



**BookTrust**  
Special School  
Library Pack



**Supporting guide  
2023–24**

# Your Special School Library Pack contains:



## The Search for the Giant Arctic Jellyfish

by Chloe Savage



## Being You: Poems of Positivity

by Daniel Thompson, illustrated by Julia Murray



## Top Tens

by National Geographic Kids



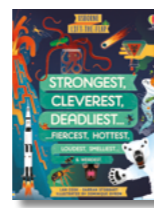
## Tutankhamun's Treasure

by David Long, illustrated by Stefano Tambellini



## Waiting for Wolf

by Sandra Dieckmann



## Strongest, Cleverest, Deadliest...

by Lan Cook and Darran Stobbart, illustrated by Dominique Byron



## Seek & Find Animals or Seek & Find Bugs

by Lydia Halliday, illustrated by Amanda Shufflebotham

You will receive either one of these books in your pack.



## Bumble & Snug and the Angry Pirates

by Mark Bradley



## Pop-Up Peekaboo! Ocean

by Dorling Kindersley, illustrated by Jean Claude



## Listen to the Music

by Mary Richards, illustrated by Caroline Bonne-Müller

# Welcome to your FREE Special School Library Pack from BookTrust, the UK's largest children's reading charity

These books have been carefully selected to help your students discover and develop a love of reading.

In this guide you'll find ideas and advice to so you and your students can make the most of each book.

We're aware that special schools support a vast spectrum of needs. Every school, class and student is different. We also know that this pack is used by different practitioners in different settings and in different ways.

With all this in mind, our book selection offers a diverse range of styles, themes and formats to ensure there's something for everyone. Likewise, the activities are as varied and flexible as possible, and can be adapted to suit different needs, circumstances and timescales.

The activities were developed by teachers, teaching assistants and librarians, and tested in schools.

We hope that you and your students enjoy the books and activities in the Special School Library Pack, and we'd love to hear what you think – let us know by emailing [schoollibrarypack@booktrust.org.uk](mailto:schoollibrarypack@booktrust.org.uk) or tweet us @BookTrust using hashtag #SpecialSchoolLibraryPack.

**Thank you to the teachers, teaching assistants and school librarians whose book selection and resource design made the Special School Library Pack possible.**



# Enjoying books in every school

You will know best which books are likely to suit the needs of your students and how to support interaction. Here are some initial ideas that you can adapt, enhance or develop to use within your school.



You can use these approaches and ideas with any book to encourage reading for pleasure, including those in this pack. These recommendations and words of advice have been suggested by special school teachers, teaching assistants and librarians from across the country, who also helped us to create the activities in the pack.

## Make it relatable

Link a story to the student's own environment and familiar subjects; ask about their experience of something related to the book.

## Stimulus boxes

Stimulus boxes with objects related to the story can help students focus and support processing. It is useful to spread them throughout the story and use at key points.

## Movement and action

Use movements or actions that correspond with the narrative to aid memory for learners.

## Use the senses

Consider sensory experiences. A strong smell or taste can be a more powerful stimuli than a picture or object. You can be creative with it!

## Signs and symbols

Find key signs and symbols linked to the story so that everyone can access it. Book-specific resources are key to the success of embedding concepts and ideas in relation to a story.

## Sensory trays

Some students find sensory trays, with objects linked to the book hidden in straw, useful to play with while they are listening to and talking about a story.

## Immersive experiences

Turn books into experiences. For example, you can use sensory trails, scavenger hunts or drama to bring the story to life. This movement around a space can increase engagement.

## Give stories time

Give each story sufficient time and repetition. Allow students to become familiar with the story and the rhythm.

