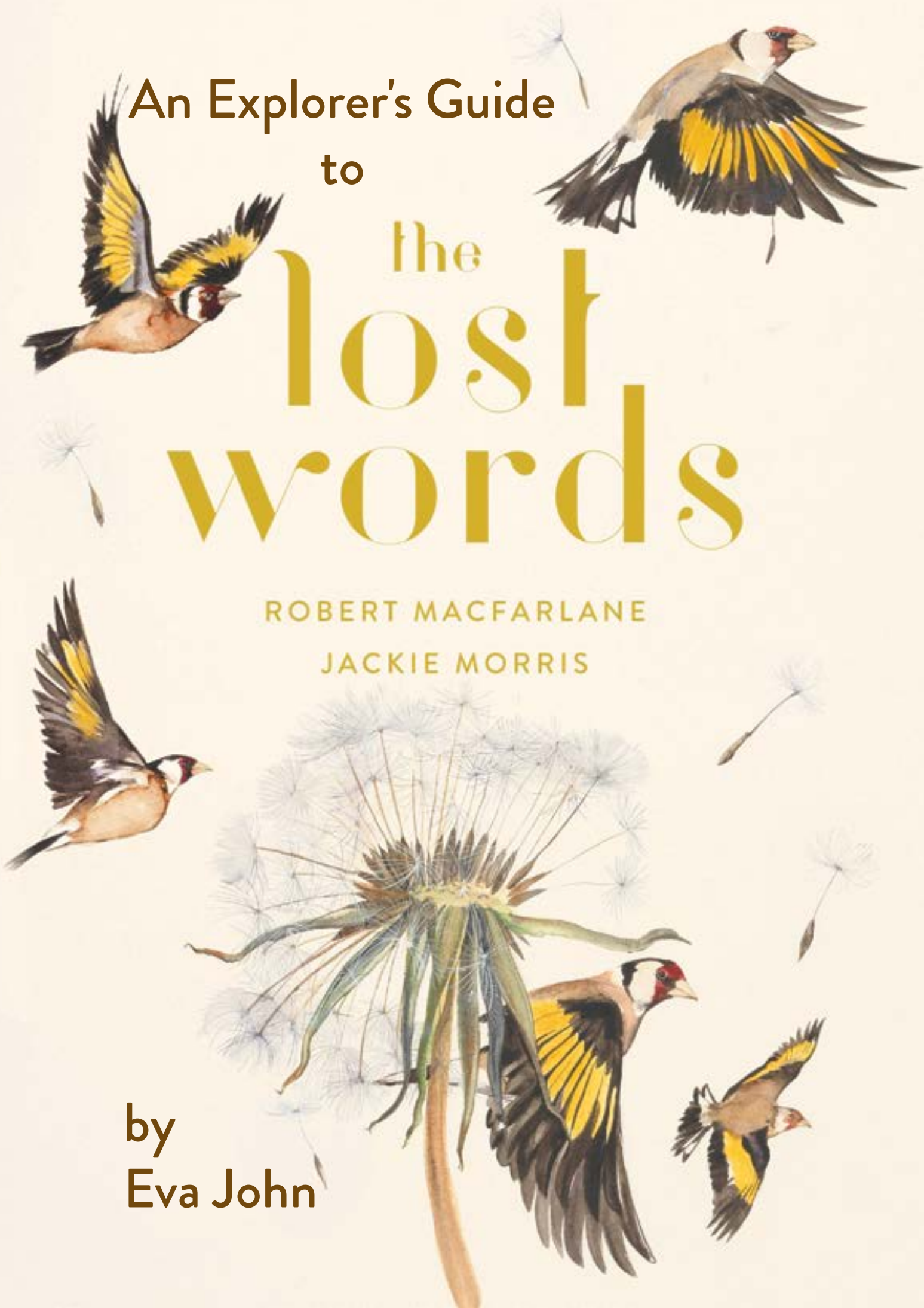


An Explorer's Guide
to

the
**lost
words**

ROBERT MACFARLANE
JACKIE MORRIS

by
Eva John





“We are Lost Word protectors and we didn’t even know it!...
Be part of the story – the ending of which will be wild words tripping off tongues like laughter and joy.”

Dara McNulty
@naturalistdara



#TheLostWords

EXPLORER'S GUIDE INTRODUCTION

Who is this Explorers' Guide to The Lost Words for?

It's for teachers, parents, children, nurseries, youth groups, charities, outdoor instructors, Forest Schools, primary schools, secondary schools, hostel staff, festival organisers, community workers, story-tellers.

It's for *anyone* with an interest in nature, words and images, and anyone who wants to explore further some of the ideas and creatures conjured up by *The Lost Words: A Spell Book*.

The age of the readers of – and listeners to – *The Lost Words* has ranged from 6 months to over 100 years old.

What is it for?

- It's to accompany 'The Lost Words'.
- It's for use in classrooms or in homes or in woods.
- It's designed to overlap with the National Curriculum across the UK but also to range beyond its bounds. There is a 'Curriculum Context' section on page 30.
- Its aim is to help get children (and non-children) looking, learning, making and dreaming about the natural world and our part in it.
- It's to help people recognise a wren or a willow or – if they're really lucky! – an otter when they see one, but also to recognise how deeply bound into our culture wrens and willows and otters are.
- It's for celebrating the magic of nature and the magic of language.
- It's for spelling back some of the plants and animals with which we share our everyday world, and the language we use to describe them.
- It's for starting conversations, stories, drawings and, perhaps, lifelong passions for nature.

How and where to use it?

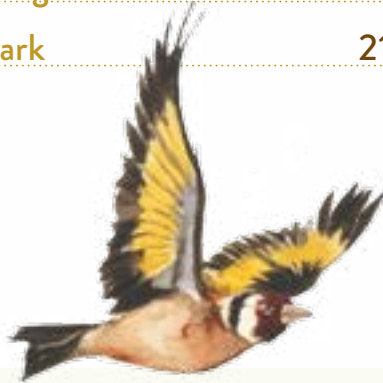
- Take it outside! Take it on expeditions, on walks, out into the school grounds.
- Keep it indoors! Use it for reflection or prompts – during or after activities.
- It's organised into twenty-two sections: one for each of the twenty words in *The Lost Words*, one for the cover and title together, and one for the preface.
- For each 'word' there are ideas, challenges (writing, research, imagining, creative, exploring), 'further connections' and further reading.
- Download it, print it, laminate key pages or individual sections.
- Read it on a screen, following the links.
- Identify words of interest to delve deeper into...
- Pick out activities that suit you, who you are with, your location...
- Print off just one section, one word: kingfisher, heron or weasel!
- In places, background information is offered in [\[blue\]](#).



An Explorer's Guide to *The Lost Words* was written by Eva John. Its production has been supported by the John Muir Trust. A proportion of royalties from sales of *The Lost Words* is donated to Action for Conservation.



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GENERAL ACTIVITIES

- Try to see each of the twenty species that are named in *The Lost Words*.
- Create fact files for some or all of the creatures and plants that appear, not just the main twenty.
- Create a special “Sketch & Spell Book” to record your own observations and responses.
- Create a nature table which will change through the seasons.
- Become “Nature Detectives”: make fine, detailed observations; learn the charm of naming things; discover new things; make connections; keep a nature journal/sketch book to develop your own responses to the wildlife, plants and environment around you.
- Add wonder words to your word-hoard in your Spell Book: build up a treasure-chest of words for nature, weather, plants and animals.
- Try reading a spell or a poem (not just from this book; any poem you like) out loud to yourself or to a friend (or to a tree!) once a day.



LITERACY & NATURE RESOURCE GUIDE



Read a John Muir Award Literacy & Nature [Resource Guide](#) to find out how nature and the outdoors can inspire and support literacy skills. It includes links to literacy resources that have a natural theme or are specially adapted for the outdoors.
Search: John Muir Trust Initiatives Lost Words

COVER AND TITLE

Cover

What does the cover suggest to you?

[The speed and colour of the 'charm' of goldfinches (the collective noun for goldfinches is a 'charm'). The seeds of the dandelion representing the words and images of this book, which might float and plant themselves in the minds of children, there to grow and flourish.]

To find out more about how this cover came into being, read Jackie Morris and Robert Macfarlane's [blog](#).

