

INTRODUCTION

This Resource Pack is based on *Malamander* – the highly anticipated new book by Thomas Taylor, a gripping and twisting seaside adventure for you and your KS2 class to be enthralled by!

Each lesson uses extracts from the book, giving you the full package to share with children (recommended ages 9+) and to excite their imaginations!

These notes include reading comprehension questions to support and elevate understanding of the text and to improve reading inference, retrieval and predictive skills, as well as suggestions for classroom activities to enjoy the book – from reading by moonlight, to creating legends of ‘Eerie-on-Sea’, creating beach bucket collages, and performing musical seaside scenes.

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ABOUT THE BOOK

Nobody visits Eerie-on-Sea in the winter. Especially not when darkness falls and the wind howls around Maw Rocks and the wreck of the battleship Leviathan, where even now some swear they have seen the unctuous malamander creep...

Herbert Lemon, Lost-and-Founder at the Grand Nautilus Hotel, knows that returning lost things to their rightful owners is not easy – especially when the lost thing is not a thing at all, but a girl. No one knows what happened to Violet Parma’s parents twelve years ago, and when she engages Herbie to help her find them, the pair discover that their disappearance might have something to do with the legendary sea-monster, the malamander. Eerie-on-Sea has always been a mysteriously chilling place, where strange stories seem to wash up. And it just got stranger...

