

## Notes for teachers and librarians on

# HELLO LIGHTHOUSE

by Jane Elson

### OVERVIEW

A lyrical and timeless picture book about hope, change and the passing of time.

On the highest rock of a tiny island at the edge of the world stands a lighthouse. From dusk to dawn, the lighthouse beams, sending its light out to sea, guiding the ships on their way. As the seasons pass and the waves rise and fall, outside, the wind blows; inside, the lighthouse keeper writes, and the rhythms of his life unfold. But change is on the horizon...

With beautiful illustrations from Caldecott Medal Winner, Sophie Blackall - the artist behind New York Times bestseller, *Finding Winnie*.

### HOOK FOR THE BOOK (Before Reading)

- Show the children a picture of a lighthouse.

What do you call a building like this? Why are lighthouses built? Where are lighthouses built? Have you ever visited a lighthouse? What was it like? What do you think it would be like to live in a lighthouse? What do you think might happen in the story? What characters do you think we will meet in the story? What might happen to the characters? Have you read any other stories which have a lighthouse as the setting?

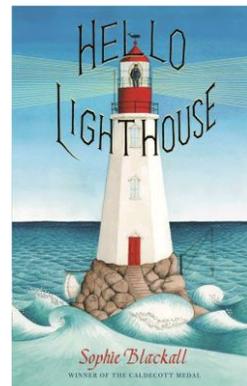
- Reveal the title 'Hello Lighthouse'.

Why do you think the author has given the story this title? Has your prediction changed?

### ENGAGING WITH THE BOOK

#### Making Predictions

- At different points of the story encourage the pupils to make predictions about what might happen next e.g. what event might take place, what a character might do next. Consider what a character might be thinking and feeling and compose ideas about what might happen to the characters after the story. Pupils can give reasons for their predictions using evidence from the text.



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### Setting

- Ask the pupils to think of language to describe the setting, ensuring they think about the key senses e.g. what they can see, touch, hear and smell. Model the writing process and then get the pupils to write a description of the setting using the vocabulary gathered and shared. Show the pupils the different illustrations showing the lighthouse in the fog, in a storm etc. Discuss with the pupils how their vocabulary choices would change from the original description. Pupils can then use the new vocabulary to write a description of the setting which will create a different mood and atmosphere.

### Poetry

- As a starting point create mood boards which include key descriptive phrases from poems and photographs of the sea. Create shape poems where the descriptive language explored is used to create the poem. The lines of the poem take the shape of waves across the page.

### Diary Account

- Read about the lighthouse keeper rescuing the sailors from the storm. Create a diary/page from the logbook from the perspective of the lighthouse keeper. Think about the main event, 1st person and character thoughts and feelings.

### List/Poster

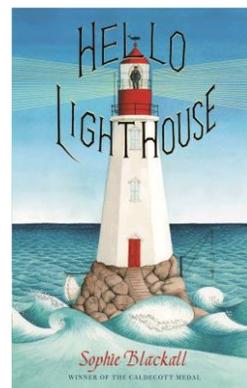
- Explore the routine and chores of a lighthouse keeper and then write a list of the jobs or design a poster advertising the position.
- Make a list of adjectives to describe the lighthouse keeper.

### Explore Sentences

- Study the range of punctuation used by the author – full stops, exclamation marks, commas, ellipsis.

### Emotion Graph

- Create a graph showing the feelings of the character(s) at the different points of the story.



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### Fact File

- Research information about whales using a range of resources such as non-fiction books and websites. Gather information about the animal's habitat, diet, lifespan, weight, length, offspring, distinguishing features, interesting facts etc. Information gathered could be recorded in different colours, on a mind map or on an annotated picture to group facts together. This research provides the pupils with a plan to create a fact file with sub-headings and paragraphs to organise information.

### Questions and Answers

- Compose questions you would like to ask the lighthouse keeper. What do you think the answers might be?