Search: *Penguin Lost Words Making Of*

Wonder Words

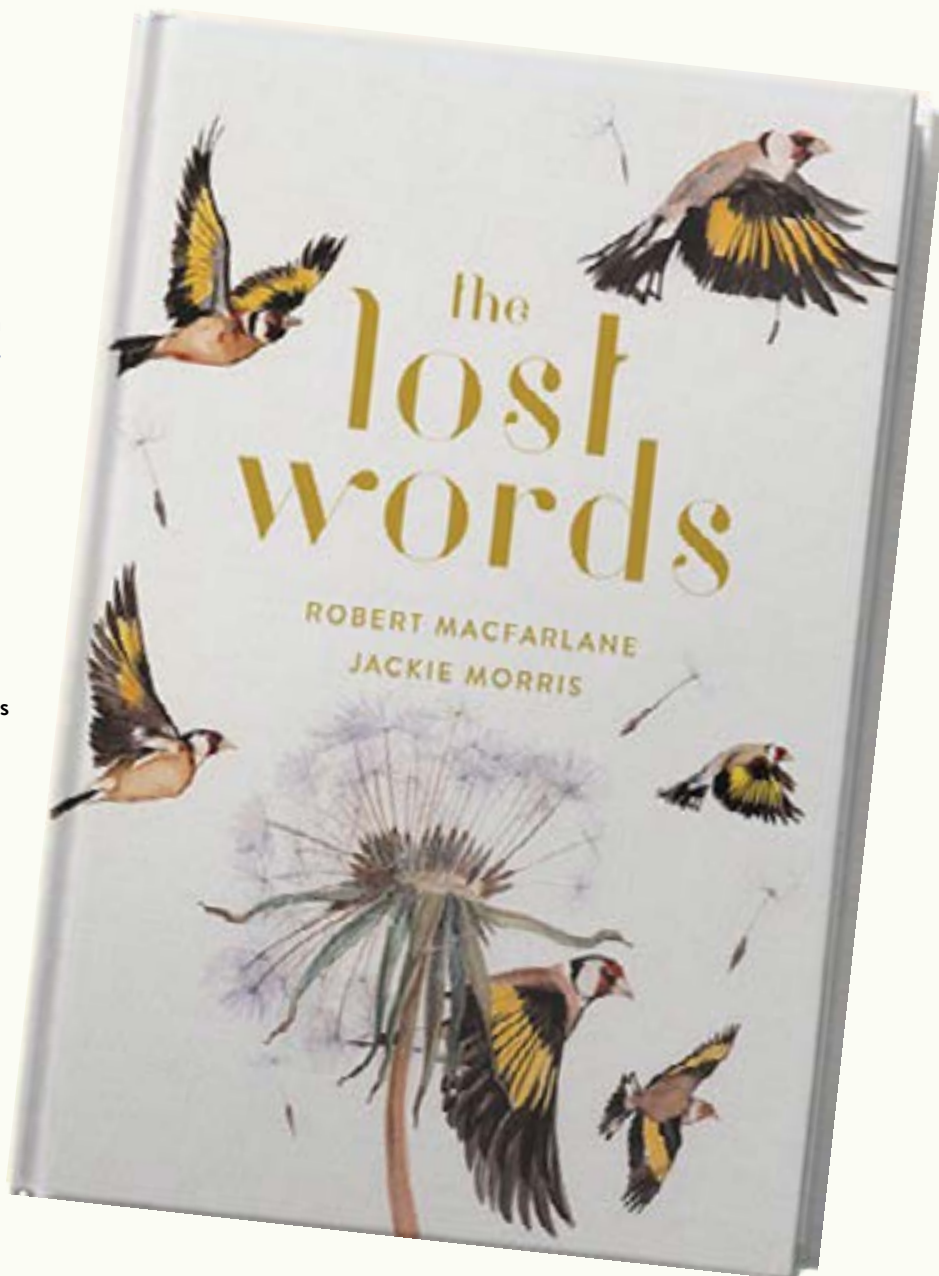
- A 'charm' of goldfinches is a collective noun.
- Discover as many collective nouns for animals as you can and list them alphabetically.
- Make up some of your own, e.g. a fierceness of lions.
- Create your own zigzag display of illustrated collective nouns.

Research challenge

- What other names are there for goldfinches?

[Goldie, gold linnet, redcap, thistle-tweaker, little tailor]

- Find out about the famous painting of a goldfinch by Fabritius (1622–54). What do you notice that is surprising in the painting?



The
**lost
words**
A Spell Book

Title

- What do the title of the book, *The Lost Words*, and its subtitle, *A Spell Book*, suggest to you?
- Do you think these words are being 'lost'?
- Are they and the species they name familiar to you?
- Why might it be important to know the name of something?



Conjuring Spell



PREFACE

Wonder Words

- What does the word *spell* mean?
- What does *conjuring* mean?
- Why do you think it is important to speak the words aloud? What kind of 'old, strong magic' might speaking aloud possess?
- What and where is 'the mind's eye'? What do you see in your mind's eye when you close your eyes for a few moments and pause?

Imagining challenge Seek, find, speak

- Close your eyes and imagine yourself elsewhere:
 - ◆ What sort of landscape do you see?
 - ◆ What sort of creatures do you see?
 - ◆ If you could be one creature or plant, what would it be?

Writing challenge Seek, find, speak, write

- Blackout poetry (or losing words): using a copy of the words in the introduction, create a blackout poem by isolating and piecing together single words or short phrases.
 - ◆ Scan the text to find an interesting key word which is significant and could be the possible theme for your poem.
 - ◆ Read the whole text and, using a pencil, circle words that would connect well with the key word. Try not to circle too many words in a row.
 - ◆ List all the chosen words on a separate piece of paper

in the order in which they appear, top to bottom and left to right as this is the order they will appear in the poem.

- ◆ Select the words that you think work best together, remembering that you can blackout parts of the words.
- ◆ Try out different ideas before making your final selection. You may want to return to the text to find additional words, but remember to keep them in order.
- ◆ Once you have made

your final selection, go back to the original text and circle only those carefully chosen words, erasing any circles around words you decided not to use.

- ◆ Carefully black out the words you are not using, taking care not to cover your chosen words. It is better to use biro or pencil, rather than ink or felts which can bleed into the paper.
- ◆ You might want to add a design which suits the subject of your poem.



ACORN

acorn



Acorn 1 Seek, find, speak

- What is missing in this illustration above?
- What do you find?
- Look closely at the grasses. How many different kinds can you see? How has the artist composed the picture?
[Cotton grass/hare's tail, greater tussock sedge, rye grass, tufted hair grass, cat's tail, common bent grass]

- Look outside for examples of different types of grasses.
- Using a reference book or the internet, try to discover the names of them all.
- In your sketch book, draw and label them, annotating them with words you might use to describe them. (A thesaurus is wonderful for extending your choice of words!)

Seek, find, speak, write

- In pairs or threes, create a grass chant.
- Play about with the order of your words to create effective rhythms.
- Practice and perform. You might want to add percussion sound effects.
- Film each other so that you can offer constructive advice for perfecting performance!

Acorn 2 Seek, find, speak

- What is in the picture?
- Why do you think the acorn is painted on gold leaf?
- Read aloud slowly. What do you notice?
[As is to, as is to (x 16)]

- Pick out all the nouns (opposite) to examine the connections carefully.

- What pattern do you notice?
- Are there patterns within the pattern?
[Alliteration, rhyme and rhythm]
- Make a recording of the poem. You may wish to add sound effects and/or music.

flake	blizzard
curve	sphere
knot	net
one	many
coin	money
bird	flock
rock	mountain
drop	fountain
spring	river
glint	glitter
near	far
wind	weather
feather	flight
light	star
kindness	good
acorn	wood



Seek, find, speak, write

- Think, pair, share: make a thought-cloud of your own words which have connections, like the ones in Acorn.

[e.g.

seed	plant
twig	nest
cell	hive
foam	crest
drop	sea
dust	star
note	song
thought	action
task	satisfaction
letters	words
eggs	birds]

- Play around with the order and, for an extra challenge, see if you can create patterns within patterns as you create your own spell: As..... is to, as is to
- Practise and perform.

Creative challenge

Hapa Zome (the Japanese art of beating leaves or flowers with hammers or pebbles, pounding natural pigment into paper or cloth)

- Select an oak leaf and good quality paper or heavy cotton cloth.
- Fold the paper or cloth in half, placing the leaf/leaves between, thinking carefully about the arrangement or composition.
- Hammer carefully or pound with a pebble, working on a smooth, durable surface and avoiding your fingers!
- Carefully unfold and behold...!
You could use this as a cover of a book in which you write your own poem to the oak.

Seek, find, speak, write

- Shape poems: create your own poem about oak trees in the shape of an oak leaf.
- Create a diamante incantation, made up of 7 lines, using the following structure:
Line 1: Beginning subject
Line 2: 2 describing words about line 1
Line 3: 3 doing words about line 1
Line 4: A short phrase about line 1, a short phrase about line 7
Line 5: 3 doing words about line 7
Line 6: 2 describing words about line 7
Line 7: End subject

[e.g.

Acorn
Cupped, cradled,
Changing, growing, shooting,
Rooting deeper, reaching higher
Budding, greening, golding,
Tall, strong
oak]

Acorn 3

Think, pair, share

- Discuss with a partner everything that you can see in the painting below. What time of year is depicted?

Seek, find, speak, write Research challenge

- Watch the Woodland Trust video of [a year in the life of an oak tree](#)
Search: *YouTube Year Oak Tree*
- Watch [Acorn to Oak](#)
Search: *Acorn to Oak*
- Conduct further research to create an oak infographic. You might include some/all of the following:

- ◆ Measurements of leaves, acorns, height of the tree, girth of the tree
- ◆ Dispersal
- ◆ Animals living in/on the oak
See [BBC Bitesize film](#)
Search: *BBC Lifecycle Oak*
- ◆ Animals feeding on the oak
- ◆ Number of species
- ◆ How to tell the age of a tree (dendrochronology)
- ◆ Use of oaks through history – e.g. ship building (*Hearts of Oak* song); building
- ◆ Oak apples and galls e.g. how these were used to make ink used to sign the Magna Carta and the Charter of

the Forest, by Mozart to record his compositions, and Newton to write his theories

- ◆ Tannins for dyeing
- ◆ Etymology (word origin) of acorn and oak
- ◆ Oaks in myths: Zeus, Jupiter, Dagda: ruled over thunder and lightning
- ◆ Druid links with oak and mistletoe
- ◆ King Charles II and his escape from the Roundheads
- ◆ Roman Emperors' victory crowns
- ◆ Emblems: National Trust, Woodland Trust
- ◆ Use of acorns: flour, 'coffee', tannin, pig food



Writing challenge

- Write about the oak from the point of view of an animal, e.g. a spider, a squirrel, an owl, a caterpillar

Further connections:

- *The Promise* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Laura Carlin
- [The Man Who Planted Trees](#) assembly kit
Search: *Woodland Trust Man Planted Trees*
- [India Man Plants Forest Bigger Than Central Park](#)
Search: *National Geographic India Man Forest*





adder

adder

Adder 1

Seek, find, speak, create

- What are the plants called that have been used to create the patterns on this page?
- What different colours can you see when you examine the painting closely?
- What has been lost?
- Create your own design, using fine pens or watercolour and a fine brush.