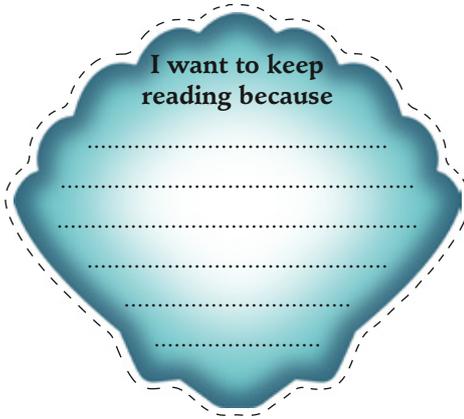
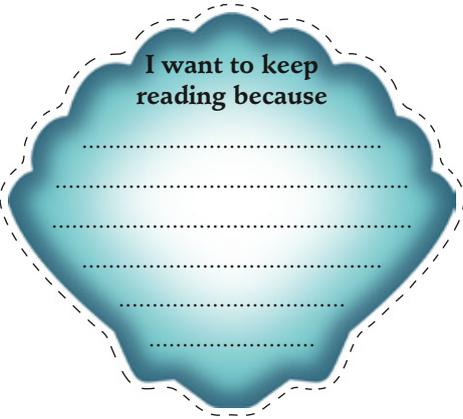
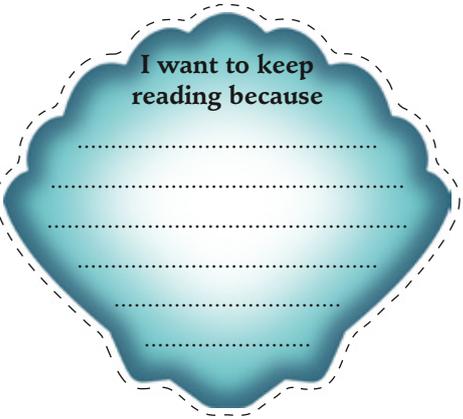
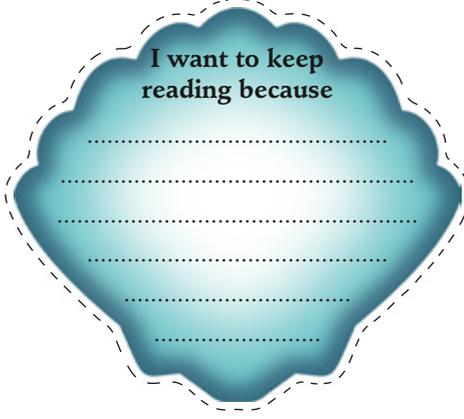
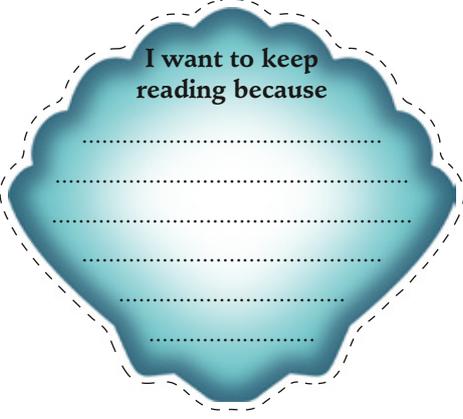
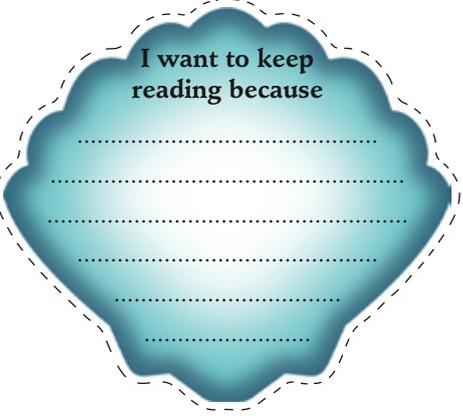
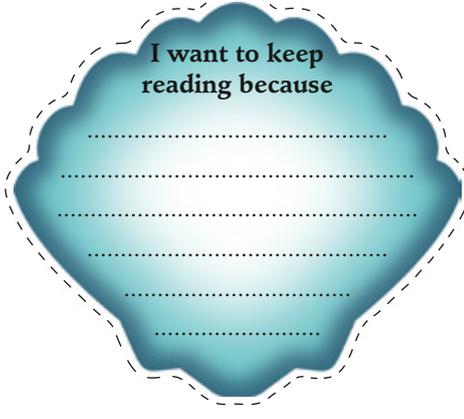
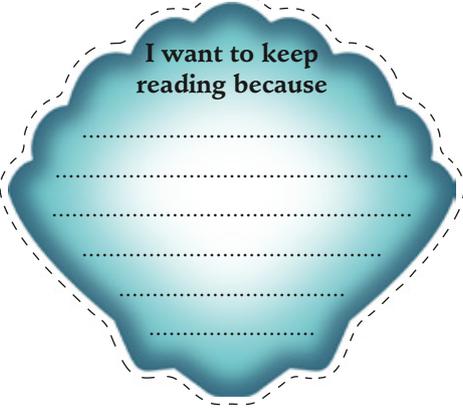
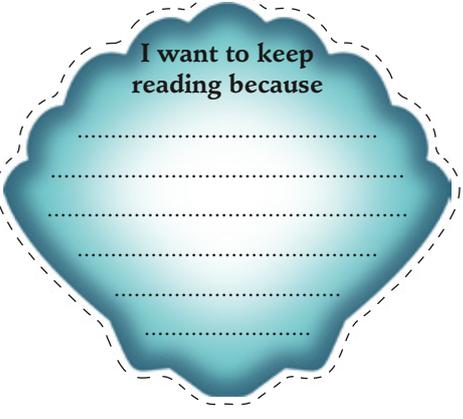
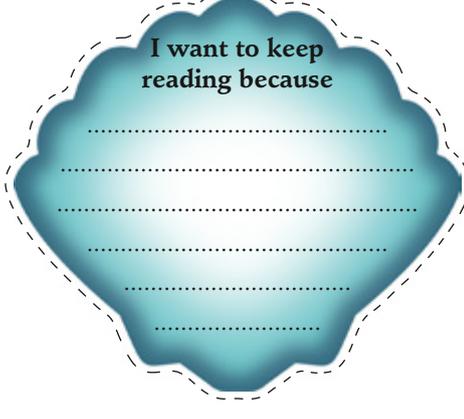
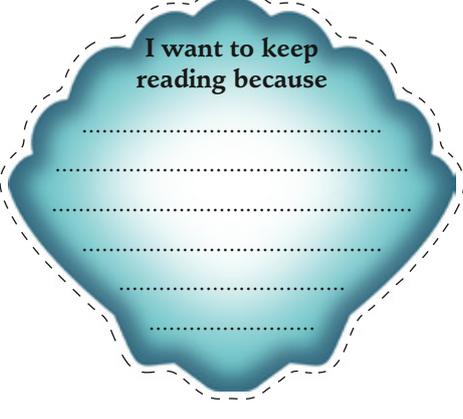
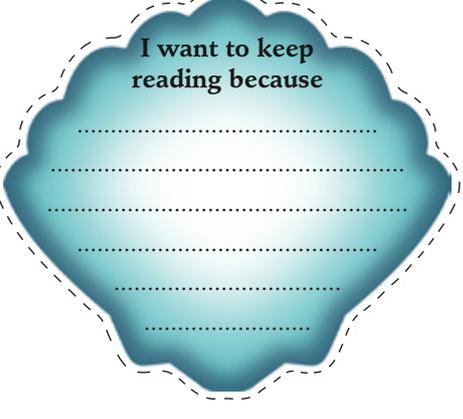
INTRODUCTORY TASK READING BY LAMPLIGHT...

