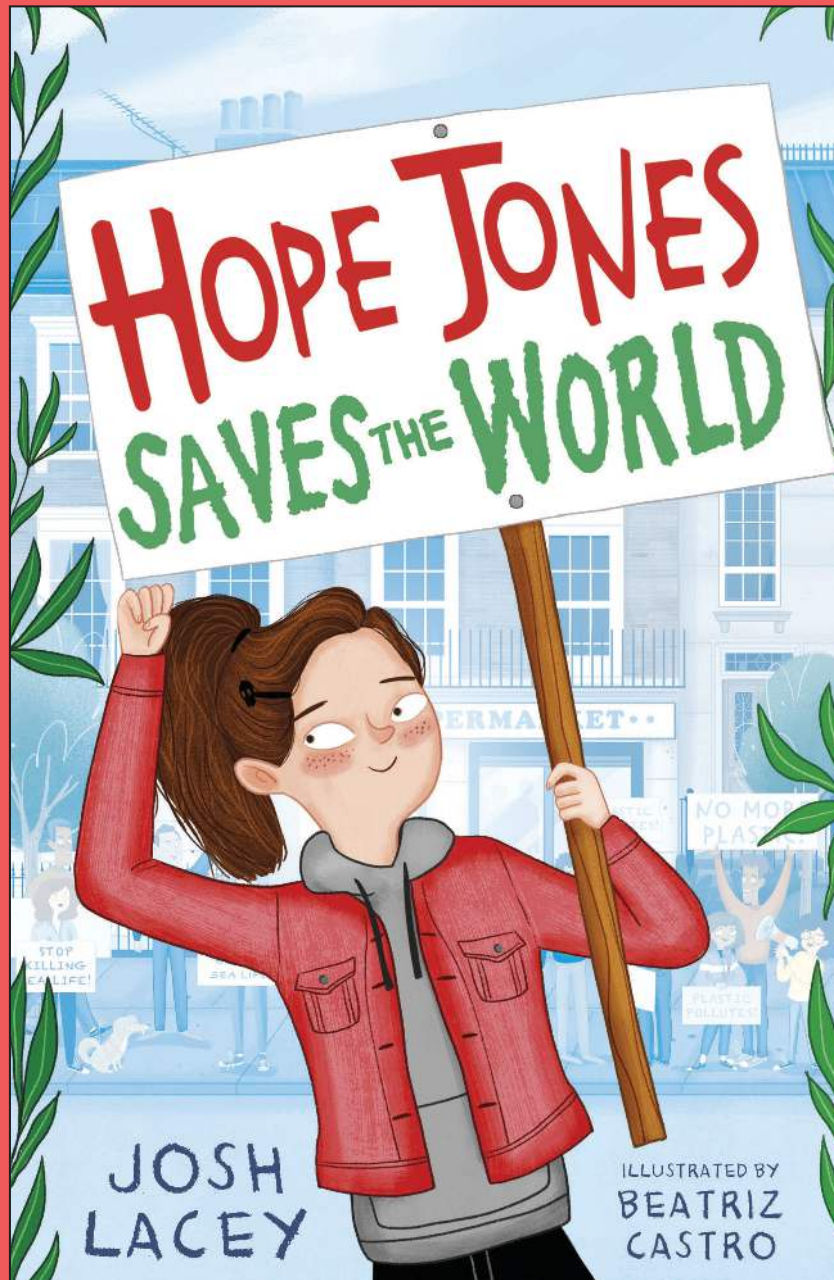


# TEACHING NOTES

for *Hope Jones Saves the World* by Josh Lacey,  
illustrated by Beatriz Castro



‘The perfect book to inspire  
conversations about activism’  
BOOKTRUST

These notes have been written by the teachers at the [CLPE](#) to provide schools with ideas to develop comprehension and cross-curricular activities around this text. They build on our work supporting teachers to use quality texts throughout the reading curriculum. They encourage a deep reading of and reflection on the text, which may happen over a series of reading sessions, rather than in just one sitting. We hope you find them useful.

## Before You Start:

- As you read the book it would be helpful to use a group journal to organise and store discussions and responses to the text. The length of the book means that you will need to consider how you wish children to engage with the text. You could use a blend of reading aloud by the adult; re-reading by the adult or the children and discussion of key passages; pupils reading sections of the text independently between sessions, depending on their experience, then summarising what they have read; revisiting specific passages and episodes and engaging in specific activities to deepen response and comprehension.
- This novel, and the young activist at its centre, provides multiple opportunities to explore the impact of plastic pollution on the environment and the role of environmental activism in eliciting change. In order to fully engage with the themes and real world figures and issues discussed in the text, children would benefit from the opportunity to access appropriate information books, websites, biographies, newspaper and magazine articles, as well as video clips and documentaries.
- As the book is written as a series of blog posts (and also makes direct reference to sending emails, shaping social media posts and sharing videos online), there are multiple opportunities to make links with PSHE and the computing curriculum and particularly the ways in which you promote safe and responsible internet use with your pupils.



