

The Children's Theatre Partnership and Royal & Derngate, Northampton present



MICHAEL ROSEN'S  
**UNEXPECTED**  
**TWIST**  
AN OLIVER TWISTED TALE

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**RESOURCE PACK FOR TEACHERS**  
for the study of Unexpected Twist

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# HOW TO USE THE RESOURCE PACK

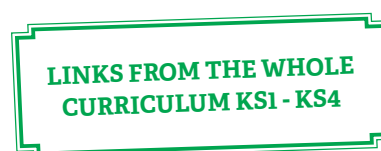
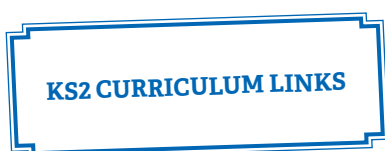
# 1

This pack contains practical activity ideas for teachers to choose from, to be used alongside the study of *Unexpected Twist* by Michael Rosen.

Our activities use creative, active approaches to explore different themes. The activities can be used in any order and you do not have to use all of them. They can be adapted for use with different themes and events from the story, or with other stories you study.

Activity ideas are split into different sections, which can be found in the contents.

Throughout the activities, you will see coloured boxes which show the curriculum links for the different activities. These are colour-coded as below:



**Blue words** indicate a link to one of the resources in this pack, which can be found in the appendices, numbered below.

## Appendices

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|--|--|
| <b>A1.</b> Unexpected Twist Blurb      | <b>A7.</b> Character Cards                             |
| <b>A2.</b> Story in 10 Scenes: Shona   | <b>A8.</b> Emojis                                      |
| <b>A3.</b> Story in 10 Scenes: Oliver  | <b>A9.</b> Story in 10 Scenes Comparison               |
| <b>A4.</b> Key Theme Questions         | <b>A10.</b> Key Stage 2 and 3 English Curriculum links |
| <b>A5.</b> Descriptive Words           | <b>A11.</b> Arts Award Discover Logbook Template       |
| <b>A6.</b> Oliver and Shona Comparison | <b>A12.</b> Resilience Framework                       |

# GETTING TO KNOW THE STORY

# 2

## Blurb

If you have a class set of books, ask pupils to look at the back of their copy. If not, provide **Unexpected Twist Blurb**. Explain how a blurb is designed to entice you to read the book.

**Discuss:**

- What do we know from the blurb?
- What do we want to find out?

From the blurb alone, ask pupils to make predictions about the story. They could act these out, write them, create a story board, or just do this through class discussion.

You can revisit these throughout the story, and in particular at the end, to review what they got right. Hopefully, there will be a lot they get wrong so that you can discuss why it is good that the blurb does not give the story away.

**Discuss:**

- Was the story predictable?
- Was there an 'unexpected twist'?

**KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas; Ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge; Predicting what might happen from details stated and implied.*

**KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Checking that the book makes sense to them, discussing their understanding and exploring the meaning of words in context; Asking questions to improve their understanding.*

**KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Checking their understanding to make sure that what they have read makes sense.*

## Story in 10 Scenes

**Story in 10 Scenes** is a great way of getting to know a story, or else recapping what happens.

- Split the students into 5 or 10 groups depending on the size of your class. Give each group a scene from the **Story in 10 Scenes** (or 2 scenes if you only have 5 groups).
- The groups now rehearse showing this scene to the rest of the class, using 'freeze-action-freeze'. They should freeze in a still image (like a photograph), then bring the action to life, then refreeze into an ending image.
- Students can choose to narrate the action from the written scene, with others performing, or just act out what is being said. They should speak the quote from the story.
- After rehearsing (give around 10 mins for this, or up to 15 if each group has 2 scenes) stand the groups around the edge of the work space.
- In scene order, the groups perform. When one group finishes, the next starts straight away without a gap.

## Key Themes

Whilst studying a story, it is useful to identify key themes which arise at specific times or throughout the narrative.

Some themes which you may want to explore with your class/group are:

**Loyalty; Family; Crime; Transition; Right and Wrong; Institutions/ Systems; Temptation; Vulnerability; Gang Culture; Historical Context; Power; Social Justice; Poverty**

See **Key Theme Thinking Points** which contain some key questions to get pupils thinking about the themes in *Unexpected Twist*. Ways to use these include:

- If you are focussing on one theme, cut out the questions under that heading and give each group a different question. Groups discuss and make notes then feedback to the class. Open up discussion and questioning from the rest of the class to share their thoughts. Alternatively, you could give each group a different theme to look at, with a few questions from this theme.
- Begin each lesson with a thinking point. Display the day's question on the board for when the pupils come into class. They can think about it and make notes until class is ready to begin. Open the floor to ideas and discussion.
- At the end of each lesson, give pupils a question to think about. They should have time to jot down initial thoughts, then send them away to think about it for the next lesson. They might wish to do some research at home as well.

These questions can also be woven into class discussions or activities and the themes may arise naturally.

### KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions; Maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments.*

### KS3 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Using Standard English confidently in a range of formal and informal contexts, including classroom discussion; Studying setting, plot, and characterisation, and the effects of these.*

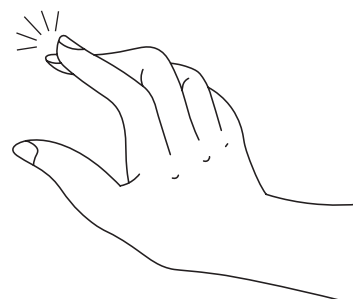
### KS1 - KS4 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas; Develop comprehension skills through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher.*

## Page to the Stage

Links below to access interviews with the creative team from the Royal & Derngate Theatre explaining how they have brought 'An Unexpected Twist' from the page to the stage.