Before you begin reading *Malamander*, cut out the 'Lamplight' template below. Then, sit around the classroom with all of your classmates in a big circle. Turn the lights out in the classroom to create an 'Eerie-on-Sea' kind of atmosphere. Pass the 'Lamplight' around the circle (or better still, use a real torch!); when you have it, it is your turn to *read by lamplight*, meaning it is your turn to read a section from the first chapter.



As you read, think about how you feel. Are you frightened? Curious? Intrigued? What is particularly erie about the opening of the story? Who in the class wants to keep reading (all of you, of course!) – and why?

Fill in one of the malamander shell badges below – make sure you wear it as you complete the lessons in this Resource Pack. And don't forget: this story *is* for you, after all...

 <p>I want to keep reading because</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	 <p>I want to keep reading because</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	 <p>I want to keep reading because</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
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EXTRACT 1: THE LEGENDS OF EERIE-ON-SEA (pages 103–105: 'What a Beachcomber Knows')

"SO, DO YOU REALLY THINK you've been attacked by the malamander, Mrs F?" I say, settling down on an upturned fishing crate beside her.

"Oh, Herbie, I really don't know," says Mrs Fossil, wincing as she tries to move her bandaged arm. "I always said I believed in the old stories, but honestly, I was just saying that to amuse people. You know, the tourists we get in the summer? This is our Loch Ness Monster, after all. They come in the shop and ask if I've seen anything. So of course I tell them yes – glimpses in the sea mist, that sort of thing. It makes them more inclined to buy something. I never actually took the legend that seriously. But now..."

"What *is* the malamander legend, exactly?" says Vi. "I mean, the one everyone knows. The one the tourists ask you about."

"Oh, there are lots of different stories about it, going way back," says Mrs F. "It's a monstrous creature – half man, half fish, half goodness-knows-what – that has haunted these misty shores since before ever a town was built on Eerie Rock. They say it can sometimes be glimpsed as midwinter approaches, as it searches for somewhere to lay its magical egg."

"Magical egg?" Vi says. "What kind of magical egg?"

"Oh, the grants-you-your-dearest-wish kind." Mrs F chuckles, with a return to her usual cheerfulness. "The whole makes-your-dreams-come-true shebang! But of course, you only get that if you can take the egg. And to take the egg, you have to defeat the malamander."

"Which no one can do," I throw in, remembering the first time I heard the tales too. "On account of its hideous spikes and steely scales and it being, you know, a monster."

"So what happens to it then? The egg?"

"The creature devours it," says Mrs Fossil. "As the sun rises the next day, when its mate never comes, it eats up that egg and slinks back into the deep for another year."

"But have people tried to take it?" says Vi, after a thoughtful pause. "I mean, in the stories. Have people tried to steal this amazing wishing egg?"

"Oh, endlessly!" Mrs Fossil chuckles again. "Heroes galore in the legends. Every single one of them –" she rolls her eyes and waggles the fingers of her good hand in a way she probably thinks is spooky – "gobbled up by the beastie!" Violet doesn't smile.

"Anyway," Mrs Fossil continues, "the tourists love it. Gives them something to look out for when the mists come in and they try a bit of beachcombing for themselves. Everyone loves a good story."

"But you'd never actually seen anything yourself?" Vi asks. "Before yesterday?"

"Oh, I wouldn't go *that* far. You don't spend hours on the foreshore in all weathers without having strange experiences. Or hearing strange sounds. Those mists in particular can addle your senses, make close things seem far away and faraway things seem..."

"Close enough to nearly bite your hand off?" I say, finishing the sentence for her.