## Enjoying books in different ways

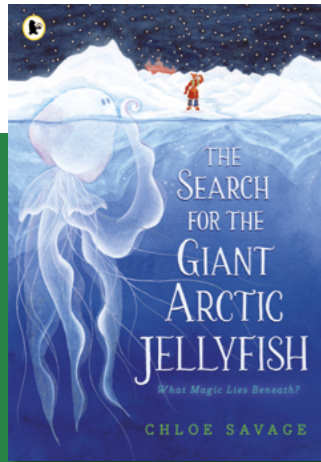
A more complex subject or challenging book can work on many levels and be appreciated in different ways. It may be a case of enjoying the rhythm and sound of the language in a poem or the illustration style in a graphic novel.

## What next?

Think of ways to extend the story, making links across the curriculum. There are lots of ways to connect books to subjects as diverse as geography, science and maths, as well as PSHE. Examples of ways to do so with this year's Special School Library Pack books are included in this guide.

# The Search for the Giant Arctic Jellyfish

by Chloe Savage



A funny tale that combines scientific exploration, mythical creatures and human endurance

## Why we chose this book

Reading the pictures is as important as reading the words in this multi-layered story about a scientist's search for the mythical giant Arctic jellyfish. With graphic novel elements, detailed ship cross-sections and dual underwater/above water perspectives, it's a story that can be explored either independently or in small groups.

## Discussion topics

- Why can't the researchers see the jellyfish? What do you think the jellyfish thinks about being found?
- Towards the end of the book, the research team begins to wonder if the giant Arctic jellyfish is a myth. What does the word 'myth' mean? Do you know of any other animals that might be myths?
- Would you like to go to the Arctic? What do you think it is like?

## Writing, drawing and craft

- The story ends on a moment of hope. Dr Morley thinks she may have spotted the giant jellyfish! Imagine you are Dr Morley and write what happens next.
- Draw your own cross-section image of a boat. What rooms will your boat have? What activities are taking place in each room? How many people are on board?
- Create your own giant Arctic jellyfish using materials of your choice. For example, you could use paper, cardboard or fabric. What colour will your jellyfish be? How might you create its flowing tentacles? What texture will it be?

## Music, drama and movement

- Act out the story in the book. Take it in turns to be the jellyfish, Dr Morley and the researchers. How will you act as the jellyfish? What movements would a jellyfish make? How does Dr Morley lead her team? What sort of work do the researchers do?
- Create a soundtrack for the book. What types of sounds can you use to represent the excitement as the team set off on their adventure to the Arctic? How might the sounds change when they feel frustrated at not being able to find the jellyfish?

## Sensory and other ideas

- Create a sensory tray of squidgy green algae. For example, you could use green jelly. Explore the algae with your hands. What does it feel like?
- Research the types of jellyfish that live in the Arctic sea. What are the names of some of the largest jellyfish?

## If you like this book, you might also like:

- **The Secret of Black Rock** by Joe Todd-Stanton
- **Lights on Cotton Rock** by David Litchfield
- **It Fell from the Sky** by The Fan Brothers

# Strongest, Cleverest, Deadliest...

by Lan Cook and Darran Stobart, illustrated by Dominique Byron



A lift-the-flap book full of record-breaking facts

## Why we chose this book

Students can explore everything from the hottest and coldest things on Earth to the smelliest and loudest in this exciting non-fiction title. It is perfect for anyone looking for a highly interactive read, with students being able to lift the flaps to discover even more.

## Discussion topics

- Which of the topics were you most interested in and why?
- What do you think you are clever at and why? What is your friend clever at?
- Which fact did you find the most amazing? Why?

## Writing, drawing and craft

- Make a dragonfly like the one shown on **page 7**. You could use paper, card, fabric or other materials. What colours will you choose? How could you make the delicate wings? When your dragonfly is finished, attach a piece of string to it and hang it up in your classroom.
- Create a true or false game using facts from the book. Write a series of facts from the book on some small pieces of card. Then write some made-up incorrect statements. Shuffle the pieces of card to mix them up. Ask a friend to play your game. Can they guess which facts are true and which are false?
- Choose your favourite topic in the book. Write a story relating to that topic. For example, it could be about something that is clever, strong, smelly or deadly.

