

VOICES IN THE WILDERNESS

the story

Here are some notes to go with the video, *Exploring the Story*. If you haven't watched it, why not watch it now.

Included in these notes is an overview, a summary, of the story as far as we know and some suggestions for how you might empower your pupils to find their own creative answers to the questions in the video and do their own story making.

What we have provided is simple framework, a skeleton of a story for them to flesh out, with tons of room for invention. They don't have to do all of it. They could just focus on a particular section. And there are many ways to go about it.

Writing is only one way. As mentioned in the video, we can draw cartoons that tell the story, maybe with speech bubbles.

We can show the whole story in one big painting, everyone helping. There can be drama and music and painting and puppets, video making, sound recording and probably ways we haven't even thought of.

Above all it should be fun. Keep asking questions and help them to understand that a story works better if everything isn't too easy. It's always better if characters aren't too perfect, too clever or too strong. Even Superman had his kryptonite.

A story works best when it's just ordinary people with their own ordinary powers and problems, people like you and me, dealing with really difficult, sometimes dangerous situations, and finding a way through together.

An overview of the story

First there was *Brave New World*, then came *Living the Dream* and now part three of the trilogy. *Voices in the Wilderness*.

This is a story of outsiders who come to the rescue of a divided society. It is a story that can easily be understood by those who sometimes feel excluded but have much that they can offer. In this story they are the heroes, who save their society from danger and who provide healing for the future.

In the middle of the ocean is an island called Dream Island. The people who first came to live on the island gave it that name because it was the home they had been looking for, the land of their dreams. But that was hundreds of years ago. The island is now a very different place.

In the middle of Dream Island stands the Sacred Mountain. On the north side of the Sacred Mountain stands Stone City, houses and factories and offices made out of stone and surrounded by high walls. The citizens of Stone City are ruled by the Big City Bosses.

On the south side of the Sacred Mountain are the fields and forests, beaches and harbour they call The Wilderness. The People of the Wilderness like to debate and discuss and decide things together. They live like they did in the old days, in wooden cottages. They travel by horse and cart or on foot and cook their food on open fires.

One day, when they climb the Sacred Mountain and look north, they see something strange going on at the edge of Stone City. A huge building is under construction and getting taller and bigger and wider and scarier all the time. It has lots of weird looking stuff sticking out of it, things that flash

sometimes like lightening, followed by smoke and strange noises and earth tremors – and the barking of dogs.

The wilderness people discover that the Big City Bosses are using a giant machine to tunnel into the Sacred Mountain. It looks as if they are mining for something, but for what? Does it have anything to do with those weird buildings? There's a rumour that the Big City Bosses have big plans and that these have something to do with the mine and the strange building. What might these plans be?

The People of the Wilderness live by farming and fishing but lately they are struggling. There's a strange smell in the air that blows from the north. The water in the stream that flows from the Sacred Mountain smells and tastes bitter. The fruit that grows on trees near the stream is sour tasting. The fish from the sea are sickly looking.

What is causing this? The wilderness people want answers. They go to complain to the Big City Bosses but are treated with disrespect and are fobbed off with promises of "an enquiry". So a few of the bravest wilderness people travel in secret to the mines in the Sacred Mountain to find out what's going on. They face many dangers as they try to discover more about the scary and life-threatening plan of the Big City Bosses. What are those dangers?

On their journey they meet a rebel gang of Stone City citizens who are also trying to discover what's going on. They learn from them what life is like in Stone City and how the Big City Bosses have a plan to get power from "Beyond". They don't know exactly what that means but the bravest of the wilderness people and the Stone City Rebels join forces to discover more and put a stop to the Bosses' dangerous plan.

To do this they will have to “go to Beyond”. And to go there they will need the help of people with a special skill in making magical sounds and vibrations. Who are those people? What exactly is the danger and how will they overcome it?

If they do overcome it, what will the future look like? How will it be possible to change life on Dream Island so that they can all live peacefully together again?

That’s a lot of questions, I know. But I’m hoping, with help and inspiration from your students we can come up with some answers so that I can finish the story by Christmas.

Explore as many questions as you like, using the Exploring the Story video and the other notes and guides on the Voices in the Wilderness page of the Big Reveal website.

Children can work alone or with friends or as a whole class. You can answer just one question, or a few questions, or all of them - with drawings, with discussions, with a sound recording, with a video or with a written story.

When you have something to share please send it to me and I will give feedback and organise a zoom session with you and your class. We might even be able to organise a visit.

The Big Reveal is ready to work with KsENT schools, the children and the teachers, to put details into this outline, to help us find the ideas and characters and actions and words, as well as the music and art and dance, to create a performance and publish a book.

Thank you so much for your help.
See you soon!

Martin Riley