Mrs F grimaces, and begins to look exhausted. "I really don't know what I saw, my dears. And that's the truth of it."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What can you infer about Mrs Fossil from her name? What kind of character do you think she is? What might she be interested in?
- Why does Eerie-on-Sea get a lot of tourists in the summer, according to Mrs F?
- What is the Loch Ness Monster? How is the legend of the 'malamander' similar to that of the Loch Ness Monster?
- How does Mrs F describe the malamander? Do you think she is frightened of it? Why or why not?
- How old is the story of the malamander?
- What happened to all of the 'heroes' in the legends, according to Mrs F?
- How does the author, Thomas Taylor, create a dream-like quality in his writing? Why do you think he does this?

ACTIVITY:

STORY IN A BOTTLE

Subjects: Literacy, Art, Design and Technology

- The story in *Malamander* revolves around the myths and legends of Eerie-on-Sea. What are the old stories of your own local area? Carry out research into the local community, industry and culture. Are there any local myths and legends that you can present to the class? Do you have your very own Loch Ness Monster – or even a malamander – lurking in nearby waters?
- Draw an image of the malamander according to Mrs F's description in the extract.
- In the extract, Mrs F refers to: "Heroes galore in the legends. Every single one of them [...] gobbled up by the beastie!" There are lots of stories on Eerie-on-Sea of various men and women throughout history trying to take the malamander's magical egg. In pairs, discuss an idea for one of these stories – you can use your own local stories as inspiration!
- Use the headers below to write a Planning Sheet for your own legend of Eerie-on-Sea:
 - Title:
 - Setting:
 - Name of hero:
 - Monster/enemy:
 - Difficult or dangerous journey:
 - Reason for journey:
 - Obstacles for hero to overcome:
 - Why the hero failed:
- Use your Planning Sheet to start writing your Legend of Eerie-on-Sea!
- When you have finished, bring an old plastic bottle to class. Roll up your story and place it inside the bottle.
- Create your own label especially for the finder of the bottle – it might include some clues as to the contents of the story inside, maybe even a map...
- Hang your plastic bottles around the classroom using a piece of string. Read the different stories inside each bottle. Which myths and legends are your favourites? Which heroes are you most intrigued by?

EXTRACT 2: LOST-AND-FOUNDERY (pages 39–41: 'Lost Luggage')

"There are spies in the hotel?" Violet's eyes light up.

I ignore the question. I'll be expected to open up my Lost-and-Foundery soon, and already I can hear guests checking in and out at the hotel reception, and the distant sound of breakfast being served.

I start tidying some of the mess from yesterday, and I'm pleased when Violet gets up to help. Between us it's not long before things are almost back to how they should be in my little cellar: utter chaos, but the sort of chaos where I more or less know where everything is, and where some proper lost-and-founding could be done if someone rings my bell.

"I wonder where it is," says Violet, as we survey our handiwork. "Or where *they* are. They might have had more than one."

"Where what is?" I say, straightening my cap. I'm already struggling to keep up and the day has barely begun.

"My parents' suitcase," says Violet. "Or cases. I mean, they surely had luggage. Luggage that they would have left behind in the room when they vanished. Well, where is it?"

It's a good question.

I should have thought of it.

"There are hundreds of lost bags and suitcases down here," I say, "going back over a century. I'd need to check the register."

"Well, can you?"

"Can I what?"

"Check the register."

I go up to my cubbyhole and lift down the big leather book where I, and all Lost-and-Founders before me, have recorded everything that has ever been handed in at the Lost-and-Foundery. I bring it down to the cellar, open it out on the floor, and flick back to twelve years before.

"What are the green ticks for?" asks Violet.

"That's for when something is returned. See, you write a description of the item in black ink, make notes in blue if you have a lead to the owner ..."

"If you find clues, you mean," says Violet, but I ignore her.

"... and then tick the entry off in green if it gets returned."

"I see. So, is there an entry for Parma? About twelve years ago? I know I was found in December..."

Violet stops talking. I've found the entry, describing two suitcases and several loose items that were handed in the day Violet's parents vanished. The name PARMA is written in careful letters. There are no notes in blue ink, and no green ticks. What there are, though, are hard red lines crossing out the entire entry.

"What does that mean?" says Violet.

I fiddle with my cap.

"It means ... er, that is to say ... the red lines are, um..."

"Herbie!"

"Well, I'm afraid it means the owners were declared dead, and the suitcases handed over to the next of kin. It means your parents' luggage isn't here. It means someone else in your family came to collect it."