Adder 2

How do you feel about adders?

Wonder words

What do these mean?

- *hank*
- *basks*
- *sine-wave*
- *live-wire*
- *susurrus*

Can you find any synonyms? Try using them with a partner by creating different sentences.

What do adders do in the different seasons? What qualities of the adder are highlighted in the spell?

What does 'Echo of snake, self-escape, a left-behind ghost' mean?

What mood do the metaphors in the first

verse create?

What do you notice about all of the words in the first two lines?

[All monosyllabic]

Which verse shows the adder at its most threatening?

What does the last verse suggest?

How do you think the writer feels about the adder?

Seek, find, speak

Research one of the following to create a fact file or diagram:

- The plants mentioned.
- The life cycle of an adder.
- Find out about adder stones.
- Find out about the adder and the Battle

of Camlan, when King Arthur was killed.

- References to the adder in Shakespeare.
- Other British snakes.

Creative challenges

● Look at magnified images of snake scales and print a design onto paper or fabric.

Either

● Make a stick puppet adder by attaching a length of patterned material to a baton.

Or

● Create a jointed snake using beads or paper chains.

Then

● Practise moving your adder to synchronise with the words of the poem.

● Perform and film.



Creative challenge

- Create a salt dough adder. When dry, paint it as accurately as possible.

SALT DOUGH RECIPE:

A cup of salt
2 cups of flour
¾ cup of water

1. In a large bowl mix salt and flour together.
2. Gradually stir in water. Mix well until it forms a doughy consistency.
3. Turn the dough onto the bench and knead with your hands until smooth and combined.
4. Make your creations using the salt dough.
5. Place the salt dough creations into the oven at 180C. The amount of time needed to bake depends on the size and thickness of the salt dough creations.



Writing challenge

- Create a thought-cloud of snake-associated words so that you can write a spell acrostic for VIPER or a snake shape poem.

Further reading and connections

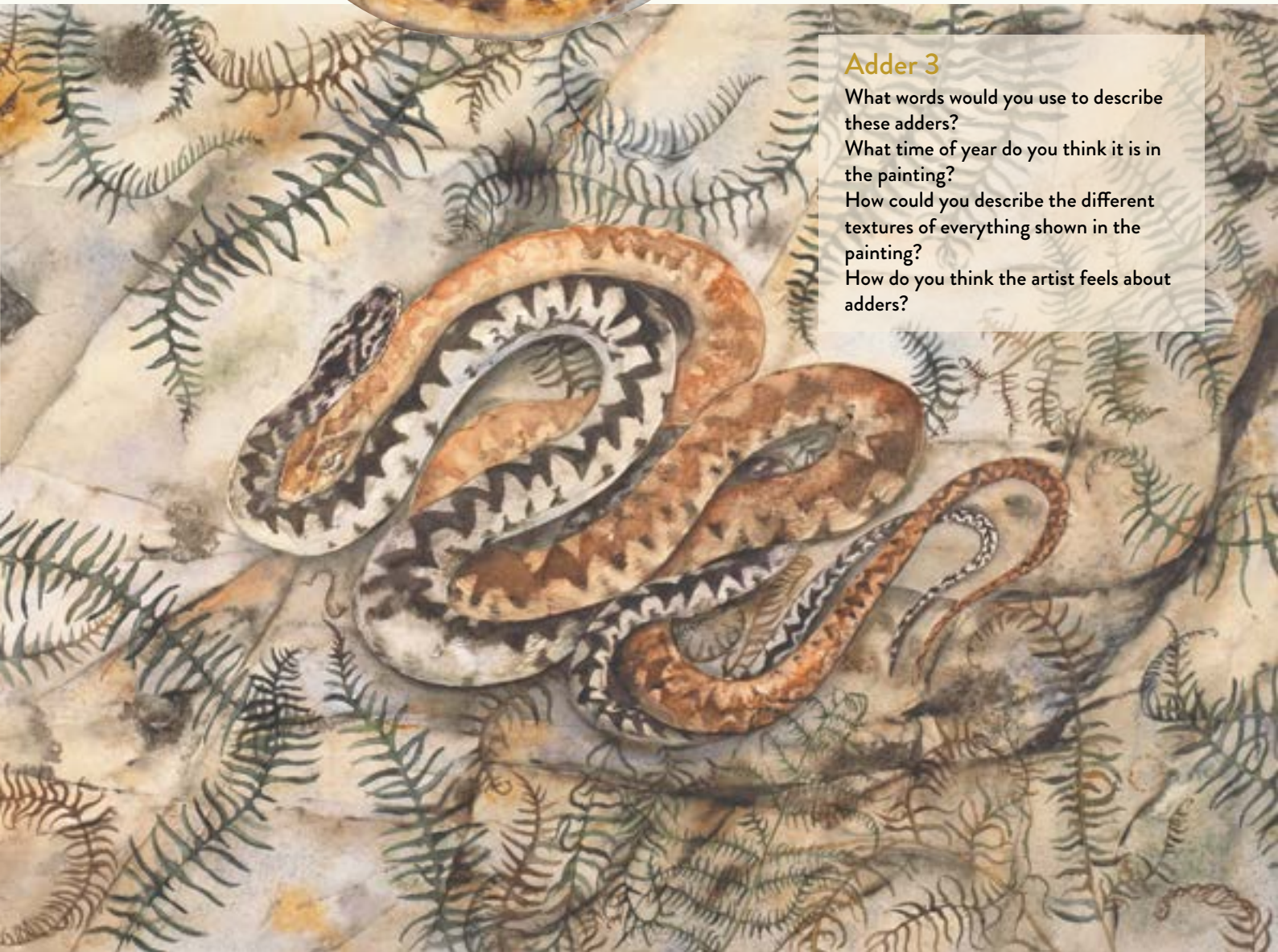
- The story of Adam de la Roche of Roch Castle

Search: Roch Castle De La Roche Dynasty (scroll down to find the story)

Storytelling challenge: Retell the story with more detail to engage the listener.

- Folklore about adders

Search: NARRS Adder



Adder 3

- What words would you use to describe these adders?
What time of year do you think it is in the painting?
How could you describe the different textures of everything shown in the painting?
How do you think the artist feels about adders?





Bluebell 1

Seek, find, speak, write

How does this image make you feel?
What is missing?

bluebell

bluebell

Bluebell 2

Wonder words

What do these mean?

- ◆ *billows*
- ◆ *current*
- ◆ *undertow*

Can you find any synonyms? Try using them with a partner by creating different sentences.

How many times is *blue* mentioned?

Why do you think this is?

What is meant by '*the blue hour*'?

Think of other names for dusk and dawn,

as the light slips into or out of the day.
What extended metaphor does the writer use? Why do you think this is? Pick out the words relating to it.
Why is there a warning?
How do the flowers affect the writer?
Pay attention to the shape, shading and lines in the painting.
List your observations.

Writing challenges

- Choose another landscape, e.g. a meadow of buttercups, a wood in summer, autumn or winter. Collect a word-hoard, using a thesaurus to extend your choices.
- Create your own poem, possibly using repetition for effect.

Research challenge

- What different names can you find for the varying shades of blue?
- Create a colour palette gradation for blue, adding the names.
- What are the growing conditions for bluebells?
- Find out about myths connected with bluebells, such as Endymion or fairy folklore.
- Find out about the [Big Bluebell Watch](#) Search: [Big Bluebell Watch](#)
- Record sightings at [Nature's Calendar](#) Search: [Nature's Calendar Bluebells](#)
- Where are bluebell woods in Britain?
- Find out about imported species, such as Spanish bluebells, grey squirrels, Japanese knotweed, Himalayan balsam

Bluebell 3

What are the creatures in the painting?

Seek, find, speak, write
Research challenge

- Find out about the two creatures and create a fact file.
- Find out about the Welsh story of Blodeuwedd from the Mabinogian.
- Find out about other owls in mythology



Writing challenges

- Start a story or poem: '*Enter the wood with care, my love...*'
 - You could make the '*hue*' a character in the story.
- Try to describe the hue.



Further reading

- *The Owl Service* by Alan Garner

Bramble 1

Seek, find, speak, create

- Think of any stories associated with brambles. What significance do you think they have?
- Look carefully at the painting. It has been created using negative space. Using a paint programme and careful observations of natural objects, create a picture using negative space.



bramble

Bramble 2

Seek, find, speak, write

- Why are the terms 'Rolling and arching' used?
 - How is personification used effectively to convey the nature of brambles?
 - What are the 'city edges' like in your mind's eye?
 - What is meant by 'The air flutters'?
 - Pick out a metaphor which suggests the invincible nature/unyielding strength of brambles.
 - What have you learned about the nature of brambles from the poem?
 - Watch the [time lapse film on brambles](#)
Search: *Brambles Timelapse*
- 'Magpie' any words and phrases you think might be useful.

