New Windmills titles are supported by a full scheme of work, including a medium-term study plan, 15 individual lesson plans, and Student, Teacher and OHT resource sheets. These resources help students to engage with the novel and assist with your planning.

Each set of resources includes a set of self-contained lessons which can be used to supplement your own teaching plans, or to provide extra support for specific teaching points. Each activity is individually mapped against the Framework Objectives and Assessment Foci. There are also guided reading and reading journal activities, plus suggestions for further study areas including speaking and listening, writing, reading and drama activities. If your students have enjoyed reading this novel, there are ideas for other New Windmills they may like to read for pleasure.

Resources for Tins:
- Synopsis 2
- Activate prior learning 2
- Activity sheets (Student sheets and OHTs) 3
- Teacher’s notes 18
- Reading journal 21
  - General reading journal 21
  - Tins reading journal prompts 24
- Further study areas 28
- Reading for pleasure 28
- Medium-term study plan 29
- Individual lesson plans 32

Activities by Mike Royston
The following pages can be downloaded and printed out as required. This material may be freely copied for institutional use. However, this material is copyright and under no circumstances can copies be offered for sale. The publishers gratefully acknowledge permission to reproduce copyright material.
Synopsis

Fergal collects tins. Without labels. They stand in a row on his bedroom shelf. Unopened.

His worried parents tell him it has to stop at 50. But Fergal’s fiftieth tin turns out to be unusual. It is very light and it rattles. When he opens it he finds a gold ear stud. Soon after, he comes across another lightweight tin. This one contains a real human finger. He hides it in the freezer.

On the hunt for more canned body parts, Fergal meets a fellow tin collector, Charlotte. They share their findings. She has discovered a signet ring. And a human ear. The ring fits the finger. The gold stud fits the ear.

Fergal and Charlotte join forces to find more ‘light’ tins. The next one has a message inside: the word HELP scrawled on a dirty scrap of paper. Checking the serial numbers of the light tins, they work out they all come from the same food factory.

Charlotte goes away on holiday. Fergal goes missing from home. He has found a tin with the same serial number as the light tins and the name of the factory on it. When he visits the factory, only a few miles from his home, he is caught trespassing by the owner and his wife. Mr Dimble-Smith lacks a ring finger. Mrs Dimble-Smith is missing an ear.

Aware that Fergal knows too much, the Dimble-Smiths enslave him in the factory. Along with a workforce of other child labourers, ‘bought’ cheaply from abroad, he has to fill and seal tins of pet food twelve hours a day. Like them, he is starved and ill-treated. Finally, he manages to write a letter about his imprisonment and slip it into an empty tin. He has a sixth sense that Charlotte will find it.

She does. But when she tells the police, they decide her story is too incredible to believe. Charlotte’s only hope is to go to the factory and try to rescue Fergal herself.

At the climax of the story, against all the odds, her rescue bid succeeds. Fergal and the other child labourers are freed. The Dimble-Smiths are never heard of again. But some time later, when Fergal’s father is opening a tin of cat food, he is startled to find it contains a human toenail …

Activate prior learning

This highly original novel is a fantasy thriller. It combines several genres – crime, horror, mystery and humour. Some awareness of this range of fictional genres will be helpful to students as they reflect on the novel’s style and structure.

The author’s treatment of child labour in the second half of the book has a serious dimension. Students will benefit from knowing something about the realities of this social problem, not only abroad but in this country too.
1 What’s inside *Tins*?

- **Unsuitable for adults:** may contain body parts
- ‘This book does what it says on the tin’
  *Canned Weekly*
- ![Warning: traces of nuts](WARNING_ICON)
- And what was just a screwball hobby becomes a deadly can of worms.

---

**Events that happen in *Tins***

- Two of the characters die a gruesome death
- Fergal vanishes
- A large number of children are kept imprisoned
- Some body parts are stored in a freezer – until it defrosts during a power cut
### Fergal’s character

**Name:** ___________________________  **Date:** ___________________________

#### Evidence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>clever</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eccentric</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imaginative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a loner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>likes to be organised</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a boffin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>looking for adventure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inquisitive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chat-room conversation

Name: __________________________ Date: __________________

**Rin Tin Tin:** Take no notice of these saddos, Nerdy-Boy. I’m into tin collecting too. Great hobby.

**Nerdy-Boy:** You are?! No, I bet you’re just winding me up, like the others.

**Rin Tin Tin:** No way, Nerdy-Boy, no way. Do you want to talk tins – or shall we put the lid on this conversation right now?

**Nerdy-Boy:** No … yes … no! Don’t sign off, please!

How might this conversation continue?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
# Planning frame for ‘The Finger’ story

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name: __________________________</th>
<th>Date: __________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sequence of events</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 ➔</td>
<td>2 ➔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 ➔</td>
<td>6 ➔</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

© Harcourt Education Limited, 2007
Fergal spidergram

imaginative: creates dramatic stories in his mind

clever: has an original and intelligent mind
determined: sticks at things and isn’t put off by difficulty

FERGAL

likes to have a problem to solve and is good at doing it

a loner: doesn’t have or make many friends

seeks adventure: perhaps to make up for leading a rather unexciting life

likes to have a problem to solve and is good at doing it
Role play instructions

Name: ______________________________ date: ________________

Decide who will play the part of which mother.

Then discuss:
- Are their mothers proud of Fergal and Charlotte?
- Do they like to boast about their children?
- Why are they rather worried about their children?
- Why do they find so much to talk about?

Start planning the conversation here and continue on a separate page if you run out of space.

Fergal’s mother ______________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________

Charlotte’s mother ___________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________

Fergal’s mother ______________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________

Charlotte’s mother ___________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________

Fergal’s mother ______________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________

Charlotte’s mother ___________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
1. The writer keeps you wondering about what may happen next.
2. The writer keeps taking you by surprise: what happens is not what you expect.
3. The writer keeps changing your mind about why things happen as they do.

### Suspense chart for chapters 2, 3, 5, 9 and 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>End of chapter</th>
<th>Why is it suspenseful?</th>
<th>What kind of suspense is it?</th>
<th>Suspense rating 1–10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Plan and write a description of one of the following:

- the huge variety of things you find on a rubbish tip
- the huge variety of pupils you find in a school
- the huge variety of people in a football crowd or in a busy shopping centre or at a Theme Park
- the huge variety of vehicles on a motorway.

Write from the viewpoint of someone involved in what you describe. For instance, you could be searching frantically through a rubbish tip for something you lost at home. Or you could be hemmed in by hundreds of pupils at break time. And so on …

Bring out your feelings as well as what you see and hear. You can write either in prose or in free verse. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.
10 Reporter’s notebook

Complete the reporter’s notes started here.

Story: Missing boy, Fergal Bamfield. Mystery – but mother says ‘an unusual boy’

When? Last Saturday, a.m.

Where? From home – just back from Pricewise supermarket with mother

What? F. eager to leave supermarket – drove home with Mrs B. – asked to go to town square

Possible reason for disappearance: Tins (!)? – mother says F. in ‘an excitable state’

Witnesses: ?

Mother’s condition: hysterical – sister staying to help her cope

Father’s condition: feels guilty (was playing golf at the time) – out looking for F. ‘every minute of the day’

Interview: Charlotte ? – away on holiday – shares F’s interest in tins
Jonathan Dimble-Smith’s own story

Name: ___________________________ Date: ________________

Bought an old isolated farm – converted it into a food factory
Charlotte’s journey: peaks and troughs rescue graph

Key
A = Charlotte cannot persuade her mother to tell the police about Fergal [bad]
B = She cannot tell Fergal’s parents she knows where he is because they are away from home [worse]
C = She tells the police but they refuse to believe her, so she has to go to the factory alone [worse]
D = She manages to get over the factory wall without being seen, despite the fierce dogs [getting better]
## 13 Review chart

Name: ____________________________  Date: ______________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Least interesting ones</th>
<th>Most interesting ones</th>
<th>Least exciting parts</th>
<th>Most exciting parts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

© Harcourt Education Limited, 2007
The term ‘child labour’ applies to children aged five to sixteen who are made to work in ways that harm their healthy development.

