

# Teachers' Resource Pack



## Includes resources on:

- Writer's craft
- Talking and Listening activities
- Creative writing projects
- Cross-curricular links (including art, social studies, modern languages , science, Rights education)
- Photocopiable activities for the classroom or library

# About Guardians of the Wild Unicorns



Fantasy and reality collide in this exciting middle-grade novel starring the unicorns of mythology and legend



Unicorns with a difference! Treating them as endangered animals, this book offers a refreshing take on conservation themes



Can two best friends save the last of the wild unicorns from extinction? Offers alternative viewpoints from strong boy and girl characters



Lewis and his best friend Rhona find themselves caught up in a dangerous adventure to save the world's last herd of wild unicorns. Fighting against dark forces, battling the wild landscape, and harnessing ancient magic, can they rescue the legendary creatures in time?

## About the author

Lindsay Littleton is a primary school teacher in Renfrewshire, Scotland. After taking up writing for children in early 2014 she won the Kelpies Prize for new Scottish writing for children with her first children's novel, *The Mixed-Up Summer of Lily McLean* and the sequel *The Awkward Autumn of Lily McLean* was published a year later. Lindsay has also written two historical novels for children, *A Pattern of Secrets*, set in Victorian Paisley, and *The Titanic Detective Agency*. Her latest novel, *Guardians of the Wild Unicorns*, is published by Floris Books.



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# Pre-reading activities

## Group Discussion



Look at the title font and the cover art.



Where and when do you think this story might be set? #=Give reasons for your answers.



Does the cover artwork give you any information about the characters? If so, what does it tell you?

## Vocabulary Development



Define guardian -Write a definition of 'guardian' in your own words.



Look up the dictionary meaning for 'guardian'.



Make a list of synonyms for 'guardian.'

You can use the same process for any other unfamiliar words you come across while reading! Use the space below to keep track:

Word: .....

Definition: .....

.....

Synonyms: .....

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Word: .....

Definition: .....

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Synonyms: .....

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## Personal Connections:

- Discuss with a partner: Who are your guardians? What do they do for you?
- Have you ever been involved in a rock climbing or abseiling type activity? If so, share your experiences with the class.

## Predictions:

- Looking only at the front cover, what do you think this book might be about?
- Now read the blurb at the back of the book. What do you feel about it? What kind of things are you now expecting to see inside the book? What questions do you have?
- Make a prediction about something you think might happen in the story. Write your prediction on a slip of paper and post in a box. Open the box when you reach the end of the story!

I predict that .....

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## Design a new cover

- Read the blurb on the book cover again and use it to help you create a brand new cover design.
- Decide what text should go on the front, the back and the spine.
- Next draw a rough design.
- Choose a colour scheme. Think of the title of the book. What colours might suit the theme?
- Lay out your paper for the cover using the template on the next page and remember that the left will be the back and the right will be the front when it is folded onto the book.

Back

Spine

Front

# Chapter 1:

Read Chapter 1 and answer the questions.

1. Which words and phrases in the text tell you that Lewis is frightened while he is abseiling?  
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2. Why is Lewis so angry with his mum?  
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3. What is your initial opinion of Lewis? Can you identify with him at all? Give reasons for your answer.  
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4. What are your initial reactions to events in this chapter? Give reasons for your answer.  
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5. *Even Rhona, his best pal in the world – let's face it, his only pal in the world – was getting on his nerves.*  
Why do you think Lewis is finding Rhona annoying? Is he being fair? Write your opinion and then discuss with your partner.  
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6. Lewis keeps a mental list of his 'fails'. It's not a very positive approach! Help him develop a positive mindset by rephrasing his 'fails' into positives.

For example, ‘*a failure at football*’ could become, ‘One thing I could do differently is practise my ball skills.’

*'rubbish at rugby'*

*'abysmal at abseiling'*

7. Choose an activity you'd like to try. Discuss with your partner what you could do to develop your skills in this activity? Who could help?



# Writer's Craft: Similes in Chapter 1



The following phrases are taken from chapter 1. Circle the simile which you think is most effective.

*Rhona peered over the edge of the cliff, grinning like a gargoyle.*

*His body began to spin, like a hanged corpse.*

*Its silken tail streaming like a banner.*

*His toes were about to turn as black as burnt chipolatas.*



Why do you think the author has chosen to use it?