Creative challenge

- Look closely at brambles and, if possible, the flowers and/or blackberries. Observe the colours, shapes, directions and textures carefully and make some

sketches or paintings.

- Find examples of [Dutch still-life paintings](#) on the internet which depict blackberries. Find one you particularly appreciate and explain why you like it.
Search: *National Trust Still Life Dyrham*
- How do you feel about brambles? Collect a word-board and, selecting the most effective, create a rolling, arching, poem which has little shoots stealing across the page. Use your best calligraphy to present it, thinking artistically about the colours you use.

Research challenge

- What different names are used for brambles?
 - Which creatures [eat blackberries](#)?
Search: *RSPB Brambles*
 - Which moths are attracted to brambles?
 - How can blackberries be [used in cooking](#)?
Search: *Woodland Trust Brambles*
- Find some recipes and, if possible, create a

culinary delight to share.

- Find [fascinating facts](#). Ramble through and pick the ones you find most interesting.
Search: *BBC Blackberries Brambles*

Writing challenge

- Create a piece of descriptive writing or a story featuring 'quiet halls, empty stairwells.' Map out your ideas and think about the atmosphere you want to create. Create a web of wonder words before you start, to help make your writing more vivid.

Further reading

- Seamus Heaney poem: [Blackberry Picking](#)
Search: *YouTube Seamus Heaney Blackberry Picking*
- Edward Thomas poem: [The Lane](#)
Search: *Edward Thomas The Lane*
- John Keats poem: [Meg Merrilies](#)
Search: *John Keates Meg Merrilies*



Bramble 3

Seek, find, speak

- Identify all of the creatures in the painting. [[House sparrow](#), [wren](#), [coal-tit](#), [blackbird](#), [woodland brown butterfly](#), [bank vole](#)]
- Look closely at the shape of the thorns.
- Listen to the [bird calls](#) on the RSPB website
Search: *RSPB Bird Calls*
- Listen to the [story](#) in this song
Search: *YouTube Briar Rose Song*





conker

conker

Conker 2

Seek, find, speak

- How is this poem different from the others?

[Question and answer dialogue]

- How many characters are there?
- Draw the king, the cabinet maker and engineer.

[Is the assumption that they are all men?]

- What is the message in this poem?
- How many fingers does a horse chestnut leaf have?

Research challenge

- Find out about horse chestnut and sticky buds.
- What happens when you open a conker shell, where the conker is still white and you leave it in the open?
- Find out about playing conkers
Search: *Project Britain Conkers*
Give instructions for finding and creating an indestructible conker.



Conker 1

Seek, find, speak

- Look closely at the image of the conker shell, what does it remind you of? What is contained within the shell?

[A tree]

- What is the other name for a conker tree?
- What is another way to spell the word *conker* and what does it mean? What ideas does this generate?

- Find out how to grow a conker.
- Find out what other uses can be made of conkers

Search: *ehow Viking Soap*; *BBC War Effort Conkers*

Writing challenges

- Find all the negative words in the poem and add any others you can find with the help of a dictionary or thesaurus, and create a rhythmic chant, playing around with the word order. What sort of sound accompaniment would add extra impact to the words?
- Create your own question and answer poem about a natural object or creature.
- Create a play script or fairy story involving the characters in the poem.
- Make an animation or film of the script or story.



Conker 3

Seek, find, speak

- Look at the different techniques used in the painting (left). How do you think the stippled effect is created?

[Wet paint on wet; sprinkling salt which breaks the surface tension of the water, taking the pigment with it]

- Identify the birds in the painting and find out which family they are from. Find out where these birds live.

Search: *RSPB Crows*

- How would you describe the birds in the painting? What sort of characteristics do you think they might have?

Research challenge

- Find stories featuring crows, ravens, jackdaws and rooks.
Search: *Fables of Aesop Crow Pitcher*
Think about the onomatopoeic nature of some of their names. Which is the best telling? Can you improve on these?
- Find out the different collective names for these birds and choose your favourites.

Further reading

- 'Crow' by Ted Hughes (from *The Cat and the Cuckoo*). Discuss the metaphors and similes. What sort of character do they convey?





dandelion

dandelion

Dandelion 1

Seek, find, speak

- What does the image on the page remind you of?

Research challenge

- How did the name, *dandelion*, originate? [The artist chose to represent the leaves of the dandelion like a clock and lion's teeth]

Art challenge

- Select a plant and experiment with making a slightly abstracted outline.

Dandelion 2

Wonder words

What do these mean? Can you find any synonyms? Try using them with a partner by creating different sentences.

- *Bane*
- *Perfectionists*

Seek, find, speak

- Who is the writer speaking to and what sort of mood is created?
- Why is the flower called 'sun-of-the-grass!' and 'tiny time-machine!'?
- Why would the writer call it 'Bane of Lawn Perfectionists,' 'Fallen Star of the Football Pitch or Scatterseed'?

- Why wouldn't the writer call it 'only, merely, simply' weed'?
- What patterns can you find in the poem? [Bracketed refrain, with fifth word changing each time to include another wild flower]
- If you were renaming the dandelion, which name would you choose?

Writing challenge

- Choose another wild flower, maybe one of the ones in the refrain, and find out about the different names it might have.
- Create a *cinquain* spell about your chosen flower, or the dandelion.

A *cinquain* consists of five unrhymed lines.

Each line has a set number of syllables:

Line 1: 2 syllables

Line 2: 4 syllables

Line 3: 6 syllables

Line 4: 8 syllables

Line 5: 2 syllables

- e.g.
- Dog rose
Twined in hedgerows
Five-petalled, pollen crowned,
Pale and fragile, softly blushing
Fruitful.

Research challenges

- Find out about the life cycle of the dandelion.
Watch these time-lapse videos and make notes. Which do you prefer and why? Which do you think gives the most information?

Search:

[YouTube Dandelion Clock Blowing](#);
[YouTube Dandelion Flower Clock Blowing](#);
[YouTube Dandelion Blooming Going to Seed](#);
[YouTube Pustelblume Cipsela](#)

- Find out what other uses are made of different parts of the dandelion.



Dandelion 3

Seek, find, speak

- What does this painting depict? [The different phases in a dandelion's growth]
- Why do you think the hare is in the illustration?
- How does this painting make you feel?
- What is the collective noun for goldfinches and also for hares?

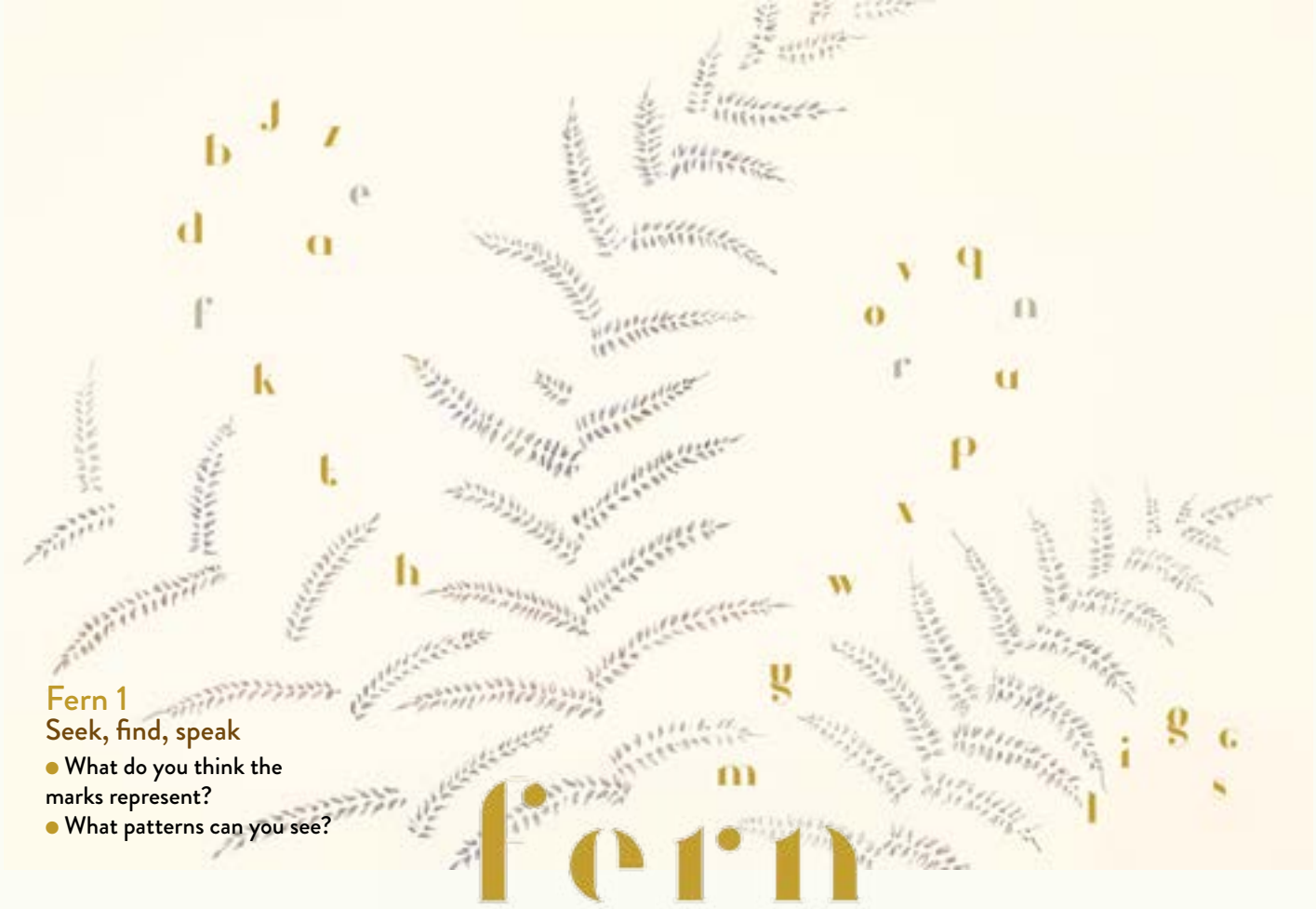
Creative challenge

- Take a dandelion seed and look closely at it with a magnifying glass. See the bright, light parachute that lifts it on the wind; the shape of its spear seed, sharp, so that when it lands, it catches the earth. Imagine the journey from dandelion clock to earth landing. Draw a single seed – huge on a big piece of paper to accompany your imaginings.