Violet shakes her head.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What do you think Herbie's 'Lost-and-Foundery' is? Why do you think the term 'lost-and-founding' is used as a verb?
- What sorts of things can be lost and found? How do you think this theme might relate to the legend of the malamander?
- What has Violet lost? What is she trying to find?
- How does Herbie feel in this extract? How do you know? Pick out key words and phrases.
- Why do you think Herbie '[fiddles] with his cap' before telling Violet about what the 'red lines' mean?
- What does Violet find out about her parents' luggage? Do you think she has 'found' anything in this extract?

ACTIVITY:

LOST LUGGAGE

Subjects: Literacy, RSHE, Art, Design and Technology, Speaking and Listening

- What is identity? How do you show your identity? How does the theme of 'Lost-and-Foundery' relate to the idea of identity in *Malamander*? Focus on Violet's story, in particular.
- Use the template below to create your own lost luggage: a suitcase that reflects your identity. Consider the following things:
 - What colours will you use and why?
 - What images will you use and why?
 - Will your suitcase be old and tatty, or will it be brand new?
 - Will your suitcase have any additional features, like a lock, a badge or some patches to reflect your personality?
- When you have finished your suitcase, discuss with a partner: what have you learned about your identity in completing this exercise? Is anyone willing to present his/her suitcase with the class?
- Now it's time to consider what objects would be inside your suitcase. What would you leave behind in your lost luggage to represent who you are? Make a list under the headings below:
 - Objects
 - Items of Clothing
 - Books
 - Extra
- Try to choose only one or two items per heading. When you have completed your list, draw each thing that you have included. Attach your items to the suitcase that you have already created – your lost luggage is ready to be added to Herbie's Lost-and-Foundery at the Grand Nautilus Hotel!

EXTRACT 3: BEACHCOMBING TREASURES (pages 70–71: ‘Coprolites and Cuttlefish’)

We crunch on through the shingle, picking our way over the piles of seaweed and sticks of driftwood. Ahead, someone well wrapped in tatty coats and scarves is approaching, carrying a metal bucket. On her head are at least three hats, all tied down with a piece of string.

“Hallooo!” the someone cries, and I *hallooo!* back.

“I don’t often see you on the beach, young Herbie,” says the woman as she draws near. “Who is your interesting friend?”

“This is Violet,” I say. “Violet, this is Mrs Fossil. She’s a beachcomber.”

“Professional beachcomber, if you please,” says Mrs Fossil, giving Violet a snaggletooth grin. “The only one in town. And I hope to see you both in my little Flotsamporium in the near future. I have some curious beach finds just in. They would especially suit a young man looking for something for that special someone in his life. Eh, Herbie?”

Mrs Fossil nudges me, and winks at Violet.

“Really?” Violet looks embarrassed. “What kind of things do you find?”

“Ah, things like this,” says Mrs Fossil, waving her bucket at Violet. Inside, a dozen strange objects – shells, twists of metal, frosty glass pebbles and funny spirals – slosh around. Mrs Fossil reaches a fingerless glove into the bucket and pulls out a glistening brown lump.

“What’s that?” asks Violet. Not taking the lump, even though it looks like Mrs Fossil is offering it to her.

“Coprolite, my dear. A lovely specimen. Prehistoric.”

“Copro... What?”

“Doo-doo,” explains Mrs Fossil with another wink. “Dino turd. Petrified poo! One hundred and thirty-five million years old, give or take a day or two. I’m probably the first person to pick it up since the Lower Cretaceous. Imagine that!”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What do you think a ‘professional beachcomber’ is, according to the extract?
- What is Mrs Fossil’s ‘Flotsamporium’? What sort of things might you find there?
- Mrs Fossil removes ‘coprolite’ from her bucket to show Herbie and Violet. What is ‘coprolite’?
- How can you tell from the extract that Mrs Fossil is interested in history?

