

Teacher

Resources

Forbidden

by Anjali Tiwari

and Danica da Silva Pereira



10 stories to make a difference

Dear Teachers,

We are delighted that you are interested in sharing **Forbidden** with your class. **Forbidden** is part of our **10 Stories to Make a Difference** collection, which has ten inspiring stories for young readers that celebrate difference and individuality.

Inside these pages you'll find activities and prompts for KS3 teachers creating lesson plans inspired by **Forbidden**, sharing ideas for making the most of the rich potential offered by this book.

A strong suggestion is to read the book aloud once for the story, then again to focus on particular aspects, passages or themes. The following activities are grouped by desired outcomes and are for a range of activities and additional needs of a class. Some extension activities are included, but all the materials can be adapted beyond the target audience according to the interests and abilities of your class.

The following activities would be suitable for the allocated age group:

- Reading independently or as group **11+ years**
- Exploring through the creative learning activities in this pack **11+ years / KS3**

All the books in our **10 Stories to Make a Difference** collection are beautifully illustrated and perfect for children aged 5 and up. They reflect the need for greater inclusivity and more diversity in children's books with the stories including characters of colour, LGBTQ+ and disabled characters.

The **10 Stories to Make a Difference** collection is available to buy from www.pop-up.org.uk/shop. Teacher and Parent/Carer Resource packs are available to download from www.pop-up.org.uk/shop. This Resource pack is written by Carey Fluker Hunt and published by Pop Up Projects CIC.
Artwork © Danica da Silva Pereira.

These resources were made available with the generous help of Arts Council England.



Supported using public funding by

**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

For any questions, please email info@pop-up.org.uk

Follow us on our social media:

| @PopUpFestival | | @pop_up_projects | | @popupfestival

Reproduction of material is strictly prohibited without prior written permission.
All rights reserved.

There are six sections:

1. About this resource pack (includes themes and curriculum links)
2. About this book (includes insights from the writer and illustrator): Page 4
3. Discussion Activities:
 - 3.1 Talking about friendship: Page 5
 - 3.2 Talking about rules: Page 6
 - 3.3 Talking about being a nuisance and creating change: Page 7
4. Illustration Activities:
 - 4.1 Working in a limited palette: Page 8
 - 4.2 Illustrating the forest: Page 9
 - 4.3 Whose perspective?: Page 10
5. Writing Activities:
 - 5.1 Exploring viewpoints through drama: Page 11
 - 5.2 Writing about the forest as a place of freedom and refuge: Page 12
 - 5.3 Exploring Ratna's point of view: Page 13
6. Glossary: Page 14

Themes and ideas include

- Friendship across a divide
- Overcoming differences
- Making and breaking the rules
- Being a change-maker
- How the past impacts on what happens next

Curriculum Links

Share and enjoy **Forbidden** as part of **Literacy** and **English**, and use it to explore points of view (3.1, 5.1 and 5.3; see also 4.2) alternate endings (3.3) or the key characters and their relationships (3.1, 5.1, 5.3). Build on your discussions with activities focusing on narrative fiction (5.3), writing to inform (5.1), writing to persuade (5.1) and descriptive writing (5.2).

Forbidden makes a great starting point for discussions in **PSHE** and **Circle Time**. Talk about friendship (3.1), making and breaking rules (3.2) and being a change-maker (3.3).

Links to other areas of the curriculum include **Art and Design** (4.1, 4.2 and 4.3).

2

About this book

Set in an imaginary time and place in India, this absorbing story about friendship, cultural taboos and prejudice evokes a vanished world that impacts on events and attitudes today. The story is narrated by Laksh-Lakshmi, who works as a sweeper at the Big House where she meets Ratna, the Sahib's daughter. The two girls form a passionate friendship, but village laws forbid them to associate, and when Ratna's mother discovers the friendship between her daughter and her servants, she does everything she can to destroy their relationship.