Further reading and connections

- *Varmints* by Helen Ward and Marc Craste and the [animation of the book](#)
Search: [YouTube Varmints Animation](#)





Fern 1

Seek, find, speak

- What do you think the marks represent?
- What patterns can you see?

Fern 2

- What do you notice about the words the writer has selected?

Wonder words

- Challenge yourself to give an accurate definition of the following.

- ◆ *furled* ◆ *frond*
- ◆ *fast* ◆ *fiddle-head*
- ◆ *flares* ◆ *fanned*

Check in a dictionary to find out which words have more than one possible definition. Which definition fits the context of the spell?

fern

Find synonyms and any possible antonyms and choose two words to incorporate into a sentence.

- Watch a [time-lapse video](#) of a fern growing
Search: *YouTube Fern Time-Lapse*
- What happens when ferns die off?
- Discover the meaning of 'fricative'

Writing challenge

- Write a four line acrostic:
Fern's last form is
Each frond
R
Now fern is

Research challenge

- Find out what can be done with fiddle-heads.
- Why do you need to be careful?
- Are ferns flowers, grasses, or something different?
Search: *Woodland Trust Ferns*



Fern 3

Seek, find, speak

- How many different types of fern can you see in the painting?
- Can you identify them using a reference book or the internet?
- What else do you notice in the illustration?
- What did ferns form over a long period of time, after they had died?

Creative challenge

- Hapa Zome (the Japanese art of beating leaves or flowers with hammers or pebbles, pounding natural pigment into paper or cloth)
- Select a fern and good quality paper or heavy cotton cloth.
 - Fold the paper or cloth in half, placing the fern between.
 - Hammer carefully or pound with a pebble, working on a smooth, durable surface and avoiding your fingers!
 - Carefully unfold and behold...!



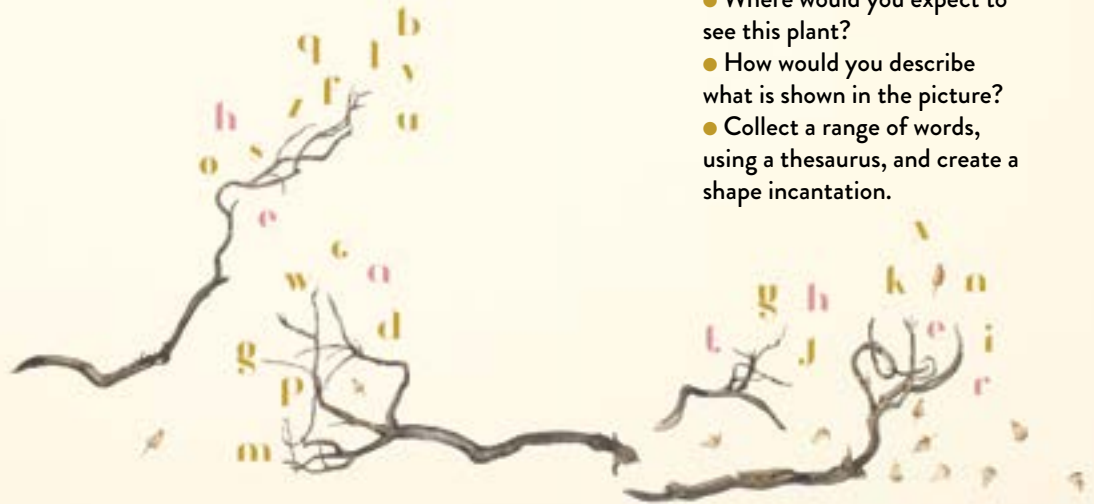
Heather 2

Seek, find, speak

- Read the spell aloud several times.
- What do you notice?
[Repetition, half-rhyme, internal rhyme, rhythm (syllable counts), alliteration, metaphor]
- Sort the lines into:
 - ◆ Questions
 - ◆ Statements
 - ◆ Imperatives
- What does the writer mean by 'Heather is never only heather'?
- Why does the writer use the word, 'cushion' in relation to moss and 'feather' in relation to lichen?
- What does the writer suggest you do with the heather, and why?

Research challenge

- What was heather used for in the past?
[Fuel, brushes, brooms, baskets, thatching, bedding, croft walls, dye]
- Which animals feed on heather?
[Red grouse, birds, bees]
- Which heather is lucky?
[White]
- Find out about the plants listed in the poem:
 - ◆ *Asphodel*: what was this used for by women in the sixteenth century?
[Dying their hair yellow]
Find out the Latin origin of the second part of the botanical name, *Ossifragum*.
[Bone-breaking, believed to be the cause of cruppany,



heather

or brittleness of the bones, in sheep that ate it]

Find a picture and write a two line description.

- ◆ *Bilberry*: what has this been used for?
[Eaten raw; cooked in pies; jellies; remedy for diarrhoea; dye for paper, linen and wool; source of vitamin D]
- Find out other names for the bilberry and which animals fed on it.
[Crowberry. Fed on by grouse, ptarmigan, other moorland birds, moth cat-

heather



erpillars such as the black mountain, mountain burnet and broad-bordered white underwing.]

- ◆ *Cotton-grass*: what were the fluffy heads of these plants once used for?
[Candlewicks; stuffing pillows and mattresses]
- ◆ *Tormentil*: what was this used for?
[‘Killing poison from the heart;’ ‘to appease rage and torment of the teeth;’ red dye for clothing; roots used for tanning hides]



Heather 3

Seek, find, speak

- What sort of landscape is this and what animals can you see?
[Mountain hare (shorter ears); hen harrier]
- What are the predominant colours?

Research challenge

- Find out about the animals and create fact files.

Further reading

- *Sky Dancer* by Gill Lewis
- *The White Hare* by Nicola Davies





heron

heron

Heron 1

Seek, find, speak

- How do you think you would describe the feel of this feather?
- What sort of bird do you think it has come from?
- Why do you think the artist has chosen to paint a feather?

Research challenge

- Make a collection of feathers and examine them with a magnifying glass or microscope. Can you identify which birds they might be from?
- How did feathers evolve?
Search: *TED Carl Zimmer Feathers*

Creative challenge

- Create your own close observational drawings or paintings of feathers. You might want to look at other feathers
Search: *Jackie Morris Feathers; Jackie Morris Feathers Tentative*
- *'Feathers are the letters from a bird.'*
What message do you think the feather in this picture might have?

Heron 2

Seek, find, speak Wonder words

- What do these mean?
 - ◆ *Eked* ◆ *Weir*
 - ◆ *Sill* ◆ *Aviator*
 - ◆ *Freighter*

Can you find any synonyms? Try using them with a partner by creating different sentences.

- Write out the first four lines and cut up the individual words, keeping the hyphenated ones together.
- Think, pair, share: find different ways of grouping the words. What do you notice? [[Repetition and all monosyllabic words](#)]
- Take the third stanza and say it out loud.

Seek, find, speak

- What does the word *'unstatues'* mean? What is the writer conveying in this stanza?
- How does the writer describe the heron when it finally moves? What does it suggest about the heron's appearance?
- Watch a video of the grey heron
Search: *YouTube Grey Heron Taking Off*
- Do you think the writer's description captures the essence of the movement?
- How has the writer 'played' with words?
- Why is heron called *'Grey-winged weapon'*?
- Find all the images linked with machinery and man-made items.

- Which part of the spell do you prefer: the part where the heron is *'dead still,'* or when he is moving? Why?

Writing challenge

- Choose a bird and study its characteristics either in life or on film.
- Jot down or audio record any ideas as you observe.
- Collect a hoard of words and phrases and extend your choice by using a thesaurus.
- Play around with the words to create a four line spell (you can write more!) about your bird.
- Choose how to display your writing.

Heron 3

Seek, find, speak

- What time of day and year do you think it is in the painting?
- How do you feel about herons?

