

# THE WILBUR & NISO SMITH FOUNDATION RESOURCE PACK

## WHAT IS ADVENTURE WRITING?

### CREATIVE WRITING LESSONS FOR KS3

## THE AIM

Have you ever asked your class: what are the essential ingredients of a great adventure story? Does it involve an impossible quest? Plenty of action? Romance? Insurmountable odds? A pacey plot? Or even life-threatening danger? If not, the time is now...

This Resource Pack is designed to get children aged 11–14 thinking about the definition of ‘adventure’, exploring its themes and features before making their own unique mark within the genre.

The activities included here have been created by The Wilbur & Niso Smith Foundation, a charitable organisation set up in 2015 by Niso Smith, wife of worldwide bestselling author Wilbur Smith. The Foundation is dedicated to empowering young writers, as well as to the advancement of the adventure-writing genre and the promotion of literacy. This Resource Pack champions these three objectives, supporting teachers in the classroom to inspire a love of adventure writing amongst their pupils.

The lessons included in this pack are based on two classic adventure stories: *The Jungle Book* by Rudyard Kipling and *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson – as well as a modern novel, *The World of Supersaurs: The Stegosorcerer* by Jay Jay Burrige. These books invite everyone in your class to explore, in every sense of the word, and to test the limits of adventure writing. The six lessons included have been designed as sequential activities and can be taught as whole units or as individual activities to be dipped in and out of. Each activity will guide pupils through the different elements of the adventure genre, giving them the skills and confidence they need to draft, structure and write a creative piece of their own. We hope you enjoy the journey...



# ABOUT THE BOOKS

The lessons included in this pack are based on the following three adventure stories:

- The Jungle Book by Rudyard Kipling
- Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson
- The World of Supersaurs: The Stegosorcerer by Jay Jay Burridge

## About The World of Supersaurs: The Stegosorcerer

*Imagine a world where dinosaurs never died out... the world of Supersaurs.*

*Carter Kingsley was raised by raptors on a remote island in Indonesia.*

*Now he's adapting to life with his long-lost family. Carter's sister Bea is always on hand to help, even when Buster, his new pet Black Dwarf Tyrant, has trouble fitting in. Carter understands saurs best, so when they reach his grandmother's Kenyan safari reserve he's thrilled, particularly by the majestic stegs. But poachers and diamond miners are threatening the nomadic Steggi tribe's way of life, and before long the children are caught up in a dangerous struggle for survival...*

The Stegosorcerer is an amazing safari adventure and the second book in the innovative adventure series by Jay Jay Burridge; it follows Supersaurs 1: The Raptors of Paradise.

## About The Jungle Book:

*A collection of enchanting fables set in the heart of the Indian jungle; The Jungle Book is a coming of age fantasy set in a bright, colourful world full of adventure and danger. It introduces us to some of the most charming and unforgettable characters in all literature: the man-cub Mowgli, the black panther Bagheera, the wise brown bear Baloo, the ruthless tiger Shere Khan, and the hypnotic python Kaa.*

This is one of the world's favourite stories, and a classic tale of everlasting friendship between man and beast.

## About Treasure Island:

Young Jim Hawkins finds himself with the key to a fortune; he has discovered a map that will lead him to the fabled Treasure Island. But a host of villains, wild beasts and deadly savages stand between him and the stash of gold. Not to mention the most infamous pirate ever to sail the high seas...

Widely heralded as the best pirate story ever written, Stevenson's tale of treachery and heroism continues to thrill generations of new readers.



# WHAT IS ADVENTURE WRITING?

## OBJECTIVES

This Resource Pack provides material for six, one-hour lessons that can take place during KS3 English classes or as extra-curricular activities. The pack covers objectives that include but are not limited to:

