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BEETLE QUEEN

M. G. Leonard

CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER RESOURCES

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chickenhousebooks.com

Chapter

Comprehension Questions

Writing Opportunities

Cross Curricular Opportunities

Front cover (Illustrated by Elisabet Portabella)

- Ask children to look at the front cover:
- What is a 'sequel'?
- Building on from the last book, what do you think this book will be about?
- How does the cover look similar or different from the last cover?
- What things can you see on the front cover? Do you remember this character from the last book – *Beetle Boy*? What about the yellow ladybirds?
- Why do you think the book has the title *Beetle Queen*?
- What kind of story will it be? What genre do you think it belongs to?
- Who might enjoy it? Based on the cover, who might you recommend it to? Why?
- Now read the blurb – were any of your predictions correct?

Write what children can observe (I can see...); what they can infer (I think... because ...); and what they want to question about the cover (I wonder if/what...? etc.).

ART • Draw alternative covers for the book

Message from Chicken House

- Upon hearing this personal message from the book's publisher, what does this add to your predictions about the cover and the story?
- Does what Barry Cunningham said make you think and feel the same?
- Why do you think the publisher uniquely chooses to put these messages in the front of their books?

After reading the story, write your own messages of reflection about the book to other readers in the school to recommend it to them.

DRAMA • Record your messages and attach them to books in the classroom or school library using QR codes for other children to scan to see video recommendations.



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Quote from Immanuel Kant

- Who is Immanuel Kant?
- Why do you think the author has chosen this quote to start the book?
- What do you think the quote means?

Find other quotes by philosopher, Immanuel Kant. Discuss their significance. Write own quotes to describe the book, opinions about science or about life today.

P4C • What is philosophy? Introduce to children by asking philosophical questions, e.g. To what extent are animals similar to people? Do they have rights? Should they be treated the same or different? Can children make up their own philosophical questions to make others think deeper about things?

1

- Why do you think the author has chosen to start the story with 'There was a gentle tap on the door.'?
- Why might Gerard be forbidden from entering the White Room unless invited?
- Who has arrived at the house of Lucretia Cutter and why?
- Explain who you think Lucretia Cutter 'really' is.

Discuss as a class about ethical fashion and animals that have been used within the fashion industry. Write a persuasive argument against using animals in fashion.

SCIENCE • Learn more about the act of metamorphosis within life cycles, particularly that of a beetle from eggs to larvae to pupa to adult.



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2

- Why does she walk with a stick? Is it because she's had an accident or because it is a decoy?
- What does 'metamorphosized' mean?
- Who is Ling Ling? What are your initial impressions of her?
- How does the author show that Lucretia and Ruby may not like each other that much?
- Predict what Lucretia means when she says 'This was going to be so easy'.

Use website: <https://www.petakids.com/animal-facts/animals-used-clothing/> to support your research.

ART • Using art and craft materials such as sequins, beads and fabric, recreate a version of the Snow White dress.

- How does the reader know that Pop-Pop Pie is a family tradition to eat?
- What does Bertolt repeatedly call Dr Cuttle to show him respect? Why?
- Why do you think Darkus is nervous to tell his father what he wants to say?
- What was the only thing that Bartholomew Cuttle could remember about the rescue?
- What happened to Baxter after the rescue?
- Read to the end of Chapter 2. What do you think will happen next?

Write an internal monologue as Darkus when he's thinking about telling his father about what he wants to say and show him.

Write the police incident report about the Emporium, before they had closed the shop, detailing the incidents that had happened here.

DRAMA • Act out the reaction of Barty Cuttle when he finds out how Darkus freed him from Towering Heights.



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3

- Explain the meaning of these words from Chapter 3: cavernous, crescendoed, cacophony, cognizant.
- Why is this chapter called 'Beetle Ball?'
- Find a synonym for 'to go down' on page 22, repeated again on page 27.
- What piece of music are the beetles playing to greet Dr Cuttle?
- How does M. G. Leonard show you that Bartholemew Cuttle is shouting when he speaks?
- Why does Bartholomew think that the beetles are dangerous? How does he react to seeing them?
- How does Darkus react to seeing his dad become annoyed by the beetles?
- 'No, son, *you* don't understand.' (pg. 28). Why is 'you' in italics?

Write the conversation that Darkus and his father would have had at home after this chapter.

Write the beetle orchestra scene from the perspective of Bartholomew Cuttle.

MUSIC • Reread the scene where the beetles are acting as an orchestra and soundtrack it using musical instruments or body percussion.

4

- What does Darkus see in his dreams?
- List all the reasons Darkus gives for why his dad is acting rather unusually.
- Predict what Bartholemew Cuttle knows about what Lucretia Cutter is doing.
- What does Darkus mean by 'I know it like I know my mum is dead?' (pg. 33)

Put yourself in Bartholomew's shoes and describe why you are treating Darkus in the evasive and protective way you are.

P4C • Are there more to our dreams than we think?