## Music, drama and movement

- Explore different sounds. What is the quietest sound? What is the loudest?

How many decibels do you think each sound could be? Soundbible.com might be a useful starting point to find sounds to listen to.

- Act out how the fiercest animals move and hunt out their prey. Do you have the stealth and skills to be an animal?

## Sensory and other ideas

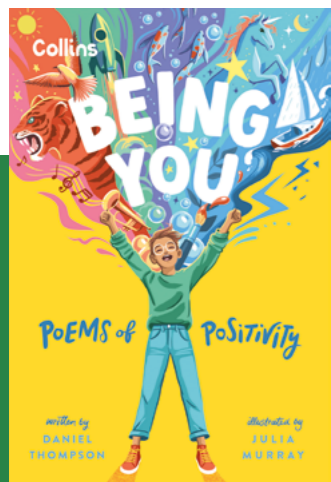
- Put together a sensory box of different smells. You could use disposable cups with lids and make a hole in the lid. Fill the cups with different things to smell. Ask your classmates to sniff each cup. Can they tell what it contains? Which smells do you like? Which do you dislike?
- Follow the steps on the contents page of the book to use the Usborne Quicklinks website. Learn more about clever, deadly, fierce, smelly, hot and cold things, such as artificial intelligence, giant sea worms, the smelliest foods and poisonous frogs.

## If you like this book, you might also like:

- **Biggest, Tallest, Fastest...** by Darran Stobart, illustrated by Kasia Serafin
- **Weird But True 2023** by National Geographic Kids
- **Extreme Planet: The Deep** by Laura Cowan, illustrated by Qu Lan

# Being You: Poems of Positivity

by Daniel Thompson, illustrated by Julia Murray



An empowering poetry collection

## Why we chose this book

Great for supporting students' emotional wellbeing, this colourful collection features poems of positivity and happiness about being yourself, sharing your feelings, and being resilient, compassionate and curious. Accompanied by calming illustrations, the poems are short and accessible, with regular rhyme schemes and straight-forward language.

## Discussion topics

- Do you have a favourite poem in the book? If so, what is it and why is it your favourite?
- How important do you think it is to share how you are feeling?
- What makes you happy and why?

## Writing, drawing and craft

- Read the poem 'Carry Compassion' (page 26). Pick a positive word that you like and create a poem in a similar way. Use each letter of the word as the starting letter of another word or sentence. This is called an acrostic poem. You could use words from the book such as 'forgiveness', 'generous' or 'kindness'. You can find lots more ideas on how to get started writing poetry from our Poetry Prompts series ([www.booktrust.org.uk/poetryprompts](http://www.booktrust.org.uk/poetryprompts)).
- Read the poem 'Little Acts of Kindness' (pages 32-33). Draw pictures showing acts of kindness that you could do for friends or family.
- Draw pictures or patterns to show how you are feeling. Do certain feelings have a particular colour or shape?

## Music, drama and movement

- Choose a poem from the book. Use movement, facial expressions and sounds

to act it out as someone else reads the words. For example, you could choose 'Share Your Feelings' (page 88) or 'Live Life in Colour' (pages 8-9).

- Use movement and dance to show how different feelings can be expressed. For example, you could come up with movements for expressing emotions such as fear, anxiety, anger, happiness or determination.

## Sensory and other ideas

- Put together a sensory bin of emotions. Fill the bin with items that could represent different feelings. For example, you could include a green toy monster (jealousy), red spiky balls (anger), water beads (sadness and tears) and soft felt hearts (love).
- Create a poster based on one of the images in the book. Which one will you choose? Display the poster in your classroom.

