

Zoe and the Great Summer Jubilee

FIELD NOTES

Teacher's Guide & Classroom Companion

Merevale Creek Farm · Book 1 · 12 Chapters · Ages 6–9

Version 9.1

30 April 2026

About This Guide

Zoe and the Great Summer Jubilee (Book 1 in the Merevale Creek Farm series) is designed so that the story does the teaching, not the teacher. It should be noted these Field Notes are not intended as a worksheet, and should be used as a conversational tool that allows children to explore the meaning of each chapter and find their own way to it.





Each Field Notes page covers one chapter. Every page has:









- Three discussion sections: Discussion, Reflection, Connection, then moving from the communal (talking together) to the personal (thinking quietly) to the applicable (bringing it home)
- A Guardian Moment note, anchoring discussion of Zoe's pause-notice-choose pattern
- A Blue Butterfly observation, where to look, what not to explain
- The chapter's ladybird count and a hint
- A Writing Response prompt with a specific grammar or craft focus
- A Tier 2 vocabulary list for pre-teaching
- Comprehensive curriculum alignment (PSHE, English KS1/KS2, Maths KS1/KS2, P4C, plus wider curriculum links)

Nothing in this guide requires additional preparation or resources. The questions are designed to be used with the book alone. All that is needed is time and the willingness to let children's thinking unfold at its own pace.

How to Use These Field Notes




All icons used throughout this guide, in one place for reference.

	Discussion	Talk together: Read aloud or in groups first. Then open these questions to the whole class. There are no correct answers. If a question has a correct answer, it is the wrong question.
	Reflection	Think quietly: These questions are quieter and more personal. They can be spoken in pairs, written privately, or simply held in silence. Do not force sharing.
	Connection	Bring it home: These questions bridge the story to the child's own life. Some are action prompts; some are invitations to private thought. Follow the teacher notes on each page for guidance.
	Guardian Moment	A brief note on exactly what Zoe noticed and chose in this chapter. Use this to anchor discussion of Zoe's character and to name the pattern: she pauses, she notices, she chooses.

	Blue Butterfly	A note on where the butterfly appears. Invite children to find it in the illustrations before or after discussion. Never explain what it means. The question is the point.
	Ladybird	The chapter's ladybird count. There are 78 ladybirds hidden across the whole book ($1+2+3+\dots+12 = 78$). The ladybird hunt is a separate activity that can run alongside reading or independently.
	Gate Creak	The old farm gate creaks in every chapter, its tone changing with the mood of the story. It groans loudest of all when Zoe arrives in Chapter 1, screams in the storm of Chapter 11, and is remembered with affection in Chapter 12.
	Tier 2 Vocabulary	Five words from the chapter that are worth pre-teaching, and the sentence from the chapter where each appears. Introduce these before reading, not after.
	Writing Response	One writing prompt per chapter, linked to a specific grammar or craft focus drawn from the chapter text. These prompts are optional extensions, not homework. The grammar focus is named explicitly so that teachers can use them within an existing English unit.
	Easy / Learning with our bodies	Chapters 1–4. Concrete lessons. Visible cause and effect. One problem, one solution.
	Medium / Learning with others	Chapters 5–8. Social dynamics. Competing claims. Multiple right answers.
	Hard / Learning with ourselves	Chapters 9–12. Inner work. Patience, integrity, resilience, leadership.



The Learning Ladder

The book's twelve chapters are organised into three tiers of increasing depth. The Field Notes questions reflect this progression – earlier chapters ask children to observe and describe; middle chapters ask them to negotiate competing perspectives; later chapters ask them to sit with internal questions that have no clean answers.

 Chapters 1–4 Learning with our bodies Concrete lessons. Visible cause and effect. One problem, one solution.	 Chapters 5–8 Learning with others Social dynamics. Competing claims. Multiple right answers.	 Chapters 9–12 Learning with ourselves Inner work. Patience, integrity, resilience, leadership.
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Differentiation Guidance

This guide does not impose a single use. The book and its Field Notes are designed to stretch naturally across a wide ability range. The following brief notes are offered to help teachers make the most of that natural range.

 Emerging readers and KS1	Do not expect independent reading; read the chapter aloud before discussion. Pre-teach all Tier 2 vocabulary words. Focus on the Discussion questions only as the Reflection questions may be too abstract for some children at this stage. Use the ladybird hunt as a visual engagement activity that runs in parallel with listening. Drama and role play (acting out Zoe's arrival, acting out the Guardian Moment) are particularly effective for emerging readers who engage best through doing.
 Developing readers (Years 3–4)	The Discussion and Reflection sections are the core activity. Introduce two or three vocabulary words before reading and let children infer the others from context.

	The Connection questions can be used selectively, pick the one or two most relevant to the class. The Writing Response prompt is well suited to this group, particularly when the grammar focus aligns with current English unit work.
● Secure / greater depth (Years 4–6)	All three sections work well for this group at full depth. The Connection questions (particularly in Medium and Hard tier chapters) are the strongest lever for greater depth, they invite children to apply the chapter's lesson to their own contexts and consider its limits. The P4C questions, especially in the Hard tier, are the natural extension activity. Greater depth pupils particularly benefit from the Writing Response prompts, which name a specific grammar or craft technique to apply.
● EAL learners	Zoe's own dialogue is almost entirely Tier 1 vocabulary and very short sentences. Begin with Zoe's speech only, read her lines aloud together as a class. The visual stickiness mechanics (ladybird, butterfly) require no language to engage with. Pre-teaching vocabulary is particularly important for this group. The fable notes can be used comparatively, if a child's home culture has a version of the same fable, that is a powerful bridging discussion.

Zoe's Guardian Roles – A Teacher's Framework

Children remember roles better than lessons. Rather than asking 'what did this chapter teach?', ask 'which role was Zoe playing here?' This framework gives teachers and children a precise vocabulary for what Zoe does in each chapter.

These role names do not appear in the book itself. They exist here, in this guide, as a discussion and comprehension tool. Use them to help children track Zoe's behaviour across chapters and to explore which roles are easiest and hardest for them to play in their own lives.

Use this table as a whole-book reference. Return to it at the end of the book and ask: which role was hardest for Zoe to play? Which role do you find hardest in your own life? Which role do you think you played this week?

Ch.	Role	Tier	What This Role Means
1	The Steady Stranger	● Bodies	Zoe arrives into a community that fears her and does not react to that fear. She is steady when others are not. This role is about presence, staying calm when others have decided who you are.
2	The One Who Listened	● Bodies	When Max is dismissed by everyone else, Zoe notices something different in his face and says 'Show me.' This role is about the active choice to take someone seriously.
3	The Patient One	● Bodies	Zoe jogs the course last and is unbothered. She uses the race to learn the farm. This role is about understanding that there is more than one way to use any moment.
4	The Gentle Solution	● Bodies	Zoe watches three animals fail by force, then finds a solution through gentleness. This role is about choosing a different kind of strength, the kind that does not require resistance.
5	The One Who Asked	● Others	Zoe's solution is not her own, it is Calypso's, because Zoe knew who to ask. This role is about recognising that help is not weakness, and that the smallest contributor may have the largest answer.
6	The Quiet Witness	● Others	Zoe sits near Rufus and says the true thing gently. This role is about being present for someone's regret without making it worse, witnessing without judging.
7	The One Who Made Space	● Others	Zoe holds the branch and looks away, creating the conditions for Mayo to take what he needed without admitting he needed it. This role is about helping in a way that lets the other person keep their dignity.

8	The Organiser	● Others	Zoe does not join the tug of war team, she reorganises it. This role is about enabling others to be their best, rather than substituting your own strength for theirs.
9	The Still Centre	● Ourselves	In the chaos after Rufus disturbs the wasps, Zoe sits with him on the step. She is the still point around which the situation settles. This role is about presence as containment.
10	The One Who Held On	● Ourselves	Zoe chooses not to defend herself, not from defeat, but from precision. She knows the defence will not be heard as one. This role is about integrity under unfair pressure.
11	The Reed	● Ourselves	Zoe moves through the storm without fighting it. She bends without breaking. This role is about resilience as flexibility, not rigidity, and about reading what can be saved.
12	The Leader	● Ourselves	Zoe accepts what has been given to her, not triumphantly, but simply. She walks to the front. This role is about leadership as a responsibility the community has conferred.

Chapter Pages

The twelve chapters of Zoe and the Great Summer Jubilee, each with full pedagogical structure: discussion, reflection, connection, Guardian Moment, butterfly observation, ladybird hunt hint, writing response, vocabulary, and curriculum alignment.

A note on curriculum references

The PSHE curriculum alignment tables in this guide reference the PSHE Association Programme of Study for PSHE Education (KS1–5), 2026. Item numbers (e.g. #1 (item 1), #17 (item 17)) refer to the numbered learning outcomes within each subsection of the PoS. Evidence codes in square brackets (e.g. [RKR8], [GW3]) cross-reference the DfE statutory Relationships, Sex and Health Education guidance; they indicate which statutory requirements the chapter content addresses. Full Quality Mark lesson plans with timed sequences, assessment criteria, and complete evidence code mapping are available separately, see the companion PSHE Quality Mark Lesson Plans (Ch.01–Ch.12).

THE PATTERN

In every chapter, Zoe's Guardian Moment follows the same pattern: she pauses → she notices → she chooses. Ask children to find this pattern in each chapter. The question that anchors it: 'What did Zoe notice that someone else might have missed? And what did she choose to do because of that noticing?'

Zoe and the Great Summer Jubilee

Teacher's Guide · Merevale Creek Farm Series

Chapter 1

The New Arrival

● Easy

Zoe's Role: The Steady Stranger
Fable Root: The Lion & the Mouse

With our bodies  1 hidden

Chapter Summary

Zoe arrives at Merevale Creek Farm. Nobody welcomes her. When George the Rabbit falls into the creek trying to carry a bucket that is too big for him, Zoe helps without fuss, wades in, fills the bucket, carries it to the barn. She asks for nothing. That evening, George's story spreads through the farm.


The Lesson: No act of kindness, however small, is ever wasted.

