

Every detective needs a crime to solve . . .

# THE MIZZY MYSTERIES

A SKELETON IN THE CLOSET



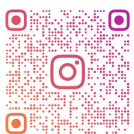
## TEACHING RESOURCE

Created by

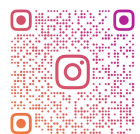
The Rebel Reading Society and Hannah Palmer

*in collaboration with*

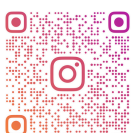
Claire Hatcher-Smith and Farshore



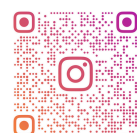
THE\_REBEL\_READING\_SOCIETY



MINI.MIDNIGHT.READS



CLAIREHATCHERSMITH



FARSHOREBOOKS



The Mizzy Mysteries is a lively and thought-provoking read that centres around a child passionate about uncovering mysteries and their determination to expose long held family secrets. The main character has Down syndrome, which is tenderly portrayed by author Claire Hatcher-Smith, and based on her many years of work supporting those with Down syndrome. Central to the story are themes of empathy, avoiding stereotypes to look more closely at other people, and believing in yourself, despite being underestimated by those around you. Alongside the important disability representation, it is an engaging book that can be used to support Maths, English, Relationship Education and Health Education in KS2 & KS3.



**Word of the Chapter** - For each chapter there is a word of interest selected from the text. These can be used in a variety of ways -

- Discussion of the word meanings.
- Prompts for looking up in dictionaries independently.
- As writing prompts to embed with the correct context within sentences.

**Discussion Prompt** - Each chapter also features a question to discuss. They range from discussing the characters and predictions for the book to reflecting on the situations presented. Many of these questions are specifically worded to tie in with the KS2 & KS3 National Curriculum.

**Activity Ideas** - There are a selection of activity ideas that link in with the text, they're numbered by the page that they tie in with and can be found below the chapter breakdown. There's a mix of STEM prompts, art ideas, opportunities for further research and more - all linking in with the National Curriculum.





## TEACHING RESOURCE



## CHAPTER BREAKDOWN

### Chapter 1

- **Word** - surveilling
- **Discussion Prompt** - What are your first impressions of how Mizzy sees herself?

### Chapter 2

- **Word** - perceptive
- **Discussion Prompt** - On page 9, Mizzy reflects that her "toes wobble like worms in the sunlit water". How does the use of this simile add to our understanding of this scene?

### Chapter 3

- **Word** - culprit
- **Discussion Prompt** - Do you think Mizzy is being kind to herself with her fear of the escalator?

### Chapter 4

- **Word** - saunter
- **Discussion Prompt** - How does this chapter show us not to make assumptions about people with Down syndrome?

### Chapter 5

- **Word** - drape
- **Discussion Prompt** - Now that we have read a few chapters, what are your first impressions of the book?

### Chapter 6

- **Word** - mismatched
- **Discussion Prompt** - How does Mizzy feel at finding the lost diaries? What inferences can you reference in the text to support this conclusion.

### Chapter 7

- **Word** - fumble
- **Discussion Prompt** - How has the author written the character of Auntie G to make them unique?

### Chapter 8

- **Word** - verify
- **Discussion Prompt** - What assumptions has Mizzy made to conclude that Great Aunt Jane was murdered?

### Chapter 9

- **Word** - admire
- **Discussion Prompt** - On page 58 Mizzy narrates, "Then we'll see who thinks I'm a baby.". With reference to the text, why do you think Mizzy is so keen to prove herself?





### Chapter 10

- **Word** - convenient
- **Discussion Prompt** - What questions would you have asked Uncle David, to learn more about what happened to Great Aunt Jane?

### Chapter 11

- **Word** - elegant
- **Discussion Prompt** - Do you think the transition of the children becoming older is causing a strain on their relationships?

### Chapter 12

- **Word** - drones (verb)
- **Discussion Prompt** - Why do you predict that Great Aunt Rose is being evasive?

### Chapter 13

- **Word** - mistaken
- **Discussion Prompt** - Why do you think it is important to remember that not all relatives are DNA related?

### Chapter 14

- **Word** - accusation
- **Discussion Prompt** - Why do you think Mizzy declined Oli's help?

### Chapter 15

- **Word** - prime
- **Discussion Prompt** - What do you think could have been put in the tea that begins with the digraph 'ch'?

### Chapter 16

- **Word** - culprit
- **Discussion Prompt** - Using inferences from the text, do you think Uncle Lionel believes the cover story of a school project?

### Chapter 17

- **Word** - dignified
- **Discussion Prompt** - Do you think Mizzy and Oli referred to and communicated with Grandma Mabel with compassion? How might they have been able to improve?