A beautiful forest clearing provides a place 'beyond rules' where the girls can dream of happy endings, but although Laksh-Lakshmi tries to change hearts and minds, this is real life, not a fairy tale.

Richly coloured illustrations bring Laksh-Lakshmi's world to life in a vibrant, contemporary style, and words and pictures work together to evoke strong emotions.

About the author and illustrator



This story was informed by **Anjali Tiwari's** experience of rural village life, and was inspired by the work of Munshi Premchand, whose books address social issues including poverty, oppression and the caste system. Written when Anjali was 16 and still studying at High School in India, ***Forbidden*** was selected as one of the winners in Pop Up's tenth birthday writing competition.



Born in Goa and now living in the UK, **Danica da Silva Pereira** worked as a graphic designer before completing an MA in Children's Book Illustration, and continues to be inspired by her ethnic culture for her illustrative work.

3

Discussion Activities

3.1 Talking about *friendship*

Show children this picture and ask them to describe it. What does it tell us about these girls and their relationship? Does anything hint at or highlight the differences between them?

“For you Ratna, anything. For you, everything...” page 26

How does the friendship between Laksh-Lakshmi and Ratna develop? How does Laksh-Lakshmi feel about Ratna? What are we told about Ratna’s feelings and reactions? What impact does this friendship have on both girls?

“My home is with a girl with amber eyes and a laughing mouth...” page 26

Ask children to reflect on why Laksh-Lakshmi uses the word home in this way, and why a friendship could feel like coming home.

Ask your class to discuss whether this book is primarily about friendship, or something else.

Extend by
making a case for your
answer with evidence taken
from the book.

Taking a broader look

- What does friendship mean to you?
- Why is friendship important in your life?
- What would you do - and not do - for your friend?



Ratna's bedroom, p. 11

3.2 Talking about rules

“Time thickens, settling into the differences between us. Our world has commanded that they must not be bridged...” page 21

Share this quote, then ask children what Laksh-Lakshmi and Ratna have in common, and how they differ. Why do the other characters focus only on their differences?

Talk about what is forbidden in this book (*Laksh-Lakshmi mustn't make a “nuisance” of herself or touch the idol; Ratna's mother can't touch Laksh-Lakshmi; Laksh-Lakshmi and Ratna can't be friends...*) then read the following quote and discuss its meaning.

“We aren't supposed to be friends, Lakshmi. The elders forbid it. They say it's unnatural, against the laws of the village.” page 14

Who enforces these laws in this story (*Dada, Ratna's mother, the head servant...*) and how and why do they do this? *For example, Ratna's mother hits Laksh-Lakshmi to get the message across, but does so with a stick to avoid touching her directly. Laksh-Lakshmi's father tries to prevent Laksh-Lakshmi's actions because he's accepted the status quo and doesn't want her to be unhappy.*

Ask children to consider who/what is harmed by these rules, and who/what benefits from them. Encourage them to discuss ideas, and ask them whether it's possible to benefit and lose out.

Which differences do your children think are more important in this story: the differences between Laksh-Lakshmi and Ratna's status in the village, or their attitudes to 'being a nuisance'?

Taking a broader look

- What rules govern your behaviour? Who makes them, and how are they enforced?
- In what circumstances would you question or break a rule?
- Who decides whether rules are necessary and just? What should you do if you believe they're not?

3.3 Talking about *being a nuisance* and creating change

"You cannot go and be a nuisance in his house..." page 4

Share this quote and ask why Dada tries to prevent Laksh-Lakshmi acting as she does. What do your children think he means by 'being a nuisance'?

"It's not you, it's just the way things are." page 14

Share this quote and ask why Ratna is less willing than Laksh-Lakshmi to challenge the status quo.

Discuss whether Laksh-Lakshmi's actions change anything. Do they have a broader impact? Why / why not?