## If you like this book, you might also like:

- **Courage in a Poem** by Various Authors
- **Smile Out Loud** by Joseph Coelho, illustrated by Daniel Gray-Barnett
- **Dare to be You** by Matthew Syed, illustrated by Toby Triumph

# Seek & Find Animals or Seek & Find Bugs

by Lydia Halliday, illustrated by Amanda Shufflebotham



An interactive nature-facts book with a 'magic torch' feature

## Why we chose this book

There are several different ways for readers to interact with and explore the animal or bug facts in this unusual non-fiction book. Students will love playing with the 'magic torch' and discovering the details it reveals in the hidden pictures.

You will receive either one of these books in your pack.

## Discussion topics

- What new facts about animals or bugs did you learn?
- Which animal or bug would you least like to encounter and why?
- Have you seen any of these animals or bugs in real life? If so, where did you see them?

## Writing, drawing and craft

- Make your own lift-the-flap page. Pick animals or bugs that interest you and research facts about them. Write questions on the outside of the flaps, then hide the answers underneath. Swap with a classmate and see if you can answer each other's questions.
- **Animals:** Look at the map at the beginning of the book. Choose one of the five colour-coded habitat regions (polar, temperate, rainforest, desert or savannah). Use an atlas or globe to research which countries are in the region.
- **Bugs:** Create a factsheet about the Amazon rainforest. Use some of the facts on the Rainforest Bugs page and research some others.
- Make a model of an animal or bug using materials of your choice. For example, you could make it from cardboard, fabric or modelling clay.

## Music, drama and movement

- The animals or bugs in the book all move

in different ways. Can you create the movements of some of them?

- What sounds should go with each page of the book? Make the different sounds of the animals or bugs as you read the pages and explore the flaps.

## Sensory and other ideas

- Put together a sensory animal or bug explorer kit to use when reading the book. You could include items such as a torch, magnifying glass, hat, notebook and pen.
- Choose one of the animal or bug habitats mentioned in the books and create a habitat box. You could use a shoebox and choose a polar or rainforest habitat. Use craft materials and different textures to decorate the box, so it looks like a habitat that the animals would like.

## If you like this book, you might also like:

- **The Earth Book** by Hannah Alice
- **Hide & Seek Forest Friends** by Igloo Books
- **Lift-the-flap Questions and Answers about Our World** by Katie Daynes, illustrated by Marie-Eve Tremblay

# Top Tens

by National Geographic Kids



Photographic non-fiction packed with mind-boggling facts about our world

## Why we chose this book

A fun book for anyone who loves to learn, share facts and find out more about the world around them. Perfect for dipping in and out, every page has ten bite-sized facts on a specific theme, covering topics from the weirdest weather recorded to world-changing inventions.

## Discussion topics

- Which pages did you find the most interesting in the book? Why?
- If you could put together a Top Ten of something, what would it be and why?
- What is the most unusual fact that you learned from reading the book?

## Writing, drawing and craft

- Look at Kids Creations (**pages 214-215**). If you could create something, what would it be? Write a story about your creation. You could draw a picture to go with it.
- Make camouflage art. Choose one of the Coolest Camouflage creatures (**pages 28-29**), such as a stick insect, giraffe or leopard. Draw the creature, colour it in and cut it out. Paint a background on a piece of card in similar colours to the creature, such as browns and greens. You could collect natural materials such as leaves or twigs and stick them to the background.
- Build a model of a bridge (**pages 166-167**) using materials of your choice, for example building blocks or a modelling material. How can you make sure it is sturdy and secure?

## Music, drama and movement

- Imagine you are an astronaut (**page 151**). You are going to walk on the moon. What might

your movements in space be like? What would it feel like to be on the moon?

- Act out a play about being a cave explorer. Which cave will you explore? What equipment will you need? What will you find? Use the caves on **pages 112-113** for ideas.

