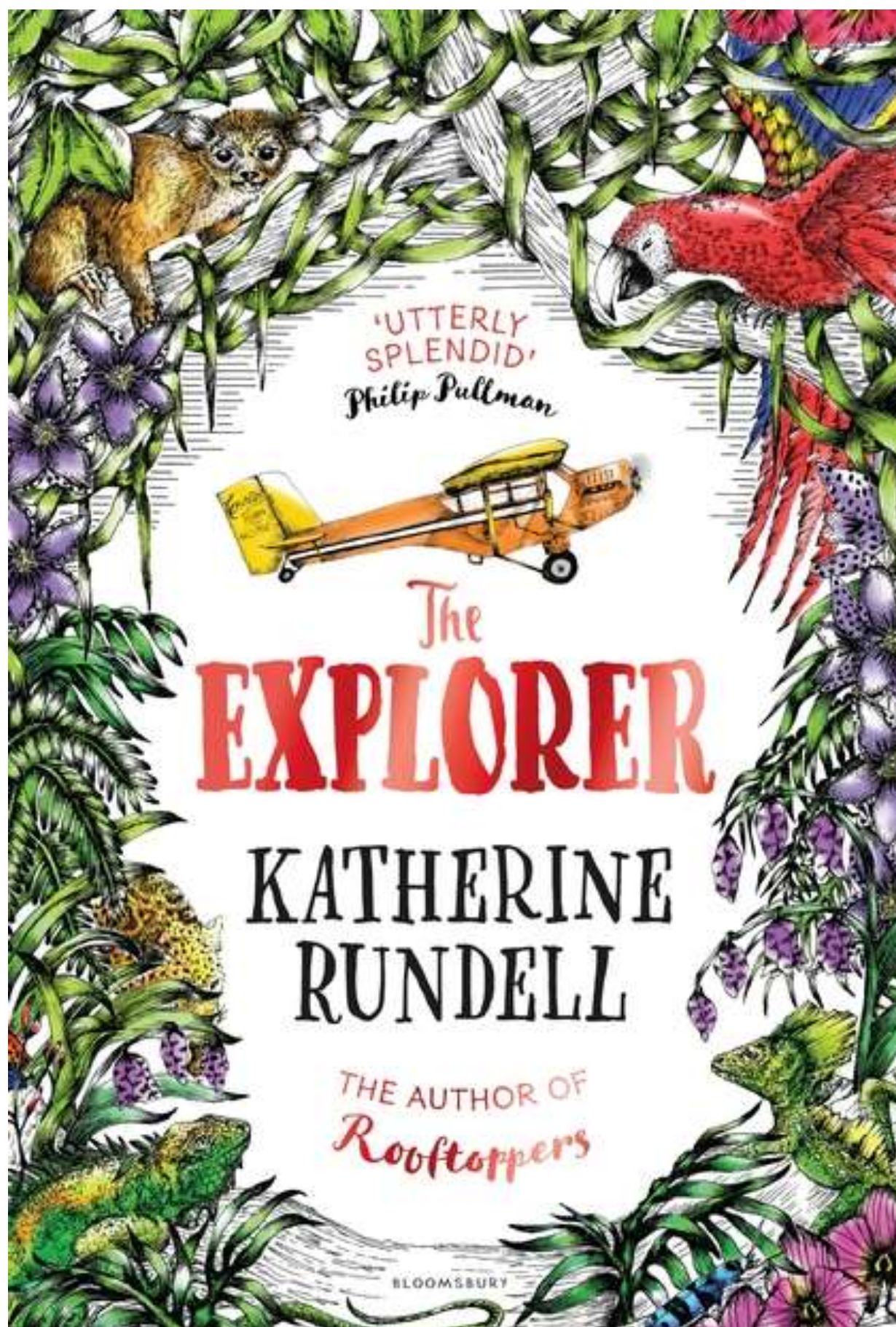
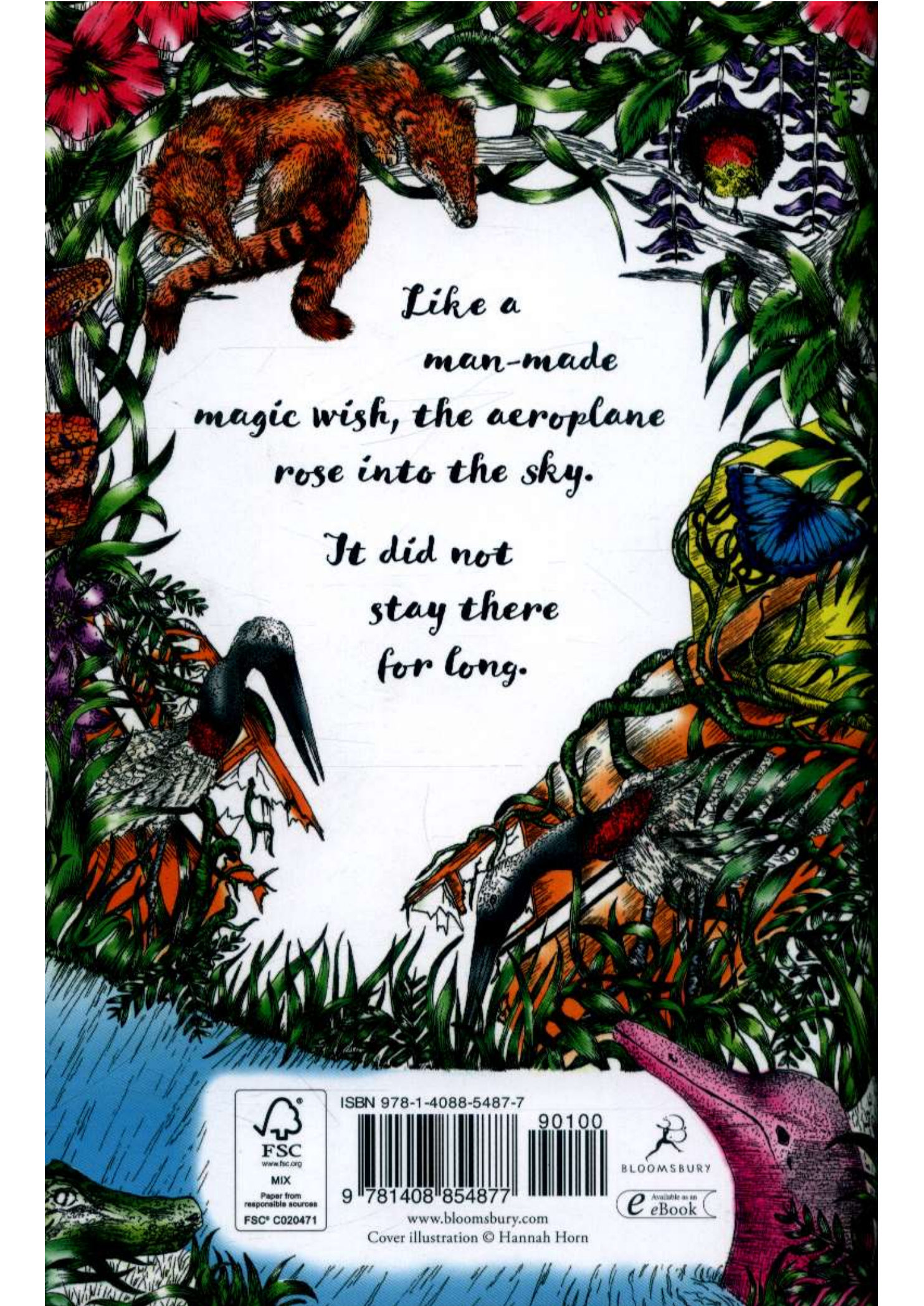