Worldwide, there are approximately 250 million child labourers. This is 16 percent of the world’s children. Most of them get no education.

One in twelve child labourers work in dangerous jobs. Many of these die, or have their health permanently damaged, by the age of ten.

In the south of Africa, 30 per cent of children aged five to fourteen are working. The figure for Asia is 19 per cent, for the Caribbean 16 per cent and for the Middle East 15 per cent.

It is not only poverty that drives children into work. Employers are keen to recruit children, since they will work cheaply and can be forced to do things adults will not tolerate.

Child labour is a problem in the UK. For example, Thorpe Park theme park in Surrey was fined in 2002 when it admitted illegally employing fourteen teenagers. The child employment officer for Surrey said: ‘Senior staff at the park were aware of the law but took no steps to comply with it’.
15 Where to find further information

Name: ________________________________  Date: ________________

Websites of organisations

- International Labour Organisation
- Comic Relief
- BBC
- UNICEF
- Make Poverty History
- Sports Relief
- Save the Children
- World Health Organisation

© Harcourt Education Limited, 2007
Lesson 1

Preparing and presenting talks to a small group

There are several websites dedicated to unusual collections. In advance of the lesson, compile a list of website addresses and screen out any which contain material inappropriate for this age group. Useful reference books include Guinness World Records.

Students tend to find too much information and become overwhelmed by it. Keep emphasising that they only need enough for a three-minute talk. Advise them to prepare notes by listing bullet points on a single piece of card. This will also help ensure they give a talk rather than a ‘reading’.

Nominate a lesson in the near future for the talks to be given. Remind students of their audience: a small group, rather than the whole class. Afterwards, ask groups to assess each speaker according to the following criteria:

- being well-prepared
- speaking clearly and confidently
- keeping the thread going without stalling or over-hesitating
- communicating through eye-contact, body language and gesture.

Lesson 6

Guided reading questions about Charlotte

In Chapter 7, what do we learn about Charlotte from:

1. Her struggle with Fergal over the tin in the bargain basket (pages 60–61)?
2. ‘The girl gave him a defiant look’ (page 62)?
3. ‘I get it first for a week. And then you get it for a week’ (page 63)?
4. ‘She’s thought to be highly intelligent’ (page 66)?
5. ‘If some girls were delicate, Charlotte plainly was not one of the overly sensitive variety. “The more gruesome the better,” she said’ (page 67)?

In Chapter 8, what do we learn about Charlotte from:

1. ‘Charlotte didn’t stand on ceremony or bother with any polite small talk’ (page 72)?
2. ‘She pointed to a tin with an old-fashioned red-and-white label reading Corned Beef. … Cost fifty quid’ (page 72)?
3. ‘Any reason why girls shouldn’t be stroppy – not that I am stroppy, but if I was is there any reason why I shouldn’t be?’ (page 74)?
4. ‘I’ve got gruesome as good as you. Possibly even better’ (page 76)?
5. ‘“Totally, double gross!” she agreed, with a certain pride in her voice’ (page 77)?
Lesson 7

The Plenary

Points that can usefully be discussed with the class following their role plays include:

- Did it help you to understand the two characters better? If so, what have you learned about them?
- Do you like this way of exploring characters – as opposed, say, to making notes or writing character profiles?
- How did it feel when you were acting in front of another pair? Was it difficult to ‘keep going’?
- What are the best ways to plan and rehearse a role play?
- What have you learned that will be helpful to you next time you do a role play?

Lesson 8

Advice for filling in the suspense chart

The aim is for students to make brief, relevant points in each column rather than go into great detail. They should use short phrases or single sentences.

For column 2, ‘It makes you wonder where the finger came from and you have to read on to find out’ or ‘It means that someone may have been killed and you read on to see who it is’ are fine. For column 3, students should refer back to one or more of the statements about suspense on their Student Sheets. For column 4, ‘8 – because it takes you by surprise that someone is trying to get help, and now you think they may be in danger of their lives’ is fine.

The purpose of this activity is for students to express what is going on in their heads as they read, rather than make all their responses in retrospect. It is important for them to understand something about how, as well as what, they read.

Lesson 9

Code-breaking puzzles

You may well have your own favourites, in which case use one of them for the Starter.

Two that normally work well are:

1. Students write out the alphabet and give each letter a number. This must follow a logical pattern – e.g. B = 3, C = 4, etc. They then write a short message to their partner. ‘Have you done your Maths homework?’ = 9, 2, 23, 6 / 26, 16, 23 / 5, 16, 15, 6 / 26, 16, 15, 6 / 14, 2, 21, 9, 20 / 9, 16, 14, 6, 24, 16, 19, 11.

2. Substitute hieroglyphs for the letters of the alphabet, again using a logical pattern. Students draw 26 small boxes and use dots, diagonals, crosses, etc. to fill them. The pattern must be able to be discerned by the code breaker, so the simpler the better.
Lesson 13

Completing the peaks and troughs rescue graph

Distribute graph paper or sheets of A3.

Each point on the graph represents a significant stage in Charlotte’s rescue attempt.
Advise students that a maximum of eight further points will be quite sufficient. Six will be fine.

The rest of the graph will mainly go ‘up’, though Charlotte encounters some setbacks which make it dip. Students must decide for themselves how far ‘up’ or ‘down’ to plot each point on the basis of where earlier entries have been made.

Emphasise that filling in the key is the most important part of this task. Students should use only one sentence for each entry, as in the model. One of their purposes is to write concisely.

Lesson 15

Information about child labour

Websites of the following organisations:

UNICEF
Save the Children
World Health Organisation
International Labour Organisation
BBC
Comic Relief
Sports Relief
Make Poverty History
Reading journal

This reading journal is designed to help you record your thoughts about the book you are reading. It is not intended to include only polished pieces of writing, but rather a collection of your developing responses to a text. To become a better reader, it helps to write an entry at the end of each reading session in class or at home, noting:

- The strategies you have been using as you read, e.g. reading backwards and forwards, skimming, inferring.
- Your responses to what happens/what characters do and say, and ask what the writer has done to make you feel this way.
- The questions in your mind as you read, e.g. what you are wondering about at the moment.
- The themes and patterns that you notice in the plot or the language used.
- Similarities and connections to other books you have read.
- Parts of the book (words, lines) that you have enjoyed.
- How what happens in the book relates to your own experiences and feelings.

The notes you make will be useful to look back on, especially before writing about the book. For example, it will show how the author has made a character change and affected your feelings about him/her as the book progresses.

Before starting to read …

Ask yourself:
- What can I tell about the book from its front cover and the blurb on the back cover?
- Have I read any other books by this writer? What were they about?

It is often useful to make a very brief timeline like the one below to track the main events, changes in narrator, scenes and characters. When you write about the book in the future, this time-chart will remind you where things that happen are described.

While reading …

Ask yourself:
- What does the opening tell me about the themes and ideas, characters and setting of the book?
- In what ways does the writer grab my attention?
- How many points of view on events am I given?
- What would I like to ask the author if I met him/her?
Name: ........................................... Year: ..............
Text title: .....................................................................
Text type: .....................................................................
Author: ........................................................................
Date started: ................. Date finished: .................
As soon as you have finished reading a book …

Ask yourself:
- Can I sum up the main idea of the text in three sentences?
- Which characters have changed and why? Which have stayed the same?
- Who would I recommend this book to and why?