### ENGLISH

#### Reading: comprehension

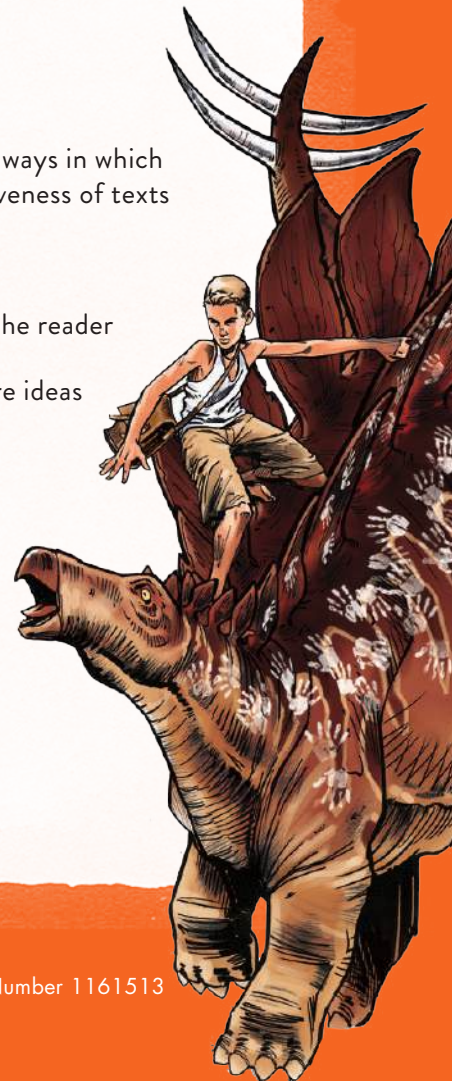
- Develop and adapt active reading strategies by:
  - i. using a repertoire of reading techniques to analyse and explore different layers of meaning within a text
  - ii. building an interpretation of a whole text, recognising links between ideas, themes or characters and supporting points with precise evidence and explanation
- Analyse writers' use of organisation, structure, layout and presentation
- Analyse how writers' use of linguistic and literary features shapes and influences meaning by:
  - i. analysing in depth and detail writers' use of literary, rhetorical and grammatical features and their effects

#### Writing: composition

- Generate ideas, planning and drafting:
  - i. planning different types of writing and develop ideas by drawing on the ways in which forms and conventions can contribute to the overall impact and effectiveness of texts
- Structure, organise and present texts in a variety of forms by:
  - i. using a range of text formats and layouts to create impact and engage the reader
  - ii. shaping and crafting language within individual paragraphs, and structure ideas between them, to achieve particular literary, transactional or rhetorical effects with purpose and audience in mind

#### Drama and Speaking and Listening

- Use a wide variety of dramatic approaches to analyse complex and challenging ideas, issues, themes and texts



# LESSON ONE

## THE ADVENTURE GENRE

### OBJECTIVE:

- To understand and be able to list the features of the adventure genre
- To make predictions about a story based on its opening chapter

### LEAD-IN QUESTIONS:

- What do you know about *Treasure Island* and *The Jungle Book*? What genre of story do you think they fall into?
- What does the title '*The World of Supersaurs: The Stegosorcerer*' make you think about? What sort of story do you think this might be?

## TASK 1:

The opening chapters of the three books have the following titles:

- **Arrival by Boat – the ship's pet – Port of Mombasa, Kenya, 1932**
- **Mowgli's Brothers**
- **The Old Sea-dog at the "Admiral Benbow"**

In pairs, discuss what you think the books have in common and how they are different. Pick out key words and phrases that lead you to your opinions. Can you match the correct opening chapter to the correct book?

## TASK 2:

In pairs again, read out the opening paragraphs of the three books below: *Treasure Island*, *The Jungle Book* and *The Stegosorcerer*. Complete the tasks below.

1. Which of these paragraphs is your favourite? Why?
2. Which opening paragraph draws the reader in the most? How?
3. Which creates a feeling of adventure? Why?
4. Can you pick out effective words and phrases that create atmosphere in each of the opening paragraphs?
5. Do any of the paragraphs make you feel that something important might happen next? How?

### Extract 1: Taken from *The Jungle Book*: 'Mowgli's Brothers'

Now Rann the Kite brings home the night  
That Mang the Bat sets free—  
The herds are shut in byre and hut  
For loosed till dawn are we.  
This is the hour of pride and power,  
Talon and tush and claw.  
Oh, hear the call!—Good hunting all  
That keep the Jungle Law!  
Night-Song in the Jungle

It was seven o'clock of a very warm evening in the Seeonee hills when Father Wolf woke up from his day's rest, scratched himself, yawned, and spread out his paws one after the other to get rid of the sleepy feeling in their tips. Mother Wolf lay with her big gray nose dropped across her four tumbling, squealing cubs, and the moon shone into the mouth of the cave where they all lived. "Augrh!" said Father Wolf. "It is time to hunt again." He was going to spring down hill when a little shadow with a bushy tail crossed the threshold and whined: "Good luck go with you, O Chief of the Wolves. And good luck and strong white teeth go with noble children that they may never forget the hungry in this world."