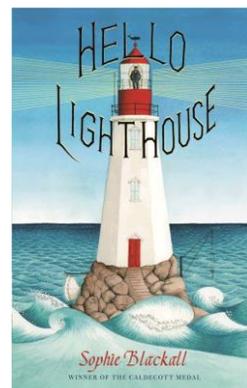
### Summary of the Story

- Write a summary of the story ensuring the main events and themes are covered. This could be written as a review, blurb or by 'hot-seating' the lighthouse keeper.

## CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS

### Science

- Animals and Habitats – Identify and name a variety of common animals and plants which live in the ocean; explore the basic needs of animals for survival; create a simple food chain; compare animals found in the ocean with animals found in a contrasting habitat. Are some animals only found in certain oceans? Why?
- Design an animal for the setting – Pupils to consider the features the animal would need to be able to live in the ocean. Pupils to create cards – each must contain a description of a different feature of the animal. These are then given to a partner who must draw the animal from the description.
- Life-cycle – Understand that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults e.g. baby-toddler-child-teenager-adult.
- How does a telescope work?



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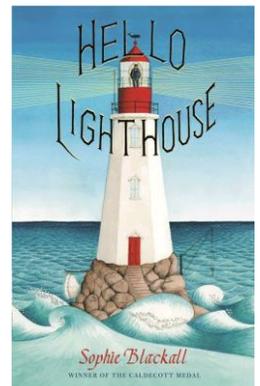
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### Science (cont.)

- Forces – Investigate which materials sink and float. Can you make a boat out of plasticine or paper which will float?
- Electricity – Construct a simple electrical circuit using a battery to make a light or buzzer work. Can you include a switch in your circuit? (Discuss how to work safely with electricity)
- Observe changes in state - Pupils to explore the effect of heating and cooling water.

### Geography

- Name and locate the oceans/seas of the world on a map.
- Identify different physical and human features of the coast – beach, cliff, harbour, pier, lighthouse etc.
- Use aerial photographs and simple plans of different coastal regions and compare.
- Study a range of the UK's contrasting coastlines – explain how some of the features are formed; draw and label coastlines of interest.
- Compare and contrast lighthouses from around the world. How are they similar/different?
- Write a tourist leaflet. Show the pupils a range of leaflets persuading the general public to visit a seaside resort/town. List common features and provide examples from a variety of sources. Think about what could be done at the seaside, thinking of activities, tours, opening times, special events etc. Plan the leaflet showing how the information would be grouped.
- Where in the world can you see the Northern Lights? What are the Northern Lights?



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### History

- Study how seaside places have changed over time.
- Study the illustrations and discuss how as readers we know the book is set in the past.
- Explore pictures of artefacts used by the lighthouse keeper – what do you think he used them for?
- Who invented the lightbulb? How did this change the life of a lighthouse keeper?
- Write a biography of a significant individual – Grace Darling (English lighthouse keeper)

### Art and Design

- Pupils create their own art inspired by the illustrations of the ocean – use oil pastels, watercolours, poster paint, inks, collage paper to experiment and find different ways to create the sea.
- Make a collage picture of a lighthouse.

### Design and Technology

- Design, make and evaluate a model of a lighthouse complete with working light. Practice the skills of cutting, shaping and joining and discuss which materials would be suitable for the end product.

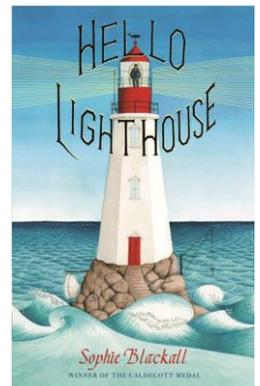
### Music

- Create a piece of music to show the atmosphere of the setting when the ocean is calm or when there is a storm out at sea.

### PSCHE

- Circle time – discuss the importance of taking care of the environment e.g. picking up litter, danger of litter to the oceans, taking your litter home or placing it in the bins provided.