Award a book rating (between 1 and 5 stars, where ★ = poor and ★★★★★ = excellent).

Write a review below summarising your thoughts about the book.
Use the questions below to help you fill in your English reading journal. What you write will not be ‘marked’ by your teacher, only read.

Chapter 1
Once you have read Chapter 1, jot down a few thoughts about:
- What sort of boy is Fergal?
- Why is his hobby unusual?
- What opinion have you formed of Fergal? Do you like him?

Chapter 2
- What do Fergal’s parents think of him?
- How is Fergal’s fiftieth tin different from all the others?
- What do you think may be inside it?

Chapter 3
- Why does Fergal get angry with his mother? Would you?
- What do you think the author wants us to think about Fergal’s hobby?
- What do you guess the gold object might be?

Chapter 4
- How do you think the stud can possibly have got into the tin?
- Do you feel sorry for Fergal when the chat-room callers make fun of him?
- If you were Fergal, what would you do to investigate where the stud comes from?

Chapter 5
- How can a real human finger have got into a tin?
- Do you think this book is going to turn out to be a horror story?
- If you were Fergal, would you report what you have found to the police? Why, or why not?
Chapter 6
- Why does Fergal decide not to report the finger?
- Do you think the family freezer is a sensible place to store the finger?
- ‘There had to be an explanation’ (page 53). What is yours?

Chapter 7
- What are your first impressions of Charlotte? Do you find her a likeable person?
- Why do you think the author introduces another tin collector at this point in the story?
- Can you see any similarities in character between Fergal and Charlotte?

Chapter 8
- What connection might there be between the things the two youngsters have found in their tins?
- How does the mystery deepen in this chapter?
- Do you think this book is going to turn out to be a murder story?

Chapter 9
- How does the author build up suspense in this chapter?
- Do you think the initials J.D.S. on the signet ring are going to prove important later in the story? If so, how?
- You are now about half-way through the book. Predict how the story will end.

Chapter 10
- How does the ending of this chapter: i increase the element of mystery, ii give the story a more sinister twist?
- What do you guess Fergal and Charlotte will do now?
Chapter 11
- Do you agree with Fergal that they ‘ought to go to the police’ (page 93)?
- Do you agree with Charlotte that ‘They’ll never believe us’ (page 93)?
- Do you agree with the conclusions Fergal and Charlotte come to about the serial numbers on the tins?

Chapter 12
- How does the author show us that Fergal and Charlotte have taken on a near-impossible task?
- What is the problem with Charlotte having to go away with her family during half-term?
- ‘Fergal Bamfield completely vanished’ (page 112). What do you guess has happened to him?

Chapter 13
- Where is Fergal now, do you think? What is he having to do?
- When Charlotte hears Mrs Bamfield’s story, what does she work out about where Fergal has gone? Do you think she is right?
- If you were Charlotte, what would you do now?

Chapter 14
- What do you now know for certain about where Fergal is and what he is doing?
- Who do you think Xavier and D.S. are?
- What is Fergal’s only hope now? Do you think his plan will work?

Chapter 15
- How much of what Fergal’s letter describes did you guess? (Be honest.)
- What do you think Charlotte should do now?
Chapter 16
- Why will neither Charlotte's mother nor the police take her story seriously?
- At the end of this chapter, do you think Charlotte is brave or foolish?

Chapters 17 and 18 and Footnote
- Charlotte triumphs ‘against the odds’. How does she manage it?
- What do you think happens in the end to Mr and Mrs Dimble-Smith?
- Do you believe that a factory like the Dimble-Smiths’ could really exist?

Looking back …
- Do you think it was a good idea for the author to add the Footnote?
- How do you rate this book as: i a ‘page-turner’, ii a thriller?
- Do you think Tins would make a good film? Why, or why not?
Further study areas

The following study areas provide opportunities for creating interesting and stimulating activities:

**Writing to imagine, explore, entertain:** We never find out exactly what becomes of Mr and Mrs Dimble-Smith at the end of the novel. Plan and write a follow-on in which you reveal what happens to them.

*(Writing to imagine: Yr7 Wr6; Yr8 Wr5; Yr9 Wr5)*

**Drama-focused speaking and listening:** After the novel ends, Charlotte and her family move away. One year later she and Fergal meet by chance. With a partner, act out the conversation they have about what they have been doing (more collecting?) and the experiences they shared.

*(Drama: Yr7 S&L16; Yr8 S&L15; Yr9 S&L12)*

**Independent research/Information writing:** Search the internet to find information about Alex Shearer and the other novels he has written for young people. Make a publicity pamphlet about him and his work as a writer.

*(Writing to inform: Yr7 R5, Wr11; Yr8 R1, Wr10; Yr9 R2, Wr9)*

**Author’s craft:** ‘We cannot believe in the Dimble-Smiths because the author makes them so evil they could never exist in real life.’ Do you agree with this criticism? If so, do you think it spoils the book? Write your considered opinion.

*(Author’s craft: Yr7 R18; Yr8 R13; Yr9 R18)*

**Group discussion:** What do you think could and should be done to reduce the problem of child labour in the twenty-first century?

*(Group discussion: Yr7 S&L1; Yr8 S&L10; Yr9 S&L9)*

Reading for pleasure

In *Tins*, Alex Shearer shows that he is a master of suspense. If students have enjoyed reading this novel, why not suggest that they read *The Lost* by the same author? If it was the gore and comedy that they liked, they will love books by Roald Dahl.
## Medium-term study plan for *Tins* by Alex Shearer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coverage</th>
<th>Objectives and lesson outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment foci</th>
<th>Framework objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week of study: 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reading through the novel</strong>: Chapters 1–2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson 1</strong></td>
<td>Opening four pages of Chapter 1</td>
<td>Using talk to recount and reflect on personal experience</td>
<td>R1, R2, W3, W7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Locating and retrieving information from reference sources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Planning a formal talk for an audience of peers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson 2</strong></td>
<td>Chapter 1 and front and back covers</td>
<td>Using prediction and visualisation to engage with a text at its outset</td>
<td>R1, R2, W2, W3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Using content clues to speculate about the novel’s genre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Writing an outline of the novel’s possible course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson 3+</strong></td>
<td>Chapters 1 and 2</td>
<td>Identifying key character traits of the novel’s hero</td>
<td>R2, R3, W2, W3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Supporting deductions about character with textual evidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Expressing a personal response to character in diagrammatic form</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week of study: 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reading through the novel</strong>: Chapters 3–8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson 4</strong></td>
<td>Chapters 3 and 4</td>
<td>Developing further a passage of dialogue in the novel</td>
<td>R3, R4, W1, W2, W3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Drawing on information from previous chapters to help construct the dialogue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Writing in role to portray characters’ attitudes and feelings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson 5</strong></td>
<td>Chapters 5 and 6</td>
<td>Planning and writing a story to imagine, explore and entertain</td>
<td>W1, W3, W5, W7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Building up a narrative through a connected sequence of events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Writing within the conventions of a chosen fictional genre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson 6+</strong></td>
<td>Chapters 7 and 8</td>
<td>Inferring the main character traits of the novel’s heroine</td>
<td>R3, R6, W3, W4, W6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Making notes to compare two major characters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Writing a literature essay comparing two major characters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Denotes suggested written homework where this is integral to the learning achieved in the lesson. Other homework/follow-on options are given to maximise teacher choice.
## Medium-term study plan for *Tins* by Alex Shearer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coverage</th>
<th>Objectives and lesson outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment foci</th>
<th>Framework objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week of study: 3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reading through the novel:</strong> Chapters 7–11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Lesson 7 | ● Short passage in Chapter 7 | Empathising with characters by drawing on personal experience | R6, R7 | Year 7: S&L15, S&L16, S&L19  
Year 8: S&L14, S&L15, S&L16  
Year 9: S&L11, S&L12, S&L14  |
|  | ● Planning and rehearsing a role play with a partner |  |  |
|  | ● Making a drama-focused presentation to an audience of peers |  |  |
| Lesson 8 | ● Chapters 1–10 | Recognising the importance of suspense as a plot device in the novel | R4, R5, R6, W2 | Year 7: R5, R12, R15, Wr2  
Year 8: R3, R5, R10, Wr3  
Year 9: R3, R12, Wr2  |
|  | ● Identifying how the author creates various forms of suspense |  |  |
|  | ● Judging the effectiveness of the author’s use of suspense |  |  |
| Lesson 9+ | ● Chapter 11 | Locating information on the internet and/or in other reference sources | R1, R2, R3, W1, W2, W3 | Year 7: R1, R2, R11, Wr19, Wr11  
Year 8: R1, R2, R9, Wr10, Wr11  
Year 9: R1, R2, R3, Wr9, Wr12  |
|  | ● Using various reading strategies and note making to extract information relevant to purpose |  |  |
|  | ● Planning and writing an information booklet for a readership of peers |  |  |
| **Week of study: 4** | **Reading through the novel:** Chapters 12–15 |  |  |
| Lesson 10+ | ● Passage in chapter 12 | Using shared reading to analyse the language and structure of a passage | R4, R5, R6, W1, W4, W5, W7 | Year 7: R12, R14, W7, W10, W14  
Year 8: R10, R13, W5, W7, W10  
Year 9: R12, R13, W5, W13  |
|  | ● Judging the effectiveness of the author’s style in relation to purpose |  |  |
|  | ● Planning and writing a descriptive piece in similar vein |  |  |
| Lesson 11 | ● Chapter 13 | Analysing the style and structure of a newspaper report | R4, R5, R6, W2, W3, W4, W6, W7 | Year 7: R4, R8, R10, W1, W10, W11  
Year 8: R3, R5, R6, W1, W7, W10  
Year 9: R1, R2, R3, W6, W11, W12  |
|  | ● Retrieving relevant information from the text to plan a newspaper report |  |  |
|  | ● Writing a front page story using appropriate organisation and language |  |  |
| Lesson 12 | ● Chapters 14 and 15 | Summarising the facts in a substantial section of text | R2, R3, R6, W3, W5, W7 | Year 7: R2, R6, R8, W10, W11, W14  
Year 8: R3, R4, R6, W7, W10  
Year 9: R1, R3, R11, W5, Wr9, Wr11  |
|  | ● Using inference and deduction to form an impression of a major character |  |  |
|  | ● Role writing to tell the story of a major character in his own words |  |  |