### Extract 2: Taken from *Treasure Island*: Chapter 1

Quire Trelawney, Dr. Livesey, and the rest of these gentlemen having asked me to write down the whole particulars about Treasure Island, from the beginning to the end, keeping nothing back but the bearings of the island, and that only because there is still treasure not yet lifted, I take up my pen in the year of grace 17\_\_ and go back to the time when my father kept the Admiral Benbow inn and the brown old seaman with the sabre cut first took up his lodging under our roof.

I remember him as if it were yesterday, as he came plodding to the inn door, his sea-chest following behind him in a hand-barrow—a tall, strong, heavy, nut-brown man, his tarry pigtail falling over the shoulder of his soiled blue coat, his hands ragged and scarred, with black, broken nails, and the sabre cut across one cheek, a dirty, livid white. I remember him looking round the cover and whistling to himself as he did so, and then breaking out in that old sea-song that he sang so often afterwards:

"Fifteen men on the dead man's chest—  
Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!"

### Extract 3: Taken from *The Stegosorcerer*: Chapter 1

Carter Kingsley woke with a start in a tangle of black feathers. The Orca was anchored where the harbourmaster had instructed, safely offshore. There was a thud to the ship's hull. He sat up, blinked the sleep from his eyes, and rubbed his nose. The tyrant slept on beside him, its sides moving rhythmically as it breathed. Dawn was breaking in streaks of deep orange over the small steamer boat, which listed at an angle.

## TASK 3:

Can you match each of the three opening paragraphs to the right book?

Give reasons for your choices.

## TASK 4:

Each of the three books that we will be using in this Resource Pack fit into the 'adventure' genre. Can you say why? Working in pairs, create a list of six features of the adventure genre. Give reasons for your choices. Use the examples below to get you started!

- A journey to a faraway place
- An interesting setting
- -----
- -----
- -----
- -----

## TASK 5:

Finally, choose one of the three books. Using the title, the opening chapter, and your knowledge of the adventure genre, make four predictions on the Storyboard below about what you think could happen in the story.

PREDICTION 1:

PREDICTION 2:

PREDICTION 3:

PREDICTION 4:

# LESSON TWO

## AN EPIC JOURNEY

### OBJECTIVE:

- To write a description of an epic journey using illustrations as prompts

### RECAP QUESTION:

- What is genre? What genre do the books *Treasure Island*, *The Jungle Book* and *The Stegosorcerer* fall into?

### LEAD-IN QUESTIONS:

- Have you ever been on an epic journey? Where did you go? What was it like?

## TASK 1:

Read the extracts from the three books below and discuss your first impressions of each with your partner. For each extract, can you underline evidence of the following things:

1. The characters are far away from home
2. The characters are anxious or excited
3. The journey is difficult or dangerous
4. The characters have to overcome obstacles

### The Stegosorcerer: Extract taken from Chapter 5:

*The view from the train was amazing. Carter was glued to his window seat as he watched the African landscape open up before him. He had never been this far inland before. Since leaving Aru they had only docked in small ports near to lush coastline. Prior to this, his only home had been a dense rainforest where the sky was only visible directly above you in small pockets between the canopy of trees. Here, the sky was wide open, the top half hazy-blue and the lower a dusty beige. The trees were thin and scattered, leaving room for coarse grasses and bushes. Hidden in these lands was a whole host of new and exciting creatures to discover.*

### Treasure Island: Extract taken from Chapter 7:

*And I was going to sea myself, to sea in a schooner, with a piping boatswain and pig-tailed singing seamen, to sea, bound for an unknown island, and to seek for buried treasure!*

*While I was still in this delightful dream, we came suddenly in front of a large inn and met Squire Trelawney, all dressed out like a sea-officer, in stout blue cloth, coming out of the door with a smile on his face and a capital imitation of a sailor's walk.*

*"Here you are," he cried, "and the doctor came last night from London. Bravo! The ship's company complete!"*

*"Oh, sir," cried I, "when do we sail?"*

*"Sail!" says he. "We sail tomorrow!"*

### The Jungle Book: Extract taken from 'Mowgli's Brothers':

*Mowgli was far and far through the forest, running hard, and his heart was hot in him. He came to the cave as the evening mist rose, and drew breath, and looked down the valley. The cubs were out, but Mother Wolf, at the back of the cave, knew by his breathing that something was troubling her frog.*

