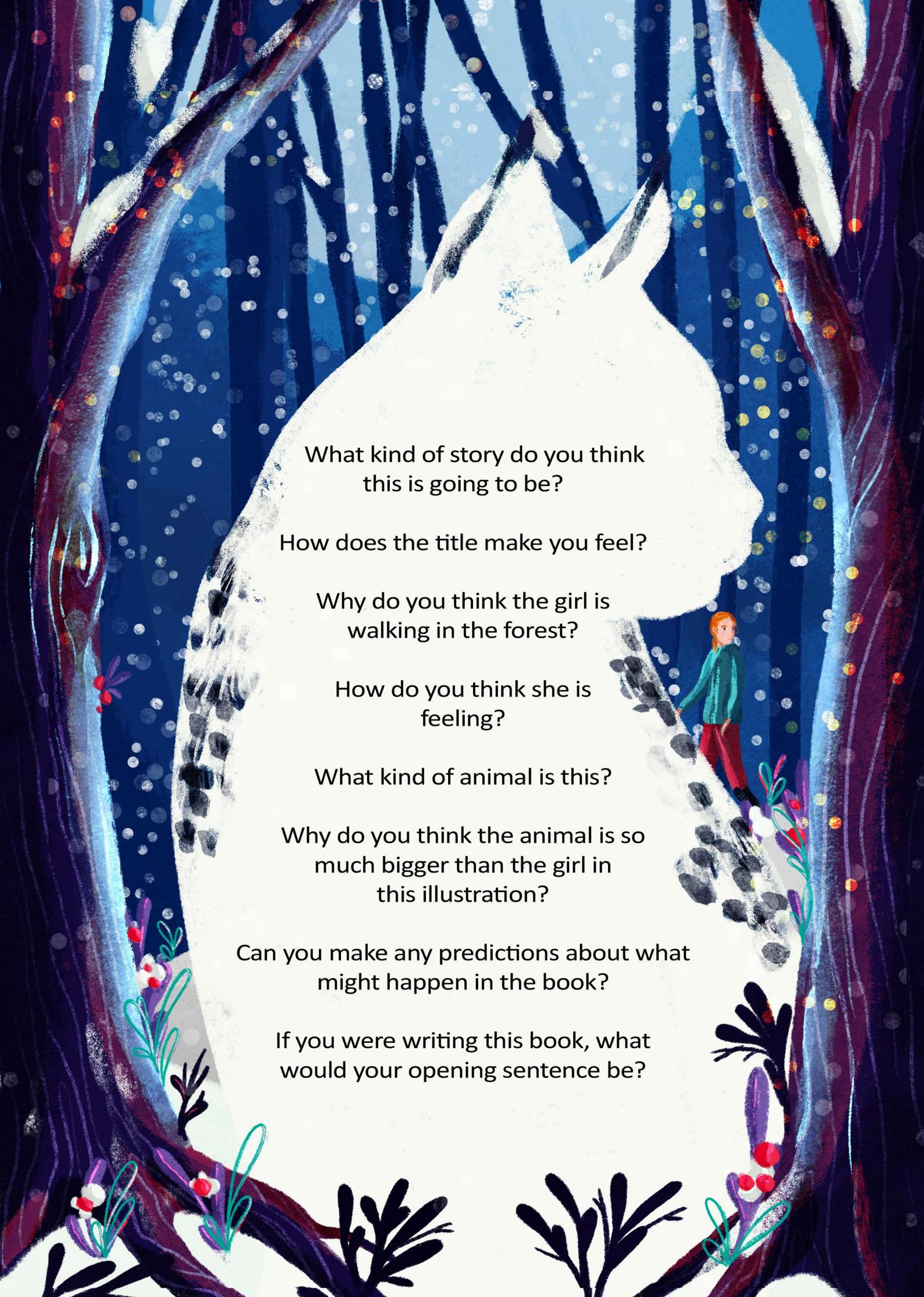


School Resource Pack



*Keeper
of
Secrets*

Sarah J. Dodd



What kind of story do you think this is going to be?

How does the title make you feel?

Why do you think the girl is walking in the forest?

How do you think she is feeling?

What kind of animal is this?

Why do you think the animal is so much bigger than the girl in this illustration?

