprised of Joseph giving a gift?**
- 4) How does Joseph act when giving the present?**
- 5) What personal touch did Joseph add to the present?**
- 6) Describe a person that you know, who reminds you of a person who likes to think they are very tough, but is a sensitive and kind individual.**

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First Day Nerves

Chapter 19

1. What disturbing stories have Daniel and his friends heard at their new school?
2. How do the older children on the bus treat "new kids"?
3. What other fears, apart from school, do the children have? Why has the writer included these concerns in this chapter?
4. What simile does Col use, at the end of the chapter, to describe his first day. Why is this simile appropriate?
5. Write an account of when you first went to secondary school. How did you feel? What were you nervous of? Who did you like? Who was it like?

MR TODD

Chapter 20

1. Describe how Mr Todd is dressed. Why does the writer stress this more than his face features?
2. Find a quotation from this chapter that shows how strict Mr Todd is.
3. Why does Mr Todd use the strap first on Bobby and then on the other children?
4. How does Mr Todd speak to the new children? How would you describe his tone and meaning?
5. Do you believe physical punishment should be brought back into schools? Consider both sides to the argument, discussing any points you have heard of the dreaded "cane". Form your answer into a paragraph.

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Happy at Home

Chapter 21

Using the text in chapter 21, find quotations to support these statements:

- A. Ailsa believes her family are not supposed to have an education.**
- B. Ailsa's family are confident they can earn money.**
- C. Ailsa is content to stay at home.**
- D. Ailsa's family have no fear of the council.**

Looking at these quotations, what does the reader learn about the characteristics and opinions of Ailsa's family?

The Miracle

Chapter 22

1. What is the miracle that Ailsa has to show Bobby?
2. What did Ailsa do to achieve this miracle?
3. The writer applies a beautiful description to the fawn on page 103: find this quotation and explain its effect.
4. Why is it so unusual for the fawn to be so young? (C)
5. Describe the most amazing thing or miracle that you have found. Use descriptive language to portray how miraculous the miracle made it so special?

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Dreams of Fire

Chapter 23

Imagine you are a filmmaker shooting the dream sequence in chapter 23.

You must plan ten screen shots, whilst using the text from the novel. Label each of your ten shots as well as sketching the appearance of each image.

You can then apply additional information to the plan: e.g. music, sound effects, lighting, costumes etc.

LESSON IN PAIN

Chapter 24

1. Explain what Bobby and Daniel are learning in the lesson.
2. What causes the disruption to the lesson?
3. What new details do we learn about the character Mr Todd in this chapter?
4. Why is it appropriate that they are having a “lesson in pain”? Explain the two different types of *pain* lessons they experience in this chapter.
5. Find a quotation that shows the reader how Mrs Todd and Mr Todd’s “discipline”.
6. Describe the strictest teacher you have ever come across. How does he/she compare to Mr Todd? Is it important to have a strict teacher and if so, how far should the punishment go?

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CLASS DIFFERENCES

Chapter 25

1. How would Diggy's dad react to seeing that his son had been physically punished?
2. How is Daniel's father different to the other boys?
3. What is Daniel's opinion of Ailsa's family and Joseph?
4. How does Bobby react to Daniel's prejudiced opinion?
5. Who do you think is the better friend to Bobby: Daniel or Diggy? Would you advise Bobby to deal with these two conflicts?

HEALTH CONCERNS

Chapter 26

Find quotations from this chapter that can support these statements.

1. Bobby's dad had been ill at work.
2. Bobby's mum tries to "put a brave face" on things.
3. Throughout the chapter the reader is reminded of Bobby's dad's illness. Find three quotations.
4. Bobby's mum is concerned about her husband's health.
5. The writer hints of "death to come" at the end of the chapter.