* Denotes suggested written homework where this is integral to the learning achieved in the lesson.  
Other homework/follow-on options are given to maximise teacher choice.
### Medium-term study plan for *Tins* by Alex Shearer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coverage</th>
<th>Objectives and lesson outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment foci</th>
<th>Framework objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week of study: 5</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reading through the novel:</strong> Chapters 16–18 and Footnote; Whole novel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Lesson 13** | - Chapters 16 and 17  
- Tracing a complex sequence of events at the climax of the novel  
- Distinguishing material relevant to a given task from that which is not relevant  
- Re-presenting an important part of the plot in diagrammatic form | R2, R3, W2, W3, W7 | Year 7: R4, R7, S&L2, Wr2, Wr11  
Year 8: R3, R5, S&L2, Wr3, Wr10  
Year 9: R3, S&L3, Wr4, Wr9, Wr10 |
| **Lesson 14** | - Whole novel  
- Formulating personal opinions about the novel  
- Evaluating the most successful and least successful aspects of the novel  
- Writing a class letter to the author expressing considered viewpoints | R4, R5, R6, W2, W3, W6 | Year 7: R15, R17, S&L5, S&L10, Wr13, Wr15  
Year 8: R5, R13, S&L2, S&L10, Wr17, Wr18  
Year 9: R5, R13, S&L2, S&L5, Wr13, Wr17 |
| **Lesson 15** | - Whole novel  
- Identifying a serious social theme explored in the novel  
- Retrieving information from reference sources to conduct personal research  
- Producing an information leaflet for a peer-group readership | R2, R3, R6, R7, W1, W2, W3, W6, W7, W8 | Year 7: R10, R11, S&L12, Wr10, Wr15  
Year 8: R2, R6, S&L10, Wr13, Wr14  
Year 9: R4, R8, S&L7, Wr6, Wr16 |

+ Denotes suggested written homework where this is integral to the learning achieved in the lesson.  
Other homework/follow-on options are given to maximise teacher choice.
**Tins by Alex Shearer**  
**Lesson 1**  
**60 minutes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Period:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesson coverage:</td>
<td>The opening three pages of the novel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson aims:</td>
<td>1 To use talk to recount and reflect on personal experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 To locate and retrieve information from reference sources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 To plan a formal talk for an audience of peers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Prior learning/knowledge:**
- Using reference sources to find information
- Some experience of making a presentation in class

**Book activity:**
Preparation: Activity 1 – Researching an unusual collection and preparing a talk about it for a small group

**Framework Objectives:**
| Year 7: R1, R2, R4, S&L2, S&L3 | Assessment Foci: R1, R2 |
| Year 8: R1, R2, R3, S&L2, S&L3 | W3, W7 |
| Year 9: R1, R3, R4, S&L1, S&L5 |

**Starter:**
(20 minutes) Read aloud to the class the novel’s opening as far as ‘Just simple, ordinary, everyday tins. Without labels’ (page 3). Establish that Fergal is a collector with an unusual hobby. Lead brief class discussion about ‘Strange collections we have known/heard about’. Then refer students to the examples printed in Book Activity 1. Ask: what makes some young people obsessive collectors? Is a youngster who collects teeth merely crazy?

**Introduction/Development:**
(20 minutes) Divide the class into small groups. Students share experiences of their own collections and others they have heard about/read about/seen on TV.

In most classes there will be students who collect (or used to collect) ‘weird’ things. As this stage of the lesson develops, ask for volunteers to extend their contributions in their group to the whole class. A question-and-answer session will follow naturally.

**Plenary:**
(20 minutes) Lead brief discussion about why certain people in all age groups find ‘collecting’ so fascinating. Does it reflect personality? Do they do it to compensate for the lack of a social life – or does it provide them with one? What might Fergal’s reasons be?

Leave ten minutes to set up the homework/follow-on below.

**Homework/Follow-on:**
Students find information on the internet and/or in reference books about an unusual collection that interest them. (There are a number of websites devoted to these.) They edit the material they gather into the form of a three-minute talk, to be given to a small group in a future lesson.

Advice for this homework/follow-on can be found in the Teacher’s Notes, page 18.