Can you make any predictions about what might happen in the book?

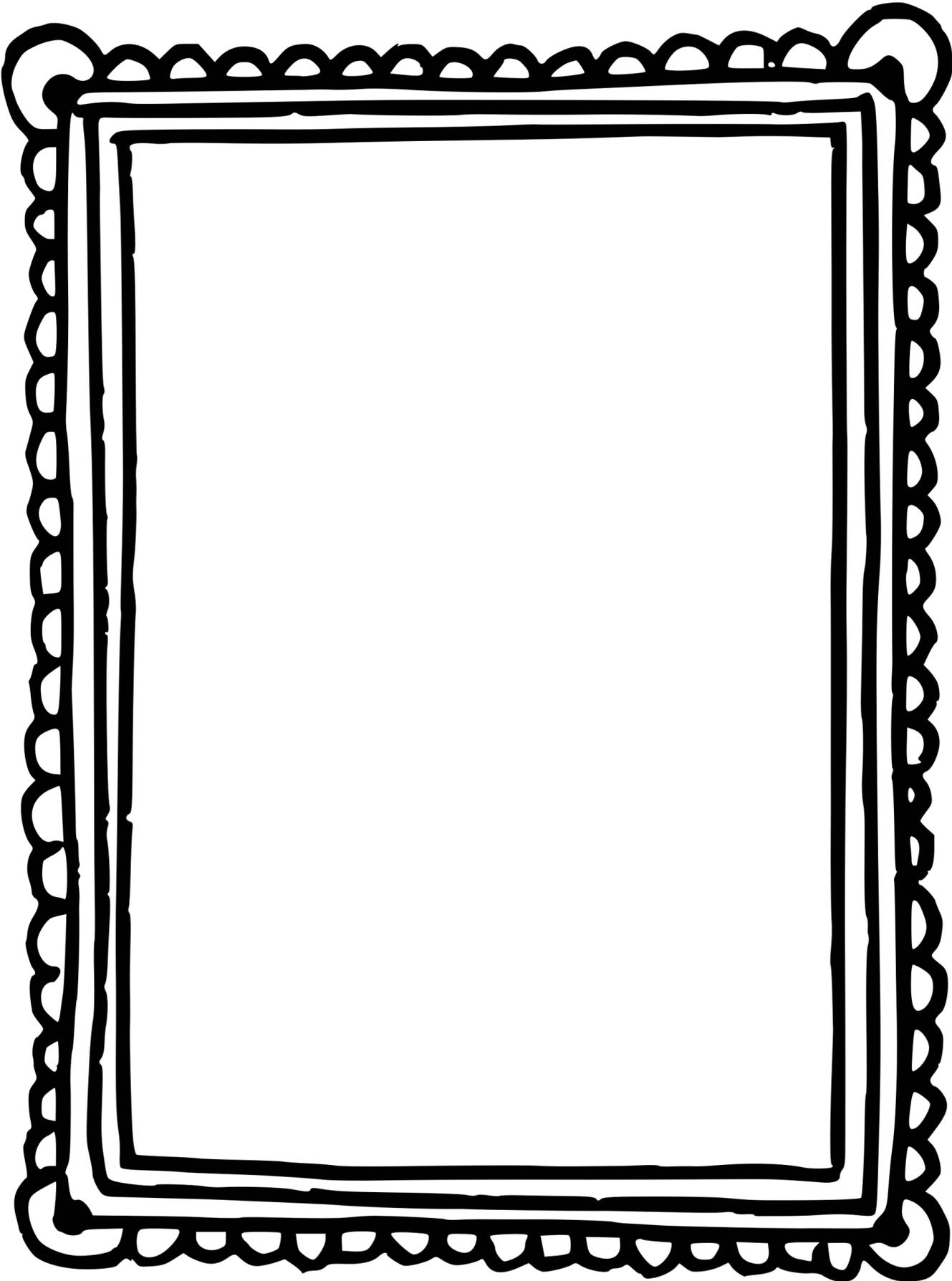
If you were writing this book, what would your opening sentence be?

The page features a light blue and white background with two stylized tree trunks on the left and right sides. In the upper center, there are two snowflake illustrations. The title 'Description Doodles' is written in a black, cursive font.