### Chapter 18

- **Word** - marvellous
- **Discussion Prompt** - Do you agree with Mizzy's assessment of the suspects?





### Chapter 19

- **Word** - admiration
- **Discussion Prompt** - How do you think Mizzy feels with this reaction? Take into consideration her existing feelings of being underestimated into your answer.

### Chapter 20

- **Word** - junction
- **Discussion Prompt** - How do you predict the rest of the book will unfold?

### Chapter 21

- **Word** - exasperation
- **Discussion Prompt** - How do you think Mizzy's Rachel Bailey persona changes how she acts?

### Chapter 22

- **Word** - fuggy
- **Discussion Prompt** - What have you learnt about how Mizzy experiences the world? Do you think this is representative of all people with Down syndrome?

### Chapter 23

- **Word** - gloom
- **Discussion Prompt** - On Page 184, Mizzy uses a simile to explain how she's feeling, "my whole body starts to fizz, bubbling and spluttering like a volcano's about to burst through the top of my head.". What other geography based similes can you think of that relate to emotions?

### Chapter 24

- **Word** - conscience
- **Discussion Prompt** - A lot has been revealed in this chapter, which part was the biggest surprise to you?

### Chapter 25

- **Word** - scurries
- **Discussion Prompt** - Using inferences from the text, what do you think has happened in this chapter?

### Chapter 26

- **Word** - honeysuckle
- **Discussion Prompt** - Do you think Uncle Lionel is a safe adult in Mizzy's life?

### Chapter 27

- **Word** - sidles
- **Discussion Prompt** - How might the story have been different if Mizzy hadn't been underestimated?





## Chapter 28

**Word** - blearily

**Discussion Prompt** - Do you think Oli values Mizzy as a human?

## Chapter 29

**Word** - lurches

**Discussion Prompt** - Thinking back to previous chapters in the book, do you remember any inferences in the text leading to this revelation?

## Chapter 30

**Word** - disgrace

**Discussion Prompt** - On page 244 Mizzy uses the following metaphor, "my legs are jellyfish". What do you think this use of figurative language is implying?

## Chapter 31

**Word** - brave

**Discussion Prompt** - Do you think Grandma Mabel is guilty, innocent, or that it is more complicated than this?

## Chapter 32

**Word** - cavernous

**Discussion Prompt** - Do you think the police officers treated the confession dismissively - do you think the response would have been different if the confessor had been from a different demographic?

## Chapter 33

**Word** - snooping

**Discussion Prompt** - If you could summarise the book in one sentence to recommend to a friend, what would you say?



## ACTIVITY IDEAS

### Page 8 - Writing Prompt



Write one of Great Aunt Jane's missing diary entries.

### Page 43 - Writing Prompt



Auntie G often reads Flower Fairy Poetry to Mizzy. Read the poem mentioned (Blackberry Fairy) and write your own poem to describe a plant of your choice.

### Page 79 - Art Prompt



Create a self portrait of yourself at 3 different stages of your life, extending both into the past and the future. You may wish to extend this further with one of the below options -

- Include reference to the disabled self portrait artist, Frida Kahlo.
- Use alongside lessons on puberty to depict how bodies change through adolescence.

### Page 123 - Fill Your Cup Activity



Uncle Lionel is passionate about Tea, but what fills your metaphorical cup up? Invite children to write or draw in an image of a cup what supports them to feel well in their day to day life, consider mentally, physically and in relationships.

### Page 144 - Maths Challenge



With reference to a map of the London Underground, pick a selection of the lines and create a graph that compares the number of stops on each line. This could further be linked in with geography discussing why the stops are arranged in this way to support the human landscape.

### Page 170 - STEM Challenge



When Mizzy hides under the blanket she observes that not much light can be seen through the material. Explore the transparency of different materials and group together into categories of opaque, transparent and translucent.

### Page 234 - STEM Challenge



Create designs of how you could make a tube station more accessible to people with disabilities. Remember that all people's experience of disability is different and that not all disabilities are visible.





## CURRICULUM LINKS - KS2 & KS3

Included in this list are both links that are found directly within the book and ideas that have been extended upon within this guide.

- **English**

- Spoken Language
- Reading Comprehension - recommending books, meaning of words in context, drawing inferences, predictions, figurative language, challenging views courteously through discussion.
- Writing - identifying the audience, writing for a wide range of purposes.

- **Maths**

- Present data using appropriate graphical methods.

- **Science**

- Materials - Compare everyday materials, properties of everyday materials.

- **Relationships Education & Health Education**

- Healthy friendships, stereotypes, changing adolescent bodies, mental wellbeing.

- **Geography**

- Understanding of Human Geography ie. trade links, land use and economic activity.

- **Art**

- Improve art and design techniques.