**Resources:**
Teacher’s Notes page 18.

**Personal teaching notes:**
### Tins by Alex Shearer  Lesson 2  60 minutes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class coverage:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesson aims:</td>
<td>Period:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1 of the novel and its front and back covers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. To use prediction and visualisation to engage with a text at its outset</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To use content clues to speculate about the novel’s genre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To write an outline of the novel’s possible course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prior learning/knowledge:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity with the purposes of a ‘blurb’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous experience of reading inferentially</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book activity:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparation: Activity 2 – Predicting the content and storyline of the novel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Framework Objectives:</th>
<th>Assessment Foci:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 7: R2, R3, S&amp;L1, S&amp;L5, Wr12</td>
<td>R1, R2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 8: R4, R7, S&amp;L5, S&amp;L10, Wr10</td>
<td>W2, W3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 9: R1, R2, S&amp;L2, S&amp;L7, Wr9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Starter:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(15 minutes) Display the top half of OHT 1 – extracts from the ‘blurb’ of a paperback edition of Tins – on an OHP. Tell students they are to predict from the blurb and from chapter 1 what the whole story is about. Allow at least five minutes’ discussion in pairs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take feedback. This is likely at first to be very general: students are wary of ‘wrong answer’ syndrome. Remove this barrier. Encourage them to use their imaginations and to elaborate; tell them that few scenarios could be more bizarre than the actual plot.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(20 minutes) Divide the class into small groups. Display the bottom half of OHT 1 – a list of events that happen in the novel, though not in the order shown. In their groups, students continue to speculate about the story: they now have eight clues. Encourage freewheeling speculation – but do not reveal details of Alex Shearer’s plot, as students will press you to do.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(15 minutes) Briefly reacquaint students with the concept of genre in fiction. Specify: crime, horror, humour, supernatural and mystery. Ask the class to take their predictions about the novel one stage further: to which genre, or genres, might it belong? Appeal to their previous reading experience and their knowledge of films to help them decide. Point out that novelists sometimes use a combination of genres.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plenary:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(10 minutes) Review and summarise the main lines of prediction to have emerged during the lesson. Then set the homework/follow-on below.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homework/Follow-on:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students write an outline of what they think will happen in the book, drawing on the work done in this lesson. The Book Activity suggests 50–75 words: use your own discretion about this, bearing in mind the nature of the class.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OHT 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal teaching notes:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
### Tins by Alex Shearer  Lesson 3  60 minutes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Period:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Lesson coverage:** Chapters 1 and 2

**Lesson aims:**
1. To identify key character traits of Fergal
2. To support deductions about character with specific evidence from the text
3. To express a personal response to character in diagrammatic form

**Prior learning/pre-reading:**
- Pre-reading of chapters 1 and 2
- Some experience of reading to infer and deduce

**Book activity:** Exploration: Activity 1 – Using deductions about Fergal’s character to make a labelled drawing of his room together with an explanatory key

**Framework Objectives:**
- **Year 7:** R8, R12, S&L1, Wr11
- **Year 8:** R5, R10, S&L1, Wr10
- **Year 9:** R1, R6, S&L2, Wr12

**Assessment Foci:**
- R2, R3
- W2, W3

**Starter:**
(10 minutes) Ask the class to choose three items from their bedrooms – furnishings, posters, pictures, technology, decorations, etc. – which reflect their personalities strongly. Take responses. Discuss with them how much you can tell about a person simply by looking round their room.

**Introduction:**
(25 minutes) Distribute Student Sheet 2 – a list of points about Fergal’s character (define this as ‘personality’) that can be inferred from chapters 1 and 2 – and display it as an OHT.

Divide the class into small groups. Give them fifteen minutes to record on their Sheets textual evidence to support these character points. They should work briskly, noting page references and quoting briefly. Then take feedback. End this stage by adding any further points about Fergal to have emerged in the group work.

**Development:**
(20 minutes) Tell students they are to use their knowledge of Fergal’s character to make a bird’s-eye-view drawing of his room. Everything in it will reflect his personality. Students show this by:
1. labelling,
2. writing an explanatory key. They begin this in class and finish it for homework.

Lead class discussion about what the drawings might include and how to produce the key. For example, what would reflect the fact that Fergal is a boffin? How might the drawing show that he likes to be organised? Emphasise that the key must be detailed enough to make clear:
1. what each item in the room is,
2. how it fits in with Fergal’s character.

**Plenary:**
(5 minutes) Use this to set up the homework/follow-on below.

**Homework/Follow-on:** Students complete the labelled bird’s-eye-view drawing of Fergal’s room. The key should explain in detail what each item shows about Fergal’s character.

**Resources:**
- Student Sheet/OHT 2

**Personal teaching notes:**
**Tins by Alex Shearer**  
**Lesson 4**  
**60 minutes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Period:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Lesson coverage:** Chapters 3 and 4

**Lesson aims:**

1. To develop further a passage of dialogue in the text
2. To use information drawn from previous chapters to help construct the dialogue
3. To portray characters’ attitudes and feelings by writing in role

**Prior learning/ knowledge:**

- Pre-reading of chapters 3 and 4
- Previous experience of writing in role

**Book activity:** Exploration: Activity 2 – Developing Fergal’s chat-room conversation (pages 31–33) with several callers, then writing it out as a transcript

**Framework Objectives:**

- **Assessment Foci:**
  - Year 7: R7, R8, Wr6, Wr10  
  - Year 8: R7, R10, Wr7, Wr10  
  - Year 9: R2, R12, Wr2, Wr5

**Starter:**

(10 minutes) Ask four students to read aloud to the class the chat-room conversation on pages 31–33 between Fergal (Nerdy-Boy) and his three callers. Then discuss: what are their attitudes towards Fergal? How does their language and tone show what they think of him?

**Introduction:**

(15 minutes) Ask students in pairs to pretend the chat-room conversation continues. Two more callers come on line: they also make fun of Fergal and his hobby.

Pairs draft this dialogue, setting it out as in the text.

**Development:**

(30 minutes) Distribute Student Sheet 3 – the start of an imagined conversation between Fergal and another caller, Rin Tin Tin, who shares Fergal’s hobby and is sympathetic to him.

Lead class discussion about how this conversation could develop. What ‘tin stories’ of his own might Rin Tin Tin have to tell? Are any of them as strange as Fergal’s? Fergal will be happy to confide his story about the mysterious tin he has found: what will he say? (For this, students need to scan back through chapters 2 and 3 to check details.) What ideas might Rin Tin Tin and Fergal exchange about where the gold stud came from?

After about fifteen minutes ask students, working individually, to begin drafting this conversation.

**Plenary:**

(5 minutes) Use this to set up the homework/follow-on below. Tell students that they will read their work to a partner in a future lesson and listen to their partner’s comments.

**Homework/ Follow-on:**

Students extend their drafts from the Introduction and Development stages into a five-minute conversation between Fergal and his callers, principally Rin Tin Tin. They should set it out in the form of a transcript.

**Resources:**

- Student Sheet 3

**Personal teaching notes:**
### Tins by Alex Shearer  Lesson 5  60 minutes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Period:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Lesson coverage:
Chapters 5 and 6

#### Lesson aims:
1. To plan and write a story to imagine, explore and entertain
2. To build up an extended narrative through a clearly connected sequence of events
3. To write within the conventions of a chosen fictional genre

#### Prior learning/knowledge:
- Pre-reading of chapters 5 and 6
- Experience of writing a developed narrative with an episodic structure

#### Book activity:
Exploration: Activity 3 – Writing a story based on Fergal’s discovery of a human finger in a tin

#### Framework Objectives: Assessment Foci:
**Year 7:**
- S&L1, S&L12, Wr5, Wr7  
**Year 8:**
- S&L10, S&L11, Wr6, Wr7  
**Year 9:**
- S&L9, S&L10, Wr1, Wr5  
- W1, W3, W5, W7

#### Starter:
(20 minutes) Divide the class into small groups. Give them fifteen minutes to:
1. agree on one theory explaining how a real human finger got into Fergal’s tin,
2. discuss how their theory could be developed into a genre story, e.g. horror, crime, supernatural, etc.

#### Introduction:
(20 minutes) Each group should share their ideas with the class. Encourage comment along the lines suggested in Book Activity 3. Keep emphasising that, for any story to engage its readers throughout, there must be:
1. a connected sequence of events,
2. a variety of characters,
3. a strong ending which the writer has clearly in mind from the outset.

#### Development:
(15 minutes) Distribute Student Sheet 4 – a planning frame for events in ‘The Finger’ story which students will go on to write.

Working individually, they use this to plan their stories. The focus here is on building up a linked sequence of episodes and events – i.e. on structuring the story. Each box can represent a new paragraph.

As they work, ask students which genre their story belongs to. Give advice about how to highlight this in the final version.