From Anjali's perspective, the odds in this story are stacked against Laksh-Lakshmi. Without "allies, power or a plan, creating any kind of lasting change was always going to be tough". Anjali could have written a happy ending for this story but chose not to, because "real life isn't a fairytale."

As a class, discuss the book's ending and your reaction to it. Why did Anjali choose this ending, do you think? How does it reflect her story's themes and setting?

Ask children to imagine a sequel in which Laksh-Lakshmi builds on this sad experience to create a happier future for herself or others. What would she have to do, and how, and why?

Taking a broader look

- When should we ask questions or challenge the status quo? How much of a nuisance should we be?
- If we want to change things for the better, how should we go about it? What do we need?
- How does the past affect how you live now?
- Can we remember everything? Should we?

Extend

"Memory is all around us, as well as within..." page 1

This book is set in the past, but its themes still resonate today. Read this quote and discuss what it tells us about this book. Why do your children think Anjali included it? What role does memory play in preventing or enabling change?

4

Illustration Activities

4.1 Working in a limited palette

Look at the illustrations in this book and talk about Danica's colour choices. How does her limited palette affect these images? What moods and atmospheres do her colour choices create?

A colour wheel may help you talk about complementary colours, hues and tints/tones/shades.

Ask children to explore a limited paint palette by using 2 -3 contrasting hues plus black and white to mix tints, tones and shades. What effects can children create, and which colours do they think look good together? Ask them to paint abstract designs or patterns using their limited palette, then showback and discuss.

Talk about the idea of rules in an artistic context. Do artists follow rules? And if they do, who sets them? Could following a rule help an artist be more creative? Why?

Revisit Danica's illustrations and discuss them again in the context of this activity.

Extend

Use a limited palette to paint abstract designs or patterns evoking different moods: for example, a dark, sombre pattern and one that feels more optimistic.

4.2 Illustrating the forest

“Stepping into the forest at night robs you of keen sight and heightens the other senses.” page 20

Share this quote, then take children outside and ask them to observe their surroundings without using their eyes. What can they hear and smell? What can they touch, and how do these things feel? Ask children to work in pairs, with one child observing and the other making notes, then swap roles. Feedback and discuss.

“The meadow, where our differences did not exist, and where we dared to hope...”
page 26

Write this quote on your whiteboard, then read and discuss the description on page 21. What does Anjali tell us about the clearing? How does she evoke our senses in describing it?

Examine the picture of Laksh-Lakshmi and Ratna approaching the clearing and talk about how it makes you feel.

Where is the light coming from? What effect does it have, and what mood does it evoke? Discuss this picture’s colour palette and composition. How does it draw our eye to what is important?

Imagine you’re standing near the girls. What can you see, hear, smell and touch?

Is this a good illustration of the clearing? What does Danica’s picture add to our experience of reading about it? Ask children to justify their opinions.

Ask children to build on this activity by drawing an inviting outdoor space that evokes our senses, and where friendship and hope are the things that matter most.

Link to writing activity 5.2



The Forest clearing, p. 22-23

4.3 Whose perspective?

For this observational drawing activity, you will need: a table and 2 chairs to recreate an illustration; chairs to seat everyone in your class, drawing boards, paper, pencils

Show children this picture and ask them to describe what they can see. What does this scene tell us about the characters?

In a large space, arrange a desk and two chairs as they appear in this picture. Sit two children at the table as Ratna and the teacher, then ask where Laksh-Lakshmi should stand to replicate the view she had in the picture. Add Laksh-Lakshmi to your scene.

Ask children to move around this scene and view it from different angles. Discuss what you can see as your viewpoint changes. Sit children in a circle around this scene and ask them to draw what they can see. Then swap positions (including models) and repeat the exercise.

Explain that artists choose their viewpoint, which affects how we read and understand an image.