- Unexpected Twist | Interview 5 - James Dacre - Director HD**  
<https://youtu.be/mJ3W1ZT3B2E>
- Unexpected Twist | Interview 4 - Conrad Murray - Musical Director, Composer and Lyricist HD**  
<https://youtu.be/spgMo86inPU>
- Unexpected Twist | Interview 3 - Roy Williams - Script Adapter HD**  
<https://youtu.be/QTAsKH0Uojc>
- Unexpected Twist | Interview 2 - Sarah Stacey - Associate Director HD**  
<https://youtu.be/QlnEpNNZv8k>
- Unexpected Twist | Interview 1 - Lisa Cagnacci - Producer HD**  
<https://youtu.be/wL7Q8CTcK6g>



# CHARACTERS

## Character Maps

In groups, pupils draw round one of them on large paper (or just draw a big body outline) and write the character's name at the top. Pupils should record what they know about the character, using evidence from the novel.

- What do others say about them?
- What do they do?
- What do they say about themselves?
- What can pupils infer about the character?

They should use quotes and their own words. This is done most effectively by starting when we first meet the character and revisiting it throughout the story (especially after key events/ changes or extra information).

### Alternatives to filling this in:

- Use a different colour each time so they can see what has been added at different points
- Write their first impressions inside the body and new information outside
- Write what they know for definite inside and what they infer outside

#### KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence.*

#### KS3 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Making inferences and referring to evidence in the text; Studying setting, plot, and characterisation, and the effects of these.*

#### KS3 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Learning new vocabulary, relating it explicitly to known vocabulary and understanding it with the help of context and dictionaries.*

#### KS1 - KS4

#### CURRICULUM LINKS

*Be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role.*

## Getting into Character

**Think of words to describe each character. This can be done by providing **Descriptive Words** and the pupils choose which matches each character, or they can come up with their own words.**

Ask pupils to become different characters and walk around the space. Think about their posture, facial expression, pace, balance, etc.

Provide different situations from the story - pupils should show their feelings physically as the character.

Ask different pupils how they are feeling, can they elaborate using different descriptive vocabulary?

**How might the characters act differently in the presence of someone else, or when put into a different situation.**

- What about Shona starting a new school?
- Oliver being sent to the workhouse and presented to the board?
- Shona meeting Pops, or Oliver meeting Fagin?

# Comparing Characters

## a) Questions:

- How are Oliver's and Shona's situations different? Similar?
- Do they have any choices as to how their lives unfold?
- What systems are in place around them?
- How do they react to these systems? Would you say Oliver has been institutionalised?
- Oliver is shunted around and doesn't know where he is going. How is this echoed with Shona? Why is she so confused?

### Activity:

Pupils should work in groups. Provide them with slips of paper. On each, they should write down something they know about Shona's situation. On the back, write down a comparison with Oliver's situation; this could be a similarity or a difference. (see [Oliver and Shona Comparison](#) for ideas).

Now, sort the cards into two piles - one for the things which are similar and one for the things which are different. Compare around the class and open discussion for those on which they disagree. Why might Michael Rosen have chosen to write Shona's character in this way?

#### KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Making comparisons within and across books.*

#### KS3 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Making critical comparisons across texts.*

## b) Question:

- Imagine that Oliver and Shona could meet. What advice would they give each other to cope with their situations?

### Activity:

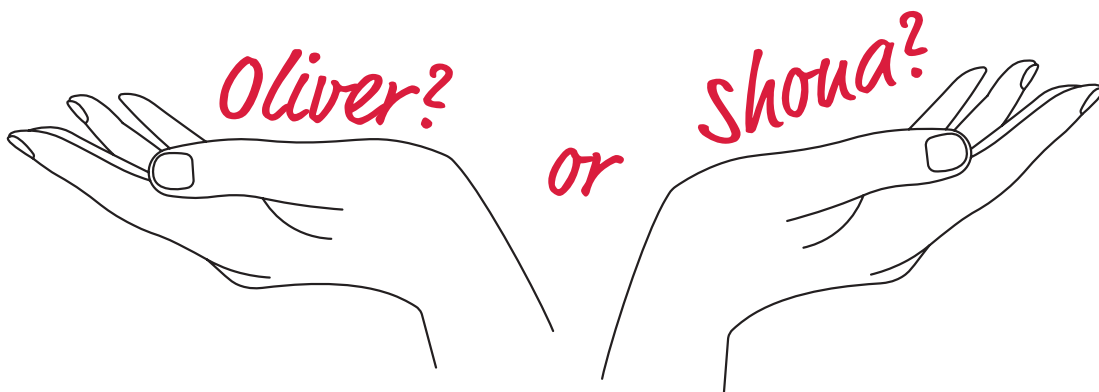
In pairs, become Oliver and Shona - what would they say to each other? How might they help? What Resilient Moves might they advise? Use what has or hasn't worked for them.

## c) Question:

- How has Oliver Twist been translated into modern day?

### Activity:

Using the [Character Cards](#), pupils match up the characters from Unexpected Twist with those who they think they relate to from Oliver Twist (e.g. Shona is Oliver). Compare with other groups in the class. Do we all agree? What is your argument for your choice? Discuss how these characters are similar and different (you could use similar activities to those you used to compare Oliver and Shona - see 'a' and 'b' above)



# RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS

# 4

## Family Trees

- a) **Look at the concept of family trees with your pupils.**  
Ask them to think about the families of Shona and Oliver - who do we know in their families? How are they connected? Begin creating a family tree for the two characters. This can be added to or changed as we find out more, or could be created once you have read the whole book.
- b) **Ask the pupils to think about their own family and begin their family tree.**  
You might want to set this as homework as they may not know very much. Back in class, pupils should share their family trees with a partner or small group. They should find similarities and differences, and celebrate these.