.....

.....



Finish these sentences with effective similes of your own.

*Its silken tail streaming like* .....

*His body began to spin like* .....

*His toes were about to turn as black as* .....



Challenge: Scan chapter 1 to find one other example of a simile.

.....

.....

# Chapter 2

*She breathed in her surroundings instead and felt a shiver of joy at the sight of the darkening sky, the vast, empty moor, distant snow-capped mountains. There was so much space and freedom here.*

Using this description, and any other information from Chapter 1 or 2, draw a picture of the setting.



# Chapter 3:

Read Chapter 3 and answer the questions.

1. *A huge sob broke from Lewis's throat, and then the tears started falling and wouldn't stop.*

Can you suggest 3 reasons for Lewis's distress?

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

2. Use a dictionary to check the meaning of 'hypothermia'. Then find words and phrases in the text that show Lewis might be beginning to suffer from hypothermia.

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## Drama Activity: Hot Seating

Sitting in a semi-circle, one pupil plays Lewis and the other pupils question him about his background, feelings, behaviour and motivation. Take turns in the hot seat. Do the same with Rhona.

# Chapter 3: Writer's Craft

Read this description of the charging unicorn. Highlight as many of the adjectives and verbs as you can find.

*Almost invisible in the mist, dark grey against purplish heather, the huge beast galloped, riderless. As it thundered towards Lewis, he could see it more clearly: muscled flanks, flowing black mane. Steam billowed from its quivering nostrils and its spiralled horn gleamed like steel. The unicorn was a huge, terrifying beast, but it wasn't on the attack: it was terrified.*

Rewrite this passage using synonyms for each word you have highlighted. Try to maintain a sense of drama and tension.

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 **Challenge:** use your imagination to add more detail to your description of the charging unicorn.

 **Support:** Highlight the words thundered, flowing, quivering, gleamed, huge, terrifying. Rewrite the passage using other words with a similar meaning to those you have highlighted.

# Chapter 4

Authors prefer to show rather than tell how their characters are feeling — it makes the story more interesting for the reader! Here's an example from chapter 4:

*Closing his eyes, he could see himself, huddled against the Pikachu rock, shivering with cold, panic exploding in his chest as he listened to the sound of hooves thudding on grass...*



In pairs talk about a time you felt scared or anxious. Describe the incident and how you felt. What, if any, were your physical symptoms?



Write about what happened, making sure you include your feelings and any physical symptoms.

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## Health and Wellbeing Activity



In the group, discuss strategies that help to calm us down when we are anxious or upset. Practise some in class; listening to music, focusing on breathing, yoga stretches. There are lots of ideas here:

<https://gozen.com/50-calm-down-ideas-to-try-with-kids-of-all-ages/>



Which strategies work best for you?

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# Chapter 5:



Read the following description of the campfire at night. Choose a setting – a beach, a wood, a city street – and write a description of your setting at night time. Try and use all of your senses.

*As she followed Scott outside, she breathed in the cold, pine-scented night air, the warm smell of smoke. The wind had whisked the rainclouds away and it was a calm, dark night, so much darker than in Glasgow. Even the stars were brighter, sparkling like diamonds on black velvet.*



# The Legend of Whindfall Forest Storyboard

Read from:

*The story goes that long, long ago there were great herds of unicorns in Scotland*

To:

*Beira turned him to stone because she wanted him to decorate her mountain throne.*



Use A3 paper to create a storyboard of the legend with text, illustrations, speech bubbles and captions.



Discuss an effective way telling the legend to an audience. Could you use storytelling with props, a short film, animation, shadow puppets?

1.	2.	3.
4.	5.	6.

# Chapter 6:

Read Chapter 6 and answer the questions.