#### Plenary:
(5 minutes) Use this to set up the homework/follow-on below.

#### Homework/Follow-on:
Students finish their plan, then use it to write their own version of ‘The Finger’ story. They give it a suitable title, aiming for three to four pages.

#### Resources:
Student Sheet 4

#### Personal teaching notes:
## Tins by Alex Shearer

### Lesson 6

**Lesson coverage:** Chapters 7 and 8

**Lesson aims:**
1. To infer from the text the main character traits of Charlotte
2. To make notes in order to compare Charlotte with Fergal
3. To write a literature essay bringing out similarities between the two characters

**Prior learning/knowledge:**
- Pre-reading of chapters 7 and 8
- Experience of planning and writing a literature essay

**Book activity:** Exploration: Activity 4 – Comparing the characters of Fergal and Charlotte, first in note form and then in a formal essay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Framework Objectives</th>
<th>Assessment Foci</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 7: R6, R12, Wr10, Wr11, Wr19</td>
<td>R3, R6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 8: R4, R5, Wr1, Wr10, Wr17</td>
<td>W3, W4, W6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 9: R1, R5, Wr10, Wr13, Wr16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Starter:**
(15 minutes) Brainstorm with the class their first impressions of Charlotte. Collect at least four points. Suggest that she is very like Fergal and ask for brief responses, either ‘agree’ or ‘disagree’.

**Introduction:**
(20 minutes) Distribute Student Sheet 5 – a spidergram for recording Charlotte’s main characteristics, supported by page references – and display it as an OHT.

Divide the class into small groups. Ask them to complete the spidergram, ensuring that each point they make is quite distinct from others. A list of guided reading questions is printed in the Teacher’s Notes, page 18. Use these to assist groups who find difficulty in making more than one or two points.

**Development:**
(15 minutes) Take feedback from the groups. Add their points to Student Sheet/OHT 5. Then display OHT 6 – a completed spidergram for Fergal. Ask groups to compare this with their spidergrams for Charlotte. What are the main similarities between them?

**Plenary:**
(10 minutes) Tell students their homework/follow-on – to write a four-paragraph essay showing how Fergal and Charlotte are alike. Draw together the main comparative points to have emerged in the lesson. Tell students that each of their four paragraphs should bring out one similarity between Fergal and Charlotte. Then formally set the homework/follow-on below.

**Homework/Follow-on:**
Students compare the characters of Fergal and Charlotte, showing four main ways in which they are alike. They should quote from the text to back up the points they make.

**Resources:**
Student Sheet/OHT 5, OHT 6, Teacher’s Notes page 18.

**Personal teaching notes:**
### Tins by Alex Shearer  
**Lesson 7**  
**60 minutes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Period:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Lesson coverage:**  
The conversation between Mrs Bamfield and Charlotte’s mother in chapter 7, pages 65–66

**Lesson aims:**
1. To empathise with characters in the novel by drawing on analagous personal experience  
2. To plan and rehearse a role play with a partner  
3. To make a drama-focused presentation to an audience of peers

**Prior learning/knowledge:**
- Some understanding of the purposes of role play  
- Experience of acting in front of other students

**Book activity:**  
Exploration: Activity 5 – Acting in role with a partner to deepen personal response to the text

**Framework Objectives:**

| Year 7: S&L15, S&L16, S&L19 |
| Year 8: S&L14, S&L15, S&L16 |
| Year 9: S&L11, S&L12, S&L14 |

**Assessment Foci:**  
R6, R7

**Starter:**  
(20 minutes) Read aloud the mothers’ conversation about their children from ‘I’m sorry, is this your daughter?’ (page 65) to ‘It all started about …’ (page 66). Ask two expressive readers to speak the dialogue of Mrs Bamfield and Charlotte’s mother. Ask another student to read the short descriptive passages.  
Invite the class to recall similar conversations they have overheard their parents/carers having about them. Encourage them to quote from memory. Using ‘Fergal’s heart sank to the bottom of his trainers’ (page 65) as a prompt, ask why such conversations are usually embarrassing. Press students for detailed responses.

**Introduction/Development:**  
(30 minutes) Tell students that, in pairs, they are to role play the mothers’ conversation, which continues while Fergal and Charlotte arrange to meet at the weekend.  
Distribute to pairs Student Sheet 7 – instructions for how to plan their role play. Allow them fifteen minutes’ preparation and rehearsal time.  
Then put pairs together into groups of four. Each pair acts out their conversation in front of the other. Set a time limit of five minutes for each pair.

**Plenary:**  
(10 minutes) Discuss with the class what they have achieved in this lesson. Advice on how to conduct the plenary is printed in the Teacher’s Notes, page 19.

**Resources:**  
Student Sheet 7, Teacher’s Notes page 19.

**Personal teaching notes:**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Period:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Lesson coverage:** Chapters 1–10

**Lesson aims:**
1. To appreciate the importance of suspense as a plot device in the novel
2. To identify how the author creates various forms of suspense
3. To judge the effectiveness of the author’s use of suspense at different points

**Prior learning/pre-reading knowledge:**
- Pre-reading of chapters 1–10
- Some awareness that an author consciously controls the reader’s response

**Book activity:** Exploration: Activity 6 – Recognising and analysing the author’s use of suspense

**Framework Objectives:**
- **Year 7:** R5, R12, R15, Wr2
- **Year 8:** R3, R5, R10, Wr3
- **Year 9:** R3, R12, Wr2

**Assessment Foci:**
- **Year 7:** R4, R5, R6
- **Year 8:** W2

**Starter:** (15 minutes) Ask students to recall the most recent episode of a TV soap, or other serial, they have seen. How did it end? How did its ending ‘hook’ viewers so they want to watch next time?

Establish that suspense is a powerful element in the plot of most novels: it keeps us turning the pages. Ask the class to illustrate this by commenting on the end of:

i. chapter 5,
ii. chapter 10. Introduce the concept of a ‘cliff-hanger’ chapter ending.

**Introduction/Development:**
(35 minutes) Divide the class into small groups. Then distribute Student Sheet 8 – three statements about suspense and a suspense chart for chapters 2, 3, 5, 9 and 10. Discuss the three statements to establish that suspense can take different forms. Reinforce this by asking students to apply the statements to events that have happened so far – e.g. Fergal’s discovery of the finger, our discovery that Charlotte has found an ear, their discovery of the HELP note. The last of these fits all three statements.

Then tell students they are to work in their groups to fill in the three columns of the suspense chart. Weaker students or groups will need some support with this. Advice for helping them is printed in the Teacher’s Notes, page 19. Emphasise that for the ‘Suspense rating’ column they are totally free to make up their own minds but they must write a reason for what they decide about each chapter.

**Plenary:** (10 minutes) Draw out the main learning points of this lesson, particularly the fundamental importance of suspense as a narrative device and the way it can take a number of forms. There are implications here for students’ own story writing.

**Homework/Follow-on:** If this option is taken, students make an individual ‘best’ copy of their suspense chart.

**Resources:** Student Sheet 8, Teacher’s Notes page 19.

**Personal teaching notes:**
### Lesson 9

#### 60 minutes

**Tins by Alex Shearer**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Period:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Lesson coverage:** Chapter 11

**Lesson aims:**
1. To locate information in reference sources, including the internet
2. To use various reading strategies and note making to extract information relevant to purpose
3. To plan and write an information booklet for an audience of peers

**Prior learning/knowledge:**
- Experience of carrying out independent research
- Experience of using an internet search engine

**Book activity:**
Exploration: Activity 7 – Researching a topic linked to codes and code breaking, then producing an information booklet about it for other students

**Framework Objectives:**
- Year 7: R1, R2, R11, Wr19, Wr11
- Year 8: R1, R2, R9, Wr10, Wr11
- Year 9: R1, R2, R3, R9, Wr12

**Assessment Foci:**
- R1, R2, R3
- W1, W2, W3

**Note:** This lesson depends upon access to the internet. The task can be undertaken in its entirety as an independent homework project simply by omitting the Starter.