## Relationship Webs

- a) **Each pupil has a character (this can be on a sticker or hung round their neck).**  
Pass and hold string for the connections (e.g. there would be a string between Shona and Nan because they are related, between Shona and Désol'e because they are friends, etc). Following this, pupils can discuss the relationships and the visual representation of how many connections there are in the novel.
- b) **Either following on from option one**, or stand-alone, pupils draw the web, writing each character and tracing the relationships between them, being prepared to explain their connections.
- a) **Like a police investigation board.**  
Stick character names or images on the display board (see [Character Cards](#)), pin strings between them for their connections. You could also add locations and properties which characters have connections to (e.g. Fagin's base).

**Relationships and Family Tree** activities can be done for the beginning, middle and end of the story. If they are displayed they can be changed and added to as the pupils discover different facts about the characters and their connections.



## Overlapping Views of the World

**Draw a dot on a piece of paper and label it 'Shona'. Using a compass, put the pin-point into your dot and draw a circle around Shona.**

Now think about those people who are in Shona's life (Dad, Nan, Désol'e, etc). Think about how much overlap they have (i.e. how much Shona might know about this person) and draw a new circle which overlaps Shona's by this amount.

Continue for other characters, thinking about how much connection and overlap they have with Shona's life. There may be characters who Shona knows little to nothing about (e.g. Lanyard Man, Ron) who you may choose not to overlap with Shona, but they may overlap with somebody else.

Look at the connections and overlaps between the characters - who is Shona closest to? Who does she know little to nothing about? How might this affect the choices she makes? Do these overlaps change throughout the story?

If you want to explore this further, you could ask the pupils to cut out a circle for each character, then they can move them around depending on the part of the story they are in.

**KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Consider and evaluate different view points, attending to and building on the contributions of others.*

## Gangs: Who?

**Think about: Who is involved in the gangs in the two stories?**

- a) **On large paper, write 'Fagin' in the middle of one piece and 'Pops' in the middle of the other. Using the Character Cards, pupils add who they think is involved in the gang.**  
They should record the clues we have to tell them this, using quotes from the story, and also whether it is clear or just inferred. They can add to this throughout study of the story. Debate may arise over certain characters and you should encourage pupils to share their arguments for and against (e.g. Nan).
- b) **An alternative to this activity would be for each pupil to become a character.** Pupils to have a sticker or card hung round their neck to say which character they are. They should add themselves to the gang if they think they are involved, and tell the class why (pupils can help each other with this) including events and quotes from the story.
- c) **When the pupils think they have added all of the characters to the gangs, they should think about who relates to whom in the two stories.**  
If you have done activity B, pupils can pair up with their related character in the other story. If activity A, they should pair up the character cards. E.g. Fagin = Pops.



## Gangs: How?

**Think about: How are people pulled into the gangs?**

**a) Look at Shona in chapter 6 and chapter 9.**

How does Tino manipulate Shona? (Tactics such as buying coffee, a sense of urgency, talking in riddles, minimising her role, offering gifts and rewards). Imagine you are in Tino's position and need to recruit others to the gang - how would you do it? Pupils imagine they are Tino and put together a persuasive argument to encourage Shona - try it out on each other in role.

**KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s).*

**b) Look at Oliver in chapter 8 and chapter 10.**

How does Dodger encourage him to come to Fagin? How do his tactics differ from Tino's? How are they similar? Try out your Tino manipulation again, this time only using the things available to you in Oliver's time - does it have the same impact on a modern-day teenager?

## Gangs: What?

**Think about: What might the future look like? What can they do to get out?**

**a) Look at the characters of Shona, Gazz and Tino.**

Do you feel sorry for them? Are you afraid of them? What might their future look like if they stay in the gang? Is it easy to get out? Play out different scenarios. What Resilient Moves might they use to help them?

**b) Oliver, Nancy and Sikes are all stuck in the same trap in Fagin's gang.**

Compare their behaviours - how and why do they react differently to being in this situation? Put Oliver, Nancy and Sikes into the hot-seat (model first with Teacher in Role, then ask pupils to become the characters) and pupils ask them questions about their lives and involvement in Fagin's gang.

**In groups of 3, pupils become Oliver, Nancy and Sikes. In character, compare your experiences of Fagin's gang - how might you help each other through, or out of the situation?**

**Do their behaviours correlate with behaviours seen in Shona's story, with those involved in Pops' gang?**

**KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Predicting what might happen from details stated and implied.*

**KS3 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Making critical comparisons across texts.*

**KS1 - KS4 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role; Have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.*

## PERSPECTIVES

### Back Stories

#### Nan and Lorraine

- What happened in Nan's past?
- Why did Lorraine move to America and continue to stay so disconnected?
- Were they both in the gang and Lorraine escaped from it but Nan remained? Is she coming back to help so Shona doesn't follow the same path? Does she feel guilty?

#### Shona

- What has Shona been through previously that has caused her not to trust people like Miss Cavani?
- What happened at previous schools?
- Why does she feel so guilty about her mum's death? What does she know/not know?
- Why is Shona so quick to assume Rory is talking about her, to jump on him?
- Shona has had dreams of running away. From what?

#### Miss Cavani

- What is Miss Cavani's life outside of school?
- Shona assumes Miss Cavani has her life all worked out, with nice clothes, a nice job and nice looks. Miss Cavani mentions that everyone has had dreams about running away, and Shona starts to wonder. What might Miss Cavani have wanted to run away from?

#### Nancy

- How did Nancy end up in Fagin's gang?
- Why does she feel the need to help Oliver?

#### Sikes

- How did Sikes end up in Fagin's gang?
- What events in his past have led to him becoming a brutal criminal and murderer?

#### Activity:

**Choose a character (you could do this and have the whole class as the same, or ask pupils to choose a character themselves).** Using the questions above as a guide, pupils write a diary entry for their chosen character, at a point in this character's past.