*"What is it, Son?" she said.*

*"Some bat's chatter of Shere Khan," he called back. "I hunt among the plowed fields tonight," and he plunged downward through the bushes, to the stream at the bottom of the valley. There he checked, for he heard the yell of the Pack hunting, heard the bellow of a hunted Sambhur, and the snort as the buck turned at bay. Then there were wicked, bitter howls from the young wolves:*

*"Akela! Akela! Let the Lone Wolf show his strength. Room for the leader of the Pack! Spring, Akela!"*

*The Lone Wolf must have sprung and missed his hold, for Mowgli heard the snap of his teeth and then a yelp as the Sambhur knocked him over with his forefoot.*

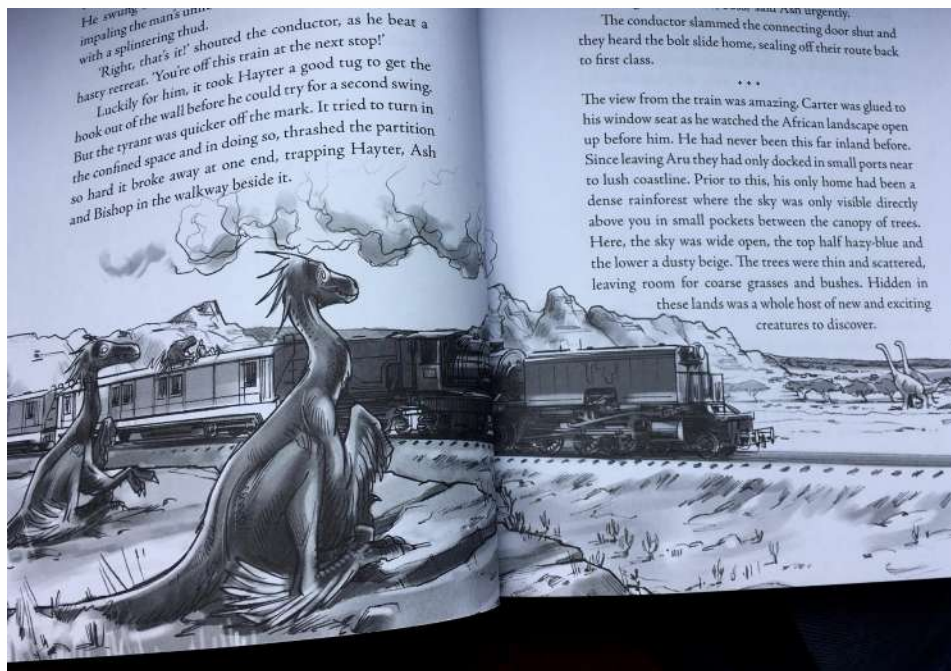
*He did not wait for anything more, but dashed on; and the yells grew fainter behind him as he ran into the croplands where the villagers lived.*

## TASK 2:

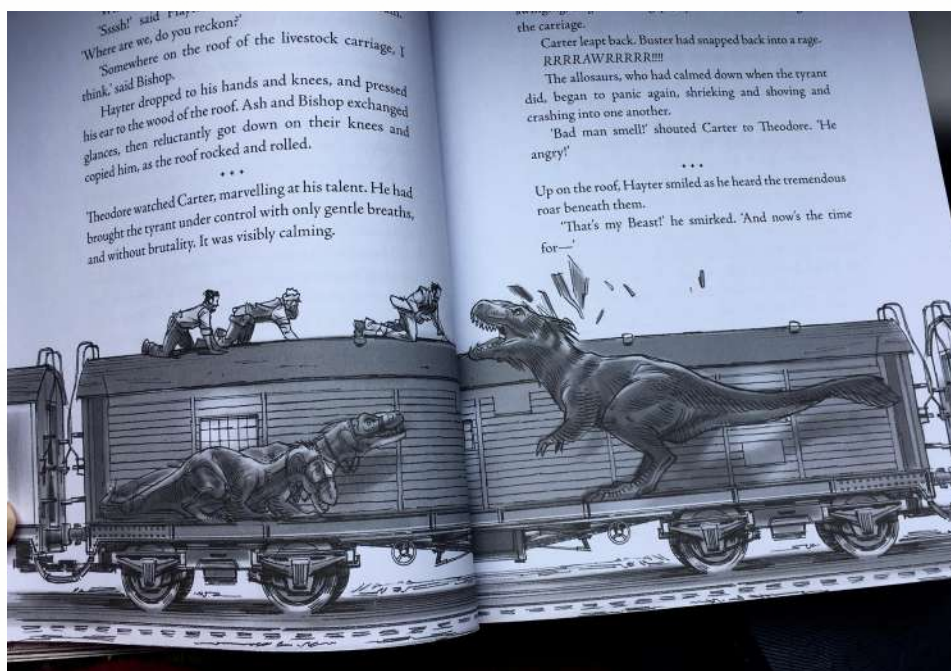
Look at the two illustrations from *The Stegosorcerer*, from pages 40–41 and pages 46–47.