## Resource A #1

Please **DO NOT PRINT** the colour images of the book covers. They have been included at an enlarged size to make them as clear as possible to see on a screen.







*Like a  
man-made  
magic wish, the aeroplane  
rose into the sky.*

*It did not  
stay there  
for long.*



ISBN 978-1-4088-5487-7



90100



9 781408 854877

[www.bloomsbury.com](http://www.bloomsbury.com)

Cover illustration © Hannah Horn



Available as an  
**eBook**



## Resource A #2

### Checking word meaning and handwriting practice

Choose the correct definition for the following words. Think carefully – some of the words on the left are homophones or homonyms and you have to write only the definition that matches the context in the story.

Practise your handwriting by recording the word alongside the definition in your books. Show off your beautifully fluent, joined and well-formed letters (remember the parallel ascenders and descenders and that no letter should look like a capital letter!)

Use a dictionary (e.g. <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/> ) to check and correct any answers.

vocabulary	definition
	to squeeze someone's throat and strangle them
	a curve, for example in a road or river
joystick	fierce; savage
throttle	a mixture of tar and broken stone, used for making a hard surface on open areas; an area on an airfield covered with this mixture
vibrate	a long, high piercing sound
sweep	to burp; make a noise by letting air from your stomach out through your mouth
grimace	the lever that controls an aircraft's movement
tarmac	to move quickly from side to side and with small movements
ferocious	able to be trusted or depended on
whine	alcoholic drink produced from grapes
belch	a device to control the flow of fuel to an engine
reliable	a strange or twisted facial expression (noun); to make a strange or twisted facial expression (verb)
	the act of brushing or cleaning; someone who cleans a chimney

Challenge: The author uses personification in the paragraph beginning 'The boy sitting'. There is a link in the final sentence. Can you work out what it is? Let me know your thoughts!