Alternatively, they could write a letter or speech to explain to another character why they have behaved like they have. They could perform their speech or read out their letter or diary entry to the class.

#### KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas; Perform their own compositions, using appropriate intonation, volume, and movement so that meaning is clear.*

#### KS3 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Giving short speeches and presentations, expressing their own ideas and keeping to the point.*

#### KS1 - KS4 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.*

## Points of View

**Unexpected Twist is told from Shona's point of view, which means we do not find out everything about other characters, and why a lot of what happens is happening.**

In Oliver Twist, we follow Oliver's story, but there are scenes in which Oliver is not there which give more backstory to the other characters and why things happen to Oliver (e.g. Mr Bumble coming to collect Oliver, Nancy talking to Rose Maylie, etc)

- What clues do we have that there is more going on that Shona doesn't know?
- Think about Nan, Miss Cavani, Désol'e, Gazz.
- What do you infer from the clues given?
- Do we really know what is going on in other people's lives/ heads?
- What if the story was told from another character's point of view?

### **Activity:**

**Choose a scene or situation from the story and rewrite it from another character's point of view.**

How might they see the situation differently? What might we learn as a reader?

#### KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence.*

#### KS3 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Making inferences and referring to evidence in the text.*

## If Shona Knew, What Would she do?

**Many things happen around Shona which she does not understand and feels she has no control over.**

### **Open a discussion:**

Is this a feeling you have ever had? When? What happened around you? Why did you feel you had no control? Did you know why it was happening?

- Shona seems to struggle to trust adults and does not want to confide in them.
- She suspects Nan of being part of the gang.
- She thinks Miss Cavani is going to tell her off rather than help with the phone situation.
- She doesn't understand why they must keep moving house.
- She doesn't understand why she is given a D8 for not wearing a lanyard, when the teachers should know why.
- She feels guilty about the death of her mum.

**Think about:** If Shona had things explained to her, would she feel differently in these situations?

### **Activity:**

**Have a pupil representing Shona, sat on a chair in the middle.** Other pupils, representing other characters, should come up and touch Shona on the shoulder and explain their feelings and actions.

E.g. Dad might come up and explain what happened when mum died, or why they need to move house.

Discuss how Shona might now feel and how her actions may be different.

You could ask pupils to rewrite a scene in Shona's story now she knows why. You could do this as a diary entry or could get pupils to recreate the scene in action.

#### KS1 - KS4 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role; Have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.*

## Is the Story Relatable?

Ask pupils to think about whether they can relate to the story. Can you relate to Shona? Is there anything about her life which relates to something you have been through? Remember it does not have to be the exact situation but perhaps something which made you feel like Shona feels.

- What about Oliver? Can you relate to any situations in his story?
- Which parts of the story were most relatable? Which were not? Why?

Hold up different **Emojis** and ask pupils to discuss situations in the story in which a character might have felt like this. In quiet reflection, pupils can also think about a time they may have felt like this in their own lives. They could also use emojis to map out Shona's feelings throughout the story.

It is interesting to note the subtle differences in some of the expressions, and discuss misinterpretation of feelings.

### KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings;  
Consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others.*



# KEY EVENTS AND TURNING POINTS

## Unexpected Twists

Using the *Story in 10 Scenes: Shona* to help, ask pupils to identify, in pairs or small groups, what they think are the key events in *Unexpected Twist*. Share ideas as a class and choose the most significant moments for Shona. Pupils should record each event on a different piece of paper or card.

You may wish to choose from:

- Shona starts a new school
- A boy gives Shona a phone
- Shona delivers the bag
- Shona meets Pops
- Shona and Dad share their feelings of guilt over Mum's death
- Shona sees Gazz who appears troubled. Miss Cavani advises her about these situations
- Shona begins to suspect Nan is involved in the gang
- Shona hears the fight between Gazz and Ron
- Nan dies
- Lorraine arrives

Using the events they have chosen, ask pupils to think about moments where Shona's attitude to her situation changes. They should separate these events from the rest and focus on these.

For each 'turning point', discuss what happens to change Shona's mind or situation (personal vs systems). Using slips of paper, record the different outcomes of the choice she makes (there may be two or more). Now use these to answer the following question:

### Debate:

**What is the most significant turning point for Shona?**

(think about the changes she makes herself and the changes which happen around her to affect her situation)

#### KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play/improvisations and debates; Explain and discuss their understanding of what they have read, including through formal presentations and debates, maintaining a focus on the topic and using notes where necessary; Provide reasoned justifications for their views.*

#### KS3 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Participating in formal debates and structured discussions, summarising and/or building on what has been said.*

#### KS1 - KS4 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate; Understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.*

# Oliver Twist

Repeat the above using the *Story in 10 Scenes: Oliver* to help. Ask pupils to identify, in pairs or small groups, what they think are the key events in *Oliver Twist*. Share ideas as a class and choose the most significant moments for Oliver. Pupils should record each event on a different piece of paper or card.

You may wish to choose from:

- Oliver is taken to the work house and presented to the board
- Oliver asks for more gruel
- Oliver is taunted by Claypole and attacks him. He is beaten by Mr Sowerberry and runs away
- Oliver is picked up by Jack Dawkins (Dodger) and taken to Fagin
- Oliver goes out on a job with Dawkins and Bates. He runs away when he realises what they are doing but is mistaken as the thief and put on trial
- The bookseller declares Oliver to be innocent. He is taken in by Mr Brownlow (the man who had been robbed)
- Oliver is caught by Nancy and returned to Fagin. He is taken on a robbery. He decides to warn the household but is hit by a bullet and left behind by the robbers
- Oliver meets his brother, Monks, and finds out that Rose is his auntie

Using the events they have chosen, ask pupils to think about moments where Oliver's situation (or his attitude to his situation) changes. They should separate these events from the rest and focus on these.