## Introduction to Book and Reading 30th December to 1st January (page 1 to 17)

- Begin by discussing the cover design, including children's responses to the title and choices made by the book's illustrator, Beatriz Castro. *Who do we think is being depicted on the front cover? What do we know about her? What can we tell about her from her appearance, her facial expressions and her body language? Does this image remind you of anything you've seen before?* Children might make connections to the placards held in the school climate strikes or the Extinction Rebellion demonstrations. *What do they notice about the crowd gathering behind Hope? What can we discover from the other placards about specifically what they might be protesting against? Why might the setting be significant?*

- Turn to the back cover of the book. *What more do we learn here? Have any of our initial impressions or predictions been confirmed or contradicted? Do they agree with the observation that 'giving up plastic is really hard'? Do you know anyone that's tried to 'give up' or reduce the amount of plastic they use?* The children might also note the sea turtle depicted on the back cover and consider why this might be pertinent to the story and the characters' motivations.
- Draw their observations together and start to make some early predictions about the story that they are about to read. *What do we think this book is about? What obstacles do we predict Hope might face in trying to save the world by giving up plastic?* Record the children's ideas and responses around a photocopy of the cover and return to these as you read the book, comparing the children's initial thoughts as to how the story actually unfolds.
- Now, turn to page 1. Read aloud the text and then allow children sufficient time to fully explore the illustration and consider what further insights the text and image give us to Hope's characterisation. *What do the various objects, posters, symbols and décor suggest about Hope Jones – her personality, her interests and her fascinations?*
- Discuss children's experience and understanding of blogs. *What is a blog? Do they have blogs and blog posts that they engage with as readers – at school or at home? Have they ever written a blog post – perhaps for their own web page or for another organisation?*
- Clarify that this book is structured in the form of a series of blog posts written by the character Hope Jones. *Why might the author have chosen to write the book entirely in the voice of his main character? What other options were available to him? Do they think they might enjoy this format? Why/why not?* Consider some of the ways in which a blog post compares to a diary entry (a form that children will probably have experience of writing), particularly in terms of purpose and audience.
- Spend some time reading and discussing the quotes on page 2. *Which quote do you like the most? Why? Discuss whether the children recognise any of these names and, if so, what they know about them, and any connections they can see between these quotes or between these influential writers/speakers. If these quotes were selected by Hope for her blog, what more do they suggest about her character and her aspirations? Why might Hope want to display these messages on her webpage?*
- Read aloud the first 2 blog entries from December 30th and 31st (page 3-10). After reading, ask the children to discuss their responses to the opening of the book. *What did this text make them think about? How did it make them feel? What made them feel this way? What questions are they left with after reading?*
- Children might make connections with their own experiences of celebrating the new year and making resolutions, of their own observations about the impact of pollution on the air where they live, and of their own position within their family. Look back at the section in which Hope introduces us to her brother, sister and aunt (p7-9). *What do we learn about them and their relationships? Is there a character or relationship that interests them the most? Why?*
- You might also use this opportunity to revisit aspects of the school's internet safety policy in relation to unwanted comments on social media, the use of email, the sharing of personal information and gaining consent before sharing images or names of other people online.
- Next, spend some time exploring and responding to the illustration on page 11. *What does it make you think of? Have you seen images like this before in drawings, in photographs or in real life? How do you feel when you look at that image? What do you think has caused this area to be covered in rubbish? What do you already know about this sort of pollution? What problems do you imagine this might cause?*
- Read aloud and then discuss the next blog entry (page 11-17). *Was there anything that surprised you? What interested you the most? What would you like to find out? What questions do you have?* Children might use a visual organiser to capture what they collectively know about plastic pollution and to then collate any questions related to the subject.

