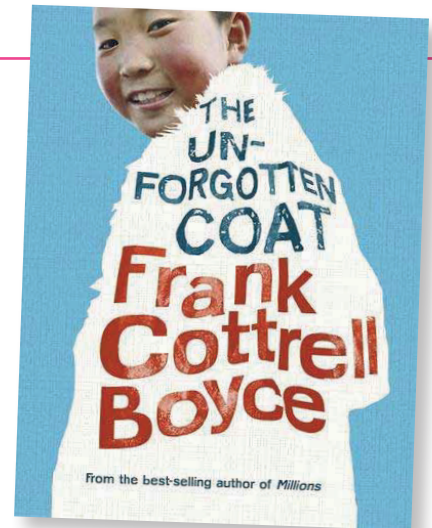


THE UNFORGOTTEN COAT

by Frank Cottrell Boyce

Walker Group
(Upper primary/lower secondary)



Set in Bootle, north of Liverpool, the book tells of two refugee brothers from Mongolia who are determined to fit in with their new schoolmates while they apply to remain in the UK. A wonderful friendship develops between the boys and Julie, a Year 6 girl in her last term at primary school. When the boys suddenly disappear one day, Julie struggles to separate truth from fantasy.

BACKGROUND

Mongolia is a land-locked country in Central Asia, with a small population of 2.7 million. In the 13th century, tribal leader Genghis Khan founded the Mongol empire and launched a fierce campaign to conquer other lands.

In 1990, Mongolia abandoned a Soviet-style regime and attempted political and economic reform. It has begun to see great wealth from mining, but many Mongolians still live in poverty. Corruption and human rights abuses are widespread.



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What do you think are the advantages of being a guide for Chingis and Nergui? **Possible answers:** Learning about a different culture eg horses, Genghis Khan, Xanadu, Explaining host culture eg football, Monster Munch
2. 'Practically everyone we know vanished. That's why we had to leave home – because people kept vanishing.' (p72) What reasons can you think of that could have made Chingis and Nergui leave Mongolia?
3. Why do you think Chingis faked the photos?
4. 'I knew that everyone in that house was afraid.' (p56) How do you think Julie feels when she realises why Chingis and Nergui were trying to run away?
5. Why do you think the book is set out as it is, ie written as if in an exercise book and with the Polaroid photos? What was the writer trying to convey?

ROLE PLAY

- Take on the roles of Shocky and Julie and talk over what they learned from having Chingis and Nergui in their class.
- Imagine Julie's conversation via Skype with Chingis and Nergui when they are all grown up.

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Article 3: We all have the right to life, and to live in freedom and safety.

Article 15: We all have the right to belong to a country.

FOLLOW UP WORK

Invite students to take photographs of their environment which capture emotions that they would like to remember later. Ask students to give the photographs titles. Make a classroom display.

FIND OUT MORE

Further resources for teaching around human rights can be found at: www.amnesty.org.uk/education