If you were on this train with Carter on an epic journey through Africa, what feelings would you have from one scene to the next? How would the journey change or become more dangerous?

### Illustration 1:



### Illustration 2:





# LESSON THREE

## EXOTIC SETTINGS

### OBJECTIVE:

- To use colourful imagery in order to create interesting settings

### LEAD-IN QUESTIONS:

- What sort of settings do adventure stories have?
- Why is it important to have a strong setting?

## TASK 1:

In pairs, you will be given a colour from the list below. Together, you need to consider what that colour makes you think about.

GREEN

YELLOW

RED

GREY

WHITE

PINK

## TASK 2:

Now, we're going to **personify** your colour. This means that we're going to imagine that your colour is a person. Answer the following questions:

1. What emotions would your colour have?
2. What body language would you colour have?
3. How would your colour speak?

## TASK 3:

Drama time! In groups, it's time to do some hot seating. Each person should take it in turns to sit in the hot seat and speak, think and act in character as the colour they have just created. The other members of the group need to ask this person questions. Share some of your performances with the whole class.

## TASK 4:

Read the extracts from the three books below and discuss how effective you think the settings are in each.

Can you identify examples of where the writers have used colourful imagery effectively to create their settings? Perhaps they use other things (e.g. natural features, creatures, objects) to evoke colour? Underline any key words or phrases in the extracts.

### The Stegosorcerer: Extract taken from Chapter 15:

*The watering hole was alive with light, every drop of moisture sparkling, like millions of diamonds. Bathing in the centre of the pool was Carter, joyfully splashing water up into the air in arcs that flared out iridescent flashes of rainbow. An Appato of huge proportions swopped its head low and lifted a plume of water over Carter in a shower of sparkles that seemed to fall slowly, and hit the surface like glass shattering. Four or five elephants, dwarfed in comparison, were spurting water from their trunks in the shimmering shallows. Surrounding them, rheboks danced as a herd of Thinhorn Tritops gently wallowed deeper in, lifting their heads, their brow horns almost pointed to the sky. A host of Sidespines thwacked their spiny tails into the water, which scared the few, brave red-leg pretors into the air, to resettle further away, safely next to a variety of storks. 'It's magical!' breathed Bea.*

### Treasure Island: Extract taken from Chapter 17:

*Then I came to a long thicket of these oaklike trees – live, or evergreen, oaks, I heard afterwards they should be called – which grew low along the sand like brambles, the boughs curiously twisted, the foliage compact, like thatch. The thicket stretched down from the top of one of the sandy knolls, spreading and growing taller as it went, until it reached the margin of the broad, reedy fen, through which the nearest of the little rivers soaked its way into the anchorage. The marsh was steaming in the strong sun, and the outline of the Spy-glass trembled through the haze.*

### The Jungle Book: Extract taken from Chapter 4:

*A black shadow dropped down into the circle. It was Bagheera the Black Panther, inky black all over, but with the panther markings showing up in certain lights like the pattern of watered silk. Everybody knew Bagheera, and nobody cared to cross his path; for he was as cunning as Tabaqui, as bold as the wild buffalo, and as reckless as the wounded elephant. But he had a voice as soft as wild honey dripping from a tree, and a skin softer than down.*

## TASK 5:

Now it's your turn to create your own exotic setting, either from your own experience or your imagination. Your challenge is to incorporate lots of colour into your writing using some of the techniques that we have looked at in this lesson; you can do this by evoking or personifying different natural features, creatures, or objects. When you're finished, read it out to the class so that we can guess which colours you have chosen!