## Sensory and other ideas

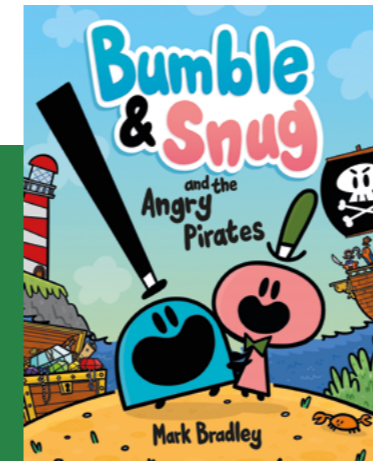
- Create a space galaxy sensory jar. Half fill an empty jar with water. Add some drops of acrylic paint (e.g. blue) and a spoonful of something sparkly (e.g. glitter). Stir it together. Add torn pieces of cotton wool, pushing them down with a spoon or the end of a paintbrush. Add more water and a different coloured paint. Stir it all together, then put the lid on.
- Ask your classmates to tell you their favourite foods. Create a Top Ten list of the favourite foods. Hold a tasting session with the foods.

## If you like this book, you might also like:

- **A Fact for Every Day of the Year** by National Geographic Kids
- **FACTopia!** by Kate Hale, illustrated by Andy Smith
- **A Day in the Life of a Poo, a Gnu and You** by Mike Barfield, illustrated by Jess Bradley

# Bumble & Snug and the Angry Pirates

by Mark Bradley



A bright, funny graphic novel about managing feelings

## Why we chose this book

This colourful, compact graphic novel follows the madcap adventures of best friends Bumble and Snug. Perfect for anyone looking for an action-filled read, it is great for less confident readers with its engaging illustrations and clear text.

## Discussion topics

- In what ways are Bumble and Snug different? Do you think you are more like Bumble or like Snug?
- If you had found the treasure, would you have taken it?
- What part of the book did you enjoy the most and why?

## Writing, drawing and craft

- Draw and write a series of picture boxes to introduce yourself, like those of Bumble and Snug (**pages 10-13**). You could include some facts about yourself, what you like doing and your strengths and weaknesses.
- Create your own Bugbop monster model using materials of your choice. For example, you could use modelling clay or you could make it out of cardboard.
- Write a story about meeting pirates. Are they happy pirates, angry pirates or some other type of pirate? What do they look like? What happens when you meet the pirates?

## Music, drama and movement

- *Bumble & Snug and the Angry Pirates* is full of sound effects, like WHOOSH, SMASH and CRASH! Make the noises out loud as you read the story.
- Pick your favourite part of the story and act it out with friends. How will you create the movements and sounds of Bumble, Snug, the octopus or the pirates?

## Sensory and other ideas

- Put together a sensory bag like Bumble's emergency kit (**page 36**). What special items that make you feel good will you put in it?
- Create a pirate treasure trail. Fill a tray with sand. Hide special treasures, like interesting stones, unusually shaped pebbles, fossils and special feathers in the sand. Dig for treasure – what will you find?

## If you like this book, you might also like:

- **Max & Chaffy: Welcome to Animal Island!** by Jamie Smart
- **Press Start! Game On, Super Rabbit Boy!** by Thomas Flintham
- **Peanut, Butter & Crackers** by Paige Braddock

# Tutankhamun's Treasure

by David Long, illustrated by Stefano Tambellini



A super-readable book about an amazing true story

## Why we chose this book

This compelling tale of the famous discovery of Egyptian pharaoh Tutankhamun's lost tomb and its priceless secrets is designed to be accessible to a range of readers, with thick paper, tinted pages and special editing to minimise barriers to comprehension. A fantastic story for both paired and independent reading.

## Discussion topics

- If you could interview King Tutankhamun, what questions would you ask him?
- Which of the artefacts found in the tomb are you most interested in?
- If you were an archaeologist, what would you most like to find?

## Writing, drawing and craft

- Create a dictionary of Egyptology. Your guide could include meanings of some of the words and phrases used in the book. For example, you could explain words such as Anubis, pharaohs, hieroglyphics and sarcophagus.
- Draw your own hieroglyphics. Make each symbol stand for a letter. Draw a cipher table to show what each symbol means. Put together a coded message using your hieroglyphics for a friend to solve.
- Make a model of Tutankhamun's tomb and chambers. Use the images on **pages 64-65** for inspiration. You could use building blocks, modelling clay or other materials.