1. What is Lewis' opinion of Derek? Do you think his opinion is correct?

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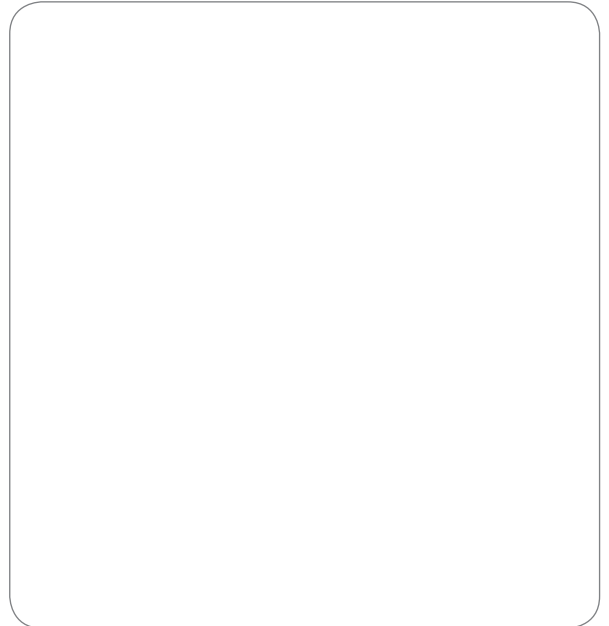
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2. How are Miss James and Scott feeling this morning? How do you know?



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3. Using the description in the text, draw a portrait of Lewis on his first day at Eastgate School.



## Drama Activity: Emotion Walk

-  Have you ever been the only new person in school or elsewhere? If not, use your imagination and think about how that might feel.
-  As a class, discuss and name possible emotions. Pupils walk around the room. When the teacher calls out one of these emotions, the pupils change their walk accordingly.

## Health/Well Being

-  Have a circle time to talk about strategies the class or group could use to make a new person feel welcome and included.

# Chapter 8

## Writer's Craft

Read from, '*Rhona didn't answer...*' to the end of Chapter 8.

1. *Rhona didn't answer.*

Why do you think the author has used a short sentence here?

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2. *High up in the air, a buzzard keened.*

Why do you think the author has included this detail?

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3. Write down some of the words or phrases the author uses to convey Lewis's feelings.

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4. Why do you think the author chose to write this scene from Lewis's perspective, rather than Rhona's?

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# Chapter 10

## Writing a Persuasive Letter

Write to the police telling them about Ailsa's evil plans for the unicorns. Use emotive language to try and to persuade them to take action to stop her. You should use evidence from the text and transition words and phrases (to begin with, therefore, in addition to, finally).

*To the chief inspector,*



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*Yours faithfully,*

# Chapter 11

## Writer's Craft

-  Write some of the phrases used by the author 'to show, not tell' that Rhona is frightened when Ailsa turns up in the Land Rover.

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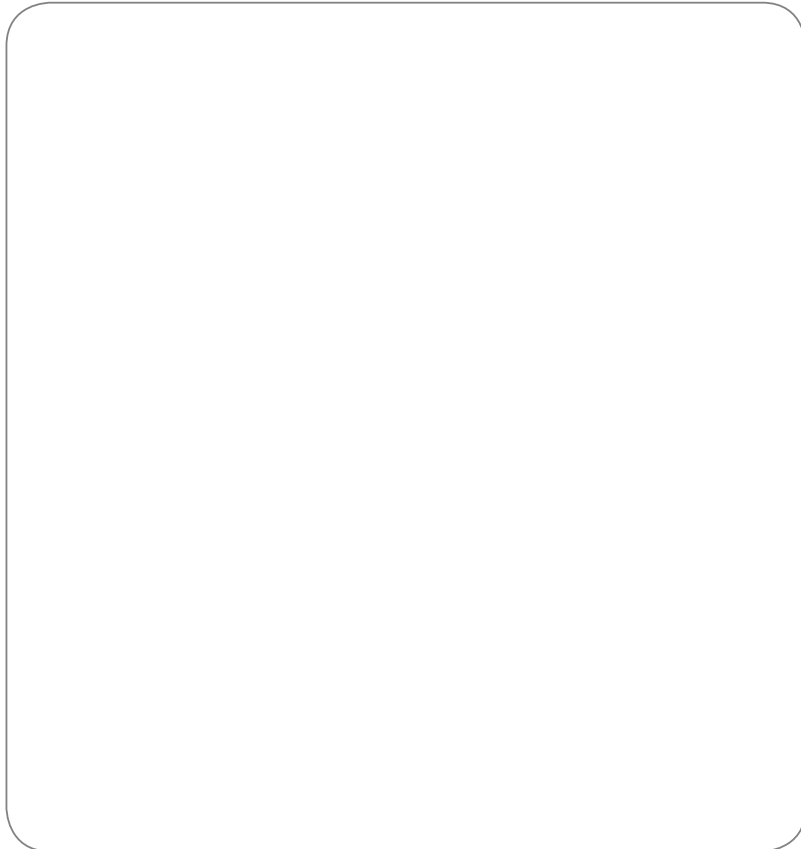
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-  Read these descriptions of Ailsa McAllister. Draw a picture of Ailsa and surround it with adjectives which describe both her physical appearance and personality.