Description Doodles

There are no illustrations of the characters in *Keeper of Secrets*, but an author can put an image into your mind by the words they use. See if you can draw and colour a picture of Josie from the description below.

Dad lifted the axe and was about to drive it into a log when a grinning woman, her arms full of brown paper bags, shouldered the gate open and came in. Her hair was a fiery curtain around her shoulders, and even though her face looked a bit older than Dad's, she was dressed like a child in a mossy green cardigan, a rainbow-coloured skirt, thick tights patterned with leaves and a pair of red leather shoes that fastened with gigantic flowers.



Fun Fact File



Choose a character from the book and write down five facts about them.

Here's an example:

Fact File onDAD

1. He is a vet.
2. His wife died.
3. He is Emily's dad.
4. He is grumpy if he's woken up in the night.
5. He likes watching action films.

Here are some characters you can choose from:

Emily, Dibs, Lotta, Josie, Rufus, Andy, Granger, Nana Godwin, Streak, Sal, Flump.

Fact File on _____

(character name)

Fact 1 _____

Fact 2 _____

Fact 3 _____

Fact 4 _____

Fact 5 _____

Lynx on the Loose: For or Against?

'Beautiful,' whispered Emily's heart. 'Dangerous,' her head replied.

Can you tell the difference between a *fact* and an *opinion*?

Fact: a statement that is always true for everyone.

Opinion: a belief about something that may vary from one person to the next.

Read the sentences below and decide whether each one is a **fact** or an **opinion**.

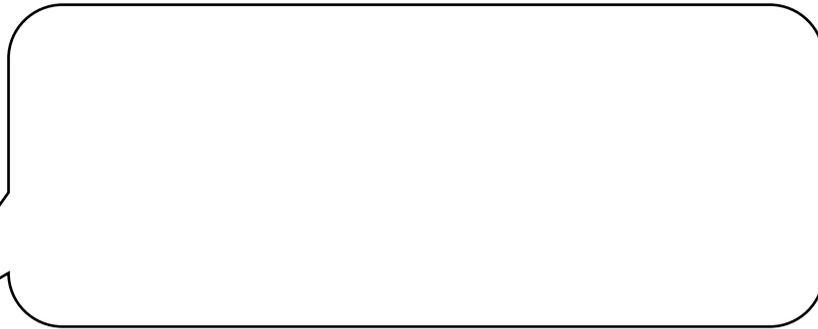
You can find information about the lynx at www.lynxuk.org



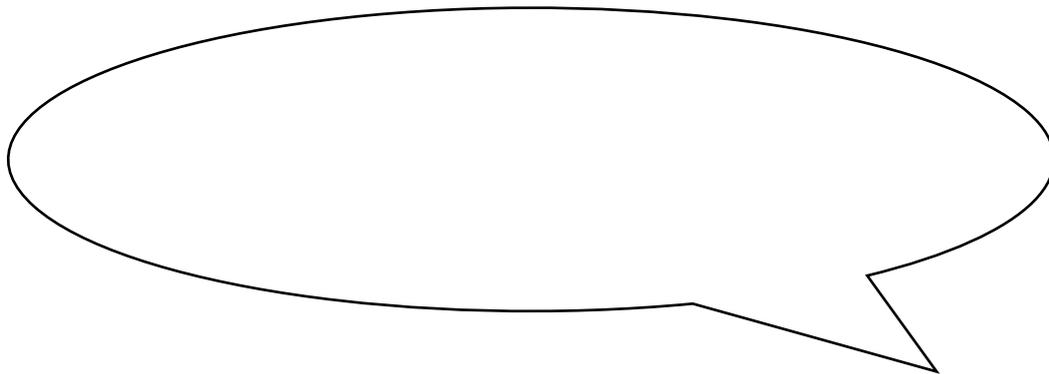
- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 1. The lynx is an animal. | FACT/OPINION |
| 2. The Eurasian lynx is native to the British Isles. | FACT/OPINION |
| 3. Lynx should be brought back to live in the wild in the UK. | FACT/OPINION |
| 4. Farmers need to look after the wildlife on their farms. | FACT/OPINION |
| 5. The last British lynx disappeared over 1000 years ago. | FACT/OPINION |
| 6. It is dangerous to have lynx walking about in the countryside. | FACT/OPINION |
| 7. It is more important to protect hedgehogs than to bring back lynx. | FACT/OPINION |
| 8. Lynx are most active at dawn and dusk. | FACT/OPINION |
| 9. Lynx are carnivores (meat-eaters). | FACT/OPINION |

Some people have strongly different views about whether lynx should be released into the wild in the UK. Think about the characters in the book. What are their opinions?