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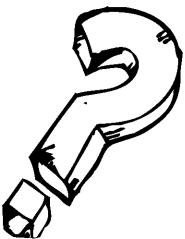
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Seeking McNulty

Chapters 27 and 28

1. Who does Bobby try to imitate in chapter 27.
2. Find a quotation from this chapter that shows Bobby's desire to be someone else. **Why** does he want this?
3. Make a bullet-point list, in chronological order, of what Bobby and his mother do in Newcastle in chapter 27.
4. What do we learn about the general public opinion of McNulty in chapter 28? Use a quotation in your answer.
5. At the end of the chapter we hear the description of a shelter which can be built for protection against a nuclear attack. Find a quotation from the text, working closely with the text, whilst carefully noting down the details with quotations.



Who Said What?

Can you identify the speaker of each of these quotations, and what is happening at each point of the novel?

- A. "On the ground. In holes, in doorways and alleyways, nobody passes."
- B. "Many of you will find that you are separated from the world. This is not a playgroup or a happy family."
- C. "while the sun glared down and the bullets rattled and the bombs fell and the sun blazed down"
- D. "Nothing happened. And I fell asleep, and all night I dreamed of running through fields and woods"

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Visit from the Council

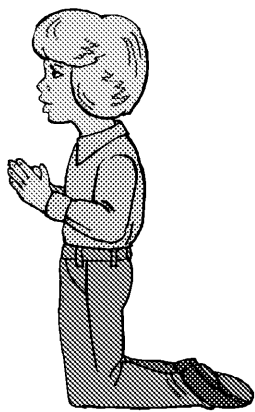
Chapter 29

In this activity you will write a play script of the council visit, as reported by Ailsa in chapter 29.

- Using the text from chapter 29, make detailed notes of the council visit.
- Make a list of all the characters you will need to include in your play script, followed by a brief description of their role in the novel. Place these names under the title: *Dramatis Personae*.
- Now begin writing your play script. Create an accurate account of the novel's events and faithful depictions of the characters. Remember to place each speaker's name in the margin, whilst putting stage directions in square brackets.

A Prayer on the Beach

Chapter 30



1. Why is Bobby so interested in the fawn?
2. Describe how they make their journey.
3. Make a list of all the dubious and dangerous questions asked by Bobby in this chapter.
4. Why has the writer placed this story? For what *effect* have they been trying to achieve?

5. Prayer is a dominant theme in the novel *The Fire Eaters*. Bobby is unsure of his faith, he still wishes to pray. Why do you think humans need this desire to pray; does it is an important activity for everyone?

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AN UNEXPECTED SIGHTING

Chapters 31 and 32

1. How does Bobby first recognise McNulty on the beach?
2. How does Ailsa describe her life when her mother died?
3. Looking on page 143, make a list of all the words and phrases being in love. E.g. "shining stars".
4. Why does Bobby's mum ask him to be quiet in chapter 32?
5. Here is the final paragraph of the chapter:

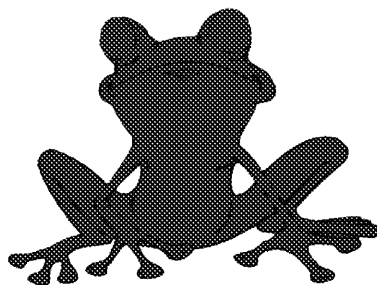
We listened. Just deep silence, and the new dawn over the sea.

What is the writer *suggesting* might happen later on in the novel?

The Dissection

Chapter 33

- 1. Explain the two reasons why the children behave like this.**
- 2. Find a quotation that shows Miss Bute's respect for the children.**
- 3. Find another quotation which demonstrates Miss Bute's skill in performing the dissection. (page 149)**
- 4. What are the final questions that Miss Bute poses to the children?**
- 5. Using your answers from the four previous questions, describe the character of Miss Bute. What new details have you discovered about her?**



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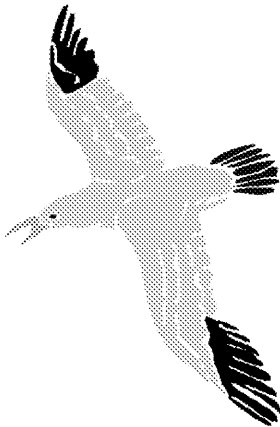
THE NEWCOMER