**Starter:**
(15 minutes) Ask students, individually or in pairs, to solve one of the code-breaking puzzles printed in the Teacher’s Notes, page 19. Afterwards, ask them to explain to each other the principles on which the code is based.

**Introduction/Development:**
(35 minutes) Tell students that, working individually, they are to research a ‘Codes and code breakers’ topic by using the internet and reference books. The information they select will be presented as a four-page booklet for others in the class to read.

Draw students’ attention to the topic suggestions listed in Book Activity 7. They then use an internet search engine to review the range of information available.

They will find that the choice is vast. Give advice about an appropriate topic in the light of individual students’ abilities. Emphasise that they are working towards a four-page booklet which will need to include illustrations: roughly 70 per cent written text, 30 per cent annotated illustration. Warn them not to be too ambitious.

Students end this stage by doing a print-out of their findings and/or making a list of websites for further research at home.

**Plenary:**
(10 minutes) Lead class discussion about how to present the finished booklet. Highlight the importance of presentational features – a striking front cover, headings, print sizes, use of annotated drawings/diagrams, colour, etc. The success criteria are clarity, helpful organisation and use of own words. Tactfully remind students they must not just copy or download material.

**Homework/Follow-on:**
Students complete their research, then write an illustrated four-page booklet for other students to read.

**Resources:**
Teacher’s Notes page 19

**Personal teaching notes:**
### **Tins by Alex Shearer**  
**Lesson 10**  
**60 minutes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Period:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Lesson coverage:**  
Chapter 12, pages 107–109

**Lesson aims:**
1. To use shared reading to analyse the language and structure of a passage in the text  
2. To comment on the effectiveness of the author’s style in relation to his purposes  
3. To plan and write a descriptive piece using similar techniques

**Prior learning/knowledge:**
- Experience of analysing and evaluating an author’s style  
- Experience of writing to describe

**Book activity:**  
Exploration: Activity 8 – Undertaking shared reading of a short passage in the text, then using it as the basis for a piece of descriptive writing.

**Framework Objectives:**
- Year 7: R12, R14, Wr7, Wr10, Wr14  
- Year 8: R10, R13, Wr5, Wr7, Wr10  
- Year 9: R12, R13, Wr5, Wr13

**Assessment Foci:**
- R4, R5, R6  
- W1, W4, W5, W7

**Starter:**
(15 minutes) Ask students in pairs to imagine themselves in a supermarket. Working at speed, they write down the brand names of:

- a fifteen different chocolate bars on the confectionery counter  
- b fifteen different packets of biscuits stacked on the shelves.

Take feedback. Go round the class using ‘follow the finger’: each student names one item so that, collectively, responses take the form of a chant.

**Introduction:**
(20 minutes) Students read aloud the passage on pages 107–109. Again, ‘follow the finger’: each student reads one sentence until the passage ends.

Go straight into class discussion. How does Alex Shearer create the impressions of ‘Miles and miles of tins’ (page 107)? How does he show us that Fergal feels overwhelmed by the task of searching them all? Highlight the techniques listed in Book Activity 8. Pay particular attention to the author’s use of metaphors drawn from the sea and other kinds of water.

**Development:**
(15 minutes) Divide the class into small groups. Distribute Student Sheet 9 – instructions for a piece of descriptive writing in which students use similar techniques to those they have been analysing.

Allow five minutes for them to choose a topic and ten minutes for them to exchange ideas about the content of what they will write.

**Plenary:**
(10 minutes) Draw together the main points about style and structure to have emerged in this lesson. Emphasise the relationship between these and the author’s particular purposes. Then set up the homework/follow-on below.

**Homework/Follow-on:**
Students plan and write their chosen descriptive piece to a length of two to three pages. They should ensure they use different paragraphs for different topics.

**Resources:**
Student Sheet 9

**Personal teaching notes:**
### Tins by Alex Shearer

**Lesson 11**

**60 minutes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Period:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Lesson coverage:** Chapter 13

**Lesson aims:**
1. To analyse the style and structure of a local newspaper report
2. To select relevant information from the text to plan a newspaper report
3. To write a front page newspaper story using appropriate organisation and language

**Prior learning/knowledge:**
- Pre-reading of chapter 13
- Some familiarity with the conventions of journalistic writing

**Book activity:** Exploration: Activity 9 – Planning and writing a front page newspaper story about Fergal’s disappearance

**Framework Objectives:**
- Year 7: R4, R8, R10, Wr1, Wr10, Wr11
- Year 8: R3, R5, R6, Wr1, Wr7, Wr10
- Year 9: R1, R2, R3, Wr6, Wr11, Wr12

**Assessment Foci:**
- R4, R5, R6
- W2, W3, W4, W6

**Starter:**
(15 minutes) Tell students they are to use information from chapter 13 to write a local newspaper story about Fergal’s disappearance.

Read round the class the passage on pages 118–126 in which Mrs Bamfield tells Charlotte how Fergal went missing. Ask students to respond to it as newspaper reporters would, sifting facts and shaping in their minds a major ‘local interest’ story.

**Introduction:**
(20 minutes) Divide the class into small groups. Distribute Student Sheet 10 – partly completed reporter’s notes about the story of the missing boy. Working together in role as reporters, students should add to these, filling in further facts and incorporating quotations from Mrs Bamfield. They can imagine they have contacted Charlotte by phone and recorded an interview with her.

**Development:**
(20 minutes) Distribute copies of a recent front page story from your local newspaper. Read it and ask students to comment on the aspects of its structure and style listed in Book Activity 9. Focus on:
- i the impact made by the headline,
- ii how the first paragraph answers ‘wh’ questions,
- iii how quotations are worked in,
- iv language choice and effect,
- v the use of presentational features, including photographs.

Students will use their copies of this as a model for their reports about Fergal.

**Plenary:**
(5 minutes) Use this to set up the homework/follow-on below. Emphasise the need to use short paragraphs, to create clear links between paragraphs, and to write in a technically accurate way.

**Homework/Follow-on:**
Students write their front page to a length of about 150 words. The aim is to replicate the format and style of a real newspaper’s front page. Using a computer will help to achieve this.

**Resources:**
- Student Sheet 10, copies of a front-page newspaper story.

**Personal teaching notes:**
## Tins by Alex Shearer  Lesson 12  60 minutes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Period:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Lesson coverage:
Chapters 14 and 15

### Lesson aims:
1. To summarise the facts revealed in a substantial section of text
2. To use inference and deduction to form an impression of a major character in the novel
3. To write in role a character’s story, showing his connection with events earlier in the novel

### Prior learning/knowledge:
- Pre-reading of chapters 14 and 15
- Experience of writing in role

### Book activity:
Exploration: Activity 10 – Recounting the story of Jonathan Dimble-Smith in his own words

### Framework Objectives:
**Year 7:** R2, R6, R8, Wr10, Wr11, Wr14  
**Year 8:** R3, R4, R6, Wr6, Wr7, Wr10  
**Year 9:** R1, R3, R11, Wr5, Wr9, Wr11  

### Assessment Foci:
- R2, R3, R6  
- W3, W5, W7

### Starter:
(15 minutes) Ask the class the six questions listed in Book Activity 10a. Encourage students to give detailed responses and produce evidence from the text, principally Fergal’s letter to Charlotte on pages 147–160. By the end of this stage, the whole class needs to have a secure understanding of:
- i what is going on at Dimble-Smith’s factory,
- ii how Mr and Mrs Dimble-Smith have got away with their crimes.