*The girl swung down from the vehicle. Lewis guessed she was about nineteen. She was tall and angular, dressed in a tweed jacket, jeans and boots. Her hair was ash-blonde, cropped short...*

*She was very beautiful, in a chilly, elegant, fashion-model sort of way. Her lipstick was a slash of red, her eyebrows immaculate curves, her eyes cat-like, but Lewis thought she looked as friendly as a she-wolf baring her teeth.*



# Chapter 12:

## The sculpture garden at Langcroft

*...they strolled casually through the stone archway that led into the walled garden. As soon as Rhona entered, she felt a change in the atmosphere. The garden felt safe, enclosed, and the air was heavy with the scent of roses.*



Draw a map for tourists of the sculpture garden. Use your imagination. What kind of sculptures/statues might be in there? Think about other details; a pond, fountain, flower beds, benches etc.

Door in the wall

Entrance



# Chapter 14:

## Writer's craft

*Inside the stockade, everything was monochrome, a moving blend of greys, white and jet-black. She gulped and stepped back a little, overwhelmed by the impression of constant movement, large beasts turning this way and that, too close for comfort, eyes rolling, lips curling in fear. Up close, the unicorns' pent-up rage and terror was disturbing.*

*There was nothing cute about the unicorns in that stockade, no rainbow manes, glittery eyelashes or plaited tails. She could sense their hope of release, flickering like light through the bars.*



In the space below, list some words and phrases used by the author in this passage which you think are particularly effective in describing the appearance, behaviour and the feelings of the unicorns in the stockade.

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Imagine you have come across a wild animal trapped in a cage. Describe its appearance, behaviour and feelings.

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Investigation: After doing some research online, make a list of the pros and cons of keeping endangered animals in zoos. Debate the issue in class.

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# Chapter 15:

Read Chapter 15 and answer the questions.

1. What do you think Rhona means when she says “I’m no’ Cinder-ruddy-ella.”?  
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2. Research task: Find 4 unusual names for a group of animals (eg. a herd of cows, a flock of sheep, a blessing of unicorns). Share them with the class.
  1. ....
  2. ....
  3. ....
  4. ....
3. Challenge: Can you invent one of your own for an animal of your choosing and give reasons why it’s apt?  
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4. Find a simile and a metaphor used by the author in this chapter. Which do you think is more effective? Why?  
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# Chapter 16:

## Inferential Questions

1. Why do you think Derek went to fetch Mr Deacon?

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2. Why do you think Derek is 'shuffling anxiously from foot to foot'?

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## Drama Activity: Freeze Frame Tableau

In this technique, pupils establish still images with their bodies to represent a scene. There's more information on this website: <https://dramaresource.com/tableaux/>

 In groups, devise a tableau of this scene from Chapter 16. Think about how each character is feeling and why. Use body language and facial expression to try and convey their different emotions.

*The three boys circled him. Kyle looked like he'd happily murder him, but Tariq just looked baffled.*

*"I don't get it," he said, running a hand through his tousled hair. "Why do you always want to ruin things for everyone? What the heck is wrong with you, Lewis?"*

*Lewis scrambled to his feet, held up his hands. "Um, overreaction here, guys?"*

*Kyle threw the pillow at him and it bounced off his head.*



*"Oi, that's enough."*

*They all spun round. Mr Deacon was standing in the doorway. Derek McIvor was behind him, shuffling anxiously from foot to foot.*

# Chapter 16:

Lewis doesn't want to get involved in the points system at the residential centre. Rhona and the others think he's in the wrong.

Give reasons for their different opinions in the two columns.

In support of points system 	Against points system 



Conclusion: who do you think has the better argument? State the reason for your point of view.