For each 'turning point', discuss what happens to change Oliver's mind or situation (personal vs systems). Using slips of paper, record the different outcomes of the choice he makes (there may be two or more).

Now use these to answer the following questions:

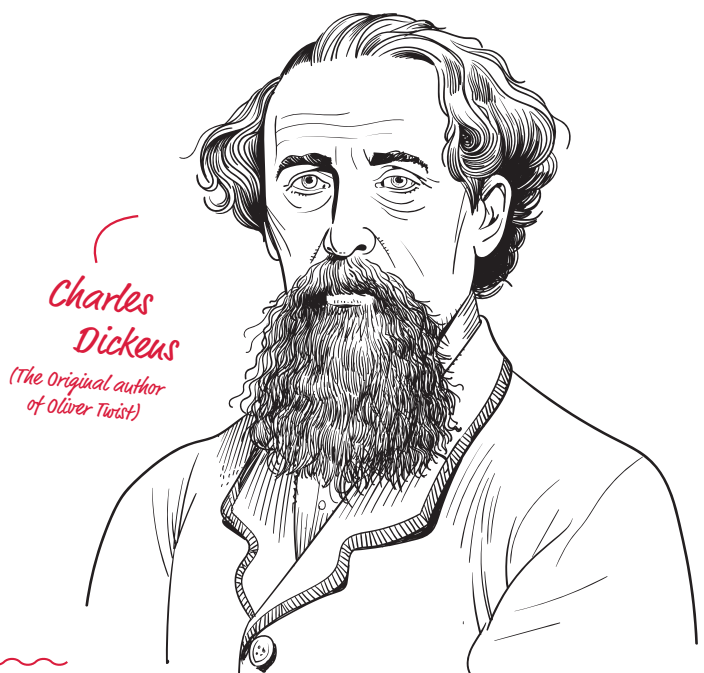
**Debate:**

**What is Oliver's turning point? How does this change his circumstances?** (think about the changes he makes himself and the changes which happen around him to affect his situation)

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## Comparing the Two Characters

- What is similar/different about Shona and Oliver's situations?
- What power do they have to change their circumstances? Who has more control over their fate?
- What systems help or hinder them along the way? What if these were different?
- Which people help or hinder them along the way?



# SHONA'S CHOICES

## Should She or Shouldn't She?

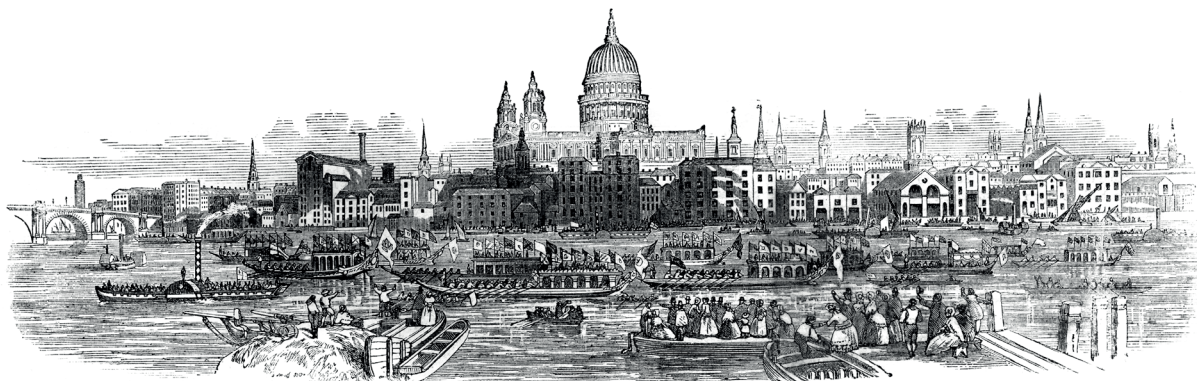
There are many moments in *Unexpected Twist* where Shona must make a choice.

Some of these 'Should She or Shouldn't She?' moments are listed below. Pupils can discuss which choice Shona makes in the story and whether this was the right choice. What are the pros and cons? What could she have done instead?

- When she is offered the phone, should she keep it?
- Should she tell Miss Cavani about where she got her phone?
- Tino tells Shona to collect a bag from Gazz and deliver it to a stranger. Should she do this or not?
- Lanyard Man accuses her of not wearing her lanyard. What should she say to him?
- Shona suspects Nan might have some involvement with the gang. Should she ask Nan directly?
- Tino tells Shona that she cannot have the phone until she comes to meet Pops. Should she go?
- Ashley, the special officer, asks Shona about the gang. Should she tell Ashley what she knows and how she has been involved?
- Should she tell Dad how she is feeling about moving school, Mum, Nan, etc?

### KS1 - KS4 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Use discussion in order to learn; be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas;  
Develop comprehension skills through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher.*





# Forum Theatre

**In Forum Theatre, members of the audience can get up and join the action, to change the outcome of a scene.**

Split the class into groups and give each group a scene from the story to put into action. They could be given a short amount of time to rehearse or they could improvise on the spot.

Or pupils could choose their own scenes based on what they have studied so far, what they relate to, or what they think is a significant moment in the story. The group perform their scene.

**KS1 - KS4 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role; have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.*

**There are then different options for how you approach using Forum Theatre:**

**1) Character Intervention**

At the key moment, freeze the scene and allow pupils to enter the action (you could have these pupils pre-chosen or let them approach at their own discretion - whichever works best for your class).

Have a pupil enter the action to give advice to a character. You could merge the two stories for this, for example with Oliver entering the action to give advice to Shona. The character then acts on the advice to change the scene.

