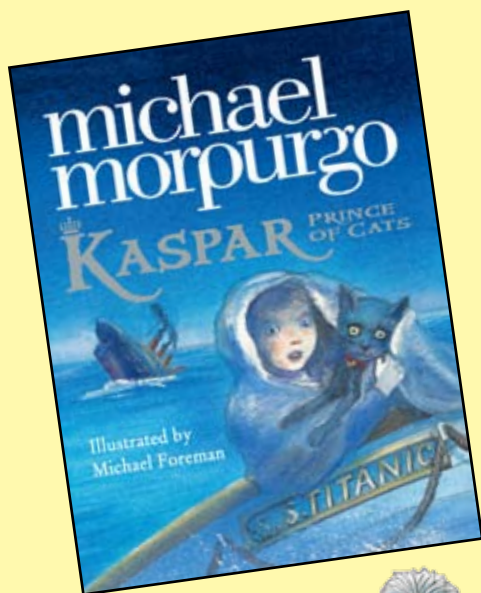


© Michael Foreman

“This story was inspired by Kaspar, the legendary cat of the Savoy Hotel in London. But he’s a living legend. I know, I’ve seen him...” Michael Morpurgo.

KASPAR



With full colour illustrations



Price	£4.99/€6.90
Case	Read On
Author	Michael Morpurgo
Illustrator	Michael Foreman
Publisher	HarperCollins Children's Books



Using this book in your classroom

Quick summary

Johnny Trott is a fourteen-year-old bell-boy at the Savoy Hotel in London when he meets the fascinating opera singer, Countess Kandinsky. She has come to stay at the hotel with her cat, Prince Kaspar Kandinsky. Despite the differences in age and status, an unlikely friendship strikes up between the Countess and Johnny. When the Countess dies in a tragic accident, Johnny gradually takes over the care of Kaspar. His job at the hotel brings Johnny into contact with a wealthy American family and their lively daughter Lizziebeth and through their shared love of Kaspar, Johnny and Lizziebeth become friends. The time eventually comes when Lizziebeth and her family have to leave – their passage back to America is booked on the Titanic. Johnny accompanies the family to the ship to help them with their luggage, and – almost by accident – both he and Kaspar end up on the Titanic as it leaves the port. When the Titanic sinks after crashing into an iceberg, Johnny helps the family to escape in safety – and Kaspar survives the disaster too. Johnny and Kaspar join Lizziebeth and her family for a new life in America.

Story themes

This exciting historical adventure includes themes of **love and loyalty**. It also casts a fascinating light on the **lives of wealthy people and their servants in 1912**.

The story session

1. Introducing the story

Explain that this story is set nearly 100 years ago, in 1912. Share children's ideas about what life may have been like then. Talk in particular about how wealthy people in those days had servants, and the differences between the lives of the rich and the poor. Ask: "Do you think you would like to have been alive in 1912? What might have been good about it? What would be less good?"

2. Reading the story

- Read Chapter 1, 'The Coming of Kaspar'. Ask: "What do you think Johnny Trott's life was like? Do you think he was happy working at the hotel? What sort of person was the Countess?"
- At the end of the chapter, Johnny lets us know that meeting the Countess and Kaspar would change his life forever. Share children's predictions about how Johnny's life might be going to change.
- If time allows, read the next chapter and talk about how life is changing for Johnny. Look back at children's predictions from the end of the first chapter. Do they want to change their minds about how the story might develop?

3. Follow-up

- Encourage children to read on to the end of the second chapter, if they have not done so already.
- In pairs, they could role-play or write about how Johnny might have felt when he heard the news of the Countess's death.

Did You Know?

- Michael Morpurgo was the Children's Laureate in 2003-5.
- In 2007, Michael was Writer in Residence at the Savoy Hotel in London, where Kaspar, Prince of Cats is set.