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the tunnels named after in Base Camp? What metaphor does M. G. Leonard use at the end of this chapter to describe how snow transforms things? Why? 	Write a continuation of the chapter of the children out enjoying playing in the snow.	
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is Novak's relationship like with Gerard, the butler? Find evidence to support your thinking. Is there anything odd about the advice 'Sois courageuse... Be brave' that Gerard offers to Novak before seeing her mother? Which keywords tell you that Novak is scared of her mother? Why does Novak call her mother 'Mater'? What sort of voice might Novak have? What do you think Ling Ling has done to Emma Lamb? Novak thinks that, 'Darkus was dead' after hearing her mother speak to Ling Ling. Discuss what you think Novak will do next. 	<p>Write an internal monologue as Novak when she's standing in front of her mother and when she is forced to leave the room.</p> <p>Write a prospective school report for Novak, if she did actually go to school.</p>	ART • Draw what you imagine Novak Cutter to look like. Explain your decisions.
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did Humphrey eat in prison because food was so limited? What is Pickering's nickname for Humphrey? Is Humphrey actually as daft as he seems? Give reasons for what you think. How has Pickering changed since being in prison? 	Write a plan of action for what you would do next if you were Pickering and Humphrey. Would you go to see Lucretia Cutter first or go to sort out Darkus? Why?	DRAMA • Use drama to recreate this chapter from Humphrey and Pickering arguing in their bunk beds to being released.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the only things that now interest him? Why were the charges against the pair dropped? 		Show how their moods change through their body language, dialogue and expression.
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why had Darkus been banned from bringing Baxter to school? What does Virginia use to view evidence that is not on the computer archive? How do the different beetles communicate with their owners? What do they tell them? What does the phrase 'have a hunch' mean? Why is Darkus reluctant at first to visit Mrs Crips? How does Virginia convince Darkus to visit her? 	Read to the end of Page 52. Write a newspaper article about Lucretia Cutter being involved in another beetle-based mystery that happened in the past.	<p>HISTORY • Look at primary and secondary sources of evidence from real historical events. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using each in historical research.</p> <p>Get in touch with your local museum or archives and arrange a visit to explore this practically.</p>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the meaning of the phrase 'terrible imposition'. On page 61, what phrase said by Mrs Crips shows her absolute relief of the chance of finding Spencer again? Find the phrase that starts on page 62 that shows that Mrs Crips is a lonely person. 	Write the beetle farm laboratory assistant job advertisement or description that Spencer saw posted up on the noticeboard in Cutter Laboratories.	ART • From the description at the start of the chapter, draw how you see 27 Elton Road in your mind's eye.



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- Read to the end of page 63. Predict what Mrs Crips may reveal about Spencer's disappearance. Could it be linked to the disappearance of Bartholemew Cuttle?
- Why do you think the police haven't investigated properly the things that Mrs Crips was telling them?
- What does it mean to 'badger' something out of someone?
- Why do they go and choose to see Professor Andrew Appleyard? Can you remember his links to Darkus' dad from *Beetle Boy*?

Write the legal document that Spencer signed, promising not to tell anyone about his work.

Write a paragraph from the perspective of a beetle about being stuck in a cage.

P4C • Should animals live in cages? What about animals in zoos? Do animals have consciences? Can they think for themselves?

- What is a 'sabbatical'?
- How does Darkus feel when people believe the lies that his father tells them?
- Why does M. G. Leonard choose to use the phrase 'You can't trust what you read in the papers.' on page 72?
- Do you think it is right to eat insects? Would you like to sample them? How do you think they might taste?
- How do we know by Virginia's body language that she is disgusted? Mime out her actions and behaviour.
- 'Lucretia Cutter will not stop until she has the world at her feet.' (pg. 84). What does this phrase mean?

Write an insect-based entomophagy three-course menu that may be served at a fancy restaurant.

Write instructions and recipes to make insect-inspired dishes. Collect the class' contributions together to make a cookbook.

GEOGRAPHY • Look at an underground tube station map and track the route that Darkus, Virginia and Bertolt have taken across London.

Understand more about people's food preferences. Discuss why people eat meat, are vegetarian or are vegan and any food allergies or substitutes that may be common in your class.



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- Predict what Professor Appleyard will do next upon hearing that Lucretia Cutter is breeding transgenic beetles.

HISTORY • Research the history of using animals in war, particularly the case of the weevil bomb in the Cold War.

DRAMA • Try out some meditation, sitting down cross-legged on a mat, breathing in slowly through your nose, closing your eyes, and breathing out through your mouth.

- What made Darkus stop in the doorway?
- How has Professor Appleyard ended up in hospital in a critical condition?
- What does it mean to 'disobey' someone?
- Why does the author write parts of Darkus' speech in capital letters?
- What does Bartholemew threaten to do to the beetles if Darkus continues to try to solve the mysteries involving Lucretia Cutter?

Write up what you think is in the folders of the Fabre Project.

Think about the documents, notes, Latin words, drawings, graphs and diagrams included.

SCIENCE • Learn the symptoms of and how to treat an insect bite.