**2) Changing the Choice; Changing the Outcome**

Have the group act out their scene. Pupils in the audience watch for significant moments and call 'freeze'. At this point, the actors freeze and the pupil who shouted 'freeze' enters the action. They replace a character and call action, changing the choice the character makes.

- The group then improvise what might happen now.
  - How has the outcome changed?
  - What was the change?
  - Why did you make this change?
  - Did the change make a difference?
- For the individual? For the situation?
  - What if making a different choice doesn't change the outcome?
  - What effect might this have on the character?
  - Does a bigger change need to be made (i.e. to the system)?

**KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions; Maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments.*

**KS3 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Using Standard English confidently in a range of formal and informal contexts, including classroom discussion; Studying setting, plot, and characterisation, and the effects of these.*

# KEY QUESTIONS FOR DEBATE

## For and Against

Split the class into debate groups and pose a different question to each group. The groups should then split themselves into the two sides of the argument.

Ask pupils to put together their arguments for and against. They should record their opening arguments, which they will read at the beginning of the debate. The floor will then be open for all other pupils to ask them questions. At the end of the debate, the audience vote on the winning side.

### Key Questions:

- Miss Cavani says: "You'll have to decide who has the easiest life, you or Oliver" Who has the easier life? **OLIVER** or **SHONA**
- Who do you think is more resilient? **OLIVER** or **SHONA**
- Do Oliver and Shona have a choice in how their lives unfold? **YES** or **NO**
- Think about the adults in Shona's life. Do they provide direction? **YES** or **NO**
- Is Shona right to trust Lorraine so quickly? **YES** or **NO**
- Does Shona need a phone? **YES** or **NO**

### KS1 - KS4 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate; Understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.*

### KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play/improvisations and debates; Explain and discuss their understanding of what they have read, including through formal presentations and debates, maintaining a focus on the topic and using notes where necessary; Provide reasoned justifications for their views.*

### KS3 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Participating in formal debates and structured discussions, summarising and/or building on what has been said.*

## Critical Debate

Pupils could also stage their own Critical Debates, where they form a panel to talk about the topic and answer audience questions, without sides or winners.

### Key Questions:

- What is unexpected in the story?
- What is the twist?
- What happens if you don't have an Auntie to come to the rescue? Think about who and what might work for and against you.
- What does including the Oliver Twist sections add to the novel?
- How does it affect Shona and her story?
- How does it affect the reader?
- What are Oliver and Shona missing in their lives?
- What are they seeking?
- Are basic needs the same in Victorian times and now?
- Are their needs comparable?

Their own debate questions may arise during class discussions also. These could come about naturally or you could give them a task to think of a good debate question. Further prompting from the teacher could help with more depth.

# PAST TO PRESENT

# 9

**a) Ask pupils to think about the things which they could not live without and record each item on a separate card.**

Ask them to split their cards into basic needs (e.g. water, sleep) and those things we want but do not need (e.g. mobile phone).

Now ask the pupils to split the basic needs cards into things which Oliver Twist does and doesn't have. Which basic needs is he missing? What is he seeking in his story?

Repeat for Shona. What basic needs is she missing? What is she seeking in her story?

**KS3 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Rereading books encountered earlier to increase familiarity with them and provide a basis for making comparisons; Making critical comparisons across texts.*

**KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Making comparisons within and across books.*

**b) How does poverty make Shona and Oliver vulnerable?**

Ask pupils to think about: In an ideal world, what rights would people have? Working in groups, pupils should put together a bill of rights, thinking about what they have discussed so far.

Things to think about could include: Would food/shelter be provided for all? Would adults and children have the same rights? Would they have to do anything to earn these rights? Pupils should now present their bill of rights to the class in a persuasive speech. Give time for questions and discussion following this to challenge their ideas.

**c) Discussion: How does moving to the modern day change the impact of the story?**

Can we relate to Oliver Twist? Are our needs different now? Revisit your character comparisons and who from Unexpected Twist relates to whom in Oliver Twist. Are the characters completely comparable?

**d) Revisit your character comparisons and who from Unexpected Twist relates to whom in Oliver Twist. Are the characters completely comparable?**

- What if Shona met Fagin? Met Dodger?
- What if Oliver met Pops? Met Tino?
- Pupils imagine they are these characters (or they may want to choose their own) and meet each other.
- How might they react?
- Would Fagin and Dodger be able to persuade Shona?
- Could Tino manipulate Oliver?
- Would Oliver be scared of Pops?
- Would Shona be scared of Fagin or would she find him funny like Oliver did?

What advice might Oliver and Shona give each other after meeting their equivalent characters?

**e) What are the class learning from Oliver Twist? How are they impacted emotionally? What about Shona?**

(Look at the discussions on Racism in chapter 9 and on Murder and Violence in chapter 16)

**KS1 - KS4 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role; Have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.*

# CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE TEXT DICKENS VS ROSEN

# 10

Unexpected Twist is Michael Rosen's modern take on the classic Oliver Twist, by Charles Dickens. It is interesting to compare the two styles of the writers, including the event order and narrative stance.

## Order of Events

- a) Using the [Story in 10 Scenes Comparison](#), cut up the events and ask pupils to put them into order for the two stories. This will show their understanding and what they can remember.
- Ask them to number the cards 1-10 for each story. Now, ask pupils to find the matching pairs from the two stories. Look together at the numbers - do they match?
  - Which events have been put into different orders. e.g. Oliver meets Fagin before going out on a job for him. Shona does the job before meeting Pops.

**Discuss:**

Why might Rosen have chosen to do this? Think about the characters and the past/present comparison.

**KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader.*

**KS3 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Knowing how language, including figurative language, vocabulary choice, grammar, text structure and organisational features, presents meaning.*

b) What if you changed the order of events?

Split the pupils into 10 groups - one for each scene - and ask them to create a freeze-frame of their scene.