Chapter 34



1. The chapter begins with Joseph
2. Joseph has discovered that
3. Before looking for the newcomer,
4. His dad has just returned from
5. Bobby and Joseph eat a scone
6. They eventually see McNulty,
7. McNulty notices the two boys and
8. The escapologist does not

**Write each half
into your exercise
by its correct order
below ()**



- A. Bobby drops his book
- B. runs up to them, saying
- C. whilst looking along the
- D. recognise Bobby, and
- E. apologising to Bobby
- F. as he practises his
- G. the hospital, behind
- H. there is a new visitor

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Fond Memories

Chapter 35

1. How does Bobby's dad describe the appeal of autumn evenings?
2. What fond memories does he have on page 162?
3. What did he take with him to Burma? Why was it special?
4. Why does Bobby's mum call her son "privileged"?
5. Explain why Bobby's mum returns the photo to her husband. What does it mean when she says "Look after him *again*"?

PHOTO SCANDAL

Chapter 36

1. Explain what the "Photo scandal" is in Chapter 36.
2. What connection does Daniel have to photographs in previous chapters?
3. What is Daniel's motive (reason) for the scandal?
4. Find a quotation from this chapter that shows Todd's cruelty towards the photographs.
5. Name all the places where the photographs are found.
6. Using one of the descriptions of the photographs in the chapter, create a drawing of Todd's cruelty. Label your picture with a quote from the text.

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Fire Eater Anagrams

Can you unscramble these anagrams into words from the novel?

- ROCNNO SOHPEJ
- KIPSN LAISA
- AGILTSCEPOOS
- RABMU
- TUBE SIMS
- UCDOL RUMOSMOH
- YBA EKELY
- BOUCLBK
- HOCLSO MARGARM

- **Now make five of your own anagrams from *The Fire Eaters* and devise one that no one else can decipher?**

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THE ASSEMBLY

Chapter 37

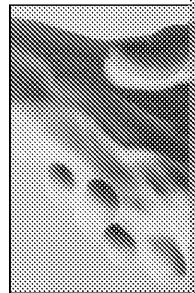
1. Why is there an assembly called in the afternoon?
2. How does the writer describe the atmosphere of the assembly in your answer.
3. Describe the methods used by the head teacher to discipline the pupils.
4. How does the writer show us Daniel's parents' involvement in the school?
5. Imagine you are Mr Todd interviewing Bobby about the assembly. Write down six questions you would ask Bobby, followed by the answers the pupil would give in return. Would he reveal the truth?

Standing Together

Chapter 38

Can you finish these six incomplete sentences with this chapter?

- a) At the beginning of the chapter Bobby tells his mum ...
- b) Bobby's mum is distracted because...
- c) That night Bobby is awoken by...
- d) He makes a promise that...
- e) The next day Bobby tells Daniel...
- f) Despite knowing they will be caught...

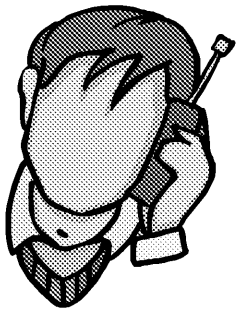


Using your understanding of the events of this chapter, write a diary entry by Daniel, voicing his feelings about Bobby and the photograph campaign.

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Who am I?

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Try to work out who these four characters are from the novel:

1. Nowt! You'll get nowt till you've paid! How 'bout the fire? Are you ready for the flames! Who am I?
2. I don't need to go to school. There's no point in learning nowt and going to university, 'cos Dad says there's enough coal to last a lifetime. Who am I?
3. Eh, Bobby, you look so grand in your new school uniform. You do our family proud, going to that big posh school. Who am I?
4. All life is sacred, even the smallest living being. It's all important. We should only conduct experiments in the pursuit of scientific knowledge. Who am I?