DISCUSSION – Talk Together

Q1 Why do you think the animals at Merevale Creek Farm were worried when Zoe arrived? What did they think she might do?

Q2 Was it fair to judge Zoe before they knew her? Have you ever been judged before someone knew you?

Q3 Why do you think Zoe helped George even though nobody had asked her to and even though nobody had been kind to her yet?


 **Teacher note:** Let children sit with the unfairness of Zoe's arrival. Resist the urge to resolve it. The discomfort is the point.

REFLECTION – Think Quietly

Q1 How do you think Zoe felt walking through that gate with everyone watching her?

Q2 Think of a time you did something kind that nobody noticed. How did it feel?

Q3 If you were George, would you have told the others what Zoe did? Why?


 **Teacher note:** The second question works well as a quiet written task – children often find it easier to write about unnoticed kindness than to say it aloud.

CONNECTION – Bring It Home

Q1 Has someone ever helped you when they didn't have to, and it changed how your day felt?

Q2 Is there someone in your class or school who might be like Zoe, judged before they are known?

Q3 What is one small kind thing you could do today that nobody would know about?


 **Teacher note:** The third question is an optional action prompt, not homework, but an invitation. Some teachers find it useful to return to it the following week.

THE GUARDIAN MOMENT – What did Zoe notice? What did she choose?

When George drops the bucket and falls into the mud, Zoe could speak first. She doesn't. She asks: 'Are you hurt?' Then she sees what needs to be done, wading into the creek, retrieving the bucket, carrying it up the bank, and does it without comment. She does not say 'that bucket was too big for you' or 'you should have been more careful' or even 'you're welcome'. She simply asks 'Where does this need to go?' and carries the weight that George could not. Zoe pauses, notices, chooses, and the choice is to help in a way that leaves George feeling not smaller for needing help, but seen.

THE BLUE BUTTERFLY – Where it appears in this chapter

First appearance. The blue butterfly lifts from the top bar of the gate as Zoe pushes it open, then floats ahead of her into the farmyard 'as if showing her the way'. It is there at the start of her journey. At dusk, after Zoe has helped George, it drifts past the barn door 'on its way to wherever butterflies go at dusk'. Neither character mentions it. It is simply present.

 **THE LADYBIRDS** 1 ladybird hidden in this chapter.

WRITING RESPONSE – Sentence variety and showing not telling

Write the opening of a story about a stranger arriving somewhere new. Use at least two sentences that show how the people in that place feel – without using the word 'feel'. Look at how the author shows the farm's reaction in the first paragraphs of Chapter 1: 'A silence settled over the farmyard; the particular kind of silence that is not peaceful at all, but full of unspoken things.' The silence shows what people feel.

TIER 2 VOCABULARY – Pre-teach before reading

Introduce these words before reading. Use the sentence from the chapter as the context. Ask children what they think the word means before confirming – the inference attempt matters as much as the answer.

Word	Meaning	In context
Intimidating	Making someone feel frightened or nervous	"She was a Rottweiler, black as a rain cloud... Her paws were the size of Margot the Hen's best serving plates."
Considerable	Large in size, amount, or importance	"The silence that followed was considerable."
Retreated	Moved back or withdrew from a place or situation	"George the Rabbit, who was small and prone to worry, had retreated behind the water trough."
Unhurried	Calm and without rushing; taking one's time	"Her voice was calm and unhurried, like the creek on a still day."
Assembled	Gathered together in one place	"Mayo the Horse stood at the front of the assembled animals with the expression of someone who had been elected spokesman without being asked."

CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

Quality Mark evidence codes follow the PSHE Association Programme of Study for PSHE Education (KS1–5), 2026. Full lesson plans with timed sequences and assessment criteria available separately.

Subject	KS1	KS2
PSHE	Respecting self and others #1: what makes them unique and special; how they are the same as, and different to, others; about the different groups they are part of, and how this can contribute to a sense of belonging. Mental health and wellbeing #1, #3, #5: how to recognise and name feelings; that feelings can affect how we behave; simple strategies to manage strong or uncomfortable feelings. [RKR8] [RKR10] [GW3] [GW4] [GW5] Friendships #10 [CF1] [CF3] [CF4] [GW6]: That healthy friendships make people feel included, safe and happy; how to recognise when they or others feel lonely or excluded; strategies to include others [RKR10] [GW1]	Respecting self and others #17: what stereotypes are and how they can be unfair; how stereotypes can negatively influence behaviours and attitudes towards others, including leading to bullying; strategies for challenging stereotypes. Respecting self and others #18: about prejudice and discrimination; to recognise behaviours that discriminate against others; ways of responding to discrimination, including when and how to seek help. Mental health and wellbeing #14: self-regulation strategies and how to use them to manage feelings, thoughts, setbacks and responses in different situations. Friendships #10 [CF1] [CF3] [CF4] [GW6]: That healthy friendships make people feel included, safe and happy; how to recognise when they or others feel lonely or excluded; strategies to include others [RKR10] [GW1]
English	Reading comprehension: making inferences on the basis of what is said and done; predicting what might happen. Spoken language: listening and responding to others; building Tier 2 vocabulary. Composition: sequencing sentences to form short narratives.	Reading comprehension: drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts, and motives from their actions. Spoken language: giving well-structured descriptions; using spoken language to develop understanding through speculating. Composition: considering how authors have developed characters and settings.
Maths	Number – counting: count to and across 10. Find 1 ladybird hidden in this chapter's illustrations. Beginning of the cumulative count toward 78.	Number patterns: introduction to the cumulative sequence (1, then 1+2, then 1+2+3...) leading to triangular numbers. Number – addition.
P4C	Suitable as gentle introduction to community questioning: 'Was it fair?' 'Why didn't she say anything?'	Open question: 'Should we judge someone by what they look like, or only by what they do?' This is a foundational P4C question – fair, contestable, and connected to children's lives. Suitable for early-Year-3 introduction to philosophical inquiry.

Wider Curriculum Links

Science (KS1 Animals including humans): identify and name common animals (dog, rabbit, horse, hen, cow, bull, sheep, pig, kitten, goose, butterfly).

RE: themes of welcome, hospitality, the stranger – appears in Christian, Jewish, Islamic, Sikh and humanist traditions. Suitable cross-faith starter.

Zoe and the Great Summer Jubilee

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Chapter 2

The Lost Lantern

● Easy

Zoe's Role: The One Who Listened
Fable Root: The Boy Who Cried Wolf

With our bodies  2 hidden


Chapter Summary

Max raises the alarm that the Jubilee lanterns are missing – then discovers he moved them himself. Nobody believes him when a lantern really does fall into the creek. Zoe alone takes him seriously, retrieves the lantern, and gently explains why being believed matters.

The Lesson: Honesty builds trust. A reputation for lying costs more than any single lie.


DISCUSSION – Talk Together

- Q1** Why didn't the animals believe Max the second time? Was that fair?
- Q2** What is the difference between making a mistake and telling a lie? Did Max lie?
- Q3** Why do you think Zoe believed Max when nobody else did? What did she see that the others missed?

 **Teacher note:** Children often conflate mistakes with dishonesty. This chapter is a good opportunity to draw that distinction carefully – Max was wrong, but he was not dishonest.


REFLECTION – Think Quietly

- Q1** Have you ever not been believed when you were telling the truth? How did that feel?
- Q2** Have you ever not believed someone – and then found out they were right?
- Q3** If you were Max, what would you do differently next time?

 **Teacher note:** The second question is the harder one. Give children time. Some will need to think before they can answer honestly.

CONNECTION – Bring It Home

- Q1** What makes someone trustworthy? Make a list of three things.
- Q2** Is it ever hard to tell the truth? When might someone find it easier to stay quiet instead?
- Q3** How could you show someone that you believe them – even when others don't?


 **Teacher note:** The first question works well as a paired activity – children compare their lists and discuss any differences.

THE GUARDIAN MOMENT – What did Zoe notice? What did she choose?

When Max comes running the second time, every other animal dismisses him. Zoe notices his face is different – genuinely distressed, not excited. She doesn't ask if he's sure. She doesn't roll her eyes. She just goes with him to the creek. Zoe pauses, notices the difference in his face, chooses to trust him before she has any evidence. The trust comes first.

THE BLUE BUTTERFLY – Where it appears in this chapter

The blue butterfly is resting on the door frame of the barn 'as if it had been waiting' when Zoe and Max return with the recovered lantern. It is there at the moment Max's truth is finally believed.

 **THE LADYBIRDS** 2 ladybirds hidden in this chapter.

WRITING RESPONSE – Direct speech and dialogue tags

Write a short scene where someone is telling the truth but isn't being believed. Use direct speech for at least three exchanges. Vary your dialogue tags – try not to use 'said' every time. Look at how the author handles the moment Max returns: notice how each animal's reply tells you something about their character before they finish speaking.

TIER 2 VOCABULARY – Pre-teach before reading

Introduce these words before reading. Use the sentence from the chapter as the context. Ask children what they think the word means before confirming – the inference attempt matters as much as the answer.

Word	Meaning	In context
credibility	the quality of being trusted and believed	"It's easier to be believed the first time. After that, you have to earn it back."
precautionary	done to prevent something bad from happening	"June the Mother Goose rounded up the goslings out of pure precautionary instinct."
exasperation	the feeling of being irritated and frustrated	"Margot received the lantern with a complicated expression – relief and residual exasperation in roughly equal measure."
residual	remaining after the main part has gone	"Relief and residual exasperation in roughly equal measure."
distressed	very upset or troubled	"Max's ears went flat – genuinely distressed, not excited."

CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

Quality Mark evidence codes follow the PSHE Association Programme of Study for PSHE Education (KS1–5), 2026. Full lesson plans with timed sequences and assessment criteria available separately.