Alternatively, you could do this with them drawing the scene on large paper. You may wish to photograph the freeze-frames for display purposes later.

Ask the pupils to put their scenes into order for the story. Now, move/swap round scenes and ask the pupils to think about what might happen differently in the story. They should bring their freeze to life and act out the scene as it may now happen.

**KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Making comparisons within and across books; Identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning.*

**KS3 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Studying setting, plot, and characterisation, and the effects of these; Making critical comparisons across texts.*

c) Think about: What does including the Oliver Twist sections add to the novel?

- Would it be the same without them?
- If you were familiar with Oliver Twist, would Unexpected Twist make you think of Oliver?
- How does including the Oliver Twist sections affect Shona and her story?
- How does it affect you as a reader?
- What is Michael Rosen trying to say?
- Think about the positive and negative impacts here. Does it help you understand Shona's character? Is it difficult to follow when it jumps between two stories? Do you compare Shona and Oliver's experiences and situations? What impact does this have on your attitude towards Shona as a character?

**KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Reading books that are structured in different ways; Increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books, including fiction from our literary heritage.*

**KS3 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Knowing the purpose, audience for and context of the writing and drawing on this knowledge to support comprehension; Read critically; Making critical comparisons across texts.*

# Narration

**Unexpected Twist and Oliver Twist are both written to follow the story of their main protagonist: Shona in Unexpected Twist and Oliver in Oliver Twist.**

Compare the two narrative styles, some examples below:

Unexpected Twist	Oliver Twist
Third person narrative, following Shona's story	Third person narrative, following Oliver's story
Every scene is based around what Shona is doing- she is always there and we know what she is thinking and experiencing, and not necessarily what is happening elsewhere	Oliver is not in every scene. We find out about other things which happen to affect him, which he is unaware of (e.g. the beadle coming to take him to the workhouse, or Nancy talking to Rose Maylie)
We, as a reader, only know what Shona does. We miss details about other characters and things which happen to affect Shona because it is always from her perspective. Because Shona is unaware of certain situations, so is the reader.	We as a reader know more than Oliver does. He is unaware of things which happen to affect him, but we are made aware.
Shona has a narrow point of view and does not know or understand other people's situations or problems	Oliver doesn't know or understand other people's situations or problems, but we can see the bigger picture. e.g. Does Oliver know that Nancy is killed by Sikes?

**a) What if Shona's story were told like Oliver's, where the reader knows of other events which happen. What might we find out?**

Ask pupils to put some of these thoughts into action. Examples:

- Imagine you are Miss Cavani in the staff room. What might she tell the teachers about Shona?
- Imagine you are Lorraine visiting Nan in the hospital. What do they speak about?
- Imagine you are Zeynep in the café. You see a lot of people coming and going. What do you see? Who do you speak to?

Pupils could also think of their own examples.

**b) What if the stories were told from a different point of view? What different impressions might we get about characters?**

Revisit the Compass circle idea from **RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS**.

What if you moved Shona's pin-point. How might she see the world now? What might she know? What if you expanded her circle?

**c) Does Shona learn anything from reading Oliver Twist?**

**KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Considering how authors have developed characters and settings in what pupils have read, listened to or seen performed.*

**KS1 - KS4 CURRICULUM LINKS**  
*Be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role; Have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.*

# The Ending

- What do you think of the two endings?
- Do you think they are realistic?
- Why might Michael Rosen have chosen to end his story in this way?

**Think about:**

- What if Lorraine hadn't come back? How might the ending look different?
- What if Oliver's brother hadn't come back? Where would Oliver be?
- Using these thoughts, pupils discuss their ideas in groups, then put together a scene from Shona's or Oliver's future - what has happened to them? Where are they? Have they moved again? Are they involved in gangs?

**They could extend this into a piece of writing:**

- A diary entry from Shona's diary a year in the future.
- A playscript for 'Unexpected Twist 2'.
- A comic strip/storyboard for the events from Nan's death to a point in the future.



# RESILIENCE

# 11

## Key Questions

**Key Quote:** *"You'll have to decide who has the easiest life, you or Oliver"* (Miss Cavani)

Miss Cavani speaks these words near the beginning of the story, when the class begin reading *Oliver Twist*. Using this quote as a starting point, use the below activities to start pupils thinking about answers to the following questions:

- Who faces more tricky moments, Oliver or Shona?
- Who do you think is more resilient?
- How would you define an 'easy life'? (is it the same as being comfortable or being happy?)
- So, who has the easiest life, Oliver or Shona?

(think about the pressures on them as children/teens, their basic needs, the people they can rely on, the systems in place around them, etc)

## Using the Framework

**Map the framework against Shona's story and Oliver's story.**

**a) Use two different colours of post-its or tabs, one for Shona and one for Oliver.**

Looking at the Resilience Framework, stick your coloured tabs on the strands which are missing/tricky for Shona. Repeat with a different colour for Oliver.

Look at the distribution of tabs- which areas are more tricky/lacking for Oliver? Which for Shona? Are they similar? How do they end up in these situations?

Choose a scene in which Oliver or Shona face a tricky moment and ask pupils to put it into action. Pupils choose a resilient move which the character could make to change the outcome. Recreate the scene, this time inserting the resilient move, and act the new outcome. Discuss: what effect did this have on the character's situation?

Are there any events where a resilient move cannot be made? Why not? What happens when an individual cannot make a resilient move? What effect might it have on them? Is there a systems change which could be made?

**b) Repeat this activity but now for the strengths which Oliver and Shona have or resilient moves they use in the story. Again, look at the distribution. Who has more? Where are they?**

Imagine Oliver and Shona could meet. In pairs, pupils become Oliver and Shona. Using the resilient moves which Oliver demonstrates in the story, the pupil playing Oliver should give advice to Shona, based on his experiences, which could help her in a tricky situation. Repeat this the other way round, using Shona's resilient moves to advise Oliver.