- Alongside these sessions, give children access to appropriate information books, websites and articles to research and discover answers to their questions. Provide them with notebooks to jot down anything that they discover so that they can bring this back and summarise it for the group, adding it to their existing knowledge.
- Clarify and predict how they think Hope's resolution could impact her daily life. *When do you use plastic in daily life? Do you think she means she won't even touch anything plastic – or do you think she means specific types of plastic usage? What plastic might be easy to avoid? What might be more difficult?*



## 2nd January – 5th January (page 18-45)

- Prior to the session, ask children to have read pages 18-38 (covering the next 3 days of Hope's blog). As they read, encourage the children to note any vocabulary that they may not be familiar with, such as '*consumption*' or Hope's regular use of the term '*literally*'. As children continue to read the book, explore vocabulary that children have noted, discussing their ideas for potential definitions, drawing upon analogy with known words or context, as well as supporting their comprehension by bringing unusual words to life using photo or video sources. Children may want to create a glossary of unfamiliar or impactful language that appears in the text as they continue to read.
- Start this session by allowing time for the group to summarise what they have read, enabling them to arrive at a shared understanding of the events described and the impact of these developments on Hope Jones and her environmentally-friendly resolution.
- Some aspects of these blog posts that children might wish to explore further include:
  - The manner in which the form of writing leads to Hope directly addressing the reader, and her specific choice to address her blog on 2nd January to 'grown-ups'. *Do you like the way she speaks to the reader? What do you like about it? How does it change the way you engage with Hope's story? Does it make it feel more realistic? In what way? Do you think she has a clear understanding of her audience?*
  - Invite children to reread Hope's letters to Jeremy Schnitzel and Brendan Corrigan (page 24 and 28) text marking them for examples of effective words and phrases and comparing her language choices in these letters with her more casual blog entries. *What is Hope trying to do in these letters? How effective do you think they might be? Which passages or phrases did you feel were most persuasive? Do we have any predictions for how they might respond?*
  - Discuss the concerns raised by other family members in response to Hope's resolution (the comments made by Mum and Dad on page 30 and 31, for example). Summarise together the points of view held by the different family members. *What further impact might Hope's choices have on her family? Do you think Hope will need to make compromises? Do you think she should?*



- Capture the children’s growing insight into Hope’s character by completing a **Role on the Wall** poster. To do this, have a simple prepared template of the outline of a child to represent Hope onto which the children can record their ideas. Ask the children to write words or phrases sharing what they know about her outward appearance, actions and speech on the outside of the outline. Then, use these to begin to infer her internal feelings and characteristics and note these on the inside of the outline.
- Encourage the children to continue to return to the **Role on the Wall** as you continue to read the story, using a different colour each time to highlight the knowledge they gain about Hope’s characterisation as they read on.
- Now, read the next blog entry together (page 39-45). As before, allow children time to summarise their response to the entry and add any further insights to the **Role on the Wall** poster for Hope.
- Summarise Hope’s progress so far in keeping her resolution. *What’s going well for Hope? What improvements is she already making? What challenges does she face?*



## 6th January – 12th January (page 46-90)

- Prior to the session, ask children to read pages 46 – 83 (6th – 11th January). Start the session by allowing time for the group to share what they have read, any aspects they liked or disliked, any questions they have and any responses to the way in which the plot has developed.
- Ask children to summarise the main events in Hope’s story that occur over these pages, and the ways in which these might be important to the wider story.
- Invite the children to draw out events that they wish to explore further; these may include Hope’s developing knowledge of activism and its role in provoking change: *What do you discover about protesting and activism in this section? How do you think the Greenham Common demonstrations compare with other more recent forms of protest?* To contextualise this for children who have not experienced different forms of protest, you might watch and discuss footage of the Greenham Common demonstration (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/zkmd7ty>) and then compare it to a more recent protest, such as the Climate Protest in Bristol in February of 2020 (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/51670888>). Other than the use of banners, placards, marches and vigils such as these, children might have heard of other forms of peaceful protest, such as striking, petitioning, and boycotts. *Which of these (or which combination of these) might be most effective in meeting Hope’s aims? What does she want to achieve from her demonstration outside the supermarket?*
- Read aloud and discuss the next blog post from the 12th January (page 84-90). Consider the ways in which Hope’s emotions shift across the day and add any new observations to her Role on the Wall poster. *Do you agree that ‘doing the right thing is very difficult’? Do you think Hope needs to change her approach as she learns more about these issues? If so, in what way?*