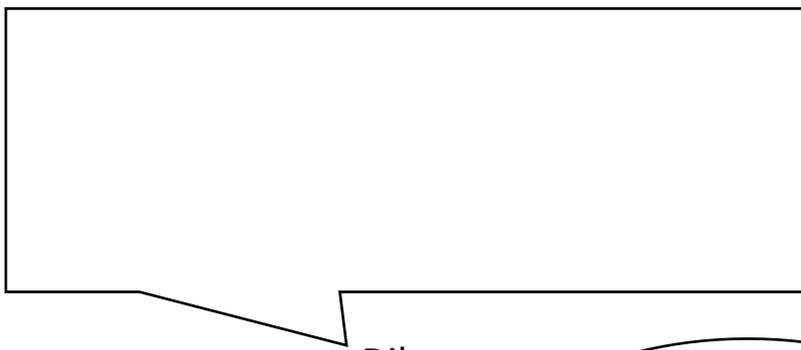
Dad



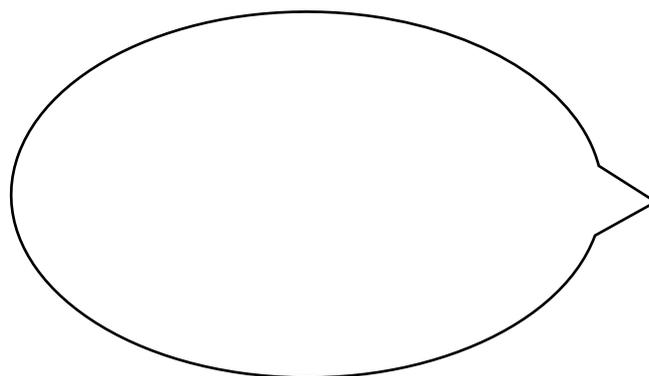
Rufus



Dibs



Josie



What do *you* think? What do other people in your class think? Find out some information about the real-life proposals to rewild lynx in the UK (eg www.lynxuk.org, www.rewildingbritain.org.uk, <https://www.scotlandbigpicture.com/lynx-to-scotland>).

Write down some of the arguments for and against, then have a class debate.

Super Sounds

There are lots of **sounds** in Keeper of Secrets. Here are a few:



She could hear the clank of buckets and the low complaint of cows.



Dad's phone rang. It had a ring tone like a sheep baa-ing. He thought it was funny but it confused people sometimes, especially when he was visiting a farm.



Emily put her head down on the table. When she kicked her foot against the table leg, it sounded loud, like a giant's footsteps.



At the beginning of Chapter 2, Emily first realises she's not at home by the sounds she hears when she wakes up:

The sounds weren't right. Home sounds should be the *clunk* and whirr of the central heating coming on, the outside hum of traffic in the street.

Close your eyes and think about the sounds you hear when you wake up in the morning.

