

### Spelling Investigations

Many describing words (adjectives) end in -cious or -tious. Look at the words below (write them on cards) and sort them under the following headings: **-cious**      **-tious**      **other**

Spacious, nutritious, anxious, gracious, cautious, fictitious, malicious, ambitious, delicious, infectious, contagious, vicious, pretentious, treacherous, ferocious, repetitious, rebellious, luscious, superstitious, conscious, scrumptious, spurious, precious, conscientious, luxurious, suspicious, pertinacious, loquacious, pernicious

How many of the words above can you use in your writing?

### Wider Curriculum Links

**Science:** This book highlights the importance of animals and their habitats. Can you research a few different animals and find out how, through evolution, it is highly suited to its habitat? Can you present this information as a report or a poster? Animals you could research are: the stag beetle, camel, polar bear, penguin etc. Are any of these animals at risk of extinction? Why? How can we help?

### Discussion Questions

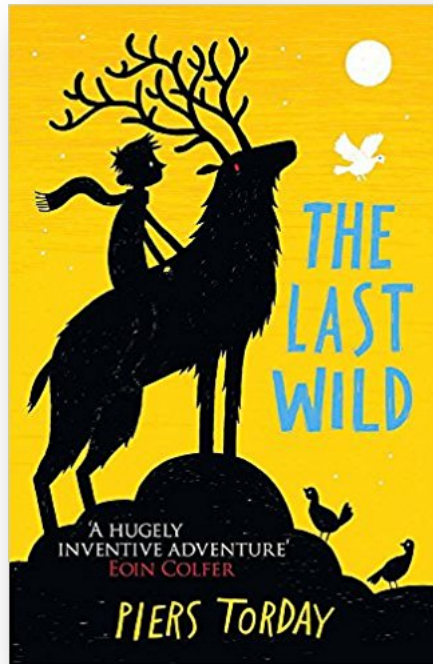
How could this dystopian future have happened?

What are some of the environmental challenges that we face?

How would you describe Kester's relationship to the other children at Spectrum Hall?

How does Kester change as a person through the story?

What do you notice about Piers Torday's writing style?



### Key Vocabulary

dystopian  
utopian  
habitat  
ecosystems  
biodiversity  
biomes  
climate change  
ecosphere  
species  
infectious  
evolution

### Writing Opportunities

1. Reading to pg. 12 '- no more normal food.' **The Island! Humanities Last Hope!** Design and write a poster for any humans that are not on the island yet.
2. Read pgs. 20 – 27 (end of Chapter 3): Write a character description for Kester at the beginning of the story. Which words would you use to describe him? Can you find evidence in the text to justify your opinion? Can you create your own character for your own dystopian story?
3. Read Chapter 5 – 6: These chapters are full of action. Can you start to write your own version (with the character you created in the last session), writing action scenes like Piers Torday?
4. Read to Part 2, Chapters 7 and 8: We meet the stag and the wolves. Can you draw a picture of what you think these animals would look like based on Torday's descriptions? Can you describe these animals in your own words? Which animals will you have in your story?
5. Read to chapter 13: Can you could write a diary entry in role as Kester?
6. Keep reading the book: Can you plan and write your own dystopian narrative?

### Further reading

*The Dark Wild* (Book 2)  
by Piers Torday

*The Wild Beyond* (Book 3)  
by Piers Torday

*Cogheart* by Peter Bunzl

*Can We Save the Tiger?*  
by Martin Jenkins

*Life: The First Four Billion Years* by Martin Jenkins

*The Hidden Forest* by Jeannie Baker

Want to find out more? Why not download the full Planning Sequence on our website?

# Home Learning Branches

*The Last Wild* by Piers Torday

1 Read Chapter 1: The author often uses one sentence paragraphs e.g. 'Not since Mum died.' Why do you think this is? Do you think this is an effective technique? On page 7 - 10, why does the author use asterisks instead of inverted commas for Kester's dialogue?

**The Island! Humanities Last Hope!**  
Can you design and write a poster for any humans that are not on the island yet? It is important they know that The Island exists and to make their way straight there. We can practise the -ous spelling. Have a go at using words like: nutritious, infectious and cautious

What a calamity has befallen our beloved planet and our last refuge is The Island! The burning Earth cannot sustain life anymore and the infectious Red Eye has wiped out our animals. Make your way to The Island where we can have a second chance.

2 frustrate  
lonely  
banish  
isolate  
free  
unhappy  
powerless  
abject

helpless  
abject  
helpless  
abandon  
bewilder  
hopeless  
bore

Add the endings to these words: **-ness, -ment, -dom and -tion**  
Try making some phrases such as: *a sense of helplessness, a wave of...*

Why is part of chapter three written in italics? What does this tell us about how he ended up at Spectrum Hall? Do you think the 'varmint' are talking to him or is it just 'imaginary'? Write a character description of Kester. Use some of the phrases from earlier...

*Kester has clearly gone through some really tough times. Where is his family? Why doesn't he talk? He has such a wave of frustration seething through him...*

3 Read Chapter 5 – 6. Focus on pg. 37 and the line, "One last look around the room, a deep breath – and I slide the keycard into the slot?" What effect does this dash have? It creates a strong, dramatic interruption. "The cockroaches power into the corridor, filling the floor with a black flood of shell." What tense is the book mostly written in? The verbs are written in present and present progressive tense (to show lots going on at the same time). What effect does this have on the reader?

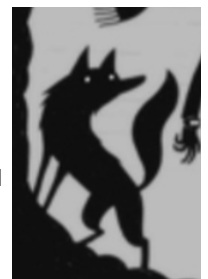
The general ordered me to keep going.

Can you change the verb to the present tense? Use this sentence to write your own action scene. Experiment adding a dash to make the last action more significant. *The General, who was scurrying up my arm, orders me to keep going. I look around, I blink slowly – and I walk out the door not looking back.*

4 Read to Part 2, Chapters 7 and 8: What words and phrases does the author use to describe the stag? Note these descriptions down on some post-it notes. Can you use these to draw a detailed picture of the stag? Can you write a descriptive paragraph of your own for the stag? What animals will you have in your own story? A tiger? Bear? Can you describe this animal?



Read Chapters 9, 10 and 11 (pg. 83). Look at sentence: "The grizzled wolf, knocked but not down, snarls and prepares for his next blow." Can you highlight the words that describe the wolf? Add another paragraph and this time focus on the wolves.



5 Read to chapter 13: What are the two things that animals believe in? What does the First Fold tell us about how the relationship between humans and animals has changed? Did it have to develop this way? Read Chapter 14.

Can you could write a diary entry in role as Kester? How do you think he is feeling at different points in the story? A powerful way to show uncertainty is to use question tags. Here are a couple of examples: *My father must be able to help, mustn't he? We will be alright, won't we?* Can you use one in your diary?

Read to chapter 19. Why is Polly so knowledgeable about plants? What do you think is happening to Kester's watch? Can you write a diary entry from Polly's point of view? What tag question might she ask? *My parents haven't forgotten me, have they?*

6 Keep reading book until the end. What is the shape of this story so far? Can you draw a story map out?

Our main character, who is a selective mute, is stuck in a boarding school on an Island. There are no animals left in the world.

There is a horrible doctor who controls the school. The other children are mean too. Our hero learns he/she can commune with "varmint".

Our hero escapes in a really dramatic way with the help of the varmint. She/he meets the last group of animals. Describe the animals.

Our hero goes on an adventure to find his/her father/mother who is famous scientist. They might be able to help...

Use your story map to write your own dystopian adventure story. What is the problem that affects the world? Can you include dialogue? Make this into a book and read to an audience!