## Music, drama and movement

- Act out the story from the point at which the boy trips over the strange piece of rock (**page 47**). How will you portray the excitement of the dig?

- Take it in turns to pretend to be Howard Carter and one of the Egyptian dig workers. Let your classmates interview you about the dig. What would Carter and the workers say about their experiences? Do you think their views of the excavation would differ?

## Sensory and other ideas

- Make your own decorative stamp, like the oval seal design Carter found in the ancient plaster of the tomb (**page 50**). For example, you could cut shapes in a halved potato or a piece of sponge. Use your stamp to create print designs.
- Create an Egypt themed sensory tray. Use the map on **page 6** as inspiration for your layout and item placement. You could fill the tray with sand to represent the Egyptian desert, water for the River Nile, a boat to put on the river and stones for the pyramids.

## If you like this book, you might also like:

- **Everything: Ancient Egypt** by National Geographic Kids
- **Everest: Reaching the Roof of the World** by David Long, illustrated by Stefano Tambellini
- **Marcy and the Riddle of the Sphinx** by Joe Todd-Stanton

# Pop-Up Peekaboo! Ocean

by Dorling Kindersley, illustrated by Jean Claude



A vibrant, interactive book introducing life under the sea

## Why we chose this book

Taking readers on a mini ocean adventure, this book combines short, rhyming text with bold illustrations and large, sturdy flaps that lift to reveal beautiful, moving pop-ups of underwater creatures. It offers a reading experience that is especially good for students with more complex needs.

## Discussion topics

- What is your favourite page in the book? Why do you like it?
- If you could be any of these ocean animals, which would you be and why?
- How many ocean animals can you spot on each page?

## Writing, drawing and craft

- Create an ocean animal. You could draw it and colour it in or cut out pieces of materials, such as fabric or coloured paper, and glue them down to create a collage.
- Pick one of the creatures in the book and write a story about their day. Imagine what they might be doing. For example, if you choose the sea otter, why were they sheltering in the seagrass? Where might the humpback whale and her calf be going?
- Create a glowing jellyfish artwork. Use wax crayons to create a colourful background all over a piece of paper, using lots of bright colours. Use black crayon or paint to cover over your colours. Using a scratching tool such as a craft stick, scratch out the design of a jellyfish. It will light up the darkness with a glow, just like in the book!

## Music, drama and movement

- The creatures in the ocean all move in different ways. Think about how a jellyfish

moves compared with a sea turtle or clown fish. Create your own movements and dance to reflect each animal.

- Use instruments and/or your voice to create the sound of the ocean. What noises might the different creatures make as they move through the water?

## Sensory and other ideas

- Make an ocean sensory bin to accompany the book. You could fill the bin with water then add some sea creatures, pebbles and rocks. You could try using modelling clay to make a coral reef.
- Research five facts about one or more of the sea creatures in the book. For example, what do they eat, how long do they typically live and what colour are they?

## If you like this book, you might also like:

- **Look Inside Seas and Oceans** by Megan Cullis, illustrated by Bao Luu
- **Find It! Explore It! Oceans** by National Geographic Kids
- **Pop-Up Peekaboo! Forest** by Dorling Kindersley, illustrated by Miranda Sofroniou

# Waiting for Wolf

by Sandra Dieckmann



A sensitive and beautifully illustrated story about friendship and loss

## Why we chose this book

Ideal for shared reading, this heartfelt and moving picture book quietly and sensitively explores the experience of grief through simple storytelling and beautiful artwork. A variety of layouts throughout the book breaks up the text and offers an immersive reading experience.

## Discussion topics

- Please note: this book contains themes of grief and loss, which some students might find difficult, and should be discussed with particular sensitivity.
- Do you have a good friend, like Fox had Wolf? Why is your friend special?
- Which of the pictures in the book do you like most and why?
- What activities do you enjoy doing with your friends?