If they had these people to rely on, would it have affected the outcomes of their situations?

### KS1 - KS4 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role; Have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.*

## People to Rely on

**a) Who does Shona have that she can rely on?**

Does she rely on anyone in the story?

Split the pupils into groups so that there are enough in each group to represent all of the people in Shona's life (repeat for Oliver's story later). Ask pupils to make a circle, each labelled with their character, with one pupil in the middle as Shona.

As a class, choose a tricky moment for Shona from the story. In their groups, pupils discuss who Shona could rely on and ask for help in this situation. This may be more than one person. Using string, create a link between Shona and the people she could rely on. (you could also display this in class using **Character Cards** and string pinned on a board).

Share and compare the groups' ideas and repeat for different tricky moments. Invite debate if there is dispute over how characters might help Shona. Why might Shona not have chosen to rely on this person? Does her attitude change through the story?

**b) Repeat the above activity, this time with the characters in Oliver's life.**

Does Oliver have as many people to rely on as Shona?

What systems might get in the way for him?

**c) Invite pupils to share their thoughts on who they can rely/lean on if they are facing tricky moments in their own lives.**

Why can they lean on this person? Pupils could draw a picture of somebody they can lean on and label the traits they have which make them reliable.

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## Supporting Characters

**Think about the characters of Désol'e (Unexpected Twist) and Nancy (Oliver Twist).** How are the roles of these two characters similar? What role do they play in the lives of Shona and Oliver? Are they characters who Shona and Oliver could lean on?

e.g. Nancy helps Oliver without being asked. Désol'e helps Shona without being asked. How are the ways they do this different? What are the consequences of this for each character?

Nancy's death is a disturbing and tragic scene. Is there anything comparable in Unexpected Twist? Why do you think Rosen chose to omit this?



# AFTER WATCHING THE PERFORMANCE

# 12

Review the performance through class and group discussion and personal reflection.

Here are some questions to prompt discussion:

- What were the key, stand-out moments in the performance?
- How were characters portrayed?
- Was it how you expected? Why?
- What did you think of lighting, sound, costume, props?
- What scenes did you relate to the most? Why do you think you related to this scene?
- Which character did you relate to? Why?
- If you could change one thing about the performance, what would it be?
- Have your opinions changed about the characters after watching how they were portrayed on the stage?
- What else did you think/feel during or after the performance?

Pupils can discuss these or physically explore these ideas. For example:

- Miming or freeze-framing their favourite scenes
- Acting out a scene with a change they would have made

#### KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Provide reasoned justifications for their views.*

#### KS3 CURRICULUM LINKS

*Understanding how the work of dramatists is communicated effectively through performance and how alternative staging allows for different interpretations of a play.*

# CREATIVE WRITING AND DESIGN CHALLENGES

# 13

**1) The stories both end in Happily Ever After... what might happen next?**

Create a storyboard/comic strip to continue the story??

**2) How would you translate the story to the stage?**

Choose a scene from the story and write it as a playscript?

**3) Think about another classic story you know.**

Rewrite it with a modern twist.

**4) Choose a tricky situation for Shona and write a diary entry.**

OR write a diary entry for one of the characters from their back story. OR write a diary entry in the future (either from the actual ending or imagining that Lorraine/Monks hadn't come to the 'rescue')

**5) Think about a situation in which Oliver or Shona find themselves and do not know what to do.**

As Shona or Oliver, write to an agony aunt. Swap with a partner and send a reply with the advice you would give.

**6) Many of the scenes are seen from Shona's point of view.**

Choose a different character and rewrite the scene from their point of view.

**7) Write the playscript for a scene we don't see:**

- Imagine you are Miss Cavani in the staff room. What might she tell the teachers about Shona?
- Imagine you are Lorraine visiting Nan in the hospital. What do they speak about?
- Imagine you are Zeynep in the café. You see a lot of people coming and going. What do you see? Who do you speak to?
- Or think of your own example.

**KS1 - KS4 CURRICULUM LINKS**

*Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.*

**KS2 CURRICULUM LINKS**

*Identifying the audience for and purpose of the writing, selecting the appropriate form and using other similar writing as models for their own; Noting and developing initial ideas, drawing on reading and research where necessary; In writing narratives, considering how authors have developed characters and settings in what pupils have read, listened to or seen performed; Perform their own compositions, using appropriate intonation, volume, and movement so that meaning is clear.*

**KS3 CURRICULUM LINKS**

*Writing for a wide range of purposes and audiences, including: well-structured formal expository and narrative essays; stories, scripts, poetry and other imaginative writing; notes and polished scripts for talks and presentations and a range of other narrative and non-narrative texts, including arguments, and personal and formal letters; Summarising and organising material, and supporting ideas and arguments with any necessary factual detail; Considering how their writing reflects the audiences and purposes for which it was intended.*

## CREDITS

The Children's Theatre Partnership (CTP) was established in 2010 to produce and tour bold, ambitious and imaginative theatre for young people. Our aim is to excite and engage new and diverse audiences, often introducing them to the theatre for the first time, bringing communities to their local theatres, inspiring a life-long love of theatre and supporting the UK's most talented artists.

The Grand Theatre has been commissioned by the Children's Theatre Partnership to develop and produce a new three-year National Creative Learning Programme:  
*Creative Resilience*

*Unexpected Twist Resource Pack for Teachers* was written and produced by:

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With thanks to the Blackpool Grand Theatre Virtual Book Club 2020 for their insights.

Reference to the Resilience Framework (Children and Young People) Oct 2012 adapted from Hart & Blincow with Thomas 2007, [www.boingboing.org.uk](http://www.boingboing.org.uk)