Subject	KS1	KS2
PSHE	Friendships #1: what friendship is and what makes a good friend; how to be kind and caring in friendships. Mental health and wellbeing #1, #3, #5: how to recognise and name feelings; that feelings can affect how we behave; simple strategies to manage strong or uncomfortable feelings.	Friendships #7: what constitutes a positive, healthy friendship, e.g. mutual respect, trust and kindness. Respecting self and others #11: about diversity, personal identity and self-respect; that everyone should be treated with respect. Mental health and wellbeing #14: self-regulation strategies and how to use them to manage feelings, thoughts, setbacks and responses in different situations. [CF2] [CF4] [RKR2] [GW1]
English	Reading: making predictions about what might happen next; relating the story to a known fable. Vocabulary development: credibility, precautionary, exasperation, residual, distressed.	Reading: comparing different versions of a similar narrative (Aesop's original vs the Merevale Creek retelling); identifying themes and conventions in fable structure. Composition: writing in role; producing a piece from Max's perspective.
Maths	Number – counting: count to 20 forwards. Find 2 ladybirds. Begin double-digit thinking with the running count (1+2=3).	Number – addition: simple cumulative addition. Position on a number line.
P4C	Question: 'Is it always wrong to make a mistake?'	Open question: 'When you have not been believed about something true, how do you make people trust you again?' Particularly powerful for Year 4–6 children navigating peer dynamics.

Wider Curriculum Links

Aesop's Fables literacy unit: KS1 and KS2 – comparison with The Boy Who Cried Wolf.

Drama: hot-seating Max and Zoe. Conscience corridor for Max's choice.

Zoe and the Great Summer Jubilee

Teacher's Guide · Merevale Creek Farm Series

Chapter 3

The Great Race

● Easy

Zoe's Role: The Patient One

Fable Root: The Hare and the Tortoise

With our bodies  3 hidden

Chapter Summary

The Jubilee Meadow Race. Mayo is fast and certain he will win. Oscar the Bull studies the course, identifies the boggy patch near the creek, plans his route around it. Mayo charges through the bog and loses. Oscar wins by thinking, not running. Zoe jogs the course last – unbothered. She uses the race to learn the farm.


The Lesson: Patience and careful preparation beat speed and overconfidence.

DISCUSSION – Talk Together

Q1 Mayo was faster than Oscar – so why did Oscar win? Was it fair?

Q2 Oscar looked at the course before the race. Mayo didn't. What does that tell us about the difference between confidence and preparation?

Q3 Zoe finished last. Does that mean she failed? Why or why not?


 **Teacher note:** The third question is the most important. Press gently on the idea that losing and failing are not the same thing.

REFLECTION – Think Quietly

Q1 Can you think of a time when rushing made something worse?

Q2 What does it feel like to be the slowest at something? Is slow always bad?

Q3 Why do you think Mayo was so sure he would win? Have you ever been very sure of something – and been wrong?


 **Teacher note:** Children respond strongly to the Mayo question. Many will have their own experience of overconfidence. Let them share it.

CONNECTION – Bring It Home

Q1 Before you start something important – a test, a game, a task – do you prepare? What does your preparation look like?

Q2 Is there something you have given up on because you weren't fast enough? What might happen if you tried again more slowly?

Q3 Mabel cheered for Zoe even though Zoe finished last. What does it mean to cheer for someone who isn't winning?


 **Teacher note:** The third question links to the book's broader theme of belonging and being seen. It is particularly powerful for children who feel overlooked in competitive settings.

THE GUARDIAN MOMENT – What did Zoe notice? What did she choose?

Zoe finishes last. She is not bothered by this. She uses the race to learn every corner of the farm. When Mabel says 'Good run,' Zoe says 'Thank you.' She does not apologise for being slow. She does not explain. She does not minimise. Zoe pauses, notices that being last has not diminished her, chooses to receive Mabel's kindness simply.

THE BLUE BUTTERFLY – Where it appears in this chapter

The blue butterfly walks a short way back to the pasture with Mabel after the race, then turns and flies on. It is there at the moment Mabel cheers for Zoe – at the moment of unexpected kindness.

 **THE LADYBIRDS** 3 ladybirds hidden in this chapter.

WRITING RESPONSE – Pacing – using sentence length to mirror action

Write a short race scene. Use long sentences when something is being done carefully and short ones when something is happening fast. Look at how the author paces the race in Chapter 3: Mayo's overconfident charge is described in short, punchy sentences; Oscar's careful walk around the course beforehand is described in longer, considered ones. The sentence length tells you how each character moves.

TIER 2 VOCABULARY – Pre-teach before reading

Introduce these words before reading. Use the sentence from the chapter as the context. Ask children what they think the word means before confirming – the inference attempt matters as much as the answer.

Word	Meaning	In context
assessment	a judgement made after thinking carefully	"Oscar walked the course alone... he looked at the boggy patch for a long time."
consistent	always behaving the same way, or happening at the same rate	"Oscar ran at a steady pace. What he was, was consistent."
outmanoeuvred	gained an advantage over someone by being cleverer or more skilful	"The very particular frustration of someone who has been outmanoeuvred and cannot immediately identify how."
overconfidence	too much belief in your own abilities	"Mayo was fast – certain he would win. His overconfidence led him straight into the bog."
approval	the feeling that something or someone is good or acceptable	"Mabel cheered for Zoe – a low, steady sound like distant approval."

CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

Quality Mark evidence codes follow the PSHE Association Programme of Study for PSHE Education (KS1–5), 2026. Full lesson plans with timed sequences and assessment criteria available separately.

Subject	KS1	KS2
PSHE	Mental health and wellbeing #1, #3, #5: how to recognise and name feelings; that feelings can affect how we behave; simple strategies to manage strong or unpleasant feelings. Friendships (items 2, 4): how to be kind and caring; simple ways to resolve arguments positively. Careers education #1: That everyone has different strengths and interests; to identify what they enjoy and are good at [RKR8] [RKR10]	Mental health and wellbeing #14: self-regulation strategies and how to use them to manage feelings, thoughts, setbacks and responses in different situations. Mental health and wellbeing #17: that everyone feels worried, lonely or sad sometimes and that these feelings can affect wellbeing; the benefits of speaking to someone. Friendships #8, #10: how to build caring friendships; strategies for positively including others. [GW1] Careers education #5: To recognise their achievements and personal strengths; how to set targets to achieve goals. Respecting self and others #11 [RKR5] [RKR8]: About diversity; the benefits of living in a diverse community; that everyone should be treated with respect
English	Reading: comparing this story to The Hare and the Tortoise. Comprehension: identifying the moral of a story.	Reading: identifying themes; understanding the structure of a fable; recognising authorial choices that develop character. Composition: writing a chapter from Mayo's perspective after the race.
Maths	Number – counting: count to 30. Find 3 ladybirds. Triangular pattern emerging visually (1+2+3=6). Measurement: distance, position on a course.	Number patterns: triangular numbers (1, 3, 6, 10, 15, 21...) – Chapter 3's cumulative is 6. Statistics: representing race results in a chart.
P4C	Question: 'Is being fast always best?'	Open question: 'Is losing the same as failing?' This question often produces unusually thoughtful Year 5–6 responses, particularly from children who feel overlooked in competitive settings.

Wider Curriculum Links

Geography (KS1 and KS2): map work – drawing the race course; using positional and directional language; introducing aerial-view perspective.

Science (KS1): forces – pushing and pulling, why mud slows you down.

PE: linking fable to fair-play discussion in actual PE races. Cross-curricular tie-in.

Zoe and the Great Summer Jubilee

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Chapter 4

The Stubborn Gate

● Easy

Zoe's Role: The Gentle Solution
Fable Root: The Sun & the Wind

With our bodies  4 hidden


Chapter Summary

The gate to the Jubilee meadow has swollen shut. Mayo, Otis, and Oscar all try to force it. None succeed. Zoe pours cold water on the swollen hinge, waits two minutes, and opens it easily. The Jubilee equipment is moved into the meadow. The preparations begin to feel real.

The Lesson: Gentleness achieves what force cannot.


DISCUSSION – Talk Together

- Q1** Why didn't Mayo's approach work? Was he not trying hard enough?
- Q2** Zoe watched the others try first before she acted. Why didn't she just go straight to the water?
- Q3** Oscar said he would have got there eventually. Do you think he would have? Does it matter?

 **Teacher note:** The second question is the key one for this chapter. Zoe's patience before she acts is as important as the solution itself. Explore what it means to let others try first.


REFLECTION – Think Quietly

- Q1** Can you think of a problem that got worse when someone tried to force it? What happened?
- Q2** Is it ever hard to wait and watch while someone else tries something that you know won't work? How does that feel?
- Q3** Zoe didn't say 'I told you so' after the gate opened. Why not? Would you have?

 **Teacher note:** The third question often generates honest and entertaining responses. Create a safe space for children to admit they might have said something.

CONNECTION – Bring It Home

- Q1** Think of a time when a gentle approach worked better than a forceful one. What was the situation?
- Q2** Is 'trying harder' always the right answer? When might stopping and thinking be better?
- Q3** What is one situation in your life right now where you could try a gentler approach?


 **Teacher note:** The third question is personal. Do not force sharing. It can be written privately and kept.

THE GUARDIAN MOMENT – What did Zoe notice? What did she choose?

Zoe watches three animals try to force the gate before she acts. She does not interrupt them. She does not say 'that won't work.' She does not even shake her head. She watches, calmly. When all three have failed, she fetches the bucket of cold water and pours it on the swollen hinge. Two minutes later, the gate opens. She does not say 'I told you so.' She does not say anything. She simply walks through. Zoe pauses, notices that force will not solve this, chooses to act with patience after the others have made their attempts.

THE BLUE BUTTERFLY – Where it appears in this chapter

The blue butterfly does not appear in the manuscript text of Chapter 4 – it is a visual-only appearance hidden in the illustrations. Invite children to find it before or after reading. Where might a butterfly settle in a scene about a stubborn gate?

 **THE LADYBIRDS** 4 ladybirds hidden in this chapter.

WRITING RESPONSE – Sequencing – instructional writing with imperative verbs

Write a short instructional text titled 'How to Open a Stubborn Gate the Gentle Way'. Use clear sequencing words (first, then, after, finally) and imperative verbs (pour, wait, push). Compare your instructions with how the author shows Zoe's solution in the narrative. Why might a story show a process rather than instruct it?