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## Drama Activity: Conscience Alley

Create two lines; each line taking an opposing viewpoint. One pupil is chosen to walk between the two lines as each side voices their thoughts. This pupil then has to decide what their decision will be. <https://dramaresource.com/conscience-alley/>

# Chapter 17 & 18:

Below are listed three of the main themes of *Guardians of the Wild Unicorns*.

Write down a quote from Chapter 17 or 18 that fits each theme.



Friendship

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Courage

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Tolerance/Acceptance

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## Personal Writing

Think of a time when you have been a good friend, or when you have shown courage or acceptance. Write about your experiences.

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## Class Discussion

Compare Lewis and Rhona's strategies for dealing with bullying. Which do you think would be more effective Why?

# Chapter 19:

## Creating a Character



Do some online research and make your own list of 5 Weirdest Animals

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....

*"I'll be Ninja Girl, the midnight warrior. You can be my loyal sidekick."*

*“Um, no, I’m sick of being the sidekick. I’ll be Wolf Boy, rescuer of unicorns in distress.”*



Create your own superhero alter ego. Draw a mind map, noting your superhero's powers, appearance, costume, name. What's the back story? Who is your arch enemy and why?





Write a description of your superhero, using your notes to help you.

“Look! It’s .....!”

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Challenge: Create a comic strip story featuring your superhero.

# Chapter 20:

## Writers' Craft



Pick out a sentence the author has written to show how furious Rhona is with Lewis at the beginning of this chapter.

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Rhona's anger fades quickly. How does the author show this happening?

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*...the animal stirred and gazed up with liquid violet eyes. Moonlight sparkled on her shimmering white coat, her translucent silvery mane. Her spiralled horn glistened with a mother-of-pearl sheen.*

Rewrite this extract using alternative adjectives, verbs and (synonyms) which maintain the author's style and tone.

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### Drama Activity: Emotion Walk

Rhona feels a range of emotions in this chapter. Discuss and name them as a class. Pupils walk around the room. When the teacher calls out one of these emotions, the pupils change their walk accordingly.

# Chapter 23:

## A Senses Poem

 Use this description and your own imagination to write a senses poem about a garden at night.

*... he could see stars reflected in a lily pond, pale moonlight glistening on an arbour of white roses...Exhausted, they flopped down on a stone bench, breathed in the cool air and the heavy scent of roses, felt the garden's dreamlike stillness. The moon illuminated the garden with its ghost-pale light, silvering the gravel paths, making the white flowers glow. The sculptures stood like sentinels, and the only sounds were the trickle of water from a fountain and the frog's low croak.*

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### Art activity:

 Draw the moonlit garden using oil pastels on black paper.

# Chapter 25:

## Dramatic Language



Read the scene where Lewis and Sneachda are being chased by Ailsa in her Landrover. Take a note of some of the energetic verbs, adjectives and phrases the author uses to build tension and excitement.

Imagine you are being chased through a forest by a pack of wolves. Create an action scene of your own, using the starter sentence below as inspiration. Remember to use powerful verbs and dramatic imagery to build tension.

*Behind me, a wolf howled.*

# Chapter 26:

## A Postcard from Whindfall



Imagine you are visiting the Highlands and you stumble across Whindfall Forest. Write a postcard to a friend, describing the forest and its wildlife. On the other side of the postcard, use the descriptions in the text and your own imagination to draw the forest.

Dear .....



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# Chapter 28:

## Inventing a Unicorn



Only a few members of the unicorn herd are described and named in the novel. Use your imagination to describe the appearance and character of another member of the herd.

