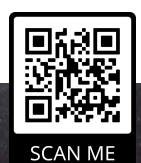




READING QUESTIONS, REFLECTIONS & ACTIVITIES FOR KS2/3 (AGES 10+)

The questions, reflections and activities included in this pack aim to stretch children's understanding of British Empire and stimulate discussion about important ideas in the book.

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Introduction

About the Book

Think the British Empire is ancient history? Think again.

It's time to tell you an unbelievable story. One that spans more than 400 years and influences the world as you know it.

Instead of endless lists of Kings and Queens, battles and dates, this book introduces you to some of the hottest topics, ideas and experiences of real people. You will discover the forces behind the biggest empire of all time and you'll answer some BIG questions. Like what does it MEAN to be British? What do people BELIEVE in? What makes us the country we are and WHY? Big questions, so how do we find the answers?

Let's start by hearing from real children all over the world; children who may have lived at different times, had different experiences, skin colours and religions BUT they have one thing in common (and so do you!) – the BRITISH EMPIRE. Discover how the British Empire impacted countries and communities across the world and, most importantly, discover its impact on children like you.

Be a part of writing our future history, and unearth the most incredible story of all – your own!



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Part One: Start here

Pages 9 - 33

READING QUESTIONS	REFLECTION	CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY
Chapters One and Two <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -What does 'colonisation' mean? -What does the author mean by the phrase: 'Story of Now'? -How has the author's life been shaped by the British Empire? -Why did the author's great grandfather leave India? 	<p>Pages 9–10:</p> <p><i>'The British Empire affected everything. And not only did it affect everything then, it still affects so many of our lives in big and small ways today.'</i></p> <p>Discuss the ways that the British Empire affected everything in the past and continues to affect things in the present.</p>	<p><i>Geography</i></p> <p>On a map, trace the routes taken by the author's family members through the British Empire (pages 14–16). Have any of your family members taken similar routes?</p>
Chapters Three and Four <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Can you find the definition of 'empire'? -What are some of the reasons to have an empire? -Why is history 'complicated'? -Whose stories get 'almost entirely ignored'? Why? 	<p>Page 24:</p> <p><i>'We must be really great detectives as we set out to learn about the British Empire.'</i></p> <p>Why must we be 'great detectives' when looking at events in the past? Create a list of reasons. What are the biggest challenges when it comes to accurately understanding the history of the British Empire?</p>	<p><i>Art, Design & Technology</i></p> <p>Create an illustrated dictionary of important words that we use when talking about the British Empire. Create illustrations that help you understand the meaning of the words. Add to your dictionary as you read.</p>
Chapters Five and Six <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -When did the British Empire start? -Has the British Empire ended? -Why is the story of the British Empire so complicated? 	<p>Page 30:</p> <p><i>'But what people disagree about is whether the things the British Empire did were good, bad or a mixture.'</i></p> <p>What are the good and bad impacts of the British Empire that people argue about? Why do people argue about this? What are your opinions?</p>	<p><i>Literacy</i></p> <p>Write a diary entry about the British Empire as a child living 100 years ago. Then write one now from your own point of view. Compare the diary entries; how are they different?</p>



Part Two: What Happened?