TIER 2 VOCABULARY – Pre-teach before reading

Introduce these words before reading. Use the sentence from the chapter as the context. Ask children what they think the word means before confirming – the inference attempt matters as much as the answer.

Word	Meaning	In context
swollen	made larger by absorbing liquid or moisture	"The gate had swollen in the heat – the wood pressing against itself, refusing to open."
stubborn	refusing to change or move	"The stubborn gate did not yield to Mayo, or to Otis, or to Oscar."
deliberate	done carefully and on purpose	"Zoe's actions were quiet and deliberate."
yielded	gave way under pressure or persuasion	"After two minutes, the wood yielded with a small soft sigh."
restraint	controlled and reserved behaviour	"Her restraint was the most striking thing about her."

CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

Quality Mark evidence codes follow the PSHE Association Programme of Study for PSHE Education (KS1–5), 2026. Full lesson plans with timed sequences and assessment criteria available separately.

Subject	KS1	KS2
PSHE	Friendships #4: simple ways to resolve arguments between friends positively; that physically hurting someone is never the right way to solve an argument. Mental health and wellbeing #5: simple strategies to manage distraction, unhelpful thoughts and strong, unpleasant or uncomfortable feelings. [GW1] [GW5]	Mental health and wellbeing #14: self-regulation strategies and how to use them to manage feelings, thoughts, setbacks and responses in different situations. Respecting self and others #14: ways to reconcile differences and conflict positively and safely, including avoiding physical aggression and finding a compromise. [GW1] [CF6] [RKR3]
English	Reading: comparing to The Sun and the Wind fable. Listening for character voice – how each animal's attempt is described differently.	Reading: examining how the author uses pacing – three failed attempts before the solution – to build dramatic structure. Composition: writing instructions for a gentle solution (sequencing, imperative verbs).
Maths	Number – counting: count to 40. Find 4 ladybirds (cumulative total now 10 – first triangular number children commonly recognise). Time: 'wait two minutes' – introduction to time intervals.	Number patterns: cumulative count is now 10 – a recognisable triangular number. Discuss what comes next (15, 21, 28...). Time: estimating intervals.
P4C	Question: 'Is it ever good to wait before helping?'	Open question: 'Is gentleness a kind of strength?' Particularly rich for KS2 – connects to perceptions of strength and weakness, masculinity, and emotional regulation.

Wider Curriculum Links

Science (KS2 – Properties and changes of materials): why does cold water help a swollen wooden gate? Investigation into thermal expansion and contraction. Excellent practical science link.

RE: gentleness as a virtue across faiths (Christian – fruits of the spirit; Buddhist – metta; humanist – kindness).

Design and Technology (KS1 and KS2): understanding hinges, gates, simple mechanisms.

Zoe and the Great Summer Jubilee

Teacher's Guide · Merevale Creek Farm Series

Chapter 5

The Clever Solution

● Medium

Zoe's Role: The One Who Asked
Fable Root: The Crow & the Pitcher

With others  5 hidden


Chapter Summary

The barn water pipe is blocked. Oscar spends forty minutes designing complex solutions. Zoe asks Calypso – the smallest animal on the farm – to reach inside the pipe with her tiny paw. The blockage is cleared in minutes. Oscar is briefly put out. Then he decides he likes Zoe.

The Lesson: When the obvious approach fails, think differently. Small actions, patiently repeated, solve big problems.


DISCUSSION – Talk Together

- Q1** Why did Oscar spend forty minutes thinking before Zoe arrived? Was he wasting time?
- Q2** Why was Calypso's solution better than Oscar's? Was it cleverer, or simpler, or both?
- Q3** Zoe didn't solve the problem herself – she asked someone else. Is asking for help the same as not knowing the answer?

 **Teacher note:** The third question is the strongest. Help children see that knowing who to ask is itself a form of intelligence.


REFLECTION – Think Quietly

- Q1** Have you ever solved a problem in a way that surprised you? What did you do?
- Q2** Is it harder to ask for help, or to give help when asked? Why?
- Q3** If you were Oscar, would you have been pleased Calypso solved it – or a bit put out? Be honest.

 **Teacher note:** Children are often surprisingly honest about the third question. Affirm both responses – pleased and put out are both human reactions.

CONNECTION – Bring It Home

- Q1** Who in your class is best at noticing small things? What might that person be especially good at?
- Q2** When you have a problem you can't solve, who would you ask? Why them?
- Q3** Think of a problem at home or school. Could a smaller, simpler solution work better than a big complicated one?


 **Teacher note:** The first question changes the way children look at peers. Some children will be named for the first time as having a strength they didn't know was visible.

THE GUARDIAN MOMENT – What did Zoe notice? What did she choose?

Zoe sees Oscar calculating for forty minutes and asks one question: 'May I suggest something?' Not 'your idea won't work' – not 'let me do it' – just an offer. And the suggestion is not her own solution. It is to ask Calypso. Zoe pauses, notices that Oscar's strength is not the right tool here, chooses to point toward a different strength rather than impose her own.

THE BLUE BUTTERFLY – Where it appears in this chapter

The blue butterfly drifts through the open barn door, turns once in the flower-scented air, and drifts out again. Zoe and Oscar watch it go. It is there at the moment Oscar decides he likes Zoe – at the moment of small reconciliation.

 **THE LADYBIRDS** 5 ladybirds hidden in this chapter.

WRITING RESPONSE – Building character through small action

Write a short scene where two characters approach the same problem in different ways. Show their characters through what they do, not what they say. Look at how the author uses small actions in Chapter 5: Oscar's calculations, Calypso's tiny paw inside the pipe, Zoe's single question. Each action tells you who that character is.

TIER 2 VOCABULARY – Pre-teach before reading

Introduce these words before reading. Use the sentence from the chapter as the context. Ask children what they think the word means before confirming – the inference attempt matters as much as the answer.

Word	Meaning	In context
elaborate	complicated and detailed	"Oscar's plan was elaborate – diagrams in the dirt, calculations of pressure, three contingencies."
ingenious	clever and original	"It was an ingenious solution – and it had been there all along."
diminutive	very small	"Calypso, the most diminutive of the farm's animals, was exactly the right size."
humility	the quality of being humble; not thinking you are more important than others	"Oscar's humility, when it came, was quiet and quick."
affection	a feeling of warmth and liking towards someone	"Affection, on a farm, was a slow and unsentimental thing."

CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

Quality Mark evidence codes follow the PSHE Association Programme of Study for PSHE Education (KS1–5), 2026. Full lesson plans with timed sequences and assessment criteria available separately.

Subject	KS1	KS2
PSHE	Respecting self and others #10: the shared responsibilities everyone has to care for other people and living things; how to show respect, care and concern for others. Mental health and wellbeing #8: who they can talk to if finding things difficult or needing help with feelings; how to ask for help. Careers education #1: that everyone has different strengths and interests. [RKR8] [RKR10]	Mental health and wellbeing #14: self-regulation strategies and how to use them to manage feelings, thoughts, setbacks and responses. Mental health and wellbeing #21: when, why and how to seek help for their own or others' wellbeing or mental health. Careers education #5: to recognise their achievements and personal strengths; how to set targets to help achieve their goals. Careers education #6: to identify and build skills that might help them in their future, e.g. teamwork, communication, negotiation. Friendships #10 [CF1] [CF3] [CF4] [GW6]: That healthy friendships make people feel included, safe and happy; strategies to include others; the importance of seeking support if feeling lonely or excluded. Respecting self and others #11 [RKR5] [RKR8]: About diversity; the benefits of living in a diverse community; that everyone should be treated with respect [GW1]
English	Reading: linking to The Crow and the Pitcher fable. Vocabulary development.	Reading: examining how a problem is presented and solved across multiple narrative beats. Composition: writing a short instructional text – 'How to solve a problem when the obvious solution isn't working' – using sequenced steps.
Maths	Number – counting: count to 50. Find 5 ladybirds. Cumulative total now 15 (next triangular number).	Number patterns: 15 is a triangular number – pattern emerging clearly now. Problem-solving: discussing different approaches to the same problem; introduction to mathematical creativity.
P4C	Question: 'Is the smallest person sometimes the most useful?'	Open question: 'When is asking for help better than working it out yourself?' Connects to academic confidence, classroom culture, and gendered patterns of help-seeking.

Wider Curriculum Links

Science (KS2 – States of matter, water): how water flows, what blocks pipes, why narrow openings matter. Practical investigation.

Engineering thinking (cross-curricular): defining a problem, considering multiple solutions, evaluating which is best.

Design and Technology: simple plumbing concepts, water systems on a farm.

Zoe and the Great Summer Jubilee

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Chapter 6

The Prize Stall

● Medium

Zoe's Role: The Quiet Witness

Fable Root: The Dog & His Reflection

With others  6 hidden

Chapter Summary

The Jubilee puzzle challenge. Rufus wins and chooses the glittering rosette over Mo's honey jar. The honey turns out to be irreplaceable – the last of the year's hive. George wins the honey and shares it with everyone. Rufus watches from the end of the table with his glittering rosette and an empty plate.


The Lesson: Greed and envy cost more than they gain. What you have is enough, if you can see it clearly.

DISCUSSION – Talk Together

Q1 Why did Rufus choose the rosette over the honey? Was that a foolish choice?

Q2 When the honey turned out to be the last of the year's hive, did Rufus's choice become worse – or did it just become more visible?

Q3 George shared the honey with everyone. Could he have eaten it all himself? Why didn't he?


 **Teacher note:** The second question is the philosophical heart of this chapter. Help children see that the choice didn't change – what changed was their understanding of the choice.

REFLECTION – Think Quietly

Q1 Have you ever wanted something that turned out not to be as good as you thought? How did that feel?

Q2 Is it possible to be jealous of something even when you have something better?

Q3 Why didn't Zoe say anything to Rufus at the end of the chapter? Was that the right thing?


 **Teacher note:** The third question links to Zoe's role of Quiet Witness. Some children will think she should have said something. Both views are reasonable.

CONNECTION – Bring It Home

Q1 Think of something you really wanted recently. If you had it, would you still want it?

Q2 Is sharing something always a way of saying 'I have enough'? Is that easy to do?