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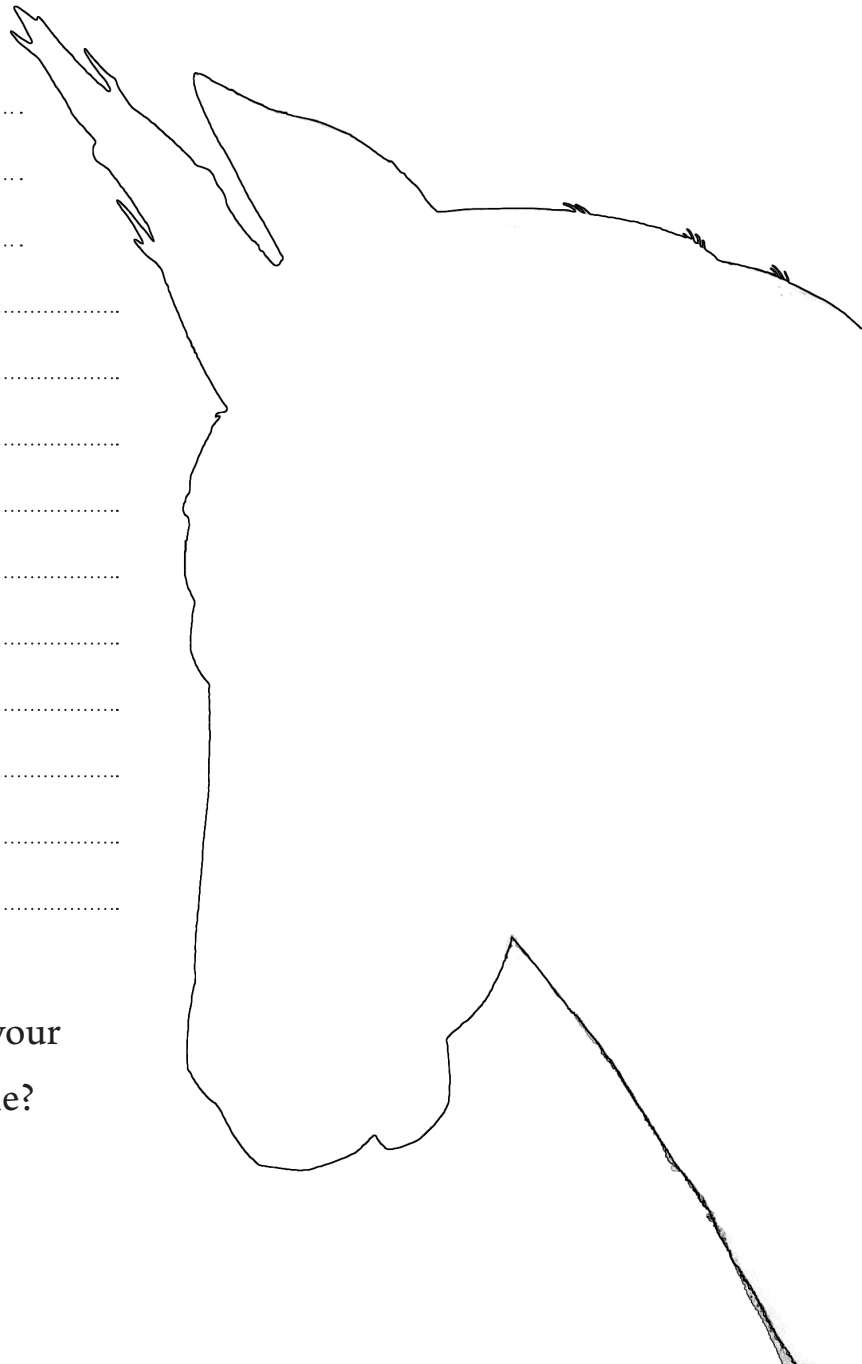
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Research challenge: Can you give your unicorn an appropriate Gaelic name?





# Chapter 29-30:

## Creating fact files

 Using information in the novel, including Rhona's revelations in Chapter 29, complete fact files for the two main characters.

Full name	
Age	
Hair colour	
Parent info	
Friends	
Hobbies	
Personality	
Aims	

Full name	
Age	
Hair colour	
Parent info	
Friends	
Hobbies	
Personality	
Aims	

# During Reading Activity: Summarising



Can you summarise what has happened so far?

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Can you summarise what has happened so far?

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# After Reading Activity:

## Link Maker



Discuss the novel in small group of 4/6 pupils.



Find a part of the novel that links with your own lives. It could be a character, an event or a place in the book.



Complete the boxes.

What happens in the book:	Who it links to:	How it links:

# Cross Curricular Links:

## Art & Design

### Coat of Arms

A unicorn appears on the royal coat of arms. Find out as much as you can about the symbols and colours used in Coats of Arms and what each represents. Create your own coat of arms which includes the following information about you.

1. A symbol / picture to represent an important place.
2. A symbol / picture to represent a hobby / activity
3. An animal that represents you
4. Any other symbol or picture that represents you.
5. Include a Personal Motto (words or a phrase that represent you)

### Scottish Unicorns



Discuss artist Steven Brown's painting *She Who Is Brave*.



