



THE SILVER ARROW

LEV GROSSMAN

Educational resource pack



EXTRACT:

CREATING ANIMAL CHARACTERS (*Taken from pages 45 – 46*)

'Hi,' Kate said.

'Been a long time since a train came through here,' the fox said.

'Very long,' said the badger, transferring its ticket to its paws.

Kate thought of saying *Is that so?* or *How about that!* but rejected both ideas as fatally uncool.

'How long?' Tom said.

'About thirty years,' the badger said. 'Where have you been? You're very late.'

'Wait – just – how can you be talking?!' Kate said.

'Oh, I know,' the fox said. 'We do talk sometimes, just not around humans. Frankly, we don't meet a lot of humans who are worth talking to. No offence.'

Kate supposed that was fair.

'But you haven't been standing here waiting this whole time, have you?' she said. 'Like, the whole thirty years?'

'Oh, no. Of course not. We just look in here once in a while to check. I mean, we're animals, it's not like we have jobs.'

'I guess not.'



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What do you like about the illustration of the animals waiting for the train?
- How does the writer bring these characters to life in the extract? Give examples.
- Which is your favourite animal character in the story and why?
- How does the writer create humour with his animal characters? Can you give examples?
- Which other animal characters do you like from other books and stories you have read?



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ACTIVITY: ANIMAL TRAVELCARD

- Using the template on the next page, create your own animal character and design a travelcard for them so that they can get the train without having to buy a ticket every time!
- First of all, try to choose a wild animal that you don't see every day. Think back to the characters in *The Silver Arrow* to give you some ideas, or you can do some research to help you decide. Then, think about the personality and characteristics your animal will possess. Which animals should they avoid sharing a carriage with? What will be their destination? E.g. the Arctic? The Amazon? Give them a name, then sketch their photo giving them an item or two of clothing if you like!
- Once everyone has created their cards, line up outside the classroom. Imagine that you are waiting for a train and act out your animal character holding on to your travelcard. When your teacher – who is now the conductor – gives the signal, you are going to pretend the classroom is the train that has just arrived. Your teacher will check your travelcard so that you can come on board!

