

TEACHING RESOURCE

THE_REBEL_READING_SOCIETY

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MAX AND ELLA, STUCK TOGETHER

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A fantastic book to support the updated RSE Guidance (September 2026). It centres on a donor-conceived child and his experience of meeting his sperm donor and family. Told from a dual perspective the book allows us to hear different voices, as well as look at the ways this format can be used in storytelling. The book, in accompaniment with this guide link in with many areas of the National Curriculum for KS2 & KS3, particularly English & RSE.

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 writing prompts, and more - linking in with the National Curriculum.

Book Club Questions - These questions are designed to reflect on the book as a whole, in a group setting or individually, after reading.



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CHAPTER BREAKDOWN

Chapter 1
- Word - *grimace*
- Discussion Prompt – From what we know about Max so far, how do you think the bullying is impacting him?

Chapter 2
- Word – *synchronised*
- Discussion Prompt – What do you think the biggest struggles in Ella's life are right now?

Chapter 3
- Word – *wince*
- Discussion Prompt – What elements of Oskar's character make him a supportive friend?

Chapter 4
- Word – *ramped*
- Discussion Prompt – On page 48 Ella describes her Dad's music taste as, *"a lot of the singers sound like a bunch of angry people yelling in an echoey cave."* What does this tell us about the music that her Dad listens to and the way Ella feels about it?

Chapter 5
- Word – *reluctant*
- Discussion Prompt – What does this chapter teach us about the importance of children connecting with people who share their life experiences?

Chapter 6
- Word - *scowl*
- Discussion Prompt – What value do you think Yaz's support offers for Ella?

Chapter 7
- Word – *vice*
- Discussion Prompt – How are hearing the perspective's of Max and Ella helping us to understand them as characters?

Chapter 8
- Word – *dismantle*
- Discussion Prompt – How would you describe Ella's character in 3 words?



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Chapter 9

- Word - *vinyl*
- Discussion Prompt – At the end of this chapter Max is struggling with his identity. What do you think might have triggered this for him?

Chapter 10

- Word – *groggy*
- Discussion Prompt – Ella's Dad/Max's donor observes that Max seems very different to him. What might this tell us about the influence of the family we grow up with on the way we approach life?

Chapter 11

- *Word - tilt*
- Discussion Prompt – What inferences can you observe in the text for how Mum and Mumsha are feeling at this point?

Chapter 12

- Word – *genes*
- Discussion Prompt – Why do you think the author made the choice to have the flat below Max's flood at this point?

Chapter 13

- Word – *roam*
- Discussion Prompt – Do you think any of the characters in this chapter are acting differently from how we've previously experienced them? Why do you think this may be?

Chapter 14

- Word – *motions*
- Discussion Prompt – How do you think Max is reconciling the Hari he had imagined from the one he is experiencing?

Chapter 15

- Word – *exposed*
- Discussion Prompt – This chapter ends with a cliff hanger, how does this compel us to keep reading?



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Chapter 16
- Word - *launches*
- Discussion Prompt – If you were Max or Ella in this section, what do you think you would do?

Chapter 17
- Word – *flinch*
- Discussion Prompt – Ella expresses a lot of feelings to Max in this chapter. How do you think this understanding changed the way Max was feeling?

Chapter 18
- Word – *cackle*
- Discussion Prompt – Have you learnt anything in this chapter from Max that will help you be more empathetic of others?

Chapter 19
- Word – *summit*
- Discussion Prompt – What change have you observed in Max and Ella now that they have started listening to each other?

Chapter 20
- Word – *trudging*
- Discussion Prompt – How is the dual perspective of the book helping us to understand the way the meeting is affecting both Max and Ella?

Chapter 21
- Word – *barge (verb)*
- Discussion Prompt – At the end of the chapter (page 205), Ella reflects that *"maybe sometimes instead of a plan, you just need to trust and see what happens."* With this in mind, do you have any predictions relating to helping her Dad?

Chapter 22
- Word – *feat*
- Discussion Prompt – How has the author written Max's personality to be unique from the other characters we encounter?

Chapter 23
- Word - *pang*
- Discussion Prompt – Can you summarise the key events of the chapter in one sentence?



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Chapter 24

- Word – *discreet*
- Discussion Prompt – Using inferences from the text, how does Max feel about how his bands performance went?

Chapter 25

- Word – *expression*
- Discussion Prompt – Are there any inferences in this chapter that suggest what Ella's mum is doing?

Chapter 26

- Word - *slump*
- Discussion Prompt – Were you anticipating this revelation from Ella's Mum? If so what points in the text led you to this prediction?

Chapter 27

- Word – *jealousy*
- Discussion Prompt – How does this chapter highlight the two family's differences in a way that is celebratory?

Chapter 28

- Word – *responsible*
- Discussion Prompt – Did you feel the end of the book wrapped up everyone's storyline in the way that you wanted to see?

Book Club Questions

1. How have we seen Max grow as a character through the book?
2. At what point did you see that Max and Ella might be able to relate to each other?
4. How do you think the characters from the book are getting on 6 months, 1 year and 5 years after the events of the book?
5. Which elements of the book left the biggest impression on you? Did you learn anything from this that you can take into your own life?
6. How does the book highlight the way the people who raise us influence who we become as people?



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ACTIVITY IDEAS

Page 18 - Geography Challenge

Map a walking route using grid reference points through a Mountainous region of the UK. Consider the topography of the region, as well access to the area.

Page 70 - RSE Activity

Create a personal list, that does not need to be shared, of the things that make you feel better/supported when you are having a difficult time. This could be kept as a simple reminder list or formed into a piece of artwork to display in your own space as a reminder.

Page 125 - STEM Challenge

Create designs for a system that can be installed in a home to detect a flood and alert the occupier. You will need to consider the areas that detection would be most effective, how you could detect this and how you might transfer this alert to the occupier.

Page 189 - Geography Challenge

Create a Mountain Safety Poster that is informative as well as eye-catching to a potential audience.

Page 237 - English Prompt

Write a letter from Ella that tells someone in her life the way she is feeling at this point in the book. You will need to consider the tone and audience, as well as conveying how Ella is feeling at this point in the book.

- A letter to her Mum explaining how she is feeling about the distance between them.
- A letter to Max after they have met.



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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. Distinguish between statements of fact and opinion.
- Writing - identifying the audience, writing for a wide range of purposes.

RSE Education

- The characteristics of safe and happy family life, such as commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives.
- That the families of other children, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family.
- How to manage conflict, and that resorting to violence is never right.
- How to communicate effectively and manage conflict with kindness and respect; how to be assertive and express needs and boundaries; how to manage feelings, including disappointment and frustration.

Geography

- Name and locate counties and cities of the United Kingdom, geographical regions and their identifying human and physical characteristics, key topographical features, including mountains.
- Use the eight points of a compass, four and six-figure grid references, symbols and key (including the use of Ordnance Survey maps) to build their knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world.
- Interpret Ordnance Survey maps in the classroom and the field, including using grid references and scale, topographical and other thematic mapping, and aerial and satellite photographs (KS3).

Design &Technology

- Develop specifications to inform the design of innovative, functional, appealing products that respond to needs in a variety of situations.

Art

- Improve art and design techniques.



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