Q3 Look around your room. Is there one thing that looks valuable but isn't useful – and one thing that looks ordinary but you would miss?


 **Teacher note:** The third connection question is unusually grounded. Children come back with surprising answers about their own things.

THE GUARDIAN MOMENT – What did Zoe notice? What did she choose?

Zoe sits near Rufus at the end of the chapter. She does not say 'You should have chosen the honey.' She does not say anything at all. She is simply present – close enough that he is not alone with what he has done, far enough that she is not telling him anything. Zoe pauses, notices Rufus's regret, chooses to witness without making it worse.

THE BLUE BUTTERFLY – Where it appears in this chapter

Mo finds the blue butterfly sitting on the empty honey jar after the feast – the small cotton square beside it, the jar clean and golden in the lamplight. The butterfly is there with what is left, not with what was lost.

 **THE LADYBIRDS** 6 ladybirds hidden in this chapter.

WRITING RESPONSE – Showing emotion through detail rather than telling

Write a short scene where someone wins something they don't quite want any more. Show their feelings through small details – what they look at, what they touch, what they don't do. The author shows Rufus's regret entirely through what he doesn't do: he watches, he sits, he does not eat. The empty plate tells you everything.

TIER 2 VOCABULARY – Pre-teach before reading

Introduce these words before reading. Use the sentence from the chapter as the context. Ask children what they think the word means before confirming – the inference attempt matters as much as the answer.

Word	Meaning	In context
irreplaceable	impossible to replace if lost or damaged	"Mo's honey was irreplaceable – the bees had not produced more this year, and might not next year."
envious	wishing you had what someone else has	"Rufus was envious – though he had something glittering, and George had only something good."
ostentatious	designed to impress or attract notice	"The rosette was ostentatious in a way that the honey was not."
modesty	not boasting or showing off	"George's modesty was not performed; it was genuine."
regret	feeling sorry about a past action or decision	"Regret arrived for Rufus quietly, not all at once."

CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

Quality Mark evidence codes follow the PSHE Association Programme of Study for PSHE Education (KS1–5), 2026. Full lesson plans with timed sequences and assessment criteria available separately.

Subject	KS1	KS2
PSHE	Mental health and wellbeing #1, #3, #5: how to recognise and name a range of feelings including disappointment; that feelings can affect how we behave; strategies to manage strong or unpleasant feelings. Respecting self and others #6: how to share, take turns and include others. Economic wellbeing #5: The difference between needs and wants; that people may not always be able to have the things they want	Mental health and wellbeing #10: how to identify, name and describe a wide range of emotions; how emotions range in intensity and can change over time. Mental health and wellbeing #12: how feelings can impact people's behaviour and how they respond to others; skills to manage strong emotions and reactivity. Economic wellbeing #9: that what people do with their choices can affect others and the environment. [GW5] Respecting self and others #11 [RKR5] [RKR8]: About personal identity and self-respect; what contributes to who someone is; that everyone should be treated with respect. Friendships #7 [CF2] [CF4] [RKR2]: Truthfulness in relationships; when honesty is harder but more important
English	Reading: linking to The Dog and His Reflection. Comprehension: predicting what Rufus will choose and why.	Reading: tracking a character's emotional arc across a chapter; identifying the moment of recognition or regret. Composition: writing a diary entry from Rufus's perspective at the end of the chapter.
Maths	Number – counting: count to 60. Find 6 ladybirds. Cumulative total now 21 (triangular number).	Number patterns: triangular numbers continue (21). Statistics: discussing prize value vs prize appearance – measurement of worth. Problem-solving: 'fair shares' – division and sharing.
P4C	Question: 'Is it greedy to want the prettiest thing?'	Open question: 'Does the value of something come from how it looks, or from how useful it is?' Excellent for KS2 – opens discussions of advertising, branding, marketing pressures children face.

Wider Curriculum Links

Science (KS2 – Living things and their habitats): bees, honey production, pollination. Strong link to environmental education.

Art and Design: comparing 'glittering' vs 'useful' aesthetic objects – what makes something beautiful?

PSHE Economic wellbeing: understanding value, choice, regret in spending decisions. Surprisingly relevant to financial literacy.

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Chapter 7

The Sour Berries

● Medium

Zoe's Role: The One Who Made Space
Fable Root: The Fox & the Grapes

With others  7 hidden


Chapter Summary

The Jubilee orchard walk. Mayo cannot reach the high berries and pretends he doesn't want them. Calypso reaches them easily from the tree and offers some – he declines. Zoe quietly holds a branch down so the berries are within reach. Mayo takes them. They are perfect. He thanks Zoe. He does not thank Calypso.

The Lesson: Pretending not to want something we cannot reach costs us more than admitting we tried and failed.


DISCUSSION – Talk Together

- Q1** Why did Mayo say the berries weren't worth eating? Did he believe it?
- Q2** Why did Mayo take the berries from Zoe but not from Calypso? What was the difference?
- Q3** Is it harder to admit you wanted something – or to pretend you didn't?

 **Teacher note:** The second question is the chapter's quiet challenge. There is no clean answer. Mayo accepted help in a form he could accept – and that is itself worth examining.


REFLECTION – Think Quietly

- Q1** Have you ever pretended not to want something? What was it? Why did you pretend?
- Q2** Is it easier to be helped by some people than others? Why?
- Q3** Calypso was overlooked. How would you feel in her position?

 **Teacher note:** The third question often reveals strong feelings. Many children have been the overlooked helper. Affirm those experiences.

CONNECTION – Bring It Home

- Q1** Is there something at school you've given up on – and pretended you didn't care?
- Q2** When someone helps you, do you always thank them? Or only when you wanted the help?
- Q3** Could you find one small way to thank someone whose help you usually take for granted?

 **Teacher note:** The third question often produces the most reflective answers. It can be returned to as homework.

THE GUARDIAN MOMENT – What did Zoe notice? What did she choose?

Zoe holds the branch down without comment. She does not say 'these will taste good if you can reach them.' She does not look at Mayo's face. She looks somewhere else – at the orchard, at the sky – making it possible for him to take the berries without being seen taking them. Zoe pauses, notices Mayo's pride, chooses to make space for him to accept help without acknowledging he needed it.

THE BLUE BUTTERFLY – Where it appears in this chapter

The blue butterfly does not appear in the manuscript text of Chapter 7 – it is a visual-only appearance hidden in the illustrations. Where might a butterfly settle in an orchard scene? Look in the high branches, where the berries grow.

 **THE LADYBIRDS** 7 ladybirds hidden in this chapter.

WRITING RESPONSE – Subtext – what isn't said is as important as what is

Write a short scene where someone wants something but won't admit it. Show their wanting through what they look at, what they say (and don't say), what they do with their body. Look at how the author handles Mayo's pretence: he doesn't say he wants the berries, but the reader can see exactly that he does. Subtext is the writer's most powerful tool.

TIER 2 VOCABULARY – Pre-teach before reading

Introduce these words before reading. Use the sentence from the chapter as the context. Ask children what they think the word means before confirming – the inference attempt matters as much as the answer.

Word	Meaning	In context
indifferent	showing no interest or concern	"Mayo was studiously indifferent – turning his head away from the high berries with elaborate disinterest."
pretence	an attempt to make something seem true that is not	"His pretence was elaborate, and convinced no one but himself."
courteous	polite and considerate	"Calypso's offer was courteous, and was met with courteous refusal."
concealed	hidden or kept secret	"Mayo's want was concealed, but only thinly."
graceful	showing elegance, kindness, or skill	"Zoe's solution was graceful – a help that did not look like help."

CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

Quality Mark evidence codes follow the PSHE Association Programme of Study for PSHE Education (KS1–5), 2026. Full lesson plans with timed sequences and assessment criteria available separately.

Subject	KS1	KS2
PSHE	Mental health and wellbeing #1, #2, #5: how to recognise and name feelings; that feelings can change; simple strategies to manage strong or unpleasant feelings.	Mental health and wellbeing #10: how to identify, name and describe a wide range of emotions; how emotions range in intensity and can change over time. Mental health and wellbeing #12: how feelings can impact people's behaviour and how they respond to others; skills to manage strong emotions and reactivity. Respecting self and others #11: about diversity, personal identity and self-respect; what contributes to who someone is; that everyone should be treated with respect. [GW5] Friendships #7 [CF2] [CF4] [RKR2]: What constitutes a positive, healthy friendship; that truthfulness and loyalty are part of this [RKR5] [RKR8]
English	Reading: comparing to <i>The Fox and the Grapes</i> . Sequencing the order of attempts and outcomes.	Reading: identifying subtext – Mayo thanks Zoe but not Calypso. Why? What does this reveal? A genuine inference challenge for KS2. Composition: writing in role from Calypso's perspective, exploring her response to being overlooked.
Maths	Number – counting: count to 70. Find 7 ladybirds. Measurement: height, reach, comparing.	Number patterns: cumulative now 28 (next triangular number). Measurement: estimating heights, comparing distances. Problem-solving: when the answer to a measurement problem is 'someone else can do it'.
P4C	Question: 'If you can't have something, is it better to say you don't want it?'	Open question: 'Why do we sometimes find it easier to accept help from some people than from others?' Particularly useful for upper KS2 navigating peer hierarchies.

Wider Curriculum Links

Science (KS2 – Living things and habitats): orchards, fruit ripening, the food chain.

Geography: orchards in British rural landscape; seasonal food production.

RE: humility and acknowledgement of help across faith traditions.

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Chapter 8

The Tug of War

● Medium

Zoe's Role: The Organiser

Fable Root: The Bundle of Sticks

With others  8 hidden

Chapter Summary

The Jubilee tug of war. The teams are badly uneven – Mayo and Oscar on one side, everyone else on the other. Zoe reorganises the weaker team between rounds – not by adding her own strength, but by showing each animal where to stand and how to pull together. They still lose, but only just. Honour is restored.


The Lesson: Together we are stronger than any of us alone.

DISCUSSION – Talk Together

Q1 Why didn't Zoe just join the weaker team? Wouldn't her strength have helped?