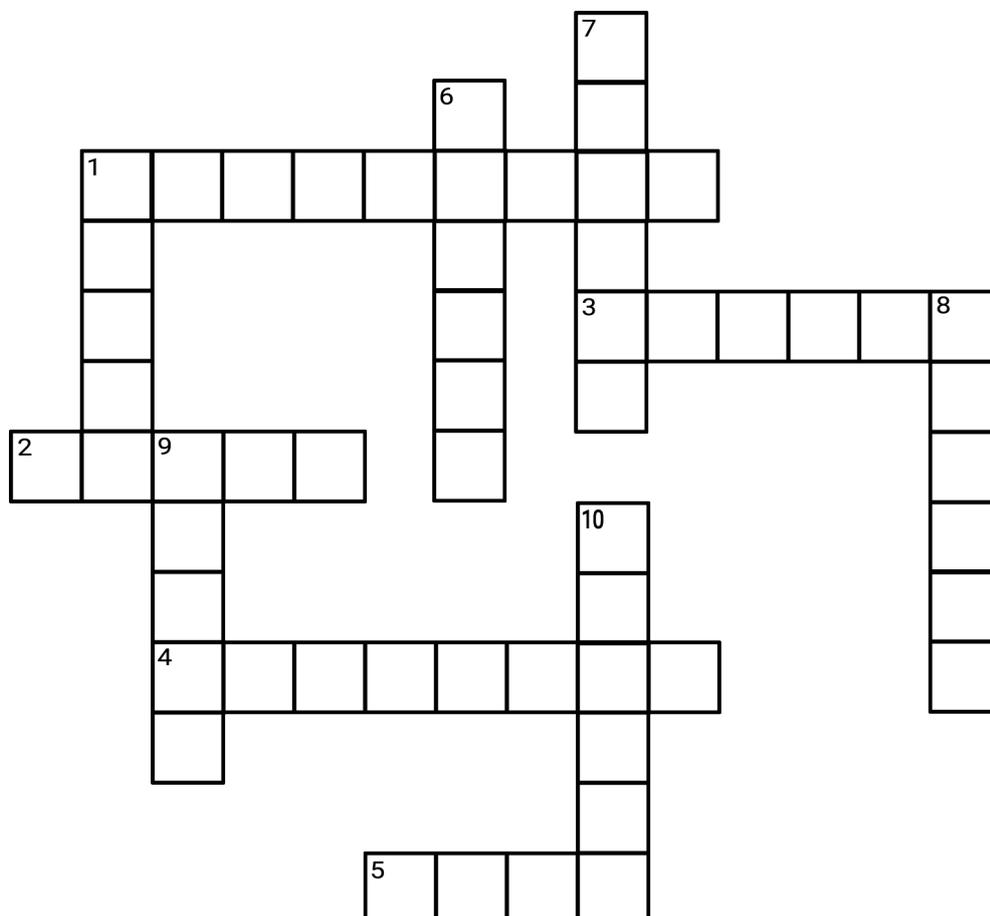
Write a paragraph about them. Include as many as you can!

Home sounds are

Crazy Crossword



See if you can complete this crossword using the clues below.



Across

1. Granger has some birds called _____ on the seat of his car.
2. The dog belonging to Rufus is called _____.
3. Emily is _____ years old.
4. Emily sleeps in a dark _____ beneath her bed.
5. The wildlife project in Littendale is called the Lynx _____.

Down

1. Emily's blanket is black and white like a _____.
6. Emily and Dad live in _____ Cottage.
7. Alexander is a _____ who sleeps in the oven.
8. Dibs' sister is called _____.
9. Dibs gives Emily a _____ at Christmas.
10. Flump is bitten by _____.



Wild Winter Wordsearch

K	I	S	U	F	U	R	W	O	N	G	D	E	R	R	I
A	R	G	N	I	D	L	I	W	E	R	Y	N	A	U	F
O	Y	L	N	J	I	Y	E	M	W	O	F	L	I	F	L
H	T	G	O	M	Q	D	I	N	T	I	L	F	L	I	I
Z	H	S	A	T	D	Y	K	A	B	E	U	B	P	O	T
W	I	O	U	B	T	E	V	N	Y	U	M	S	A	J	T
E	U	J	R	T	N	A	S	A	E	H	P	I	N	T	E
K	B	Z	M	U	L	O	N	B	N	O	L	H	A	H	N
R	A	N	X	D	I	F	O	R	S	M	U	B	S	I	D
G	R	A	N	G	E	R	W	I	T	G	K	Y	Z	K	A
U	E	H	I	Q	W	H	M	V	X	N	Y	L	N	P	L
B	W	P	R	L	K	F	L	U	V	D	M	I	L	M	E
B	A	T	D	S	V	Y	D	T	I	L	N	M	E	D	S
W	O	R	X	D	T	S	U	B	X	T	S	E	R	O	F
L	Y	J	O	V	G	A	S	T	L	V	R	Q	N	Z	L
I	P	A	L	U	F	N	R	U	D	P	H	A	S	G	C

See if you can find these words:

LOTTA

EMILY

LYNX

LITTENDALE

DIBS

PHEASANT

GRANGER

FLUMP

STAR

SNOW

DIBS

RUFUS

JOSIE

REWILDING

FOREST



Spectacular Similes

Similes can be used to make your writing much more colourful and interesting. Here are a few from Keeper of Secrets:

Josie pushed her glasses up to the top of her head, where they sat like a second pair of eyes.

