



# When the Sky Falls

by Phil Earle

This half term all pupils will be lent a copy of *When the Sky Falls*, which they will be expected to read at home alongside a book of their choice and some non-fiction writing. **Please support us by ensuring your child does this reading each week.**

Please see below for a suggested timetable for reading at home as well as ideas and discussion points for supporting your child with this book.

## Deadlines for reading *When the Sky Falls*

Please note, pupils may read the book more quickly if they wish. However, we will be holding quizzes and discussions at school based on the table below.

Wednesday 12th November	pg43
Wednesday 19th November	pg82
Wednesday 26th November	pg120
Wednesday 3rd December	pg159
Wednesday 10th December	pg201
Wednesday 17th December	pg239
End of Christmas holidays	End

Pupils will need to read roughly 40 pages per week of this book. This could be broken down into 3 lots of roughly 13-14 pages, which should work well with the 30 minutes per day required reading.

## Daily reading

Pupils should spend 30 minutes per day reading at home. Please support your child by ensuring they have a quiet place to read and get into a habit of reading at the same time each day. This could be as soon as they get home from school, before they go to bed, or straight after their homework - try to find a routine which works best for your family.

If your child struggles to read independently for 30 minutes, then try the following:

- Split the time up into sections (e.g. fifteen minutes before school and fifteen minutes afterwards)



- Split the time into books (e.g. ten minutes on each text)
- Use a timer
- Take it in turns to read (e.g. your child reads a page, and then you read a page)

### Supporting your child with reading at home

Children are more likely to read and enjoy reading if their parents/carers show them that reading is important.

You can help them do this in the following ways:

- Help your child get into a reading routine (see above)
- Ask your child to read part of the book aloud to you
- Ask your child the discussion questions for each chapter and show interest in their answers
- Encourage your child to complete the competition task at the end of each book
- Read part of the book aloud to your child

Your child will take part in a quiz about these books each week. You can help your child prepare for this by asking them the discussion questions below.

### Questions to go through with your child

#### **Section 1 (chapters 1-5)**

- 1) What are your first impressions of Joseph when he arrives in the city? How do his actions and words show how he feels about being sent away?
- 2) How does Mrs. F treat Joseph when they first meet, and why do you think she behaves this way? What clues does Phil Earle give us about her personality?
- 3) Joseph is drawn to the gorilla, Adonis, even though it's dangerous. Why do you think he feels a connection to the animal?

#### **Section 2 (chapters 6-12)**

- 1) How does Joseph and Mrs. F's relationship change in these chapters?
- 2) Joseph often feels angry and out of place. What are some of the reasons for his anger, and how does he try to deal with it? Do you think his reactions are fair?
- 3) Who shows the most bravery in this section of the book?

#### **Section 3 (chapters 13-19)**

- 1) How has Joseph's behaviour and attitude changed compared to the start of the book? What events or relationships have helped him to grow and mature?
- 2) How does Mrs. F begin to show more trust in Joseph during these chapters?
- 3) How does Phil Earle show the growing danger and fear caused by the war in these chapters? Which scenes make you feel the tension most strongly?
- 4) Both Mrs. F and Joseph face difficult choices about right and wrong. What are some of these choices,



and what do they reveal about their characters?

#### **Section 4 (chapters 20-24)**

- 1) What does Joseph find out about Syd's parents? Why do you think she didn't tell him before?
- 2) How does Joseph feel about reading? Why do you think he is so reluctant to accept help?
- 3) What is Mrs F's main advice about how to act around Adonis? Do you think an animal can ever be a friend?

#### **Section 5 (chapters 25-30)**

- 1) Do you think Joseph should save Bert from Adonis?
- 2) Do you think Adonis' actions were just a coincidence? Do animals ever have a sense of right and wrong?
- 3) Was it brave or stupid to help Bert?
- 4) Why do you think Joseph gets so angry when Mrs F says a doctor might be able to help him?

#### **Section 6 (chapters 31-36)**

- 1) Do you think it's right for Joseph to be stealing vegetables to feed Adonis?
- 2) What is going to happen to Adonis if they don't find a home for him? What do you think Joseph and Mrs F should do?
- 3) How does Joseph try to trick the headmaster with his reading?
- 4) How do you think Joseph feels after Mrs F rescues him from the headmaster?

#### **Section 6 (chapter 37- end)**

- 1) What do we find out about Joseph's mum leaving?
- 2) Do you think Joseph should clean Adonis' cage? Is it brave or stupid?
- 3) What do we find out about Mrs F's family? Does that change your perception of her?
- 4) What do you think Joseph and Mrs F have in common?

#### Competition

All pupils are encouraged to enter our *When the Sky Falls* response competition. To enter the competition you need to respond to the book in some way - this could be with a piece of writing (poem, story, song lyrics etc), a piece of art (drawing, collage, painting, photograph), or any other recorded response.

#### Recommended reading after *When the Sky Falls*

*Until the Road Ends* by Phil Earle

While the Storm Rages by Phil Earle