Writing challenge

- Create a haiku on the subject of heron as depicted in the painting
- Create a diamante spell, starting perhaps with:

Still

-----, -----
-----, -----, -----
-----, -----, -----
-----, -----
-----, -----

Flight



Further reading

- The fable of Bramble, Heron and Cat
Search: *Museum Wales Heron Cat Bramble*
- Dylan Thomas: Poem in October
Search: *Dylan Thomas October*





Ivy 1

Seek, find, speak

- Look closely at walls with ivy growing on them. Can you trace the pathways of the rootlets?
- Find out about:
 - ◆ The different shapes of ivy leaves
 - ◆ Which insects pollinate the flowers
[Wasps and flies]
 - ◆ Which creatures feed on the black ivy berries
[Holly blue butterfly caterpillars]
 - ◆ Christmas traditions of using ivy
 - ◆ Other uses of ivy
[Highlands: keeps evil away from cows and milk
Shropshire: cups made from the thick



lower stems were used by children to drink milk and this was supposed to ward off whooping cough]

- What do the ivy rootlet patterns remind you of?

Ivy 2

Seek, find, speak

- What is the first thing you notice about this poem?

Wonder words

What do these mean?

- ◆ *Via*
- ◆ *Sky-wire*
- ◆ *Ground cover*

Try using these words with a partner by creating different sentences.

Seek, find, speak

- What sort of voice do you imagine 'Ivy' has? Practise saying the poem, learning it by heart, and expressing it to suggest the character you imagine ivy to have.
- Who do you think Ivy is talking to when she says, 'You call me ground-cover'?
- What are your feelings about ivy?



Ivy 3

- Try to identify the birds in this painting and find out more information about them to add to your fact file.
[Collared dove, wren, field fare]





kingfisher

Kingfisher 2

Seek, find, speak
Wonder words

Think, pair, share:

- What do these mean?
 - ◆ feather-stream
 - ◆ slings its arrow
 - ◆ Halcyon (research different meanings for this word)
 - ◆ Angler

Try using them with a partner by creating different sentences.

Seek, find, speak

Imagery

- 'carves its hollow In the water' - what image do you see in your mind's eye?
- 'slings its arrow superswift' - what image do you see when you hear these words? What other word in the spell fits with the arrow image?

[Quiver]

kingfisher

Writing challenge

- Collect all the hyphenated words and write them out as separate words. Rearrange the words, playing around with the order, creating new partnerships and use these words to create your own spell. Write it down.
- Now find all the compound words in the poems and separate those into their two separate parts. Add these to your word collection and rearrange, playing around with the order until you are happy with your new spell. Record this.
- Which do you feel is more effective? Why?
- Add music or sound effects as you perform or record your spells.

Performance

- Read the poem several times and think about pace. Which parts do you think should be calm and slow and which parts fast or accelerating?
- Practise reading aloud with a partner. Record and add background film or graphics.

Quick abstract art challenge (in pairs)

- Read the poem and list the colours it conjures in your mind.
- Collect all the colours and materials you think you might need to create an abstract picture in a speedy response to the spell.
- As your partner reads the spell aloud, respond to the images by painting and using any other materials you have

Kingfisher 1

Seek, find, speak

- What sort of tree has these leaves?
- What do you notice about the ripples?

Research challenge

- Look for information and images on Japanese art depicting willows and water.
- Choose one image, look at the composition and compare it with Jackie Morris's painting. What sort of feelings do the paintings evoke?
- Find images of Monet's paintings of willows. Choose one. What are the similarities and differences when you compare it with the Japanese art and the painting in *The Lost Words*? How would you describe the mood of this painting?

selected, to depict what you are hearing.

- You might need to have the poem read more than once!
- Swap roles.
- Discuss the results. What worked well? What might you have done differently?

Creative challenge

- Create a dance to the words of the spell, possibly using long lengths of fabric for the river and ribbons to help depict the kingfisher's movements.

Research challenge

- Find out about [the kingfisher](#) and create an infographic. Search: *YouTube Common Kingfisher Catching Fish; RSPB Kingfishers*

Kingfisher 3

Seek, find, speak

- Where is the focus in this painting?
- Compare it with the painting of the kingfisher on gold leaf. What similarities are there?
- Which line in the spell describes this scene?

Further reading

- Find out about the [Greek myth](#) about kingfishers
Search: *Greek Myths Halcyon*





Lark 1

Seek, find, speak

- Why do you think the letters are arranged in this way?
- Why do you think blue was the colour chosen for the letters of the missing word?
- How do you think the artist created the sky effect?

lark

lark

Lark 2

Seek, find, speak

- What is this spell about?
- What is the metaphor the writer has chosen for the lark and why do you think he has chosen it?
- Which verbs has Robert Macfarlane chosen to depict the song? Why is this, do you think?
- Why might the lark be 'short of breath'?
- What is meant by:
 - ◆ 'dying stars'
 - ◆ 'exploding suns'
 - ◆ 'dark matter'
- How do you feel when you think about deep space?

Writing challenges

- What sort of things cheer you up when your 'sadness has come' and your 'heart grows flatter'?
- Create a recipe spell for 'Being of good cheer.' Think of the ingredients and how you would combine them to create the desired result.
- Listen to the [song of a lark](#)
Search: *RSPB Lark*
- Listen to [The Lark Ascending](#) by Vaughan Williams
Search: *YouTube Lark Ascending*
What does this music suggest to you about the lark?
- Collect words that you could use to

describe the sound of the lark. Play around with arranging them on the page to suggest the flight of the lark, thinking carefully about design: colour and word letter size.

Seek, find, speak

- Read the spell again. In what ways has your understanding of it developed from the first reading?



Lark 3

Seek, find, speak

- Identify the yellow flowers in the painting.
- Research challenge:
 - Find out about the [legend of St Peter](#) that is associated with this flower.
Search: *Woodland Trust Cowslip*
 - What can be made from these flowers?
[Wine]





magpie

magpie

Magpie 2 Wonder words

- What do these mean?
 - ◆ *Manifesto*
 - ◆ *Bicker*
 - ◆ *Snicker*
 - ◆ *Interject*
 - ◆ *Intercept*
 - ◆ *Intervene*

Can you find any synonyms? Try using them with a partner by creating different sentences.

- Idiom: Can you explain the meaning of this: 'Argue Every Toss!'

Seek, find, speak

- What do you notice about the punctuation? Why do you think the writer has done this?
- What do the last three lines of the spell tell you? Can you think of any other creatures that behave in this way?
- Think, pair, share: describe the character of the magpie in your own words.
- Think of a bird which is a complete contrast to the magpie.

Magpie 3 Seek, find, speak

- Find out about magpie nests – how and where they are constructed.
- How did the magpie get its name? [Mag = Margaret (women in general) Pie = pointed (tail or wing)]
- Find out the collective noun for a group of magpies.
- Find out the length of the body, its tail and wingspan.

Creative challenge

- Create a comic strip retelling of 'The Magpie's Nest' Search: *Full Online Book Magpies Nest*

Writing challenge

- Create a kenning on the magpie. This acts like a riddle by describing something indirectly. They are lines of two words joined together with a hyphen to make a new noun. E.g. swan-road = river (noun-noun)
 - ◆ Think about how the magpie looks, moves,

sounds, behaves and list the words.

- ◆ Link words together to convey the character of the magpie, e.g. Street-scavenger Cheeky-chatterer
- ◆ Tips: think about rhythm and alliteration; play around with the pairings and order; magpie words from Robert Macfarlane's spell!

- Practise and perform.

Art challenge

- Look at magpies on the ground, in trees and in flight. Find images of them and sketch, paint or create a collage of a magpie.



Magpie 1 Seek, find, speak

- What time of year is it in the painting?
- What creatures are absent?
- Research challenge: Find out about these creatures and create an infographic, showing their Latin name and the family to which they belong; the development of the chicks; any other interesting information. Search: *RSPB Magpie*; *Wikipedia Magpie*

Further reading and connections

- Traditional rhymes Search: *Wikipedia One for Sorrow*
- Find different versions and create your own, using the same rhyme scheme.
- Find out about the storyline to Rossini's opera, *The Thieving Magpie*.
- Read the poem by Sian MacKay Search: *Sian MacKay Magpie*
- *The Adventures of Tintin: The Castafiore Emerald*.
- Dreamtime myths Search: *World Stories First Sunrise*
- The Magpie, a painting by Claude Monet Search: *Monet Magpie*



newt.

newt

Newt 1

Seek, find and speak

- What class of animals does this one belong to?
- Which different kinds can be found in the United Kingdom?
- Judging from the outline, which sort do you think this is?
- What sort of plant do you think is in this picture?

Newt 2

Wonder words

- What do these mean?

- ◆ *emoted* ◆ *coot*
- ◆ *unhirsute* ◆ *unastute*
- ◆ *disrepute*

Can you find any synonyms and antonyms? Try using them with a partner by creating different sentences.

Seek, find, speak

- What techniques has the writer used?
- What sort of effect is created?
- What other words rhyme with coot?

- How does the newt feel about himself? Look at the gold leaf painting. Do you think his ideas (king, lions, dragons) work well? Give reasons. Why do you think the newt pauses at the end?

Writing challenge

In pairs:

- Choose two creatures that can have a conversation with each other, with one commenting on the other's character and appearance. Decide how they will be answered and write it up as a short play script.



Newt 3

Seek, find, speak

- Why do you think the artist chose to paint the newt so large and the coot in the distance? What features can you identify?
- Find out about coots and crested newts and add to your fact files.





Otter 1

Seek, find, speak

- What is depicted in the painting?
- How would you indicate an absence of otter?

Otter 2

Wonder words

- What do these mean?
 - ◆ *falter* ◆ *holt*
 - ◆ *skein* ◆ *ore*
 - ◆ *silver-miner* ◆ *delves*

Try using them with a partner by creating different sentences.