Pages 37 - 151

READING QUESTIONS	REFLECTION	CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY
Chapters Seven and Eight -What is a 'corporation'? What is 'global trade'? -What is the East India Company? -What is the link between slavery and the British Empire? -In what ways was slavery justified by slave owners?	Page 66: <i>'Dehumanising means that you stop considering a person as a human being, or you think they are less human than you are.'</i> List the ways that many people were dehumanised in the name of the British Empire. Does this dehumanisation exist in the present day? Consider to what extent has it has changed or stayed the same.	<i>Literacy</i> 'In 1791, thousands of leaflets were printed to encourage people to boycott sugar that was produced by enslaved people.' (p.69–70). Create one of these leaflets, persuading people to stop buying sugar to support the Abolitionist movement.
Chapters Nine and Ten -Why is the story of the iconic British 'cuppa' important? -What were some of the 'goods' sought after and exchanged in the transatlantic trade? -What is the link between economic inequality and the British Empire?	Page 123: <i>'If I'm thinking about how I'd like to get rich, I'd definitely want to be rich in a way that others could be too, to their benefit, not at their expense. Wouldn't you?'</i> How did wealthy people benefit during the British Empire at the expense of others? How and why does this economic imbalance continue to exist today?	<i>Geography</i> Using a map, create a diagram to show your understanding of the 'triangular trade' described on page 83. Label your diagram with the flow of exchange of goods. Give examples of the goods that were traded.
Chapters Eleven and Twelve -What is 'forced migration'? -How has migration created the Britain we live in today? -In what ways have technological advancements supported the British Empire?	Page 136: <i>'Migration is the very thing that made Britain what it is today – by transporting people, power, resources, wealth, and ideas around the world.'</i> Read the statements on pages 134–135. Why do you think there are so many contradictory ideas about migration?	<i>Citizenship</i> Find a current news story about migration or, most likely, immigration. Can you find any of the viewpoints that are listed in the book, on pages 134–135? Share your ideas as a class.



Part Three: The Story of Now

Pages 155 - 225

READING QUESTIONS	REFLECTION	CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY
Chapters Thirteen and Fourteen -What ideas about empire started to emerge after the World Wars? -What was established in 1926? -What examples of hostility did many migrants face in Britain? -How did Britain leave India? Why was this wrong? -What are the reminders of the British Empire that exist today?	Page 159: <i>'It's hard for me to talk about this, but I am often told to my face that this isn't my home, and that I don't belong here. It's one of the most painful things you can be told, when you've poured your life and love into a place.'</i> Have you experienced this or seen it happen to someone you know? How did it make the person feel? How did it make you feel? Come up with ways to prevent this happening in your school community.	Citizenship Write an argument for 'decolonising the curriculum' in Britain. First, describe what the term means (page 170). Then, give reasons why this would be a positive thing. Perform your written argument as a persuasive speech to your class members.
Chapters Fifteen and Sixteen Whose stories are often omitted from history? Why must we tell these stories? Why can talking about the British Empire feel like 'a challenge to British identity itself' for some people?	Page 196: <i>'But what I want you to take from this chapter is that if you want to properly understand Britain, the British Empire, and your life, it's important to look for new stories, especially the ones we haven't heard. Including yours.'</i> What is your understanding of Britishness after reading this book? Has your understanding changed? How?	Literacy The author describes how it is important to 'be brave about looking for new perspectives' (p. 196). Why? Think of any stories you've read recently that you think show a different perspective on our shared history. What did you learn?
Chapters Seventeen and Eighteen What is 'morality'? Was it wrong to have an empire? Why is this hard to answer? What is the legacy of the British Empire on our 'national identity'?	Page 222: <i>'Having a shared sense of national identity is an important part of a successful country, for making everyone feel like they belong (and that feeling is important).'</i> Discuss how we can achieve this and become a 'successful country' in the present day.	History What was the Windrush Scandal (p. 221)? How did ideas of 'Britishness' play into what happened? Write an apology on behalf of the British Government to those who suffered.



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Part Four: What's Next?

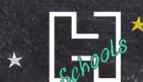
Pages 228 - 239

READING QUESTIONS	REFLECTION	CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY
<p>Chapters Nineteen and Twenty</p> <p>-What did the author find 'most eye-opening' when writing the book? What did she also find difficult?</p> <p>-How have you been inspired to shape the future of Britain? What practical things can you achieve in your daily life to make your vision a reality?</p>	<p>Page 230:</p> <p><i>'That's where you come in. You can add stories that you've been inspired to learn more about. You too can investigate, discuss and research more stories. They might be to do with the British Empire, or other local and national histories that have affected you.'</i></p> <p>Pick a story that has inspired you. Explain your choice. What have you learned from this story? How will it change your outlook and future choices?</p>	<p><i>Literacy</i></p> <p>Become 'the Sherlock Holmes of your own story' (p. 235). Carry out some research into the members of your family. What interesting things can you find? Perhaps your family has their history in another country?</p> <p>Alternatively, if you prefer, tell the story of a local place that means a lot to you.</p>



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