

SCHEME OF WORK FOR THE SCARLET FILES: CAT BURGLAR FOR AGES 8-12 YRS

Created by Tamsin Cooke, author of the book, and former primary school teacher

This scheme of work is full of fun reading and writing activities, aiming to inspire children and ignite their imaginations. The activities are differentiated through outcome. I am very happy to visit your school and cover any of these activities with your students. If interested, please see my website tamsincooke.co.uk for more details.

1) Job Advertisement and Job Application for a Cat Burglar

Aims:

- To deduce information from a text
- To write persuasively

2) Challenging stereotypes

Aims:

- To compare characters
- To write dialogue to convey character

3) Writing as if you are an animal

Aims:

- To deduce information from a text
- To incorporate the senses into your writing

4) News reports

Aims:

- To summarise the main points of a story
- To write and speak for a different audience

5) Villains

Aims:

- To deduce information from the text
- To create a villain

6) Writing an action scene.

Aims:

- To deduce information from a text
- To write a dramatic scene full of pace

7) Comprehensions

Aim:

- To deduce information from a text

1) Job Advertisement and Job Application for a Cat Burglar

Please read chapter one (pages 1-5). Scar wants to be the best cat burglar in the world.

a) What qualities are needed for a cat burglar?

b) Imagine a cat burglar is needed for a heist – either to work on his/her own or to be a part of a team. Create an advert that would entice the right sort of person.

This is a rough draft for a getaway driver, which you can use for inspiration.

DO YOU LIKE TAKING RISKS? ARE YOU GOOD AT TIME KEEPING? DO YOU HAVE A DRIVING
LICENSE? THEN THIS COULD BE THE PERFECT JOB FOR YOU.

WE NEED A GETAWAY DRIVER

NEED SOMEONE WHO CAN DRIVE FAST, FOLLOW A MAP, AND IS GREAT AT
BEING PART OF A TEAM.

PAY: A FIVE WAY SPLIT OF THE LOOT

PLEASE CONTACT: MR HEIST,
ROBBERS LANE
SOMERSET

POLICEMEN NEED NOT APPLY

c) Write a formal letter where Scar applies for the job, explaining why she thinks she is perfect for the role. Using your imagination, you could include her past experience and her skill set. Remember to start with Dear... and finish with Yours sincerely, Scarlet McCall.

2) Challenging stereotypes

a) Read pages 123 – 126. What have you learnt about Ethan and Scar's characters? How are they different?

b) How do these characters challenge stereotypes?

c) Imagine Scar and Ethan are going on another heist. From your knowledge of their personalities, as well as your imagination, what do you think they would pack? Draw their bags with their packed items inside. Please label.

d) In pairs, create a conversation between the two of them as they look into each other's bag, showing their disbelief and disgust. You can add in their actions, thoughts and feelings.

e) Create a character that challenges stereotypes such as a bloodthirsty bunny or a gentle tiger or a ninja granny.

f) Ethan is hair obsessed and won't go anywhere without his hair gel. Create an advert for Ethan's hair gel perfect for him to take on on his next heist.

3) Writing as if you are an animal

In chapter ten, Scar learns all about Nahuallis from Mr Tomlinson, a curator at the British museum. Please read the following.

'It's an Aztec word meaning 'shadow soul.' It's your animal twin, your spirit double. Born at the same time as you, you share each other's souls... Usually the Nahualli has traits that reflect those of the person they belong to. If you are clever and curious, your Nahualli might be the monkey. If you have courage and search for perspective it might be the eagle.'

a) If you had a Nahualli what would it be? What qualities do you share with the animal? Draw the animal and surround it with its characteristics.

b) Read pages 75 -77. What does Scar feel when she transforms?

c) Imagine you are transforming into your Nahualli. What do you feel? Does it hurt? Do you feel hot or cold? What happens to your body? Do you sprout fur or feathers?

d) Once you've transformed, how do you move? Do you fly, squirm etc?

e) When Scar transforms, her senses are enhanced. Imagine you are an animal. Please copy the table below and show what you see, hear, smell, touch and taste at the various locations.