- What do you notice about the structure of the poem (first and last lines)?
- What does the second stanza suggest?
- What is the extended metaphor used in the third stanza?
- What does 'turns the water inside-out, then inside-outer' mean and why is it so effective?

- Pick out words related to movement.
- How does the writer feel about the otter?

Writing challenge

- 'Ever dreamed of being ...' Which creature would you like to shape-shift into?
- Make a collection of movement words, verbs and adverbs, similes and metaphors, that you would relate to your chosen animal.
- Visualise shifting and describe what happens.
- Either write a diamante, showing the change from human to animal, or write a description or narrative.



Otter 3

Seek, find and speak

- How does this painting reflect the spell? Pick out the words and phrases that you think have clearly influenced the artist's interpretation.
- What else do you notice in the painting?

Further reading

- *Tarka, the Otter* by Henry Williamson
 - *An Otter* a poem by Ted Hughes, from 'The Cat and the Cuckoo.'
 - *One Moonlit Night* by T. Llew Jones, adapted by Gillian Clarke and illustrated by Jac Jones
 - *Gwion and the Witch*, which tells the story of Taliesin who has the art of shape-shifting. There's also a folk song version on YouTube.
- Search: *Wales History Taliesin*; *YouTube Ceridwen Taliesin*



RAVEN

raven



Raven 1

Seek, find, speak

- Another feather! How is this one different from Heron's?

Raven 2

Seek, find, speak
Wonder words

What do these mean?

- ◆ *rasps* ◆ *swagger*
- ◆ *peak* ◆ *boulder*
- ◆ *Guile* ◆ *agile*
- ◆ *ventures* ◆ *scoffs*
- ◆ *scarp* ◆ *familiar*
- ◆ *hexes*

Can you find any synonyms? Try using three of them with a partner by creating different sentences.

- In the last verse, what do the words bring to mind?

[Big Bad Wolf in Little Red Riding Hood]

Performance Poetry

- In fives, divide the poem up and practise performing. Take care with the last verse.
- Act it out. You could create an animation or use stick puppets for the performance.

Research challenge

- Find out about ravens.
- Which other birds do they have links with in this book of spells?
- Compare their size with other creatures in the spell book and arrange them in order.
- The egg in the raven's beak belongs to a guillemot. Find out three fascinating facts about guillemot eggs.

Writing challenge

- What is the collective noun for ravens?
- Create a story or play with the collective noun as a title. Think about which characters will be involved and plan your storyline before you start writing.

Raven 3

Seek, find, speak

- Look carefully at the painting.

What do you notice?

Silence in court!

- Using your research, make a list of good and bad points about the raven.
- State the case either for or against the raven.

Art challenge

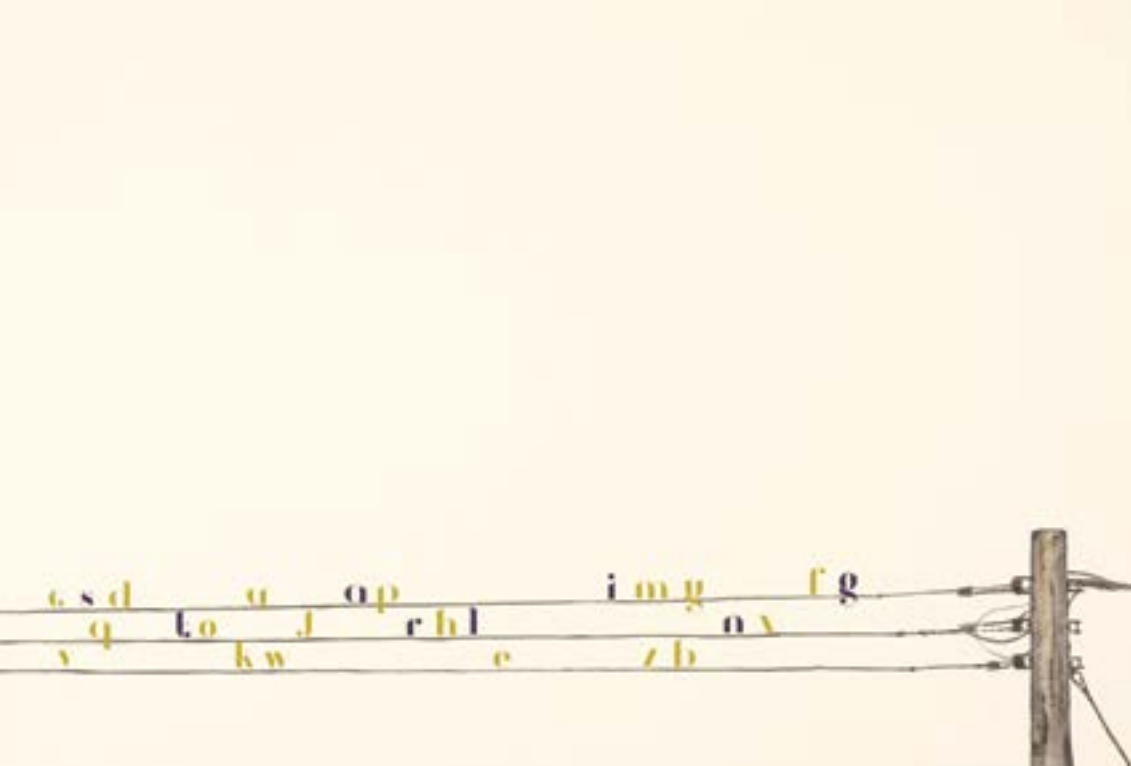
- Create a raven silhouette from black paper. Use images from books or the internet to help you with your design.



Further reading:

- Find out about the stories and myths which feature ravens:
 - ◆ Greek: Apollo
Search: *Corvid Research Why Crow Black*
 - ◆ Norse: Hugin and Munin
Search: *DLTK Kids Hugin Munin*
 - ◆ Native American
Search: *Magma Raven Steals Sun*
 - ◆ Wales: Bran the Blessed
Search: *Bran Blessed*
 - ◆ The link with the ravens and the Tower of London.





starling

starling

Starling 2 Wonder words

- What do these mean?
 - ◆ *sheen* ◆ *pitch*
 - ◆ *shoaling* ◆ *murmuration*

Can you find any synonyms?
Try using them with a partner
by creating different sentences.

Seek, find, speak

- Read the poem again closely. What quality do the first two stanzas describe?

- What techniques does the writer use to depict the quality?
[Hyphenated descriptions, similes, metaphors, alliteration, internal rhyme]
- What quality of starlings is described in stanzas three and four?
- Pick out the words which have been selected to convey

this quality. What do you notice?

- How does the writer convey the blackness of the starling's eye?
- What do the final two stanzas describe?
- Which words are repeated? Why do you think the writer has chosen to do this?
- Find videos of the Northern Lights
Search: *YouTube Stunning Aurora Borealis*



Starling 3 Seek, find, speak

- Describe what is happening in this painting.
- What do you notice about the composition and how it relates to the first picture?
- Observe starlings, particularly their behaviour at bird feeders.
- How do you feel about starlings?

Starling 1 Seek, find, speak

- Why do you think the artist chose to paint a telegraph pole and wires?

Shoaling fish

Search: *YouTube Predators Attack Fish*

Swarming flies

Search: *YouTube Swarming Lake Flies*

Ink, dispersing in water

Search: *YouTube Red Ink Water*

Starling murmurations

Search: *YouTube Amazing Starlings Murmurations*

- What is the writer saying about starlings? Do you agree with him?

Writing challenge

- Devise an incantation to try and create another creature, following the same pattern the writer has used for

Starling:

- ◆ Choose a creature
- ◆ Suggest how to mix the colour of the creature
- ◆ Suggest how to create the sounds made by the creature
- ◆ Suggest how to teach the movement of the creature

Further reading

- Find out about the myths and stories which feature starlings:
 - ◆ The story of Branwen
Search: *Tes Story Branwen*
 - ◆ The Starlings of West Pier, by 9 year old Roxanna Toyne
Search: *BBC Starlings West Pier*



Weasel 2

Wonder words

What do these mean? Can you find any synonyms? Try using them with a partner by creating different sentences.

- ◆ Embers
- ◆ tinder
- ◆ pyre
- ◆ hot-wires
- ◆ gyres

Seek, find, speak

- What is the extended simile chosen by the writer for weasel?
- Why has he chosen this?
- Pick out the words relating to the simile.
- What does the writer mean by the words:
'... turns field to pyre, sand to glass....'
- What detail does the painting add to the words of the weasel spell?
- Summarise, in your own words, what you have learned about the weasel.

Writing challenge

- Who killed Cock Robin? Find the nursery rhyme. How many creatures mentioned in *The Book of Spells* feature in the rhyme?
- With a partner, improvise a verse to frame the weasel, to fit with the painting!

Research challenge

- Which other animals are closely related to weasels?
[[Stoats](#), [pine-martens](#), [pole-cats](#), [otters](#)]
- Find out details about their relative sizes and create an infographic, adding other interesting facts that you have discovered. Think carefully

Weasel 1

Seek, find, speak

- What is suggested in this painting?



weasel

weasel

about the organisation to make the information accessible.