Now create two of your own "Who am I?" paragraphs for another two characters from The Fire Eaters. Try to give your writing detailed facts from the novel.

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McNulty in the Middle

Chapter 39

In chapter 29 we can see the differences of opinion about McNulty. Some characters sympathise with him, whilst others do not trust him at all. By filling in the table below we can realise the reasons for each character's opinion of the unusual McNulty.

Character	Opinion of McNulty	Reasons
Bobby's dad		
Losh and Yak		
Bobby		
Ailsa's dad		
Newcastle market staff (see chapter 28)		
Joseph		

Jam and Tea

Chapter 40

1. How does the writer describe McNulty's shack? Use a descriptive word in your answer.
2. **Why** does the writer describe the shack like this?
3. Make a list of all the strange things that McNulty does in this chapter. Why does he act like this?
4. What does McNulty warn Bobby and Ailsa of?
5. What happens at the end of the chapter? How does this relate to McNulty's ominous warnings?



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CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

This was a major clash between the United States and the Soviet Union in October 1962, which was due to the USSR placing nuclear missiles in Cuba.

The USSR premier Khrushchev had promised to protect Cuba in 1960, but he did not expect the United States to take steps to prevent this. The USA was very concerned about the nuclear missiles that Khrushchev had placed in Cuba as such weapons could hit much of the eastern United States within minutes.



On October 22nd the US President John F. Kennedy decided to surround the island of Cuba (a naval blockade), to stop missiles from being shipped to Cuba from Russia. During the following days the world came close to the brink of nuclear war, whilst messages were exchanged between Kennedy and Khrushchev during extreme tension.

On October 28 Khrushchev gave in and informed Kennedy that the missiles already in Cuba would be removed and returned to the USSR. In return, Kennedy promised that the United States would never invade Cuba.

The Cuban missile crisis marked the closest point in the Cold War that the world had ever come to global nuclear war.

Imagine you are a news reporter, who must report on the Cuban Missile Crisis on October 22nd, as in chapter 40. Use the information from the three paragraphs above in your news report.

Don't forget to explain why Kennedy has decided to impose a naval blockade, the USSR's ships, the concerns of the world and the end of the Missile Crisis".

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No Point?

Chapter 41

1. What does Daniel teach the other boys on the 1st of June?
2. Find a quotation that shows Daniel's surprise at the boys' lack of knowledge.
3. Find a second quotation that reveals how "cut off" the other boys are from the "real world".
4. At the end of the chapter Ed declares "There's no more nowt". Explain why the boys think this.
5. Daniel's refusal to give up is shown when he puts his foot onto this lapel. Imagine you are going to attend a nuclear weapons protest in the capital. Write three protest chants or shout for the disarmament of nuclear weapons.

Protests

Chapter 42

1. Describe what Bobby and his dad saw on the news that night.
2. Does Bobby's dad agree with protesting?
3. Find a quotation that shows why Bobby was so "reckless" the next day.
4. How are the CND riots in London similar to what Bobby is doing?
5. Imagine how the headmaster Mr Grace is going to react to Daniel's voluntary confession. Write a dramatic monologue for Mr Grace when he addresses the boys. What will he say?

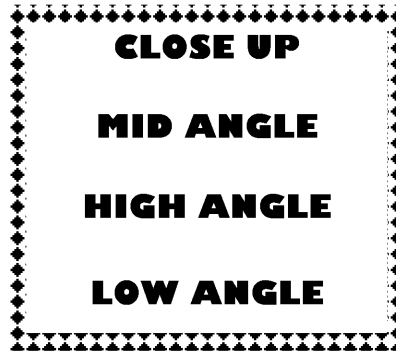
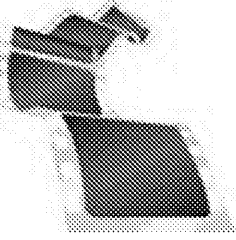


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CAMERA ANGLES



Can you match the correct camera angle definitions to the correct names in the box above?