## Resource A #2 **ANSWERS**

Checking word meaning and handwriting practice – red words / definitions at bottom are irrelevant

vocabulary	definition
joystick	the lever that controls an aircraft's movement
throttle (noun)	a device to control the flow of fuel to an engine
vibrate	to move quickly from side to side and with small movements
sweep (noun)	a curve, for example in a road or river
grimace	a strange or twisted facial expression (noun); to make a strange or twisted facial expression (verb)
tarmac	a mixture of tar and broken stone, used for making a hard surface on open areas; an area on an airfield covered with this mixture
ferocious	fierce; savage
whine	a long, high piercing sound
belch	to burp; make a noise by letting air from your stomach out through your mouth
reliable	able to be trusted or depended on
wine	alcoholic drink produced from grapes
throttle (verb)	to squeeze someone's throat and strangle them
sweep (verb)	the act of brushing or cleaning; someone who cleans a chimney

## Resource A #3

You can listen to Katherine Rundell read the first chapter of her book by following this link to her publisher's YouTube site:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G7lCzmS9Ghl>

### FLIGHT

Like a man-made wish, the aeroplane began to rise.

The boy sitting in the cockpit gripped his seat and held his breath as the plane climbed into the arms of the sky. Fred's jaw was set with concentration, and his fingers twitched, following the movements of the pilot beside him: joystick, throttle.

The aeroplane vibrated as it flew faster into the setting sun, following the swerve of the Amazon River below them. Fred could see the reflection of the six-seater plane, a spot of black on the vast sweep of blue, as it sped towards Manaus, the city on the water. He brushed his hair out of his eyes and pressed his forehead against the window.

Behind Fred sat a girl and her little brother. They had the same slanted eyebrows and the same brown skin, the same long eyelashes. The girl had been shy, hugging her parents until the last possible moment at the airfield; now she was staring down at

the water, singing under her breath, her brother trying to eat his seatbelt.

In the next row, on her own, sat a pale girl with blonde hair down to her waist. Her blouse had a neck-ruffle that came up to her chin, and she kept tugging it down and grimacing. She was determinedly not looking out of the window.

The airfield they had just left had been dusty and almost deserted, just a strip of tarmac under the ferocious Brazilian sun. Fred's cousin had insisted that he wear his school uniform and cricket jumper, and now, inside the hot, airless cabin, he felt like he was being gently cooked inside his own skin.

The engine gave a whine, and the pilot frowned and tapped the joystick. He was old and soldierly, with brisk nostril hair and a grey waxed moustache which seemed to reject the usual laws of gravity. He touched the throttle and the plane soared upwards, higher into the clouds.

It was almost dark when Fred began to worry. The pilot began to belch, first quietly, then violently and repeatedly. His hand jerked, and the plane dipped suddenly to the left. Someone screamed behind Fred. The plane lurched away from the river and over the canopy. The pilot grunted, gasped and wound back the throttle, slowing the engine. He gave a cough that sounded like a choke.

Fred stared at the man – he was turning the same shade of grey as his moustache. ‘Are you all right, sir?’ he asked. ‘Is there something I can do?’

Fighting for breath, the pilot shook his head. He reached over to the control panel and cut the engine. The roar ceased. The nose of the plane dipped downwards. The trees rose up.

‘What’s happening?’ asked the blonde girl sharply. ‘What’s he doing? Make him stop!’

The little boy in the back began to shriek. The pilot grasped Fred’s wrist hard for a single moment, then his head slumped against the dashboard.

And the sky, which had seconds before seemed so reliable, gave way.

## Resource A #4 Katherine Rundell's Creative Writing Challenge

The author of *The Explorer*, Katherine Rundell, has set you a challenge.

“Imagine you have just crash-landed in the middle of the Amazon jungle and you don’t know where you are and you don’t know how to survive so what do you do? What are the first things you do? What can you see? What can you feel? What can you smell? What does the ground feel like under your feet? Are you hurt? Are you dizzy? And what are you going to eat? I want you to write about going in search of food. You can write about the most disgusting food you can think of if you want to! But how would *you* survive?”

Katherine Rundell chose to set her story around the 1920s so that there was no option to use a cell or mobile phone or radar to seek help – “one of the things about writing a story about people who are lost is that if you can just give someone a call, then it is a very, very short story!” So, in your story you will have to think of a way of making it hard for your characters to just dial 999 or phone home!

You might start by noting down ideas for a survival list – what things do we need in order to survive, what might you have with you to help?

Think about how you might feel in a strange place – overwhelmed, terrified, curious, sad, desperate, hungry, shivery, ...

What might be found in the Amazon jungle that you could think of eating? If it is alive, how will you catch or capture it ? Will it need cooking and if so, how? How can you describe the texture, smell and flavour?