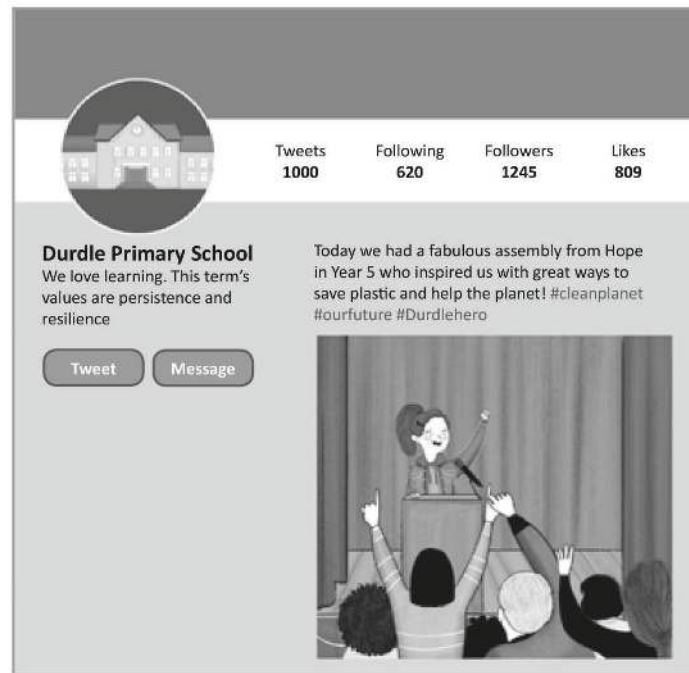
- Share that many blogs have a comments section under each entry where readers can share their own stories and opinions or ask questions. *What would you say to Hope if you could? Work together to draft a message for Hope, reflecting on what they want to say to her and how they might say it. What tone might you use and what language choices might you make in order to comfort or encourage or advise her?*
- After reading this section of the book, the children might choose to look at the ways in which plastic products are used across their school setting, and whether there are opportunities to reduce the use of non-recyclable or single-use plastic (You can download a Hope Jones plastic tally sheet from this webpage: <https://www.hopejonessavestheworld.com/>). After surveying the environment, the children can discuss potential and practical solutions and then prepare a persuasive letter or presentation to communicate their observations and ideas to members of the school community who are in a position to act on those findings.



### 13th January to 26th January (page 91-132)

- Prior to the session, ask children to read pages 91 – 125 (13th – 25th January). As before, begin by inviting the children to summarise what they have read, any aspects they liked or disliked, any questions they have and any responses to the way in which the plot has developed.
- Revisit together the moment when Hope chooses to go against her mum’s wishes and sneaks out to be interviewed (p103-105). *Do you think she did the right thing? Why/why not? What other options were available to her? What might the consequences of each of Hope’s choices be? Does sneaking out feel compatible with what we have understood of Hope’s character so far? Return to the Role on the Wall poster to revisit those characteristics and add to them if children have new insights.*
- Then move on to re-read the conversation between Mum and Hope on page 113-114. Invite them to summarise the main points of view shared by Hope and Mum. Hope says that “we agreed about a lot of things.” *What areas do the two characters agree on? Which of Hope’s arguments do you agree with? Why? Can you also see things from Mum’s point of view? Why is it important to always take personal responsibility and to understand the consequences of your actions? In what way might that be particularly relevant to Hope’s story? What might the consequences be of Hope’s efforts to keep her resolution?*

- Read together Hope’s blog for the 26th January (page 126 – 132) and ask children to share any responses they might have to the events that take place in these two posts. *Have they noticed any changes in Hope’s behaviour or confidence as her demonstration outside the supermarket has progressed? What difficulties might people face when considering boycotting the supermarket? What do you think of Becca’s strategy for engaging people in the protest? Does it feel achievable? Does it feel effective?*
- Finally invite children to reread the letter from Ginny Tuffington-Pertwhistle. *How does it differ from Mr Schnitzel’s letters? Why do you think she might want to meet Hope? What do you predict the outcome of their meeting might be? Are you optimistic and hopeful – like Hope? Why/why not?*



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## 27th January to 6th February (page 133-167)

- Before the session ask children to read pages 133-150 (27th – 30th January). Allow time for the group to reflect on what they have read, summarising and interpreting the events and how these affect Hope and advance the plot as we approach the ending:
  - When she gets asked to present an assembly about her campaign, Hope tells her teacher that she doesn’t know what ‘political activism’ means. *What do we understand by the term political activism? Work with the children to reach a common understanding about their definition of this term and how it might relate to other forms of activism. What do you think the characteristics of an effective activist might be? Are they similar to the characteristics we have observed in Hope? Do you think those behaviours and attitudes would make her an effective school council member? Why/why not?*
  - Discuss the children’s response to the meeting at Willow Group head office and its impact on Hope and her ambitions. *Why do you think Willow Group invited Hope to this meeting? What were they hoping for? What was she hoping would come out of the meeting? Hope finishes her blog post by describing it as “one of the most disappointing days of her entire life.” What does it mean to be disappointed? Look at her blog entry 30th January. How might she be feeling? What suggests that? Does this affect your predictions for how the story might end?*
- Now read together from 31st January until the end of the book.