- a. This is shot from below the character and makes the character appear powerful and frightening.**
- b. This shows characters from the waist up and is a close shot, sociable and allowing more character to be seen.**
- c. This shows a character's face and focuses on their emotions.**
- d. This is shot from above the character, and makes them appear vulnerable.**

Choose a character from the novel for each Camera Angle box (choose two for Mid Angle) and draw how you would portray this person in a film adaptation of *The Fire Eaters*. Write an explanation of why you chose each character for their chosen camera angle.



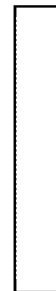
HIGH ANGLE



MID ANGLE



CLOSE UP



LOW ANGLE

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Religion Misused

Chapter 43

1. How does Mr Grace describe the two “offenders” at the beginning of the chapter?
2. Make a list of all the religious icons and references made in this chapter.
3. Why is it so strange (or ironic) that the cruel teacher use religious sayings?
4. Do you agree that what Daniel and Bobby have done is work of the “devil”? Or this *ironic* too?
5. Why has the writer included so many religious references in this chapter? What is he trying to make the reader realise?

FREEDOM CRY

Chapter 44

- a) Describe the autumn afternoon as Bobby runs home.
- b) What effect does this beautiful description give to the story? Consider the nuclear threat facing the world.
- c) Make a list of the things that Bobby wishes to achieve.
- d) Name all the characters that Bobby sees on the beach.
- e) Using the description of Keely Bay at the end of the chapter, draw a seascape with each character’s position on the beach labelled.

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An Older Brother

Chapter 45

Joseph Connor is a hybrid character, one who has many good points (e.g. loyalty to Bobby) and many bad points making him a realistic person. Fill in the table below with the good things he has done so far throughout the novel, followed by the bad things he has done.

Good Actions	Bad Actions

- Now consider how Joseph helps Bobby in chapter 45. How does he help his younger friend? Is Joseph overall a kind person or a behaved brute?

TEST RESULTS

Chapter 46

1. Describe the atmosphere of Bobby's home when he enters at the beginning of the chapter.
2. How does the writer show Bobby's dad's test results in the atmosphere?
3. Find a quotation that reveals Bobby's surprise.
4. Now rewrite the beginning of this chapter, this time with the opposite test results. What images will you use to show the results in a different way?

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Movie Scene Plan

Imagine you are a filmmaker who has been asked to make the novel movie. You have been set the task of planning these three key scenes. Consider what factors will make the shooting of these scenes the most ideal camera angle for each scene, drawing how it will appear in the

McNulty performs tricks in Newcastle	Bobby talks with Ailsa on the beach	
Camera Angle _____	Camera Angle _____	Camera Angle _____
Setting:		
Lighting:		
Music:		
Costume:		
Make-Up:		
Special and Sound Effects:		

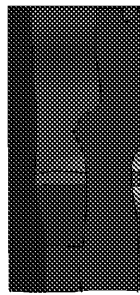
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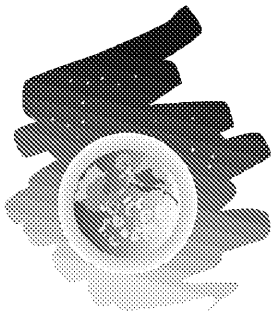
At the Gates of Hell

Chapters 47 and 48



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1. Make a list of all the light and dark references made in chapter 47.
2. Copy this half sentence into your book, finishing the rest
chapter 47 the writer's use of light and dark images give
3. Explain why "the gates of hell" is a good description of w
time.
4. What exactly is Bobby proposing to do in chapter 48?
5. Write your own version of Bobby's notebook entry, descri
things you would be willing to give up in order to save the
beautiful details of home and friends that the writer has



THE LAST DAY?

Chapter 49

Bobby's friends and family spend the day together on the beach that it could very well be their last day. Fill in the table with how their awareness of the Earth's doom, following with a quotation that shows this action.

