

listened to Mrs Pankhurst's speech. For this activity, split the class into pairs. In each pair, one child is to take the role of someone who agrees with Mrs Pankhurst. The other child is to play someone who disagrees, and thinks women should be told what to do, what to eat, what to wear and how to spend their money. Together, the pair should improvise a dialogue where each character is trying to convince the other of their views.

- Explain that, in concluding her lecture, Mrs Pankhurst points out that the Suffragettes' wish for the vote was not simply as a 'right' but in order that women could carry out more effectively their duties within their community. Clarify that rights come with responsibilities. Ask the children to think of some aspect of their lives that they think is 'not fair'. Ask, how could it be improved and who, beyond themselves, would benefit? Invite them to write and present a short lecture on their point of view. For example, they might focus on 'It's not fair that I have to go to bed earlier than my older brother' or 'It's not fair that you can't drive until you are 17 years old'.
- Challenge the children to find out the year in which some women were at last given the right to vote in elections (1918).
- Ask each child to make two lists: one headed, 'Things I like to decide for myself' and the other, 'Things I like my parents or teacher to decide'. Sort the children into twos and ask them to share and compare their lists and discuss common ground or disagreements. Bring the class together and invite the children to share their findings with others and discuss and explain their feelings and rationales. Ask the children why some decisions are better taken out of their hands. At what age do they think, for example, that children should decide for themselves what time they go to bed, what they wear, and so on? Invite any children with younger siblings to consider why limitations are sometimes a good idea. In a separate lesson, ask the children to write a speech after the style of Mrs Pankhurst to argue a case for more freedom for children over, say, how they spend their pocket money or how late they are allowed to play outside.

BOOK 4

Because the children will meet many new words in this book and because some familiar words have entirely different meanings when used in different contexts, it is recommended that they have dictionaries to refer to throughout.

The rooks' parliament (Level 4 text)

Contained in: Book 4 (page 4)

Genre: Poem


Author: Alison Brackenbury

Introduction The rural setting of this poem by a twenty-first century writer lends itself to comparison with classical poems about birds by poets such as Edward Thomas (see 'The owl' on page 12) and William Wordsworth (see 'To the cuckoo' on page 20). Here the rooks' right to life is defended without sentimentality as the poet champions their cause in lively lyrical form. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading.

Answers 1a. *she wants to distinguish them from crows* 1b. *she believes that people confuse the two birds* 2. 'kind' 3a. 'chilling blue flame' 3b. *the light in the eyes of the dead rooks* 4. 'crown rough roadside trees' 5a. French 'parler'; to speak 5b. *to give the rooks a voice; speaking on*

their behalf; a reference to their 'assemblies' – 'where wisdom is made' 6. *serious, solemn* 7. *they are harmless, gentle, and eat pests.*

Further activities

- 'Parliament of rooks' is a collective noun. Ask the children to think of other collective nouns for creatures, especially birds, or list the following: a 'skein' of geese or swans (in flight), a 'cast' of (a couple of) hawks, a 'charm' of goldfinches, an 'ascension' of larks, a 'bouquet' of pheasants, a 'company' of parrots or a 'colony' of penguins. Point out how the word 'parliament' reflects the talkative nature of rooks and discuss how the parliament of a country or state makes laws and sets taxes.
- Invite the children to select one of the collective nouns above, and turn it into a title as the poet did here (for example, 'The pheasants' bouquet' or 'A casting of hawks'). They should then plan and write their own poem. Depending on their choice of noun, they will need to consider questions such as, 'What flowers would the bouquet contain?' 'To whom and why would they present it?' 'Would the hawks be a married couple?' 'Might their poem be a dialogue for two voices?'
- Ask the children to list other creatures that people might consider to be pests, such as mice, snails, flies, rats, wasps, magpies, foxes and badgers. Challenge them to champion the cause for preserving one or more of these creatures. Ask them to investigate the food chain and consider ways in which the animals that we see as 'pests' might be food and life to another creature or make a useful contribution to our environment. (For example, thrushes eat snails; snails clean away rotting debris, and so on.) Ask them to write a paragraph titled 'In praise of (snails)' – encouraging them to be controversial if necessary, so that their writing will prompt class discussion.
-  Ask the children to investigate the characteristics of either the rook or the crow, and then to make a presentation to the class so that their shared research makes clear the differences between the two.

Tudor wedding (Level 4 text)

Contained in: Book 4 (page 6)

Genre: Historical fiction in diary form

Source: *My Tudor Queen – The Diary of Eva De Puebla, London 1501–1513*

Author: Alison Prince

Introduction This authoritative and well-researched fiction looks at the Tudor court through the eyes of a fictional Spanish maid-in-waiting to the real-life Catherine of Aragon. It is set at the time of Catherine's wedding to Prince Arthur, older brother of Henry (Harry): she will later become the first of Henry's six wives. Use the pointer in the activity book to introduce the text to the children before they start reading. As an extension activity, invite the more able children to write a review of the text; space is provided in the box below the questions. Discuss the reviews in class later.

Answers 1. Spain (Aragon) 2a. *argumentative* 2b. *calm, peaceful* 3. 'like two white swans' 4. *he might then have been the bridegroom/married Catherine himself* 5. 'burgundy', 'scarlet', 'crimson' 6. *near the beginning: the entry is dated Nov 1501 and the book covers 1501–1513* 7. King Henry VII.

Further activities

- Make sure that the children understand any unfamiliar vocabulary in the first paragraph – for example, 'pageantry', 'law-resistant', 'insensible'.
- Invite the children to research the real-life characters that appear in this extract and fit them into part of a family tree of the Tudors. Ask them to find out how old Harry would have been at the time of Catherine's first wedding.