ACTIVITY:

MY BEACH BUCKET

Subjects: Literacy, Science, Geography, Speaking and Listening

- Based on the extract, discuss as a class what the term ‘beachcombing’ means. Make a list of the things that Mrs Fossil has in her bucket. In pairs, discuss what each object can tell us about the beach habitat.
- What good things might you find on a beach, and what bad things (e.g. litter)? Create a list and divide it into two columns.
- What are the negative human impacts on beaches today? Why is it important to protect the beach?
- In pairs again, make a list of things that you might find in each of the following habitats: beach, rainforest, city, desert. How would they be different and why?
- Where is your nearest beach? Carry out some research into what it is like there. How would you get there? How long would it take you? Create a map of your route to the nearest beach.
- Thinking about Mrs Fossil’s bucket, create a collage on an A3 sheet of paper of all the things that you might find if you visited the beach. Use different materials, paper, colours and pens to create your beach bucket collage. How can you show the different textures of the things that you find?
- Using sensory description, describe your beach bucket collage. Read out your descriptions to the class!
- Finally, write a Beach Pledge explaining how you will protect the beach from humans dropping litter. What sorts of things can you do to make sure that the only things inside Mrs Fossil’s bucket are ‘nature’s jewels’?

EXTRACT 4: THE POWER OF THE SEA (pages 85–86: 'The Sighting')

"Yeah," I say, fishing my Lost-and-Founder's cap out of a pool of seawater and wringing it out. "We need to get out of here."

"Wait a moment," says Violet. "What just happened? Herbie, what was that we saw by the water?"

"You wanted to know about the malamander, didn't you?" I reply. "Well, I'd say Eerie-on-Sea has just obliged you with your very own sighting."

"But it can't be real." Violet shakes her head. "How can it be real?"

"Do you see that?" I say, pointing into the mist.

"What?"

"Exactly. Violet, in this fog, anything could be standing ten paces away right now and we wouldn't know. We need to get off the beach. It's dangerous here."

"OK, maybe you're right. But there's something we need to find first," she says. And she heads off into the mist where Mrs Fossil's footprints are still faintly visible in the waterlogged sand.

"What are you doing?" I say, trying to catch up. "This is madness. What do we need to find?"

"That!" Violet cries, pointing ahead.

Something is lying on the beach, on the edge of visibility. Violet jogs over to it and picks it up. It's Mrs Fossil's bucket, her beachcombing treasures spread out around it.

From where I'm standing, Violet is half vanished in the mist. I see her silhouette as she stoops to scoop the spilled things back into the bucket.

And then I see something else.

A shape. No, the shape. The strange, crouching, spiny shape from a moment ago, faint but massive in the mist beyond Violet. And it's getting closer, making a throaty, clicking, burbling sound as it comes.

"Violet, behind you!"

This time she doesn't hesitate. It must be the panicky high-pitched squeak in my voice, which, for once, is actually quite useful.

Then we are both running up the beach, not looking back – running and running until we reach the top of the steps in the sea wall, and we can see the town and the cheery lights and the door of the Grand Nautilus Hotel.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- How do you get the sense that the beach is dangerous for Herbie and Violet in the extract? Pick out key words and phrases.
- Why is the name 'Eerie-on-Sea' effective in the context of the story? What are its connotations?
- How does the author use imagery of light and dark to set the scene in the extract?
- How does the tension rise in the extract? The author, Thomas Taylor, uses a variation of short and long sentences in this extract. Why do you think he does this?
- What do you think a 'throaty, clicking, burbling sound' might sound like? Can you recreate it?
- How does the extract convey the power of nature?

ACTIVITY:

A SEASIDE SCENE

Subjects: Literacy, Poetry, Art and Design, Drama, Music

- In pairs, discuss the last time that you visited the seaside. Where did you go? What is your best experience or memory of the seaside? What is your worst? What do you know about the sea? How can it be considered frightening?
- Consider the question: what does the seaside mean to you? Create a list of words that come into your head when you think about the seaside. You can even make a creative classroom display using these words!

- Using your list of words, write a poem and a corresponding illustration to show what the seaside means to you. Your poem can be as happy or as eerie as you like! Use what you've read so far of *Malamander* to give you inspiration.
- Once you have written your poems, share them with your classmates. Read the poems aloud with each other. How can you use your voice, facial expressions and body language to create meaning? Perform your poems together in front of the class.
- When you've practised reading your poems aloud several times, try to incorporate musical instruments into your performance. Consider how you can use different instruments to create mood and atmosphere.
- If you don't feel like you can add music to your own poems, trying adding it to the extract from the book. Use different sounds to show the rising tension on the beach, as Herbie and Violet look through the mist, wondering what they can *really* see...

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For readers aged 9 years+

www.eerie-on-sea.com

#malamander