Emily's fingers looked green and pale, like alien fingers.

Emily was drawn to the farm like a bee to a bright flower.

Emily broke into a run, her breath like a steam train.

Emily shook her head like a dog coming out of a river.

Fat flakes dawdled from the sky like clumpy feathers.

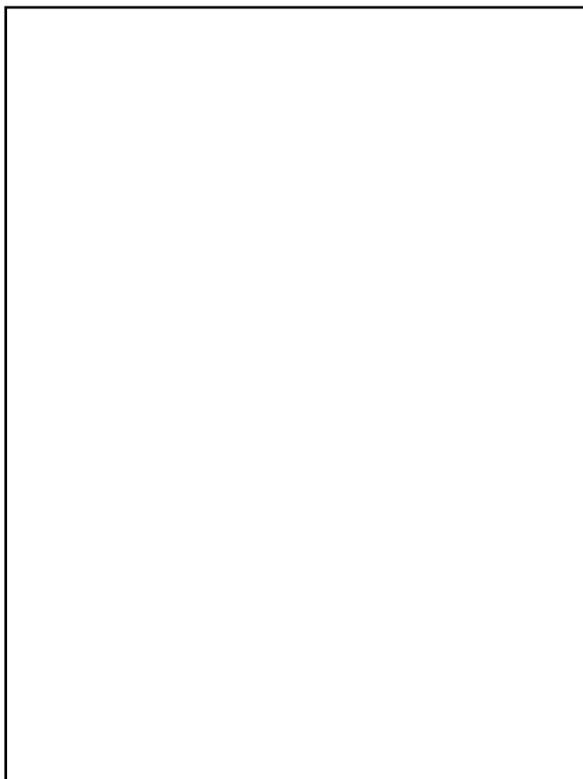
Grandma Underwood had scrunched-up lips that looked like she was sucking through an invisible straw.

The morning dragged by like a miserable snail.

Which one is your favourite? Why?

Choose one and try to draw it in the box. See if your friend can guess which one it is.

Are there any that are impossible to draw?



Can you write some spectacular simile sentences of your own? See if you can complete these:

Emily ran as fast as...