Share your settings with us on Twitter at [@Wilbur\\_Niso\\_Fdn](https://twitter.com/Wilbur_Niso_Fdn).

# LESSON FOUR

## COURAGEOUS CHARACTERS

### OBJECTIVE:

- To write a diary entry in role as a fictional character

### LEAD-IN TASK:

- Imagine you are with your friends and family when a fire breaks out.  
How would you feel?
- Put the emotion cards below in order from 1–5 (1 being the emotion you'd feel the most and 5 being the emotion you'd feel the least).

## TASK 2:

There is a blank emotion card for you to add your own ideas. Is there any emotion not listed that you think you might feel?

OVERWHELMED

TERRIFIED

PANICKED

DETERMINED

DESPERATE

?

## TASK 3:

Read the following extract from the **The Stegosorcerer: Taken from Chapter 32:**

*Outside, Bea was with Mo, each of them waving a smouldering branch to ward off the locusts, when suddenly she saw flames leaping out from the roof of the lodge.*

*‘Mo!’ she screamed. ‘The lodge! It’s on fire!’*

*Immediately she and Mo began checking who was there and who wasn’t. She saw Theodore, Carter, Lambert, the servants...*

*‘Where’s Bunty?’ she shouted.  
‘She was inside!’ Mo yelled back.*

*He threw his branch down and ran towards the lodge, Bea following and shouting for help. Carter and Theodore both heard Bea’s panicky shout and rushed to the house.*

*‘The door’s jammed!’ shouted Mo.  
‘We think Bunty’s inside!’ wailed Bea.*

*Theodore hurled himself at the locked front door and took out both the door and frame in one hit. The flames inside blew out, but as fresh oxygen was sucked in through the gaping hole, the fire burst into renewed life.*

*The fire now raged out of control – glass and windows were shattering under the intense heat as parts of the building began to collapse from within. Theodore ran through the flames and disappeared into the house. Bea went to run after him, but Carter stopped her, pulling her away just as the door lintel gave way and the porch crashed to the ground.*

What can you tell about Bea’s character from this extract? Discuss it with the person next to you and share your ideas with the class. How can you tell that she is **courageous** and **resilient**?

## TASK 4:

Using your emotion cards again, rank how Bea feels by putting them in order from 1–5 (1 being the emotion she’d feel the most and 5 being the emotion she’d feel the least). For each card, pick out a word or phrase that shows evidence of it. There might be more than one word or phrase for each emotion. Here’s an example:

**PANICKED:** ‘Carter and Theodore both heard Bea’s panicky shout’

Don’t forget to add another emotion that you think Bea has onto the blank emotion card.



# LESSON FIVE

## PACEY PLOTS

### OBJECTIVE:

- To create pace and suspense in a piece of writing

### LEAD-IN QUESTIONS:

- What is pace? Why is pace important in an adventure story?
- How does increasing pace in a story make the reader feel tense or 'on the edge of their seat'?
- Can you think of a book that you've read which had a moment of suspense or tension?  
How did it make you feel?
- What is a cliffhanger?

## TASK 1:

Read the following extract from the **The Stegosorcerer: Taken from Chapter 5:**

*Theodore watched Carter, marvelling at his talent. He had brought the tyrant under control with only gentle breaths, and without brutality. It was visibly calming. Then the tyrant suddenly came out of its reverie; tail swinging, huge mouth agape, eyes fixed on the ceiling of the carriage.*

*Carter leapt back. Buster had snapped back into a rage.*

*RRRRAWRRRRR!!!!*

*The allosaurs, who had calmed down when the tyrant did, began to panic again, shrieking and shoving and crashing into one another.*

*'Bad man smell!' shouted Carter to Theodore. 'He angry'*

\*\*\*

*Up on the roof, Hayter smiled as he heard the tremendous roar beneath them.*

*'That's my Beast!' he smirked. 'And now's the time for --'*

*But Ash and Bishop never found out what it was time for, because at that second the roof beneath them erupted upwards, as if there'd been an explosion in the carriage below, and the tyrant's massive head burst out through the roof; mouth agape and jaws slavering. All three men flung themselves, in panic, towards the edge of the moving train . . .*

Read the extract aloud with your partner. Try to pause and to speed up whenever you think the author intends you to do so. What effect does it have on you as the reader? How does it make you feel?