## Writing, drawing and craft

- Make a memory book. Write down all your favourite things about your friends. What activities have you done together that you enjoyed? Draw or add photos of your friends.
- Create a night sky display for your classroom using materials of your choice. Make a moon and sparkly stars. Hang them up.
- Think about colours. Do different colours remind you of certain feelings? Create a colour chart with each colour representing a different feeling. Use the colours to show how you are currently feeling.

# Listen to the Music

by Mary Richards, illustrated by Caroline Bonne-Müller



An extraordinary sound book introducing some famous pieces of music

## Why we chose this book

Students will love pressing the music buttons on each page and hearing the different kinds of music, then learning about where it came from and who wrote it. Presenting a variety of musical sounds and time periods, along with detailed illustrations and clear text, it can inspire countless music activities.

## Discussion topics

- Which piece of music was your favourite? Why did you like it?
- If you could hear the full version of one of the pieces of music, which one would you choose? Why?
- How many different types of instruments can you see in the pictures? Do you know what they all are?

## Writing, drawing and craft

- Create a poster advertising a concert by one of the musicians featured in the book. How will you design your poster? What wording and images will you include?
- Imagine you are in Brazil for Carnival. Write a story about what happens when Sammy invites you to join the street party.

## Music, drama and movement

- The pieces of music played in the book are only short snippets. Choose a piece and see if you can guess how it might continue. You could use instruments, your voice or rhythm to show how the tune might continue.
- Create movements and dance to go with your choice of music from the book. What style of dance is most suited to the music you have chosen?

- An opera is a story told in music and song. Choose a piece of music you like and write a story to go with it. Then put the two together and perform it.

## Sensory and other ideas

- Make your own musical instrument using materials of your choice. For example, you could make a shaker by putting dried pasta or dried beans into an empty container and rattling it. Or you could make a drum by covering a bowl or an empty container with tape and tapping it with your hands. Have fun making your own music!
- Pick one of the musical artists featured in the book and research them. For example, you could aim to find five to ten interesting facts about them and their music.

## Music, drama and movement

- Use drama and movement to act out how Fox felt when he first realised Wolf was never coming back.
- Create a soundtrack for the book using instruments, tapped sounds or your voice. What sounds can you make to represent Fox feeling sad? What sounds show Fox is happy as he remembers good times?

## Sensory and other ideas

- Create your own star blanket. You could use floaty fabric or large pieces of paper. Make some sparkly silver stars to stick on it. Add other decorations that make you feel good.
- Lots of stars can be seen in the night sky. Can you see any from your window at night? Do some research into the stars. What are their names? How far away from Earth are they?

## If you like this book, you might also like:

- **Rain Before Rainbows** by Smriti Halls, illustrated by David Litchfield
- **If All the World Were...** by Joseph Coelho, illustrated by Allison Colpoys
- **The Comet** by Joe Todd-Stanton

## If you like this book, you might also like:

- **Lift-the-Flap Questions and Answers about Music** by Lara Bryan, illustrated by Elisa Paganelli
- **The Story Orchestra** by Jessica Courtney-Tickle
- **Once Upon a Rhythm** by James Carter, illustrated by Valerio Vidali



## Find out more

To find out more about the Special School Library Pack, visit [booktrust.org.uk/ss-library-pack](https://booktrust.org.uk/ss-library-pack)

For more ideas and book recommendations, use our Bookfinder at [booktrust.org.uk/bookfinder](https://booktrust.org.uk/bookfinder)

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Charity number 313343

## Address

BookTrust  
No 1 Aire Street  
Leeds  
LS1 4PR

**Telephone:** +44 (0)20 7801 8800  
[schoollibrarypack@booktrust.org.uk](mailto:schoollibrarypack@booktrust.org.uk)



Supported using public funding by

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