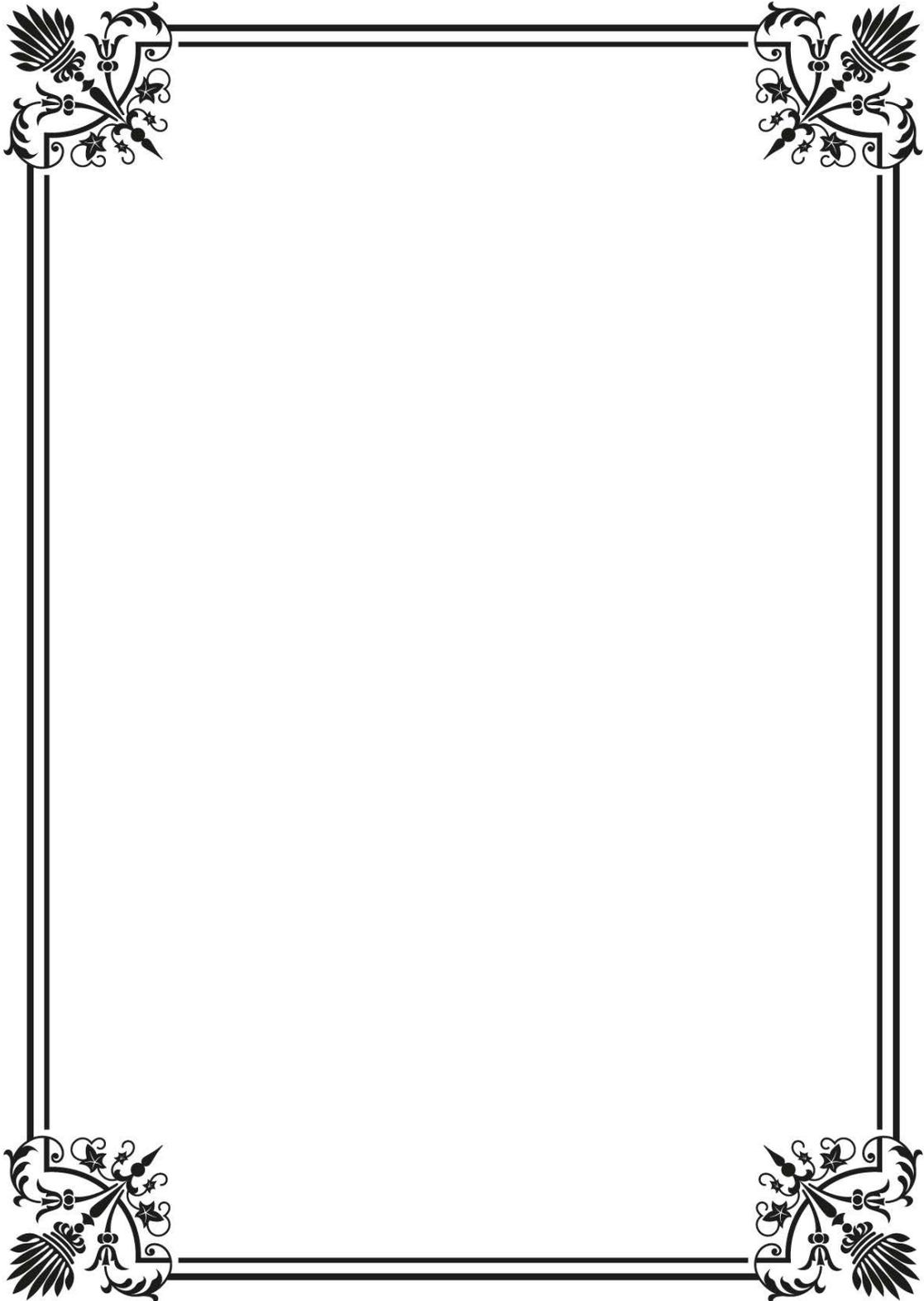
The snowy field looked like...

Dad was as grumpy as...

Lotta Letter

Imagine you are Emily. Write a letter to Nana Godwin, explaining why Lotta is in the outhouse and asking for advice. You might like to include:

- a description of Lotta
- the story of how you found Lotta and brought her back to the cottage
- why you are finding things difficult
- why you can't ask anyone else for help



The Mystery of the Sound in the Wall

It's time for you to do some investigating. There is a mystery in Keeper of Secrets that needs solving, and you're going to do it!

In Chapter 1, Emily hears a strange sound:

A wailing groan, like an animal in pain. It sounded nearby. It seemed to be coming from the wall between their cottage and the big house next door.

'DAD!' she yelled.

The groaning stopped.

She hears it again in Chapter 9:

She heard something. It was coming from the wall again – the one that separated Badger Cottage from Rufus' house. She stiffened, ready to call for Dad. But this time it wasn't that eerie wailing sound; it was more like ... well, like someone *crying*.

Being careful not to make a noise, she wriggled to the end of the cupboard and pressed her ear to the wall. Yes, definitely someone crying – a jerky sob followed by someone blowing their nose. Did Rufus have a visitor? Or another daughter?

In the book, we are never told exactly what the sound is, or who/what is making it. We're going to look at the evidence and see what we can infer to solve the mystery.

So let's tiptoe with Emily into Rufus' house and see what clues we can find...

Mystery scene 1: The kitchen

Rufus' back door was unlocked. It opened into a large kitchen with a high ceiling. Melted snow dribbled from Emily's boots onto uneven, red-brown tiles. A brass tap drip-drip-dripped into a huge white sink with a crack down one side. Piled in the sink and to either side of it were dirty dishes. There were knives and forks with food dried on them, mugs with tea stains, and an old dishcloth over the edge of the sink that was dried and crispy when she picked it up.

It smelled cold. Abandoned.

She stopped dead. What about the person she'd heard crying? What if they were still here? Rufus hadn't mentioned any visitors, but that didn't mean there weren't any.

She would have to be quick. And quiet.