## TASK 2:

Read the extract again. This time, complete the Venn diagram below by putting appropriate words and phrases into each category, contributing to the feeling of suspense or tension.





# LESSON SIX

## OVERCOMING DANGER

### OBJECTIVE:

- To write the opening paragraph of an adventure story

### RECAP QUESTIONS:

- What have you learned about the adventure genre?
- Which feature of adventure writing interests you the most?
- Which book would you most like to carry on reading?

## TASK 1:

One of the important parts of adventure writing is the notion of danger or of a great enemy to be defeated. In pairs, consider the following questions:

1. What types of enemies have you encountered in the books you read?
2. Do enemies have to be magical or otherworldly, or can they also be human?
3. Can you think of enemies that are not human? For example, would you consider **emotions** or **ideas** to also be dangerous?

## TASK 2:

Read the extracts from the three books below and consider the features of each enemy or danger described.

Can you identify the enemies or the danger in each of these extracts? Are they human, or animal – or something more?

### **The Stegosorcerer: Extract taken from Chapter 19:**

*Inside the hut, Theodore felt rage rising in him. His first instinct was to jump out and attack De Bois, drag him to the caves and force him to free the children. But he didn't know how many men De Bois was using to guard them. The men were armed, De Bois had said as much. And at this moment, Theodore had only one advantage: De Bois didn't know he was there, nor that Bea and Carter were among the children. The best thing he could do was remain hidden, and listen.*

*'Looking after the steps is the children's job,' the stegosorcerer proclaimed.*

*De Bois gave a mocking laugh.*

*'It seems that like many of the saurs around here, your steps – sorry, my steps – are worth a lot of money. The children will not need to look after them.'*

*'You cannot do this!' burst out the Elder. 'The children and those steps are our life!'*

*De Bois was obviously enjoying delivering such terrible news, his smirk turning into a broad smile.*

### **Treasure Island: Extract taken from Chapter 14:**

*When I came again to myself the monster had pulled himself together, his crutch under his arm, his hat upon his head. Just before him Tom lay motionless upon the sward; but the murderer minded him not a whit, cleansing his blood-stained knife the while upon a wisp of grass. Everything else was unchanged, the sun still shining mercilessly on the steaming marsh and the tall pinnacle of the mountain, and I could scarce persuade myself that murder had been actually done and a human life cruelly cut short a moment since before my eyes.*

### **The Jungle Book: Extract taken from 'Mowgli's Brothers':**

*The moonlight was blocked out of the mouth of the cave, for Shere Khan's great square head and shoulders were thrust into the entrance. Tabaqui, behind him, was squeaking: "My lord, my lord, it went in here!"*

*"Shere Khan does us great honor," said Father Wolf, but his eyes were very angry. "What does Shere Khan need?"*

*"My quarry. A man's cub went this way," said Shere Khan. "Its parents have run off. Give it to me." Shere Khan had jumped at a woodcutter's campfire, as Father Wolf had said, and was furious from the pain of his burned feet. But Father Wolf knew that the mouth of the cave was too narrow for a tiger to come in by. Even where he was, Shere Khan's shoulders and forepaws were cramped for want of room, as a man's would be if he tried to fight in a barrel.*

*"The Wolves are a free people," said Father Wolf. "They take orders from the Head of the Pack, and not from any striped cattle-killer. The man's cub is ours—to kill if we choose."*

*"Ye choose and ye do not choose! What talk is this of choosing? By the bull that I killed, am I to stand nosing into your dog's den for my fair dues? It is I, Shere Khan, who speak!"*

*The tiger's roar filled the cave with thunder. Mother Wolf shook herself clear of the cubs and sprang forward, her eyes, like two green moons in the darkness, facing the blazing eyes of Shere Khan.*



**CONGRATULATIONS!**

**YOU'VE COMPLETED THE**

**WHAT IS  
ADVENTURE  
WRITING?**

**RESOURCE PACK**

**DON'T FORGET TO HOLD ON TO  
EVERYTHING THAT YOU'VE CREATED. IT  
MIGHT COME IN HANDY WHEN YOU COME  
TO WRITE YOUR VERY OWN BESTSELLING  
ADVENTURE NOVEL!**

**WE CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOUR AMAZING,  
CREATIVE TALENTS AT WORK.**

**THE WILBUR & NISO SMITH FOUNDATION**