	See	Hear	Smell	Touch	Taste
Cinema					
Beach					
School					
Supermarket					

f) Imagine you are an animal in a strange setting. How would you feel? Are you scared? How would you react to people? How would they react to you? Write a short passage. Don't forget your senses will be a lot stronger now. If you like, you can start off as a human and then transform.

g) Create a personality profile for an animal

On my website: tamsincooke.co.uk I have created a quiz: What is your Nahualli? Find out what your Nahualli is. Do you agree?

Imagine you were adding another animal to the quiz. Create a personality profile for the new creature.

4) News reports

a) Please read pages 75 -77. Lots of people saw a jaguar on the train not realising it was Scar. In pairs, choose one of you to be the journalist, and the other to be a guard, a passenger, a policeman or a zookeeper. Think of a set of questions the journalist would ask and work out the appropriate answers from one of the above characters.

b) Create a short drama showing your interview to the rest of the class. You can film or record your interview as if it were a news segments on the TV or radio.

c) Read some newspaper articles taking note of the language they use. Write a newspaper report covering the above event.

5) Villains

a) Please read pages 163 -165. We meet Lady Melksham in this chapter. Create a table using the template below showing what you have learnt about her so far.

What have you learnt?	Quote from text
She's willing to hurt someone to get what she wants.	'To my horror she's holding a Taser. She slams it into Dad's shoulder.'
	Next quote

b) Create a profile for a new villain. Think about what he/she wants more than anything. What are their likes/ dislikes? Do they have a hobby? Do they have minions? What do they look like? What is their voice like? Include as many details as possible. Remember, no one is completely bad. Could he/she want world domination but care about stray cats? Include something surprising about your character.

c) Meeting your villain for the first time.

Write the beginning to a story using this sentence starter:

The hairs on the back of my neck shoot up. Turning around...

6) Writing an action scene.

Please read the following section from chapter 27

I don't aim for Lady Melksham's body. I go for the stun gun instead. I tear it out of her hand, and bite down as hard as I can, but my teeth only scrape the surface. The Taser slips out of my grasp and falls to the floor.

'One of you, get her!' yells Lady Melksham.

Out of the corner of my eye, I see Richard frozen in shock. But Matt hurtles across the room to the stun gun lying on the carpet. I leap towards him. Our bodies slam. My claws rip through his T-shirt, piercing his shoulders. Matt crashes to the ground, his head smacking the wall, his eyes rolling backwards. I stand over him, inhaling the blood, licking my lips. I open my mouth. People are shrieking but I don't care. I lower my head.

Then I freeze. He didn't tackle me back on Dartmoor. He didn't stun Dad. Before I can change my mind, I jump off and race out of the room.

a) What techniques have I used to make this scene so dramatic? Please use Point, Evidence and Explain. Hint: have a look at the verbs, the sentence length, metaphors, tense etc...

b) Create your own action scene, using some of the language techniques from above.

Build up the suspense and end on a cliffhanger so your teacher cannot wait to find out what happens next.

7) Comprehensions

Comprehension number 1: Please read chapter 3 (pages 16-22)

- 1) Where do you think the bracelet has gone?
- 2) What reasons does Dad give for the bracelet disappearing?
- 3) Where does Scar's father hide the safe?
- 4) If you had a safe, where would you hide it and why?
- 5) How do you know that Scar feels guilty about the bracelet disappearing?
- 6) Why doesn't Scar tell her dad she thought someone watched her climb a tree?
- 7) Find three details about their next heist.
- 8) What have you learnt about Scar's relationship with her father in this chapter?
Please use Point, Evidence and Explain.

Comprehension number 2: Please read chapter 24 (pages 157-162)

- 1) What animals does Scar discover in the room?
- 2) The Delivery Guy has a soft spot for one of the animals. What is it and what is her name?
Why is this so surprising?
- 3) Why is the Delivery guy surprised to see Scar out of the cage?
- 4) Why does Scar feel guilty for leaving the animals?
- 5) What senses does Scar use to locate her dad?
- 6) Why does Scar 'want to kill whoever invented door handles'?
- 7) What three things reappear when Scar looks at her reflection in the window?
- 8) How does Scar feel when she first sees her dad tied up?
Please use Point, Evidence and Explain.
- 9) Scar and her father seem to have switched roles. Scar becomes the parent. How does the author show this?
- 10) How does the author show Scar is beginning to panic when she can't undo her father's chains?