Using oil pastels and symbols of Scotland (e.g saltire, thistle, tartan) create your own very Scottish unicorn inspired by the one in the painting.

### Stained glass unicorn silhouettes



Using thinned PVA glue, stick torn pieces coloured tissue onto paper. When the background is dry, cut out a unicorn shape on black paper and attach to your colourful tissue background.



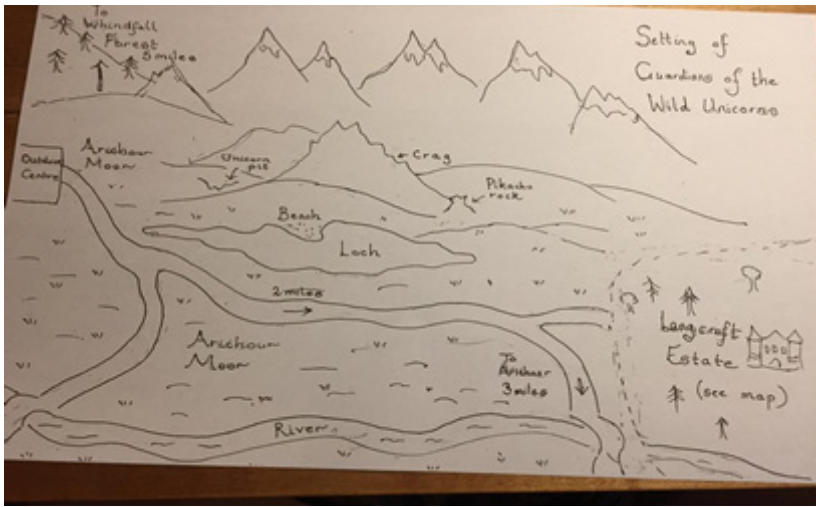
Alternatively, sponge paint a gradient of hot or cold colours to create a background for your unicorn silhouette. There are lots of inspirational ideas if you search 'unicorn silhouette paintings' on Pinterest!

# Cross Curricular Links:

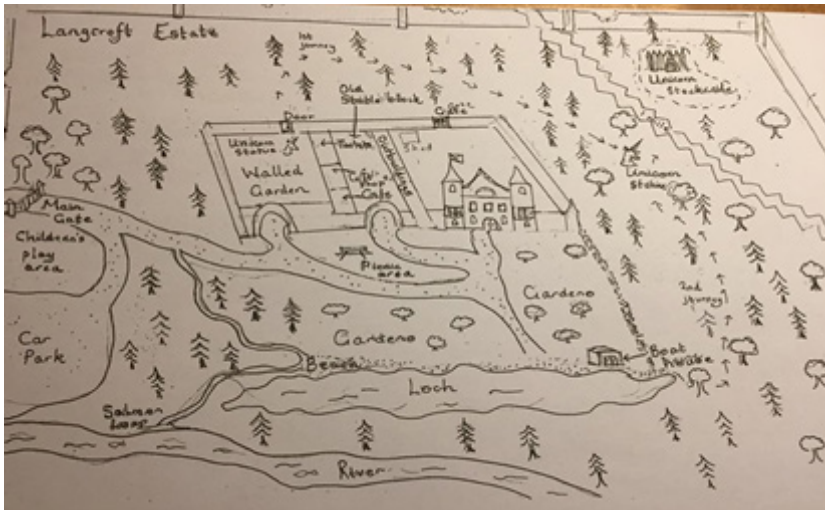
## Social Studies

### Mapping Ideas

These roughly sketched maps were created to help the publishers 'see' the setting of *Guardians of the Wild Unicorns*.



This map could be used to create a wall display or a 3-D map of the book's setting.



This map of the Langcroft Estate could be used to create an information leaflet for visitors to Langcroft.

You could create your own individual maps of the story's setting, or draw a map of a setting for a story from your imagination.

*Inspirational Island* maps are fun to do and a great way to plan a fantasy story.

# Persuasive Writing



Your task is to create a leaflet persuading people with an interest in history to go on a tour of places in Scotland with a unicorn connection. You need to tell them about several places to visit where they might see unicorn statues/landmarks etc and suggest other activities they might do at each location.