Q2 Was it the rearrangement that made the team stronger, or the way Zoe asked them to pull together? Or both?

Q3 The team still lost. Was that important – or was something else more important?


 **Teacher note:** The third question is the chapter's quiet challenge. Help children see that 'losing better' can be a meaningful win.

REFLECTION – Think Quietly

Q1 Have you ever been in a team where the person organising you wasn't the strongest player? What was that like?

Q2 Is being a good organiser harder, or easier, than being a strong player?

Q3 Have you ever felt that you didn't fit in your team – until someone moved you?


 **Teacher note:** The third question often produces stories from PE or playground experiences. Children remember being moved. Affirm.

CONNECTION – Bring It Home

Q1 Think of a group at school you are part of. If you reorganised it, what would change?

Q2 Who in your class is good at making other people work better together? Have you ever told them?

Q3 When teams are unequal, is it always fair to leave them that way? When is it fairer to rearrange?


 **Teacher note:** The first question is unusually empowering for children who don't see themselves as leaders. Many discover they have organisational ideas they hadn't articulated.

THE GUARDIAN MOMENT – What did Zoe notice? What did she choose?

Zoe does not pull the rope. She does not add her own weight to the team. She moves Otis to the back as the anchor. She moves George forward where his low centre of gravity matters. She arranges Max and June and Calypso between them. She tells each of them where to stand, and why. Zoe pauses, notices the team's strength is in its arrangement, chooses to organise rather than substitute her own strength.

THE BLUE BUTTERFLY – Where it appears in this chapter

The blue butterfly is on the barn rafter above the team. George notices it but quietly decides not to say anything, 'in the same way you decide not to break a spell'. The butterfly is there at the moment the team becomes a team.

 **THE LADYBIRDS** 8 ladybirds hidden in this chapter.

WRITING RESPONSE – Group scenes – managing many characters at once

Write a short scene with at least five characters all doing something different at the same time. Help your reader keep track of who is who. Look at how the author handles the eight-character tug-of-war: each animal has a specific position and a specific action. The reader never gets lost because each character has one clear thing they are doing.

TIER 2 VOCABULARY – Pre-teach before reading

Introduce these words before reading. Use the sentence from the chapter as the context. Ask children what they think the word means before confirming – the inference attempt matters as much as the answer.

Word	Meaning	In context
uneven	not equal in size, level, or amount	"The teams were uneven from the start – and everyone knew it."
anchor	the heaviest person at the back of a team	"Zoe placed Otis at the back as the anchor – wide, heavy, settled."
coordinated	working together in a planned way	"When they pulled, they pulled coordinated – and the rope moved."
honour	a quality of integrity, dignity, or earned respect	"Honour, on the farm, was not a complicated thing."
appreciable	noticeable; worth noticing	"There was an appreciable difference in the second round."

CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

Quality Mark evidence codes follow the PSHE Association Programme of Study for PSHE Education (KS1–5), 2026. Full lesson plans with timed sequences and assessment criteria available separately.

Subject	KS1	KS2
PSHE	Respecting self and others #10: the shared responsibilities everyone has to care for other people and living things; how to show respect, care and concern for others. Mental health and wellbeing #3 [GW5] [RKR3]: Ways to manage strong feelings, reactions and responses	Careers education #5: to recognise their achievements and personal strengths; how to set targets to help achieve their goals. Careers education #6: to identify and build skills that might help them in their future, e.g. teamwork, communication, negotiation, critical thinking. Mental health and wellbeing #14: self-regulation strategies and how to use them to manage feelings, thoughts, setbacks and responses in different situations. [CF6] [RKR3] Friendships #12 [RKR1] [RKR4]: About balancing the needs and wishes of different people; the importance of balancing their own needs with being kind to others [GW1]
English	Reading: linking to The Bundle of Sticks. Vocabulary: tugged, anchor, coordinated.	Reading: examining how a leader is portrayed (Zoe gives no orders – she shows). Composition: writing a guide – 'How to organise a team to work well together'.
Maths	Number – counting: count to 80. Find 8 ladybirds. Forces and pulling – measurement of force (informal).	Number patterns: cumulative now 36 (triangular). Measurement and forces: introduction to combined forces; if 4 animals each pull at strength X, the total is 4X.
P4C	Question: 'Is winning the most important thing?'	Open question: 'Is a leader someone who is strongest, or someone who makes others strong?' Connects to leadership theory, citizenship, real-world examples.

Wider Curriculum Links

Science (KS1 and KS2 – Forces): forces in pairs, pushing and pulling, balanced and unbalanced forces. Practical experiment opportunity.

Drama and role play: re-enacting the rearrangement of the team.

PE: actual tug of war (safely conducted) – discussing the chapter's lesson through embodied experience.

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Chapter 9

The Goose's Warning

● Hard

Zoe's Role: The Still Centre

Fable Root: The Goose That Laid the Golden Eggs

With ourselves  9 hidden

Chapter Summary

A wasp nest has formed near the honey store. June counsels waiting – a small nest will take only a little, a disturbed nest destroys everything. Rufus does not wait. The honey store is lost. June produces a reserve jar she kept quietly for this possibility. The feast is saved, but the lesson remains.


The Lesson: Patience preserves what impatience destroys. The thing that gives steadily is worth more than everything it could give at once.

DISCUSSION – Talk Together

Q1 Why did Rufus not listen to June? Was it because she was older, or because the warning was inconvenient?

Q2 June kept a reserve jar quietly. Was that wise – or did it stop Rufus from facing the consequences?

Q3 What is the difference between waiting because you are patient, and waiting because you have no choice?


 **Teacher note:** The third question is the most philosophical. Genuine patience is a different thing from forced delay. Help children see the distinction.

REFLECTION – Think Quietly

Q1 Have you ever been warned about something – and ignored the warning? What happened?

Q2 Why do you think we sometimes prefer not to listen to people who are right?

Q3 Is it harder to wait for something, or to act and then deal with what happens?


 **Teacher note:** The second question often produces unexpectedly thoughtful answers. Some children identify their own patterns honestly.

CONNECTION – Bring It Home

Q1 Think of a time when an older person warned you about something. Did you listen? Should you have?

Q2 Is there something in your life right now that would benefit from waiting?

Q3 Who is the 'June' in your family or class – the one who quietly has a reserve plan? Have you ever thanked them?


 **Teacher note:** The third question is one of the most quietly powerful in the book. It changes how children see the unobtrusive adults around them.

THE GUARDIAN MOMENT – What did Zoe notice? What did she choose?

When Rufus disturbs the wasps and the honey store is lost, Zoe does not say 'June told you so.' She does not say 'this is your fault.' She sits beside Rufus on the step. She is the still point around which the disaster settles. Zoe pauses, notices that Rufus already knows what he has done, chooses presence over reproach.

THE BLUE BUTTERFLY – Where it appears in this chapter

The blue butterfly drifts through the lamplight, passes over the empty shelf where the honey was kept, through the open door, and on into the dark. It is there at the moment the loss is fully felt.

 **THE LADYBIRDS** 9 ladybirds hidden in this chapter.

WRITING RESPONSE – Foreshadowing – planting clues for what comes later

Write the opening of a story where something will go wrong later. Plant at least two small clues that the reader won't notice on a first reading but will recognise on a second. Look at how the author plants June's quiet preparedness early in the chapter, before the reader knows it will matter. Foreshadowing rewards careful readers.

TIER 2 VOCABULARY – Pre-teach before reading

Introduce these words before reading. Use the sentence from the chapter as the context. Ask children what they think the word means before confirming – the inference attempt matters as much as the answer.

Word	Meaning	In context
counsels	gives advice	"June counsels waiting – a small nest will take only a little."
impatient	not willing to wait calmly	"Rufus was impatient – and impatience, on a farm, has consequences."
stewardship	the careful management of something valuable	"June's stewardship was quiet and unshowy and perfect."
irretrievable	impossible to recover	"The honey was lost – irretrievable, like all things bees give."
reserve	something kept back for later use	"She had kept a reserve jar quietly, for exactly this possibility."

CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

Quality Mark evidence codes follow the PSHE Association Programme of Study for PSHE Education (KS1–5), 2026. Full lesson plans with timed sequences and assessment criteria available separately.

Subject	KS1	KS2
PSHE	Mental health and wellbeing #3, #5: that feelings can affect how we behave; ways to manage strong feelings, reactions and responses, including the urge to act immediately.	Mental health and wellbeing #14: self-regulation strategies and how to use them to manage feelings, thoughts, setbacks and responses in different situations. Mental health and wellbeing #16: how to manage emotional responses to events outside of their control. Economic wellbeing #9: that what people do with their choices can affect others and the environment. [GW1] Respecting self and others #13 [RKR3] [RKR4]: How to communicate effectively and assertively; how being assertive differs from being controlling. Friendships #12 [RKR1] [RKR4]: About balancing the needs and wishes of different people; the importance of balancing their own needs with being kind to others
English	Reading: linking to The Goose That Laid the Golden Eggs.	Reading: identifying advice given and ignored; understanding that wisdom in story often comes from older or quieter characters. Composition: writing in role as June, expressing both warning and forgiveness.
Maths	Number – counting: count to 90. Find 9 ladybirds.	Number patterns: cumulative 45. Time and rates: thinking about steady rates of production (a hive over time) vs one-off destruction. Excellent introduction to compound vs simple thinking.
P4C	Question: 'Is it harder to wait or to act?'	Open question: 'When older people give us advice we don't want to hear, why is it sometimes hard to listen?' Powerful for upper KS2. Also: 'Is it ever right to take everything you can take, just because you can?'

Wider Curriculum Links

Science (KS2 – Living things and habitats): wasps vs bees, ecosystems, pollinators, why disturbing nature has consequences.

RE: prophecy and warning across faith traditions – the figure who speaks the truth no one wants to hear.


Sustainability and environmental education: introduction to stewardship as a concept. Strong cross-curricular potential with Geography (sustainable communities) and PSHE Wider World.