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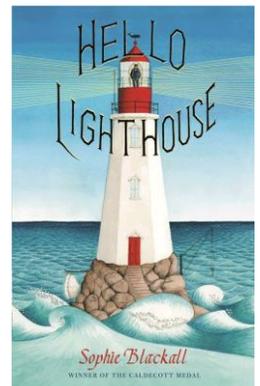
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### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Where is the lighthouse?
- What do you think it would be like to live in a lighthouse? Would you like to live in a lighthouse? Give reasons for your answer.
- How does the lighthouse guide the ships which sail by?
- Explain the author's meaning: 'From dusk to dawn, the lighthouse beams.'
- What is the role of a lighthouse keeper?
- What does the lighthouse keeper do when he arrives at the lighthouse for the first time?
- What do you think the lighthouse keeper writes in his logbook?
- Discuss the author's description: 'The wind takes a deep breath and blows and blows.'
- How would the lighthouse keeper feel during the storm? Think of 5 words to describe his emotions.
- Where does the lighthouse keeper fish for cod?
- Discuss how the lighthouse keeper might do his shopping whilst living 'on the highest rock of a tiny island at the edge of the world.'
- What does the lighthouse keeper wish for?
- Why does the lighthouse keeper place a letter in a bottle and send it out to sea?
- What does the lighthouse keeper see through the telescope?
- What is a tender? What/who does it bring to the lighthouse keeper?



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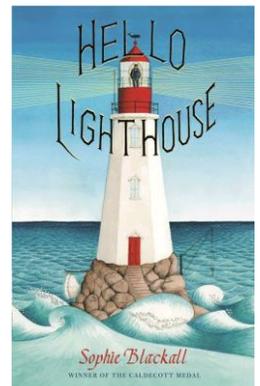
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### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (CONT.)

- What does the lighthouse keeper do when his wife arrives at the lighthouse? Think of 5 adjectives to describe the lighthouse keeper's feelings before and after the arrival of his wife at the lighthouse.
- When and why must the lighthouse keeper ring a bell?
- How does the lighthouse keeper help the sailors after their boat is wrecked on the rocks? Why does he need to write in his logbook? Would you describe the lighthouse keeper as brave? Give examples from the text to support your answer.
- Explain the author's meaning: 'Not a moment to lose'.
- Find the adjectives used by the author to describe the sea. Make a list of alternative adjectives and phrases to describe the sea during the storm.
- Explain the meaning of the description, 'The sea turns into a carpet of ice.'
- What happens to the lighthouse when the keeper is terribly ill?
- Why does the lighthouse keeper's wife 'chip ice off the lantern room windows'?
- Why do the whales journey north?
- Look at the illustration where 'the sky erupts in swirls of green'. What do you think might be causing this? What might happen next?
- The tender brings an unexpected letter. From the clues shared in the text, what do you think it might say?
- What is the horizon?



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### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (CONT.)

- What is the significance of the coast guard bringing a brand-new light? How will this affect the lighthouse keeper and his wife?
- Explain the author's meaning: 'Beyond the breakers, they all look up'.
- Why does the lighthouse keeper say 'Good bye' to the lighthouse?
- What happens to the lighthouse keeper at the end of the story?
- Why do you think the author has given the story the title 'Hello Lighthouse'? What title would you give the story? Give reasons for your answer.
- How does the author show the passing of time during the story?
- Why does the author repeat the same words at the beginning and end of the story?
- On the highest rock of a tiny island
- at the edge of the world stands a lighthouse.
- It is built to last for ever.
- Sending its light out to sea.

### VOCABULARY TO EXPLORE:

Explore the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases used by the author. Here are some examples you might consider:

*island, edge of the world, guiding, dusk, dawn, beams, tending the light, wick, motion, winds the clockwork, logbook, telescope, tender, disappear, rung, disaster, wrecked, broth, lantern, fever, spiral, iceberg, journey, erupts, swirls, unexpected, horizon, installs, machine, belongings, farewell*

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