## Resource A #5 Short Story Inspired by Travel – imaginary or real

Katherine Rundell has said that she was inspired to write *The Explorer* after a trip to the Amazon. This is what she says:

The inspiration behind the book was a trip that I took to the Amazon jungle a few years before I wrote it and, like I always say, if you become a writer, you get to travel the world and tell everyone that it's very serious research! So, we went and I discovered that the Amazon - and the Amazon rainforest - is the most beautiful thing that I have ever seen. It's so beautiful that you think it's almost impossible, like someone imagined it rather than it having grown up from the earth.

And so, in the book so much that happens is actually real. There is a scene where they are on a raft and dolphins come swimming under their boat. While we were in the Amazon we were sitting on a boat and a pod of five pink, wild river-dolphins came swimming under our boat and, even though we were completely fully clothed, we just pulled off our boots and dived in after them. You could see that they had these scars along their backs where they had got in a fight with caiman, which are a kind of alligator, and that they had these very sharp little teeth and these very beautiful, soft eyes.

And then a lot of the other things are true as well, a lot of the more disgusting things! They eat grubs that they find in cocoa pods – we did that. They taste disgusting, a little bit of chocolate but mostly of dirt. We discovered how you could hunt tarantulas by wriggling a stick over their holes and they come out with their front legs forward and you have to pat them round the back so they can't bite you. We discovered all these things about the texture and detail, the smells and the sights of the Amazon. Every day, I would write it down, at night in my hammock, and every morning, I would go out on another adventure.

Have you had or could you imagine a trip that could inspire a **short** story? Have you had real experiences that you could draw on – they could be from different trips which you, as an imaginative writer, could combine creatively. Your story could involve a separation from your fellow travellers, friends or family, the discovery of a new place or a strange object, perhaps you get lost and turn a corner and find yourself in ...

Katherine Rundell leads her readers into her story by introducing an object, a place and a person – could you do something similar? She has “four children who crash-land in the Amazon jungle and at first they survive by eating bugs and they try to find water. And then they find a map and the map leads them down the river on a raft and they find a ruined city. And in the ruined city there is a man and he won't tell them his name so he is just the Explorer, and he has a secret and the secret is the thing the children have to discover.”

Can you make your readers feel how beautiful or amazing or strange and real your place is, in the same way that she wanted to do with the Amazon? This is what she has said: “I wanted, when I wrote the book, to make people fall in love with these animals and with this place, so that they do everything they can ... even if it's a small thing, to protect the world we live in, because it's completely breath-taking and if we lose it, we don't get it back.” Think about using well-worded descriptions that use the senses (sight, smell, sound, taste, touch, atmosphere etc.) and rich vocabulary to paint a picture for your reader (vivid and precise nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs, similes, metaphor, personification).

Challenge yourselves to 'show rather than tell' (e.g. 'the full moon bounced off the rippling waves that tickled the shore' rather than 'it was nighttime' or 'clouds of dust sprayed the windscreen and the car leaped into the air as the front tyres struck the pot holes' rather than 'the road was dusty and full of pot holes'). Have your characters react to their surroundings ('As she inhaled, the dry air hurt her nose and burnt her nostrils' rather than 'the air was hot and dry') and to one another ('Thinking about what he'd just seen, Bob realised that Georgie was used to giving orders; her tone was firm and cold and one that expected to be obeyed without question' rather than 'Georgie told Bob what to do').



## Katherine Rundell's advice for creating believable characters

...one of the things to hold in your head is that people change. Throughout a really big experience, anything at all, whether it's falling in love or going on an adventure, you will transform, people constantly transform - you are different now than you were six months ago. A story in which the main character, or indeed any character, remains completely the same, for that reason feels untrue because we are always in a state of constant flux, constant change. So when you write a story, it's worth thinking about the ark that the character makes, how they develop, how they shift, what they learn, what they have to unlearn perhaps, maybe there are things in them that they've always longed to let out and what that would look like in a story.

This is how she describes the characters of the children in *The Explorer*:

the children are called Fred, Con, Max and Lila. Fred is maybe the hero of the book. He's the kind of boy who longs for adventures but has never yet been able to have any, but he's tough and brave. Then there's Con. Con is very British and she's the kind of person who just says no to everything. Then there's Lila. Lila - maybe you know someone like this or maybe you are like this yourself - Lila has a profound relationship with animals: they trust her and she trusts them. She's Brazilian. Then there's her little brother, Max, and Max is just five and a bit and mostly he just runs around and pees on things - he is the chaos ending of the book!

You could create characters with contrasting personalities. Keep it simple – just two or three characters to make it manageable. How do they know one another, are they related or unknown to one another until a recent event? What is their backstory, how did they get here, do they get on, is one more dominant than another, do they have particular skills or knowledge or characteristics that are important?