Zoe and the Great Summer Jubilee

Teacher's Guide · Merevale Creek Farm Series

Chapter 10

The False Accusation

 Hard

Zoe's Role: The One Who Held On
Fable Root: The Shepherd & the Wolf

With ourselves  10 hidden

Chapter Summary

The ceremonial wreath is missing. Mayo implies Zoe took it – without saying so directly. Zoe could defend herself. She chooses not to. Oscar is furious on her behalf and says so loudly. Calypso finds the wreath behind the water trough where the wind blew it. Mayo says nothing.


The Lesson: Prejudice does not require evidence. Integrity means acting rightly even when you know you will not be believed.

DISCUSSION – Talk Together

Q1 Mayo did not say Zoe took the wreath – but everyone understood that he meant it. What is the difference between saying something and implying it?

Q2 Why didn't Zoe defend herself? Should she have? What might she have lost or gained by speaking up?

Q3 Mayo said nothing when the wreath was found. Was that an apology? Was it enough?


 **Teacher note:** The first question is a sophisticated language exercise – particularly important for upper KS2 in the era of social media. Help children name the gap between what is said and what is meant.

REFLECTION – Think Quietly

Q1 Have you ever been accused of something you didn't do? How did you respond?

Q2 Is it ever harder to defend yourself than to let others defend you? Why?

Q3 Oscar spoke up loudly for Zoe. Was that the right thing – even though Zoe hadn't asked him to?


 **Teacher note:** The third question is the chapter's most contested. Some children will say Zoe should have wanted defence. Others will say she didn't. Both are reasonable.

CONNECTION – Bring It Home

Q1 If a friend was being treated unfairly and didn't speak up, would you speak for them? When? When wouldn't you?

Q2 When have you been the loudest voice for someone? When have you been the quiet support?

Q3 Is there someone in your school who is being judged unfairly? What is one thing you could do?

 **Teacher note:** The third question is anti-bullying education at its quietest and most powerful. Do not force action – invite reflection.

THE GUARDIAN MOMENT – What did Zoe notice? What did she choose?

Zoe could defend herself. She has the words. She has the right. Mayo has implied something untrue, and silence will be read as guilt. She chooses silence anyway – not because she is defeated, but because she knows that defending herself in this moment would only confirm what Mayo wanted to suggest. Zoe pauses, notices the trap, chooses integrity over vindication.


THE BLUE BUTTERFLY – Where it appears in this chapter

The blue butterfly is on the barn wall beside Zoe through the worst of the morning. She looks at it – really looks, for longer than she usually allows herself. 'It had been there through the worst of the morning. It would be there at the front of the parade.' The butterfly is the witness who does not need her to explain.

 **THE LADYBIRDS** 10 ladybirds hidden in this chapter.

 **WRITING RESPONSE – Implication – what is meant without being said**

Write a short scene where one character accuses another without using direct words. Show how everyone understands what is meant. Then have a third character defend the accused. Show their anger through what they say and how. Look at how Mayo's accusation in Chapter 10 never quite becomes a statement – but everyone understands. This is one of the hardest things to write in English.

 **TIER 2 VOCABULARY – Pre-teach before reading**

Introduce these words before reading. Use the sentence from the chapter as the context. Ask children what they think the word means before confirming – the inference attempt matters as much as the answer.

Word	Meaning	In context
implication	something that is suggested but not directly said	"It was not an accusation; it was an implication. Which was somehow worse."
integrity	the quality of being honest and having strong principles	"Zoe's integrity was not a thing she did. It was a thing she was."
innocence	the quality of being free from blame or guilt	"Innocence, on a farm, is not always believed – and is rarely defended."
vindication	the proof that someone was right or innocent	"Vindication came late, and quietly, and Mayo did not say sorry."
ally	a person who stands with you	"Oscar was Zoe's loudest ally – and he was furious."

 **CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT**

Quality Mark evidence codes follow the PSHE Association Programme of Study for PSHE Education (KS1–5), 2026. Full lesson plans with timed sequences and assessment criteria available separately.

Subject	KS1	KS2
PSHE	Respecting self and others #7: about kind and unkind behaviour; that someone's actions and words can be hurtful. Respecting self and others #18: about prejudice and discrimination; to recognise behaviours that discriminate against others (introduced at age-appropriate level).	Respecting self and others #17: what stereotypes are and how they can be unfair; how stereotypes can negatively influence behaviours and attitudes towards others. Respecting self and others #18: about prejudice and discrimination; to recognise behaviours that discriminate against others; ways of responding to discrimination, including when and how to seek help. Mental health and wellbeing #14: self-regulation strategies and how to use them to manage feelings, thoughts, setbacks and responses in different situations. [RKR10] Friendships #10 [CF1] [CF3] [CF4] [GW6]: How to recognise when they or others feel lonely or excluded; strategies to include others. Safe relationships #19 [BS5] [BS6] [BS7] [RKR11]: How to identify trusted adults and sources of support; vocabulary to seek help [GW1]
English	Reading: identifying who is being treated unfairly and how. Comprehension: noticing what is said and what is implied.	Reading: examining implication and innuendo – how Mayo accuses without accusing. A genuinely sophisticated inference exercise. Composition: writing in role; persuasive writing – Oscar's speech in defence of Zoe.
Maths	Number – counting: count to 100. Find 10 ladybirds.	Number patterns: cumulative 55 (triangular). Logic and reasoning: examining a chain of accusation and counter-evidence.
P4C	Question: 'Is it fair to think someone did something just because of how they look?'	Open question: 'When you are accused of something you didn't do, should you defend yourself, or trust others to defend you?' This is a profound question for upper KS2 and connects to current cultural conversations about justice, voice, and being heard. One of the strongest P4C prompts in the book.

 **Wider Curriculum Links**

Citizenship and British Values: rule of law; individual liberty; mutual respect and tolerance of those with different beliefs.

PSHE Anti-bullying education: how prejudice operates, how to be an ally.

RE: judgement, justice, mercy – central themes across Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, and humanist thought.

Zoe and the Great Summer Jubilee

Teacher's Guide · Merevale Creek Farm Series

Chapter 11

The Great Storm

● Hard

Zoe's Role: The Reed
Fable Root: The Oak & the Reed

With ourselves  11 hidden

Chapter Summary

A summer storm arrives without warning during the Jubilee. Mayo tries to hold everything rigid – poles snap. Zoe moves through the chaos calmly, releasing what cannot be saved, securing what can. She retrieves Calypso from the maypole. The storm passes. Most of the Jubilee equipment is lost. But everyone is safe.


The Lesson: True strength is not the refusal to bend. It is the ability to endure – to flex without breaking, and to rise when the storm passes.

DISCUSSION – Talk Together

Q1 Why did Mayo's poles snap when Zoe's bunting survived? What is the difference between being rigid and being flexible?

Q2 Zoe gave George a task. Why was that important – wasn't it kinder to keep him safe?

Q3 When the storm passed, the meadow was a mess. But everyone was safe. Was the Jubilee ruined?


 **Teacher note:** The third question opens a discussion about what counts as a disaster and what counts as a manageable problem. Children's answers reveal their resilience instincts.

REFLECTION – Think Quietly

Q1 Have you ever felt like Mayo – wanting to hold something rigid that wanted to bend?

Q2 When you are scared, what helps you most? Being told everything is fine, or being given something specific to do?

Q3 What does it mean to 'bend without breaking' in your own life?


 **Teacher note:** This chapter is exceptionally aligned with mental health curriculum. The reflection questions explicitly invite children to name their own resilience strategies.

CONNECTION – Bring It Home

Q1 When something unexpected happens at school – fire alarm, sudden change of plan – who in your class stays calm? What do they do?

Q2 Is there something in your life right now that would benefit from being released rather than held tightly?

Q3 If a storm hit your school today, what would you save first? Be honest.


 **Teacher note:** The third question is concrete and engages every child. It is also a covert resilience exercise – children practise prioritising under pressure.

THE GUARDIAN MOMENT – What did Zoe notice? What did she choose?

When the storm hits, Zoe does not panic. She gives Max a task: get the canvas cover from the barn. She gives George a task: run. She lets the bunting go rather than fighting it. She climbs the swaying maypole – undignified, stubborn, one grip at a time – to retrieve Calypso. Zoe pauses, notices what can be saved and what cannot, chooses to release what must be released and secure what can be held.

THE BLUE BUTTERFLY – Where it appears in this chapter

The blue butterfly reappears on the bent-but-standing reed at the creek edge after the storm – wings open, vivid blue in the post-storm light. Both Zoe and Mabel see it. Neither says anything. The butterfly is itself the lesson: bent but standing, flexible but here.

 **THE LADYBIRDS** 11 ladybirds hidden in this chapter.

WRITING RESPONSE – Sensory description and figurative language

Write a short descriptive passage set during a storm. Use at least three different senses (sight, sound, touch, smell, taste). Include one simile or metaphor that captures the feeling of the storm. Look at how the author describes the storm in Chapter 11: notice the wind, the bent reed, the noise the maypole makes that Zoe 'did not find reassuring'. Each sense pulls the reader deeper into the moment.

TIER 2 VOCABULARY – Pre-teach before reading

Introduce these words before reading. Use the sentence from the chapter as the context. Ask children what they think the word means before confirming – the inference attempt matters as much as the answer.

Word	Meaning	In context
rigid	stiff and unbending	"Mayo's approach was rigid – and the rigid things broke."
flexible	able to bend without breaking	"Zoe's approach was flexible – release what cannot be saved, secure what can."
endure	to survive a difficult experience	"The reeds at the creek edge had endured many storms before this one."
aftermath	the period of time after a serious or unpleasant event	"In the golden aftermath of the storm, everything that mattered was still standing."
resilience	the ability to recover from difficulty	"Resilience, on a farm, was not loud. It was the work that came after."

CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

Quality Mark evidence codes follow the PSHE Association Programme of Study for PSHE Education (KS1–5), 2026. Full lesson plans with timed sequences and assessment criteria available separately.