Character	Last Day Action	Ex
Bobby	He prays many times for the world's safety.	"Don't let safe" page
Joseph		
Mr Spink		
Ailsa		
Losh and Yak		
Mr Gower		

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An Unexpected Invitation

Chapter 50

The troubled character of McNulty develops over a period of time during the novel. For instance, in chapter 50 the reader learns about McNulty's character when he weeps at Bobby's invitation to join everyone.

Explain what we have learnt about McNulty's character in each of the chapters:

Chapter 1: Bobby meets McNulty in Newcastle

Chapter 2: Bobby's dad recounts McNulty's past

Chapter 17: McNulty and Bobby's dad meet again

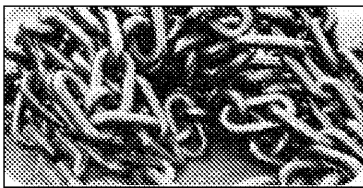
Chapter 31: McNulty arrives at Keely Bay in the evening

Chapter 34: Joseph and Bobby spy on McNulty

Chapter 39: The Spinks family see McNulty

Chapter 40: Bobby and Ailsa have jam and tea with McNulty

Chapter 50: McNulty is invited to join everyone on the beach



Escapology of McNulty

Chapter 51

1. How do Bobby and Ailsa help McNulty on his way to the beach?
2. What effect does McNulty's arrival have on the others? Give your answer.
3. Name the two tricks that McNulty performs on the beach.
4. Explain **why** McNulty asks for "*the thing that'll make me a man*" and what he means. Why does he ask McNulty to ask for this?
5. Imagine it is the last day of your life: what would you do? Whom would you spend time with? Describe what you would do in a similar situation to the characters of the novel.

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The Greatest of the Fire Eaters

Chapters 52 and 53

Find quotations from the text to support the statements below:

- a) McNulty is unable to communicate with other people.
- b) The writer repeatedly uses descriptions of fire in the examples)
- c) Bobby's dad describes what makes a very good Fire Eater
- d) McNulty shows himself to be the Greatest of the Fire Eaters in Chapter 52.
- e) McNulty no longer demands money in Chapter 53.
- f) The writer portrays the lifeless body of McNulty.

Outcomes

Chapter 54

Copy and fill in this table into your books, explaining what you think of the following characters at the end of the novel.

Character	Outcome
Bobby's Dad	
Miss Bute	
The fawn	
Daniel	
Ailsa	
McNulty	

Are you satisfied with the overall outcomes of this novel?

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Final Tasks

1. Rewrite the last chapter of *The Fire Eaters*. Can you make it original? Will you have a happy or sad ending? Any mystery? Maybe a final plot twist?

Carefully make a plan of the events that will happen in your last chapter. Once you have planned your work you can begin writing it!



2. Imagine that you are a director of children's television programmes. You are asked to direct a four part series of the novel *The Fire Eaters*. Each part is half an hour long.

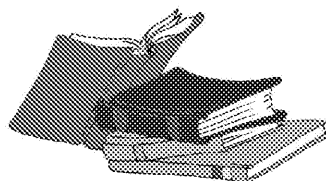
You must plan what exactly happens in each episode of the series. You must evenly plan out the events of the novel. For example, you could have the first ten chapters in three episodes and have to squash the last ten chapters into one episode! Clearly describe the events of each episode.

3. Design a newspaper article about the relief felt by all of the people of the Bay when finding out that the threat of Nuclear War has ended. What would your headline be? Your story needs to cover how the events of the *supposed* last day, the unfortunate death of McNulty and the fate of the main characters.

A good newspaper article must have: an interesting headline, a picture, quotations from people in the report, and the use of the 5Ws – who, where, when, what and why.

4. Imagine that you are a book reviewer for a national newspaper. You are asked to write a review of *The Fire Eaters*. In your review you must include: the characters you liked and why, the use of tension created by the author, and your overall opinion of the novel.

A good book review should include: a star rating of the novel, a short summary, an attractive layout with a picture, and a well structured piece of writing with several paragraphs. Would you advise your audience to read *The Fire Eaters*?



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