### Introduction/Development:
(30 minutes) Tell students they are to put themselves in the place of Jonathan Dimble-Smith and write his own story in his own words. Distribute Student Sheet 11 – a note chart for recording Dimble-Smith’s history in detail. Working in pairs, students fill this in as a means of planning his story and the order in which he will write it. Encourage them to do this in role: ‘Think of yourself as him’. They should include his account of how Fergal came to be a worker at the factory.

### Plenary:
(15 minutes) Ask pairs for extracts from their note charts. Other students should comment: has anything vital been missed out? Has anything been misunderstood?

Move discussion on to the style in which students will write ‘as’ Dimble-Smith. Ask them for adjectives to describe him: Pompous? Selfish? Greedy? Cruel? Cunning?, etc. Discuss how his character traits might be reflected in his language.

Then set up the homework/follow-on below.

### Homework/Follow-on:

### Resources:
Student Sheet 11

### Personal teaching notes:
**Tins by Alex Shearer**  
**Lesson 13**  
**60 minutes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Period:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Lesson coverage:**  
Chapters 16 and 17

**Lesson aims:**
1. To trace accurately a complex sequence of events at the climax of the novel
2. To distinguish material relevant to a given task from that which is not relevant
3. To re-present an important part of the novel’s plot in diagrammatic form

**Prior learning/knowledge:**
- Pre-reading of chapters 16 and 17
- Some experience of expressing response to a narrative diagrammatically

**Book activity:**
Exploration: Activity 11 – Constructing a graph to explain how Charlotte finds and rescues Fergal

**Framework Objectives:**  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>Year 8</th>
<th>Year 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R4, R7, S&amp;L2, Wr2, Wr11</td>
<td>R3, R5, S&amp;L2, Wr3, Wr10</td>
<td>R3, S&amp;L3, Wr4, Wr9, Wr10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assessment Foci:**  
| R2, R3 | W2, W3, W7 |

**Starter:**
(15 minutes) Ask the class to recount between them the details of Charlotte’s journey from home to the point at which she rescues Fergal. Use the ‘follow the finger’ method: the student being pointed at must give way to the next one as your finger moves around the class. Allow no interruptions and ensure that all/most students have a chance to contribute to the recount. Move the finger quickly if a student is clearly struggling.

**Introduction:**
(10 minutes) Distribute Student Sheet 12 – a partly completed peaks and troughs rescue graph for tracing Charlotte’s journey – and display it as an OHT. Use the OHT to explain how the graph ‘works’. Consult the Teacher’s Notes, page 20 if necessary. Draw attention to the key and the bracketed words at the end of each entry.

**Development:**
(30 minutes) Tell students their task – to continue plotting the graph and adding to its key until Fergal is rescued. Students should work in pairs but fill in their own copy of the graph. Suggest that they plot a further six to eight points.

Some students will attempt to record every detail of Charlotte’s journey – in which case the graph would never end. Point out to them that one of their purposes is to distinguish events which are central from those which are not. Give an example.

**Plenary:**
(5 minutes) Use this to set up the homework/follow-on below.

**Homework/Follow-on:**
Students complete their graphs and bring them to the next lesson. The finished versions make an attractive wall display, particularly if different colours are used.

**Resources:**
Student Sheet/OHT 12, Teacher’s Notes page 20.

**Personal teaching notes:**
# Tins by Alex Shearer  Lesson 14  60 minutes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Period:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

## Lesson coverage:
Whole novel

## Lesson aims:
1. To formulate personal opinions about the novel
2. To evaluate the most successful and the least successful aspects of the novel
3. To contribute to a class letter to the author expressing considered viewpoints

## Prior learning/knowledge:
- Experience of judging the effectiveness of a whole novel
- Some awareness of the criteria for making these judgements

## Book activity:
Inspiration: Activity 1 – Expressing personal views about the novel, first in discussion and then in a letter to the author

## Framework Objectives:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>Year 8</th>
<th>Year 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R15, R17, S&amp;L1, S&amp;L5, Wr’15, Wr19,</td>
<td>R5, R13, S&amp;L5, S&amp;L10, Wr17, Wr18,</td>
<td>R5, R13, S&amp;L2, S&amp;L5, Wr13, Wr17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R4, R5, R6</td>
<td>W2, W3, W6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Starter:
(10 minutes) Ask students to imagine Alex Shearer visits their classroom. They write down one or two questions they genuinely want to ask him about the plot, characters and themes of *Tins*. Draw attention to the three questions suggested in Book Activity 1b.

## Introduction:
(20 minutes) Divide the class into small groups. They take turns to ‘be’ Alex Shearer. Group members put their questions to him; he does his best to give honest answers.

Students tend to frame questions which are implicitly complimentary about the book. Explain that this need not be the case. If they feel the book has weaknesses, their questions should reflect this.

## Development:
(20 minutes) Distribute Student Sheet 13 – a review chart for recording personal responses to the novel’s plot and characters. In pairs, students make entries in note form, using bullet points. Emphasise that they must give reasons for what they decide.

## Plenary:
(10 minutes) Collect in the review charts. Explain that these will form the basis of a class letter to the author to be written in the near future. The rest of this letter will be made up from the personal reviews students write for homework, which you should now set.

## Homework/Follow-on:
Students draw on the work they have done in this lesson to write a personal review of the novel. This should be honest and include opinions about both the strengths and weaknesses of *Tins*.

## Resources:
- Student Sheet 13

## Personal teaching notes:
**Tins by Alex Shearer**  
**Lesson 15**  
**60 minutes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Period:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson coverage:</strong></td>
<td>Whole novel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Lesson aims:** | 1. To identify a serious social theme explored in Part Three of the novel  
2. To find information from reference sources about the problem of child labour  
3. To produce an information leaflet for a young readership about a chosen aspect of this topic | |
| **Prior learning/knowledge:** | Some awareness that child labour is a major social problem  
Experience of using reference sources, including the internet, to locate and retrieve information | |
| **Book activity:** | Inspiration: Activity 2 – Researching the problem of child labour and producing an information leaflet about it for other students | |
| **Framework Objectives:** | Assessment Foci:  
Year 7: R10, R11, S&L12, Wr10, Wr15  
Year 8: R2, R6, S&L10, Wr13, Wr14  
Year 9: R4, R8, S&L7, Wr6, Wr16 | R2, R3, R6, R7  
W1, W2, W3, W6, W7, W8 |

| **Starter:** | (20 minutes) Ask the class whether they think the existence of a child labour force at the Dimble-Smith factory is pure fiction. Have they read, or seen on TV, any real-life stories about the problem of child labour:  
i. abroad, ii. in this country?  
Take feedback. Then distribute Student Sheet 14 – a set of facts compiled from information issued by the United Nations. Invite initial responses. | |

| **Introduction/Development:** | (25 minutes) Tell students they are to choose one aspect of this topic they want to explore further. They will conduct personal research into it and present their findings in the form of a leaflet for readers of their own age.  
Divide the class into small groups. Allow ten to fifteen minutes of free discussion based on the Student Sheet. It is important that students have time to absorb this information and become aware that are confronting facts.  
Go round the groups and give advice about how to find material for further research. Suggestions about reference sources are printed in the Teacher’s Notes, page 20. By the end of this stage, students should have identified a topic area they will go on to investigate. | |

| **Plenary:** | (15 minutes) Distribute Student Sheet 15 – a list of sources which give relevant information. Then lead class discussion about the form the leaflets might take. Point out that its purposes are: a. to raise awareness, b. to shock. Set a time limit for the task. | |

| **Homework/ Follow-on:** | Students conduct research into their chosen topic and present it in the form of an information leaflet for a peer-group readership. | |

| **Resources:** | Student Sheet 14, Student Sheet 15, Teacher’s Notes page 20. | |

| **Personal teaching notes:** | | |