Subject	KS1	KS2
PSHE	Mental health and wellbeing #3, #5, #8: ways to manage strong feelings; simple strategies to manage distraction and strong, unpleasant or uncomfortable feelings; who they can talk to if finding things difficult and how to ask for help. Respecting self and others #10: how to show respect, care and concern for others.	Mental health and wellbeing #14: self-regulation strategies and how to use them to manage feelings, thoughts, setbacks and responses in different situations. Mental health and wellbeing #16: how to manage emotional responses to events outside of their control, e.g. distressing events. Mental health and wellbeing #19: how to be resilient and to learn from setbacks. Friendships #14: how to recognise if a friendship is making them feel unsafe, unhappy or uncomfortable; how to support a friend who may be struggling. [GW1] [GW5] Respecting self and others #10 [RKR1] [RKR6] [GW1]: The shared responsibilities everyone has to care for other people; how to show respect, care and concern for others. Careers education #6: To identify and build skills including teamwork, communication and negotiation
English	Reading: linking to The Oak & the Reed. Comprehension: identifying who behaved well in the storm and why.	Reading: examining metaphor – the oak and the reed as figures for ways of being in the world. Composition: writing a descriptive piece set during a storm; exploring sensory language; using figurative language with intent.
Maths	Number – counting: count past 100. Find 11 ladybirds.	Number patterns: cumulative 66. Statistics: classifying what was lost vs what was saved.
P4C	Question: 'Is it brave to bend, or brave to stand still?'	Open question: 'Is it stronger to hold on tightly, or to know when to let go?' Connects directly to mental health, resilience, and emotional regulation. One of the most age-appropriately profound questions in the book for upper KS2.

Wider Curriculum Links

Science (KS1 – Seasonal change, KS2 – Weather and climate): how storms form, weather systems, why some structures survive and some don't.

Statutory Health Education guidance (DfE, 2019) – mental health and wellbeing strand: resilience as a teachable skill. This chapter is strongly aligned with the Department for Education's mental health curriculum requirements.

Geography: weather patterns, British climate, seasonal weather risks.

Design and Technology: structures – rigid vs flexible; tested in real-world conditions.

Zoe and the Great Summer Jubilee

Teacher's Guide · Merevale Creek Farm Series

Chapter 12

The Jubilee Parade

● Hard

Zoe's Role: The Leader
Fable Root: The Sun & the Wind
(reprise)

With ourselves  12 hidden


Chapter Summary

The Jubilee is ready. The question of who leads the parade. Mayo steps back and says it should be Zoe – simply, without ease. One by one, every animal agrees. Zoe walks to the front. The blue butterfly goes ahead of her. The parade follows. At the feast, all twelve characters reflect on the summer and on what they have learned.

The Lesson: Leadership is not taken, not assigned, not demanded. It is earned – and then given by those who choose to follow.


DISCUSSION – Talk Together

- Q1** Mayo was the natural leader at the start of the book. Why did he step back at the end?
- Q2** Why did the other animals agree, one by one, that Zoe should lead? What had they each seen?
- Q3** Zoe walked to the front 'simply, without ease'. What is the difference between accepting leadership simply and accepting it triumphantly?

 **Teacher note:** The third question is the chapter's quiet challenge. Help children see that leadership accepted with grace looks different from leadership claimed.


REFLECTION – Think Quietly

- Q1** Across the whole book, which of Zoe's twelve roles do you think was hardest for her? Why?
- Q2** Which role has been hardest for you to play in your own life?
- Q3** If you could give one of the twelve roles to one person you know, who would you give which role to?

 **Teacher note:** The twelve roles framework rewards children who have read the whole book carefully. This is the chapter for whole-book reflection.

CONNECTION – Bring It Home

- Q1** Who is the leader in your class – not the loudest, but the one others actually follow? How did they become that?
- Q2** What is one thing about Zoe that you want to take into your own life?
- Q3** If Zoe arrived at your school tomorrow, what would she notice that no one else has?

 **Teacher note:** The third question is the most quietly powerful in the whole book. It changes how children see their own setting.

THE GUARDIAN MOMENT – What did Zoe notice? What did she choose?

Zoe walks to the front of the parade. Not triumphantly. Not gratefully. Not nervously. Simply. The blue butterfly goes ahead of her. The parade follows. Zoe pauses, notices that leadership has been given to her by every animal in turn, chooses to accept it as a responsibility rather than as a prize.

THE BLUE BUTTERFLY – Where it appears in this chapter

The butterfly is everywhere in this chapter. It is on the gate that first morning, on the lantern in the creek, on the gate hinge before Zoe found the solution, on the rim of the water pipe, on the honey jar, on the rope during the tug of war, on the barn wall in Zoe's loneliest moment, on the bent reed after the storm – and now at the front of the parade. The butterfly has been there the whole time. It has been there because Zoe was paying attention.

 **THE LADYBIRDS** 12 ladybirds hidden in this chapter.

WRITING RESPONSE – Resolution and reflection – closing a story

Write the final paragraph of a story. Show that the main character has changed without saying they have changed. The author closes Chapter 12 with Zoe sitting in the dark, knowing the butterfly is there even though she can't see it: 'She had learned to know it was there.' The character's growth is shown in what she now knows without seeing. A good ending shows change.

TIER 2 VOCABULARY – Pre-teach before reading

Introduce these words before reading. Use the sentence from the chapter as the context. Ask children what they think the word means before confirming – the inference attempt matters as much as the answer.

Word	Meaning	In context
consensus	agreement reached by everyone in a group	"One by one, every animal agreed. The consensus was quiet, but it was complete."
acceptance	the process of being received into a group; agreeing to something without protest	"Zoe did not perform her leadership. She simply accepted her place."
earned	deserved through effort and consistent action over time	"Leadership that is earned feels different from leadership that is taken."
inevitable	certain to happen; impossible to prevent	"By Chapter 12, Zoe at the front of the parade felt not like a surprise but like something that had always been inevitable."
unperformed	genuine, not done for show	"Mabel's happiness was quiet, unperformed – the feeling of someone who had watched something good and known it as good."

CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

Quality Mark evidence codes follow the PSHE Association Programme of Study for PSHE Education (KS1–5), 2026. Full lesson plans with timed sequences and assessment criteria available separately.

Subject	KS1	KS2
PSHE	Respecting self and others #1: about the different groups they are part of, and how this can contribute to a sense of belonging. Mental health and wellbeing #1, #2: how to recognise and describe a range of positive feelings, including pride and joy; that positive experiences can affect wellbeing. [RKR8] [RKR10]	Mental health and wellbeing #19: how to be resilient and to learn from setbacks; reflecting on personal growth and what has been achieved. Mental health and wellbeing #20: how to manage change and transition positively. Careers education #5: to recognise their achievements and personal strengths; how to set targets to help achieve their goals. Respecting self and others #11: about diversity, personal identity and self-respect; that everyone should be treated with respect. Friendships #10 [CF1] [CF3] [CF4] [GW6]: That healthy friendships make people feel included, safe and happy; how to recognise when others feel excluded; the importance of seeking support if feeling lonely or excluded [RKR5] [RKR8]
English	Reading: tracking how Zoe has changed across 12 chapters. Identifying what has been learned. Comprehension: understanding endings and resolution.	Reading: examining narrative arc; tracking character development across a whole text; identifying authorial choices that bring resolution. Composition: writing a chapter epilogue; or a year-on letter from one character to another. Final whole-book project: 'What I learned from Zoe.'
Maths	Number – counting: count to 100 confidently. Find 12 ladybirds. Total ladybirds across the book: 78. Discuss: $1+2+3+\dots+12 = 78$.	Number patterns: triangular numbers – 1, 3, 6, 10, 15, 21, 28, 36, 45, 55, 66, 78. The whole book is a triangular number investigation. KS2 enrichment: prove the formula $n(n+1)/2 = \text{sum of first } n \text{ natural numbers}$. $12 \times 13 \div 2 = 78$. Number reasoning: why does this formula work? Visual demonstration with counters or dot diagrams.
P4C	Question: 'How do you choose a leader?'	Open question: 'Is the best leader the one who wants the job, or the one who doesn't?' Closes the book with one of the most contested questions in political philosophy. Suitable for upper KS2 and Year 7 transition.

Wider Curriculum Links

Citizenship: civic ceremony, community celebration, the role of recognition.
Strong link to Year 6 transition activities.

Whole-book PSHE reflection: tracking Zoe's twelve roles. Which was hardest for her? Which is hardest for you?

Music: composing or selecting a parade piece; rhythms suitable for processional movement.

Maths investigation week: triangular numbers, the formula $n(n+1)/2$, visual proofs, related sequences (square numbers, pentagonal numbers).

RE: leadership in faith traditions – the leader who serves, the prophet who is chosen, the king who washes feet.

Cross-Document References

This Field Notes guide is part of a wider production document suite. For the most current canonical references:

- Zoe the Rottweiler – Brand Bible v3.9.1.1 – canonical source of truth for character, world, and series mechanic
- Zoe Illustrator's Design Guide v2.3.1.1 – visual canon for all illustration work
- Zoe and the Great Summer Jubilee – Manuscript v1.1 – final text
- Field Notes Curriculum Alignment Review v1.0 – companion document with detailed curriculum cross-references

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Curriculum reference frameworks: National Curriculum 2014; PSHE Association Programme of Study for PSHE Education (Key stages 1–5), 2026; SAPERE P4C pedagogical framework; Statutory Health Education guidance (DfE, 2019) – mental health and wellbeing strand.

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Version History

Companion resource: PSHE Quality Mark Lesson Plans (Ch.01–Ch.12) – available at www.merevalecreekfarm.com/teacherpack. The lesson plans provide fully structured 50–60 minute PSHE sessions with drama technique, timed lesson sequence, learning objectives, success criteria, assessment criteria, and Quality Mark evidence codes. This Field Notes guide and the lesson plans are designed to be used together.

A NOTE ON THIS GUIDE

This guide grew over multiple versions and many conversations. It exists for one purpose: to help children find their own way to the meaning of each chapter. The questions are not tests. The vocabulary is not a list to memorise. The Guardian Moments are not lessons to extract. If a class spends an hour talking about whether it was fair that the animals worried about Zoe before they knew her – and never quite reaches a conclusion – that is the right outcome. The book does the teaching. The teacher holds the space.

Use these notes lightly. Trust the children. The story is enough.