



What should I already know?

Last term pupils looked at a range of poems and short stories from a range of cultures. In particular, a number of stories were set in Africa, where a significant portion of this tale takes place. Pupils are already aware with how cultures and traditions are different in Africa.

You will apply comprehension and retrieval skills used in previous novel studies to explore the author’s intent within a piece of writing. You will explore how a writer’s culture has influenced their writing as well as using empathy to write as a range of characters.

What will I know by the end of the unit?

I will be able to:

Recall the key characters, their actions in the novel and their characteristics

Summarise the key events, themes and ideas of the novel

Identify key quotations on key characters and explain what I can interpret about their character as a result

Use a range of strategies to decode and learn new vocabulary,

Examine how language, vocabulary choice, grammar and text structure presents meaning

Explore how culture can influence and shape writing

Analyse a text, selecting relevant quotations to support my views in answer to a set question

Comment on the impact of the author’s language and structure on differing audiences

Comment on how dramatists work is communicated through performance and how staging can allow for different interpretations

Write a critical essay on a set question, commenting on characters, themes and events from across the texts

Reflect on my own work, considering how it reflects the audience and purpose for which it was intended

Adapt my own use of vocabulary, grammar and structure to improve the overall effectiveness of my work.

Key Vocabulary

Refugee	A person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster.
Asylum	A place of shelter or safety. An asylum seeker is someone who has come to the country because it is a safe place for them, where their life will not be in danger.
Ethiopia	Africa’s oldest independent country and its second largest in terms of population.
Eritrea	Won independence from Ethiopia in 1993 after a 30 year war. It has been plagued by repression at home and tense relations with its neighbours.
The Refugee Council	A UK based organisation which works with refugees and asylum seekers.
Political asylum	The protection granted by a state to someone who has left their home country as a political refugee.
The Home Office	A department of the Government which is responsible for immigration, security and law and order.
EAST	East African Solidarity Trust.
Detention Centre	An institution for the short term detention of illegal immigrants, refugee, people awaiting trial or sentence.
Appeal hearing	The appeal re-hears the evidence of the disciplinary matter and reaches a decision regarding the fairness of the decision.
Appellant	A person who applies to a higher court for a reversal of the decision of a lower court.
Persecution	Hostility and ill treatment, especially because of race or political or religious beliefs; oppression.
Barrister	A type of lawyer in common law jurisdictions.

Literary Techniques

Allegory	A story, poem or picture that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning, typically a moral or political one.
Alliteration	The occurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words.
Assonance	A repetition of vowel sounds.
Connotation	Associated meaning of the word.
Dialect	A particular form of a language which links to a specific region or social group.



Emotive Language	Language used to create a particular emotion in the reader.
Foreshadowing	When the writer hints at a future event.
Formal and Informal language	Formal language is used in situations that are serious or that involve people we don't know well. Informal language is more commonly used in situation that are more relaxed and involve people we know well.
Hyperbole	Exaggerated statements.
Metaphor	A comparison – made directly or indirectly – without using 'like' or 'as.'
Pathetic Fallacy	When a character's feelings, thoughts or emotions are displayed through the environment around them. For example, when a character is depressed and it is raining.
Pun	A joke exploiting the different possible meanings of a word or the fact that there are words which sound alike but have different meanings.
Personification	Giving human characteristics to something which is not human.
Plosive	'b,' 'p,' 't,' and 'd' sounds – which can be harsh, aggressive or shocking.
Protagonist	The main character.
Sibilance	Repeated 's' sounds – most often caused by 's,' 'ss,' and 'c.' These can be harsh, smooth or sickly.
Simile	A comparison made using the words 'like' or 'as.'
Slang	A type of language consisting of words and phrases that are regarded as very informal.
Theme	The central idea of a literary work.

Key characters		Key themes & Characters	
Alem	The protagonist of the novel. He is not safe in either Ethiopia or Eritrea because he is mixed race. He has to seek asylum in England.	War and Conflict	Alem is forced to become a refugee due to the war between Eritea and Ethiopia. Whilst living in England, he encounters conflict every day and compares it to the war in Africa.
Mr Kelo	Alem's father. He is Ethiopian.	Love	Alem's parents love him and Mr Kelo leaves Alem in England to protect him from the dangers of war. Alem's friends and family also love him and protest against the decision to send him back to Ethiopia or Eritrea.
Mrs Kelo	Alem's mother. She is Eritrean.	Hope	Alem continuously has hopes that peace will be declared between Ethiopia and Eritrea and that he will be able to return safely to Africa to live with his parents.
Mr and Mrs Fitzgerald	Alem's foster parents.	Injustice	Alem is not welcome in either Ethiopia or Eritrea because he is mixed race and is threatened at gun point by soldiers who tell his family has to leave. However, a judge (who has never been to either country) decides that it is safe for Alem to return. This leads to Alem's friends protesting against the decision.
Ruth	Mr and Mrs Fitzgerald's daughter.	Isolation	Alem is left alone in England at the beginning of the novel. Throughout the book, Alem is faced with isolation and loneliness and there are many barriers which make him feel like an outsider.



Topic: Refugee Boy

Year: 8

NC Strand:

Sheila	A social worker who supports Alem.	Stanley	A boy in the care home that shares a room with Alem.
Mariam and Pamela	They are from the refugee council. They help Alem to apply for asylum.	Nicholas Morgan	A barrister for Alem. He is trying to get him refugee status.
Robert	Alem's friend from school. His real name is Roberto Fernandez.	Sweeney	A bully from the care home.
Asher	A very friendly boy and has a way about him that Alem admires.	Buck	One of the students from Alem's school.

Brief Summary

- Alem's family are threatened at gun-point in both Eritrea and Ethiopia.
- Alem's father takes him to London and leaves him alone in a hotel room.
- The Refugee Council send Alem to a children's home and then to the Fitzgeralds (a foster family).
- Alem starts school in London. He makes two friends - Robert and Buck.
- Alem receives a letter from his father indicating his mother is missing.
- Alem's application for asylum is rejected. He has his first appeal hearing.
- Alem receives a second letter from his father explaining that his mother has been killed.
- Alem's father arrives in the UK but is arrested and taken to Campsfield detention centre.
- Alem and his father have an appeal hearing together and their application for asylum is rejected as the judge believes that war has not affected the whole of Ethiopia or Eritrea.
- Alem is not allowed to stay with the Fitzgeralds. He is forced to live in a hotel with his father.
- Alem's friends start a campaign to support Alem and his father.
- Alem's father is shot and killed.
- Alem returns to live with the Fitzgeralds and his application for asylum is accepted.

Context

On 6th May 1998, a conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia began which left tens of thousands dead or injured in the space of just two years. The war was sparked by a battle for control of the border town of Badme - a humble, dusty market town with no apparent value.

A peace agreement was signed in December 2000, establishing the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission. It was meant to settle the dispute over Badme but its "final and binding" ruling 18 months later, awarding Badme to Eritrea, was not accepted by Ethiopia without the preconditions of further negotiations with Eritrea. Eritrea refused to talk to Ethiopia until the ruling was adhered to and peace between them remained elusive until July 2018 when a peace deal was signed.