Return to the illustration and talk about Danica's viewpoint. How does being 'above the action' affect us, as viewers? *For example, we can see what's going on; we're observing the scene without being noticed; maybe we don't feel so involved.*



Ratna and her governess, p. 6

5

Writing Activities

5.1 Exploring viewpoints through drama

Talk about the characters in this book. What motivates them, and what are their attitudes to the rules? What do they know about events? What's their 'take' on things? Ask children to create character profiles from what the text states and what they can deduce.

Organise a roleplay exercise by setting up a village meeting at which the elders will ask the characters to describe and account for what they did, and question them about their attitudes and actions.

Assign the roles of Laksh-Lakshmi, Ratna, Ratna's mother, Laksh-Lakshmi's father, the head servant, and Ratna's father, and ask everyone else to play the village elders.

Children should follow the facts as described, inventing additional reasons and justifications in a way that fits the story. Give them time to prepare to ask questions or argue their case, and invite feedback afterwards. Did this activity reveal anything new about these characters?

Follow up by asking children to write a news report about the meeting, describing

- the facts about what happened
- the views of those involved (without revealing their own opinion)

Then ask them to write an article for the same paper, arguing the case for

- changing the rules and allowing the girls to be friends, or
- defending the status quo

5.2 Writing about the forest as a place of freedom and refuge

Re-read the first three paragraphs of this story. Discuss what this episode tells us about Laksh-Lakshmi and the forest.

For example: Laksh-Lakshmi is courageous and can think for herself; the forest exists beyond the village rules and stories.

The forest is also described and pictured on page 21 to page 25. Ask children what we learn about it from the text, and what information is added by the artwork. Collect words and phrases to describe it.

Why is the forest so important to Laksh-Lakshmi? What does it represent?

Talk about freedom and refuge. If you were creating a perfect place, what would it be like? Share ideas about what would (and wouldn't) happen there, and how people would behave.

Then ask children to use the words you collected earlier to help them write descriptively about this ideal place.

Link to illustration activity 4.2



The Forest clearing, p. 6

5.3 Exploring Ratna's point of view

Ask children to describe this image, then talk about its colour palette, viewpoint, composition and mood.

As a class, pool what you know about Ratna. Talk about her family, her house, her education, and what we learn about her attitudes and personality. We are shown these things through Laksh-Lakshmi's eyes, and she is describing someone she loves. What impact does this have on our impression of Ratna?

"We aren't supposed to be friends, Lakshmi....it's not you, it's just the way things are."
page 14

Read this quote and discuss why Ratna isn't prepared to fight as hard as Laksh-Lakshmi for their friendship. As observers who don't feel the same emotions as Laksh-Lakshmi, how would your class describe Ratna?

Broaden your discussion to consider how Ratna views things, and how she feels about Laksh-Lakshmi and their friendship.

Ask children to write or retell this story from Ratna's point of view.



Ratna on the balcony, p. 2

6 Glossary

Refuge: a place that protects from danger or difficulty.

Freedom: the state of being free to act or move as one wishes.

Status Quo: the existing state; conditions as they are at a given time.

Caste System: a social structure in which one's class in society is determined by heredity.

Taboo: a ban on a subject, action, or behavior.

Prejudice: hatred or unfair treatment toward a person or group without cause or reason. Prejudice is often directed toward people of a certain race or religion.

10 stories to make a difference

Forbidden is part of a collection of ten inspiring stories for young readers that celebrate difference and individuality.

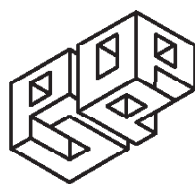
All the books in our **10 Stories to Make a Difference** collection are beautifully illustrated and perfect for children, aged 5 and up.



Each of the books is an exciting collaboration between well-known and emerging writers and illustrators, giving a platform to bold new voices.

We believe that all children should be able to find themselves, and discover others, through the stories they read. We therefore hope that these amazing stories will entertain and inspire the young readers in your lives.

Enjoy and feel free to get in touch with us at info@pop-up.org.uk.
We always love to hear from our readers!



Pop Up Projects

pop-up.org.uk/shop