There weren't any gun cartridges to be seen, but he must keep them somewhere. Did he have a locked cabinet, like Sal did? He didn't need one, did he? He didn't have any children that could pick them up and play with them. His daughter was all grown up and gone away, only last week. That must be her in the silver-framed picture propped up on the kitchen table – which was an odd place to keep it, next to a single table mat covered in crumbs and an empty plate with a knife and fork across it. Perhaps he liked to look at it while he ate. The woman reminded Emily of a deer, her hair dark and her smile shy. Nothing like Rufus.



1. From this text, what do we learn about:

- the tap? _____
- the sink? _____
- the dishes? _____
- the knives and forks? _____
- the mugs? _____
- the dishcloth? _____
- the table mat? _____

What do these clues suggest about Rufus and the way he looks after his house?

2. Now let's examine the photograph.

- Who is in the photograph? _____
- Where does Rufus keep the photograph? _____
- Why do you think he keeps it there? _____

What do these clues suggest about how Rufus is feeling? _____



Well done! You are closer to solving the mystery. Now come upstairs to the bedroom for more investigating...

Mystery Scene 2: The Bedroom

Above the bed hung a large photograph, black and white, of a man and a woman. It looked like a wedding picture, judging by the flowers the woman was holding, although she didn't have a posh white dress, only a grey-looking jacket and skirt that could have been any colour at all. She had dark hair, half-hidden by a small hat with a veil on it. She looked like the young woman in the photo downstairs.

One side of the bed was neatly made, the pillow clean and smooth; the other side was rumpled, the greasy-looking pillow dented with the shape of a head. It was a bed for two, with only one person sleeping in it.

Bedside cabinets stood on both sides, one messy and the other neat and tidy. On the messy one was a water glass with stale bubbles in it and a book called *Growing through Grief*. On the neat one stood a small lamp, a square alarm clock and a lace-edged handkerchief. The clock was so similar to Emily's that she went over and picked it up, but no – it was smaller, and it had stopped. There was no comforting whirr as the batteries drove the hands round and round. The hands said twenty-five past ten.

1. First, let's look at the evidence. Read the text and see if you can answer these questions about the photograph:

- Where did the photograph hang? _____

- What colour was the photograph? _____
- Who was in the photograph? _____
- What was the woman holding? _____
- What was the woman wearing? _____

From this evidence, who do you think this is a photograph of? _____

What event were they celebrating? _____

Why do you think that? _____

2. Now let's look at the bed. See if you can fill in the table of evidence below, describing the two pillows, the two bedside cabinets and what is on them.

	First one	Second one
What are the pillows like?		
Use one or two words to describe the bedside cabinets		
What is on the bedside cabinets?		

- Why do you think one side of the bed is neatly made and the other messy?
- Who do you think is reading the book called ***Growing Through Grief?***
- Why do you think they are reading it?

You've visited the scenes. You've gathered the evidence. Now for the big question....

You've visited the scenes. You've gathered the evidence.

Now for the big question....

- 'What do you think the mystery noise was?



Curriculum links

Science

Looking at the lynx fits well into the 'Living Things and Their Habitats' section of the KS2 Science curriculum. Children can be encouraged to research the role of the lynx as a predator in food chains and broader ecological systems.

In early KS3, pupils are to consider Interactions and Interdependencies, with particular reference to relationships within an ecosystem.

English

Lynx on the Loose: For or Against?

Lower KS2 – Pupils 'should be learning to justify their views about what they have read: with support at the start of Year 3 and increasingly independently by the end of Year 4.'

Upper KS2 – Pupils should 'participate in discussions about books that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, building on their own and others' ideas and challenging views courteously.'

Pupils should 'explain and discuss their understanding of what they have read, including through formal presentations and debates.'

Pupils should...'distinguish between statements of fact and opinion.'

KS3 – pupils should participate in 'formal debates and structured discussions, summarising and/or building on what has been said.'

Spectacular Similes

Lower KS2 – Pupils should 'demonstrate understanding of figurative language' and 'develop positive attitudes to reading, and an understanding of what they read, by discussing words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination.

Upper KS2 – Pupils should 'discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader.'

The Mystery of the Sound in the Wall

Lower and Upper KS2 – Pupils should 'understand what they read...by drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence.'

All the other activities aid comprehension, recall and personal response to the text, as well as the opportunity for pupils to write their own sentences, paragraphs and an informal letter.