- Ask children to reflect on the way in which the story ends, how the resolution of the story has affected them, and how they feel about the book as a whole:
  - *How do you feel about the way the story ends? How does the author draw everything together?*
  - *Consider Hope’s journey throughout the book. How did she change as a character? She started by trying to commit to giving up plastic for her New Year Resolution, where did she end up? What do you think were the most significant moments in her story? What were the highs and lows and how did they effect the choices she made and the outcome of the story? What could be the next step for Hope’s environmental campaign?*
- In drawing together their overall thoughts, invite children to respond to Aidan Chambers calls ‘the four basic questions’. These questions give children accessible starting points for discussion:
  - Did you enjoy this story? What did you like or dislike?
  - What puzzles did it contain?
  - What links do you see to other stories you already know, or things that you know about from real-life experience?
- You might also suggest that they look back through the book and draw out favourite moments and what they particularly like about them.
- Discuss how they felt about the book’s format and structure. *Did you like reading a book that was composed as a series of blog posts? How did you feel about the inclusion of other forms of writing – letters, emails, social media, leaflets, etc.?*
- Finally, give children the opportunity to respond to the environmental message within the book. *How did you feel about plastic pollution and the impact of plastic consumption on the environment by the end of the story? Did your feelings alter over the course of the book? Why might Josh Lacey have chosen to write this story? Are you left with any questions about Hope or about plastic pollution that you would like to ask?* Invite children to jot down and share any questions or comments that they have. You might choose to share questions about Hope’s story or about the environmental issues explored in the text with the book’s author: Josh Lacey monitors the ‘Hope Jones’ gmail address mentioned in her first blog entry and will try to respond to questions from readers.

## After reading:

- Invite children to read and respond to the afterword in which Hope lists ten things that the reader could do to help save the world. *Which of those strategies might make the biggest difference? Is there one of those that they could try at home? Which could they try at school?* Provide children with the time and resources to engage in some of those practical activities or research opportunities.
- Having read the story, children might be inspired to find out more information about the ways in which plastic consumption and pollution affect the world, and some of the strategies being tried to combat those effects:
  - Find out about different conversation efforts and opportunities to take actions via the WWF: [https://wwf.panda.org/act/take\\_action/](https://wwf.panda.org/act/take_action/)
  - Learn more about the impact of plastic on the environment and on animals’ habitats <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/nature/kids-vs-plastic/article/pollution-1> or pick out some key facts from Earth Day: <https://www.earthday.org/fact-sheet-single-use-plastics/>
  - Find out about the real life equivalent of ‘Hope Jones’ with the two young people who started <https://www.kidsagainstplastic.co.uk/>



- Hope Jones continues her efforts to provoke change and save the planet in further books in the series. In the second book, Hope explores the impact of veganism, while in the third, she attempts to reduce air pollution. Each book balances Hope's narrative with information on the subject matter. Through Hope's efforts the reader can reflect on the ways in which citizens can make small but significant changes themselves as well as the importance of speaking truth to power and convincing others to make changes too. If possible, ensure that children have access and opportunity to continue to read the further adventures of Hope Jones as well as exploring linked texts that can answer questions and spark curiosity about environmental activism. See below for some example texts:

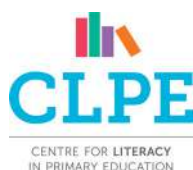


### Further books in the Hope Jones series:

- *Hope Jones Will Not Eat Meat*, Josh Lacey, illustrated by Beatriz Castro (Andersen Press)
- *Hope Jones Clears the Air*, Josh Lacey, illustrated by Beatriz Castro (Andersen Press)

### Selected titles that support exploration of themes from the book:

- *A Planet Full of Plastic (and How You Can Help)*, Neal Layton (Wren and Rook)
- *What A Waste: Rubbish, Recycling, and Protecting our Planet*, Jess French (DK Children)
- *Old Enough to Save the Planet*, Loll Kirby and Adelina Lirius (Magic Cat Publishing)
- *Guardians of the Planet: How to be an Eco-Hero*, Clive Gifford and Jonathan Woodward (Buster Books)
- *Kids Fight Plastic: How to be a #2minutesuperhero*, Martin Dorey and Tim Wesson (Walker Books)
- *Earth Heroes: Twenty Inspiring Stories of People Saving Our World*, Lily Dyu (Nosy Crow)



This sequence of activities was designed in partnership with CLPE.  
To access more free resources from CLPE, visit: [www.clpe.org.uk](http://www.clpe.org.uk).