



PAISLEY
BOOK
FESTIVAL

Schools Programme

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#PBF2021 #YoungFutures

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Think about a real time when something difficult happened to you (or to someone else), but you (or they) managed to find something in it to be happy about. Or it can be something happening right now.
 - What was/is the difficult thing?
 - What did you (or they) find/what can you find to be happy about?
 - How did/will this help you/them get through the difficult thing?
2. Do you know any children's books set in the past, which have disabled characters in them?
 - How is this character's disability viewed by the character themselves?
 - How is this character's disability viewed by other characters?
 - How do you think this book's portrayal might affect the ways people in real life perceive others who have a similar disability?
 - How have our views of disability in general, and of this disability, changed since the writing of this book?
 - How do you think authors now should go about writing disabled characters in their stories? Why?

WRITING ACTIVITIES

1. Write a story about an imaginary character who finds themselves in an imaginary difficult situation. Write about them finding something to be happy about in that situation. Write about how finding that thing helps them come through the difficult situation.
2. Pick a passage from a story that is in the public domain and is set in the past. If you already have a favourite story that is in the public domain and is set in the past, and a favourite passage of that story, then you can use that. Think about what happens in that part of the story. Now write your own version of that passage, but set it here and now. Find ways to make it harder to recognise, without changing the most important things that happen in it.
3. Pick a character from a story that is set in the past. Write about what you think they would be like if they went to your school now. How would your teachers react to them? What would this character struggle with and what would they be good at? How might this character cope with things they found difficult? Would they like things such as aeroplanes, MacDonald's and fairgrounds? What might their job be, or what might they want to be when they grew up?
4. Pick a well-known short story that is in the public domain. Write your own version of the story it tells, but set here and now, with a human main character. Read your story out, and see if your friends can guess which story it is that you are retelling.

SOME CLASSIC CHILDREN'S BOOKS IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

The Secret Garden – Frances Hodgson Burnett

Heidi – Johanna Spyri

Anne of Green Gables – L.M. Montgomery

Pollyanna – Eleanor H. Porter

Little House on the Prairie – Laura Ingells Wilder

Little Women – Louisa May Alcott

What Katy Did – Susan M. Coolidge

SOME WELL-KNOWN SHORT STORIES IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

Aesop's Fables – e.g. *The Tortoise and the Hare*, *The Fox and the Crane*, *The Sun and the Wind*

Grimm's Fairy Tales – e.g. *The Three Little Pigs*, *The Elves and the Shoemaker*, *Little Red Riding Hood*

The Parables of Jesus – e.g. The Prodigal Son, the Lost Sheep

Fairy Stories by Hans Christian Anderson – e.g. *The Little Mermaid*, *The Snow Queen*, *The Ugly Duckling*