Success Criteria:

I can:



Take notes that I can use to help me to plan my leaflet








Discuss the elements of an effective persuasive leaflet after examining and comparing some commercially made leaflets







Create a persuasive leaflet with an attractive layout that incorporates text details and research skills

Note taking:

Places with unicorn landmarks:	What else do I want/need to know about this place of interest?

- 
- Using your left column notes as a starting point, decide what else you want/need to know about places to visit.
- 
- Fill in the right hand column on your page of notes.
- 
- Do some research in books and the internet and/or on a class trip to gather the information you need.
- 
- Examine some commercially made leaflets and discuss audience, content and layout.
- 
- Plan your own leaflet carefully.

Think **PALL**: Purpose, Audience, Language, Layout.

- 
- Purpose: What are you trying to do? What is your goal?
- 
- Audience: Who is your leaflet aimed at?
- 
- Language: What language features will you use? e.g. slogans, alliteration, adjectives, commands.
- 
- Layout: How are you going to set out your leaflet? What colours, pictures and graphics will you use?

Useful websites:

<https://www.visitscotland.com/about/uniquely-scottish/national-animal-unicorn/>




<https://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/travel-and-adventure/2018/01/why-unicorn-alive-well-and-scotland>

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/15106948.revealed-where-to-find-unicorns-in-scotland/>




## Research Task

-  The unicorn is the national animal of Scotland. With your partner, create a poster or Powerpoint containing information about the unicorn in Scotland.

Here are some questions you and your partner might use as prompts.

-  When did the unicorn become an important symbol in Scotland?
-  Why did the unicorn become Scotland's national animal?
-  Where can we see unicorn statues in Scotland?



You might also want to research and/or discuss:

-  Unicorn Myths and Legends
-  Unicorns in literature, film and television
-  Gender stereotyping: why are unicorn products being marketed 'for girls'? What are the possible implications of having gendered toys? The diagram on this blog might be a good starting point for a class discussion:  
<https://genneu.co.uk/blogs/escape-the-stereotypes/the-vicious-circle-of-gendered-toys>

## Modern Languages

### Gaelic

In *Guardians of the Wild Unicorns*, the unicorns have Gaelic names.

-  Go on this website and choose a topic that interests you:  
<https://go-gaelic.scot/topics/>
-  Learn a few words and/or phrases in Gaelic and teach them to the rest of the class.

## Technology/Creative Writing

### Book Trailer

Using this series of video lessons as a source of practical advice, information and inspiration, create an exciting book trailer for *Guardians of the Wild Unicorns*.

<http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/learning/learning-resources/resource/how-to-create-book-trailers-video-series>



# Science

## Conservation / endangered animals

- 🦋 Lewis and Rhona didn't manage to complete their personal research task on a Scottish endangered bird or animal. Can you succeed in completing the challenge?
- 🦋 With a partner, put together a Powerpoint presentation telling the rest of the class about your chosen bird or animal.  
Consider habitat, diet, lifespan, size, threats. Mention any current projects aimed at protecting your animal or bird. Is the work making a difference?
- 🦋 Is there anything you or your class could do to help? Discuss the possibilities.  
These are useful websites for your research:  
<https://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/>  
<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/trees-woods-and-wildlife/animals/>  
<https://www.nature.scot/plants-animals-and-fungi>
- 🦋 You could create dioramas showing your chosen animal in its natural habitat. Using details in the text about Whindfall Forest, you could create another diorama showing the unicorns in their natural habitat too.
- 🦋 There are some inspirational ideas on this website!  
<https://www.guidpatterns.com/how-to-make-a-shoebox-diorama-ideas.php>

# Rights Education

Below are three articles from the summary of the UN Convention On the Rights of the Child.

*Article 18 (parental responsibilities and state assistance) Both parents share responsibility for bringing up their child and should always consider what is best for the child. Governments must support parents by creating support services for children and giving parents the help they need to raise their children.*

*Article 27 (adequate standard of living) Every child has the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and social needs and support their development. Governments must help families who cannot afford to provide this.*

*Article 31 (leisure, play and culture) Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.*



Create a class list of facts we know about Rhona's home life and standard of living. Are her rights under the UNCRC being met? If not, what needs to change?

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