



Main framework objectives

- Year 4:** **Reading, 7.2:** Deduce characters' reasons for behaviour from their actions.
Writing, 10.1: Organise text into paragraphs to distinguish between different information, events or processes.
- Year 5:** **Reading, 7.5:** Explore how writers use language for comic and dramatic effects.
Writing, 9.4: Vary pace and develop the viewpoint through the use of direct and reported speech, portrayal of action, selection of detail.
- Year 6:** **Reading, 7.2:** Understand underlying themes, causes, points of view.
Writing, 9.5: Integrate words, images and sounds imaginatively for different purposes.

Reading activities

- ★ When the children have finished reading the story, talk about the role of R-cher in the story. Ask: *What kind of character is R-cher? Why do you think he decided to follow the boys back through the portal to Earth? What does he think about Z-kee? Do you think that R-cher would like to be the leader of Halycrus in place of Z-kee?* Talk about how we can find out about characters and what motivates them by looking at what they do and say.
- ★ Re-read pages 24 to 27 of the book together. Ask: *Do you agree with what R-cher is saying here? Why, or why not?* Look together at how the author uses language in a dramatic way in R-cher's speeches (for example, the use of persuasive language on pages 26–27). Ask the children to work in pairs and role play a continuation to R-cher's speech, where he persuades the Halycrusians to follow him rather than Z-kee. Encourage them to make their speeches as persuasive as possible.
- ★ Challenge the children to sum up what this book is about in just one or two sentences. Ask: *What do you think the main theme is, and why?* Children may have different ideas about this. Discuss their ideas and relate them back to evidence in the text. For example, they may think the story is about leadership and what it takes to be a good leader; or they may think it is about the importance of using your gifts to help other people.

Writing activities

- ★ Ask the children to choose part of the story that they feel is exciting. Encourage them to re-write this scene in a normal narrative style, with direct speech rather than pictures and speech bubbles. Remind them to start a new paragraph for each speaker and each time the action changes.
- ★ Invite the children to retell part of the story from Z-kee's point of view. For example, they could show how he feels when R-cher challenges him. Ask them to retell the story orally at first, working in pairs, and then write the story, using either normal or manga-style narrative.
- ★ The children can create their own manga-style story using the blank layouts on the CD-ROM and images from the Halycrus Image Bank. For example, they could write what happens when the Halycrusians are living on Bejais Island.

Photocopiable pages

- ★ Photocopiable page 11, Follow the leader: Reading – let the children discuss in pairs which character is the best leader, using evidence from the book, before writing up their ideas individually. Before starting, have a group discussion about what it takes to be a good leader.
- ★ Photocopiable page 12, Monster helpers: Writing – working individually or in pairs, ask the children to draw and describe their own made-up evil-looking but helpful monster. Share some of their ideas with the group before starting the activity.