[VWT Mustelid Guide](#)

Search: [VWT Mustelid Guide](#)

[Arkive Weasel](#)

Search: [Arkive Weasel](#)

[BBC Nature Weasel](#)

Search: [BBC Nature Weasel](#)

Watch [Weasel Wildlife Centre](#)

Search: [YouTube Weasel Wildlife Centre](#)



Weasel 3

Seek, find, speak

- Which creatures feature in this painting?
- Where do you think this habitat might be?
- What plants can you see?

Further reading

- *The Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Graham





Willow 1

Seek, find, speak

- What is shown in the painting?
- What is absent?
- What do you imagine you might see in the distance?

willow

Willow 2

Wonder words

- What do these mean?
 - ◆ *billow*
 - ◆ *heartwood*
 - ◆ *bough*
 - ◆ *grain*
 - ◆ *knot*

Can you find any synonyms? Try using them with a partner by creating different sentences.

Seek, find, speak

- What feelings does this gilded painting evoke?
- Who is speaking in this spell?
- What different techniques does the writer use?

[Question and answer, alliteration, internal and end rhymes, repetition]

- What does the poem suggest about the character of willow?
- Do you think trees can communicate?
- What questions might you ask of willow?

Drama challenge

- In small groups, practise delivering the spell as a conversation, clearly conveying the characteristics of the speakers through your intonation, pace and volume. Then perform to each other.
- In pairs: hot seat willow, staying in character as questioner and tree.
 - ◆ Questioner: think about

which secrets you really want to discover.

- ◆ Willow: think of good responses which will deflect the questions.

Research challenge

- Find out about the other trees mentioned in the final stanza.
- What shapes are the trees and the leaves?
- What characters do they suggest to you?
- What secrets do you think the different trees might possess?

Writing challenge

- Create a spell for a tree native to the British Isles.
 - ◆ Think about where it is growing, what it might see and experience, which creatures visit.
 - ◆ You could write the spell in the shape of the tree or its leaves.
- Find out the names of trees native to the British Isles and create a chant.
- Think about alliteration, rhythm, internal and end rhymes. You might want to use similes and/or metaphors to suggest the character of your trees.
- Write a spell which is a conversation between two different types of tree which conveys their different characters.

Willow 3

Seek, find, speak

- What is the mood in this painting?

Writing challenge

- Write a short poem, perhaps a haiku, tanka or cinquain, to capture the moment.
 - ◆ Haiku: 5, 7, 5 syllables
 - ◆ Tanka: 5 lines which can be either 5,7,5,7,7 syllables. They can, unlike the haiku, include metaphors and similes.

- ◆ Cinquain: 5 lines of 2, 4, 6, 8, 2 syllables.

- Use the scene as a setting for a story, perhaps about secrets.

Research challenge

- Find out in what ways willow wood can be used.

Creative challenge

- Create objects by weaving willow
- Search: *YouTube Willow Fish*
- Create a willow den
- Search: *RHS Living Willow*

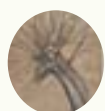


Further reading

- The Willow Wife: a Japanese Folktale
Search: *Uexpress Willow Wife*
- Trees for Life: Willow
Search: *Trees for Life Willow*
- The Whomping Willow in

Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban and *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*.

- Hans Christian Anderson Under the Willow Tree (a long story!)
Search: *Andersen Centre Willow*



Wren 2

Listen, seek, find, speak

- Robert Macfarlane reading the Wren spell
Search: *BBC Today Macfarlane Wren*
- Kerry Andrew performing the Wren spell, as Jackie Morris paints
Search: *Morris Wren Whirrs*

Wonder words

- What do these mean?
 - ◆ *furze*
 - ◆ *etches*
 - ◆ *glitches*

Can you find any synonyms? Try using them with a partner by creating different sentences.

Seek, find, speak

- What is meant by 'the world around her slows'?
- What is the chief characteristic that the writer conveys?
- What techniques does the writer use?
[Alliteration, internal rhyme, repetition, onomatopoeia, half rhymes, pauses]

- Make a list of the words related to movement. Why do you think the writer chose these particular words?
- What metaphors are used for wren?
- What does the last line suggest?

Writing challenge

- Choose a creature that moves very quickly. Observe the creature closely, using a film if a live example is unavailable!
- Create a word-hoard of movement words, using a thesaurus to extend your lexical treasury.
- Think of two metaphors you could use to suggest the creature's quality.
- Create your own spell, using the ideas you have gathered, playing around with the order to create the most impact.
- Practise reading aloud and perform, adding any sound effects that will enhance the delivery.

Wren 1

Seek, find, speak

- What do you think the twisted lines represent?
- What do you notice about the thorns?



WREN

wren

Wren 3

Seek, find, speak

- Make some observations about the painting and compare with the previous two illustrations.

Research challenge

- What is the collective noun for wrens?
- What does the Latin name for wren, 'troglodytes,' mean? Why do you think this name

was chosen?

- Find out five fascinating wren facts
Search: *BBC Nature Wildlife Wren*
- Find out about the 'hunting the wren' tradition.
- Find out the names attached to the wren in Wales, England, Scotland and the Netherlands.
[Welsh - 'Druid,' English - 'Jenny,' Scottish - 'Dreathan-Donn,' Dutch - 'Little King']



Further reading and listening

- *King of the Birds* a fable from Aesop
Search: *Little Brown Wren King Birds*
- *King of Birds!* by Karine Polwart
Search: *YouTube Polwart Birds*
 - ◆ Compare this with a traditional Zulu story
Search: *Canteach Birds Zulu*
 - ◆ What are the similarities and differences?
- *Birds and Words* by Charlie Harper: compare the ways in which birds are depicted by Charlie Harper with the writing and art in *The Book of Spells*.
- *Little Wren performed by Kerry Andrew*
Search: *YouTube Kerry Andrew Wren*



FINAL THOUGHTS

Writing challenge

● In pairs, create rhyming couplets for a chosen animal. Make sure everyone chooses a different creature.

e.g. A kaleidoscope of colour
As butterflies flutter.

A flamboyance of flamingos
Striking a fluorescent pose.

A marching line of militants,
An army of ants.

● Create a group incantation by collating everybody's work, illustrating the charms, and deciding which order works most effectively by reading the lines aloud.

● Perform!

Personal challenge

● How can you make a difference in helping to preserve our wild creatures and places?

johnmuirtrust.org
wildlifetrusts.org/natureclubs
woodlandtrust.org.uk/naturedetectives
plantlife.org.uk/uk/discover-wild-plants-nature/children-families
rspb.org.uk

Seek, find, speak

● A charm of goldfinches 'flit through the pages' in The Spell Book. Why do you think the creators of this book chose to use goldfinches as a symbol?

● Select your favourite spell and explain why that one particularly speaks to you.

● Choose your favourite painting and explain why it appeals to you.

● Why might it be important to know

the names of plants and creatures?

● Create wild chains, finding links and connections between creatures and plants.

● Consider which other wild words we are in danger of losing and create your own illustrated spell book.

Further reading

● Kathleen Jamie, *Here lies our land*
Search: *Scottish Poetry Jamie Land*

● Landmarks by Robert Macfarlane:
find words which connect with the subjects of the Spells and add to your word-hoard.

● The Reader's Digest Field Guide to the Wild Flowers of Britain

● Flora Britannica by Richard Mabey

● The Tales of Beatrix Potter

● The Tales of Brambly Hedge by Jill Barklem

CURRICULUM CONTEXT

There is significant potential for using The Lost Words and activities in this Explorers' Guide as part of creative, active, outdoor-based approaches to learning.

Use it to initiate, or as part of existing programmes and lesson plans, and to work towards curriculum outcomes.

Promote cross-curricular links – across literacy, art, Religious & Moral Education (values, spirituality, inter-relationships), maths...

Take learning outside

Explore school grounds. Use it as a prompt into local greenspace, parks and community woods. Integrate activities with field trips and outdoor residentials (see #BrilliantResidential).

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

The Curriculum provides an outline of core knowledge around which teachers develop exciting and stimulating lessons. Its aim is to promote the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills.

It is just one element of a young person's education; wide-ranging experiences can be planned within the school day. It is widely recognised that learning in and about the natural environment contributes to a varied and enriching curriculum.

"Giving children the opportunity to discover, learn about and experience the natural world is hugely important - it can help create a sense of belonging rooted in their local environment, enhancing their health, wellbeing and educational outcomes."

TRANSFORMING OUTDOOR LEARNING IN SCHOOLS, LESSONS FROM THE NATURAL CONNECTIONS PROJECT. 2016

Scotland

Curriculum for Excellence places an emphasis on the development of children to be successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

It focuses on developing skills for learning, life and work and contributes to raising attainment for all. It encourages an active, healthy and environmentally sustainable lifestyle and aims to support children and young people to learn beyond the classroom.

In Scotland, attainment is interpreted as a broad term beyond a narrow definition of exam results or test scores. It's 'the measurable progress which children and young people make through and beyond school, and the development of the range of skills, knowledge and attributes needed to succeed in learning, life and work'. It is dependent on certain key foundations for learning: good literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing.

The lead commitment in Learning for Sustainability Vision 2030+ is that 'All learners should have an entitlement to Learning for Sustainability', with Recommendation 1 stating: 'Progressive and curriculum-led approaches to outdoor learning should continue to be promoted'.

"All teachers and school leaders are required to demonstrate Learning for Sustainability in their practice as it is an integral part of the General Teaching Council of Scotland Professional Standards. It is an important prerequisite for all who deliver Scottish education."

JOHN SWINNEY MSP, DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER AND CABINET SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS

NOTES



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