DRAMA • Using drama, act out the argument between Darkus and his father.



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- Which book does Darkus appear to read?
- What might Darkus be thinking and feeling when he strokes his mother's face on the photograph?

Write a ranty diary entry from Darkus after his argument with his father in this chapter.

- What phrases in this chapter show that Novak is worried? Suggest at least three examples.
- Explain the phrase 'Her heart hardened a little more towards Mater' (pg. 99).
- Why does Novak choose Maximilian Cuttle rather than Bartholemew Cuttle or Bertolt and Virginia to contact?
- Predict what Novak wrote in her letter to Maximilian Cuttle.
- What word on Page 105 means 'in an unwilling and hesitant way'?
- Summarise Novak by describing her in three words.

Write the letter that Novak is writing to Maximilian Cuttle.

MISCELLANEOUS • Imagine you were Novak and had to leave your home quickly the next day. Write three things you would put in your suitcase to take with you, and explain why you have chosen these things.



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12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predict what might happen based on the title of this chapter. What type of code does Newton use to communicate with Darkus? How is Virginia clever at her ways of disguising things? Why does Virginia sometimes appear jealous of Darkus when he talks about Novak? Why are the children dubious about Dr Cuttle's letter? What does the phrase 'a force to be reckoned with' mean? How does M. G. Leonard show that the relationship between Darkus and Virginia is growing? 	Write a story about an invasive species of beetle taking over something or someone.	SCIENCE • Explore the impacts that invasive species may have on native species and habitats and investigate some of the most common methods used to control invasive species.
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is this chapter similar to Chapter One: Snow White? Explain the phrase 'Her familiar voice sounded like sandpaper dripping with honey'. What is your first impression of Stella Manning? Give three words to describe her and explain your reason for each word. What does 'demure' mean? Why are the dresses that Lucretia Cutter makes only on loan and not for sale to the actresses? How does the author create a sense of sadness in the reader towards Novak in Chapter 13? 	Read an abridged version of the story of Macbeth to discover more about the character of Lady Macbeth, why her name is associated with bad luck and why this dress is named after her. Write a character description of Lady Macbeth.	ART • Draw what you imagine the dress, Lady Macbeth, to look like. Label your sketch and explain your decisions. MICELLANEOUS • Stella Manning seems concerned that the public do not like the signs of her pregnancy such as her 'baby belly'.



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- What does Novak notice about Darkus' dad when he walks into the room?

Research the concept of body image, particularly in young people and find out why it is affecting their mental health and self-esteem. Discuss if there's such a thing as having a 'perfect' body. Relate to using make-up, social media, filters and Photoshop.

- Why do you think Darkus doubts himself about the reasons why his father has gone off with Lucretia Cutter?
- What are 'intentions'?
- Why is what Millie says to Darkus with the phrase 'You're dead! She shot you!' comical?
- List all the ways that Darkus, Virginia and Uncle Max tried to look for any signs of life in the house.
- Explain why Millie forgot to bring the letter to Uncle Max.
- Summarise Uncle Max's feelings when he read the letter, in three words.

Rewrite this part of the story from Millie's perspective.

DRAMA • Act out Darkus, Virginia and Uncle Max breaking into Towering Heights. Try to make it as dramatic as you can.



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15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predict from the title what might happen in this chapter. What does the illustration add to this chapter? Who does Humphrey and Pickering think Bertolt is? What is a raft? How does the author create tension as well as inject some humour into the chase scene? How would you describe Bertolt after reading this chapter? Summarise his character in three words and give reasons for each. 	Write the events of this chapter from the perspective of Humphrey and/or Pickering.	P4C • Is it wise for Bertolt to run into a burning building? Would you take this risk if you had to save something of great importance to you inside?
16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is a silhouette? How do Darkus and Virginia know that Bertolt will have gone to the Oyster? How do the children feel about saving Pickering and Humphrey? What are your opinions towards Humphrey and Pickering in this chapter? Would you have saved them? Why? Why do you think M. G. Leonard chooses to use the phrase 'cocooning himself in darkness' (pg. 156) here? Why was Baxter unusually still in Darkus' hands? 	Write the opening paragraph to the next chapter of the story.	P4C • Should good characters save the bad characters in literature? Does not saving them make the good characters bad characters?



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- 'Lucretia Cutter had won.' Summarise your thoughts at the end of the chapter in three words.

- Which part of America is Lucretia Cutter in?
- Why does Humphrey want to go to America?
- What does the repetition of thinking about food suggest about Humphrey's character?
- Why do Humphrey and Pickering plan on staying in hospital for the night?
- What does the phrase 'saving it for a rainy day' mean?

Write headlines for the newspaper article about Lucretia Cutter dressing the three nominated actresses at the Film Awards. Try to make them as attention-grabbing as possible. Create a front page of a newspaper called The Daily News with an image and caption of Lucretia Cutter.

GEOGRAPHY • Locate the United States of America on a world map. Then locate Los Angeles.

MATHS • Discuss time zones. Calculate the cost and time it would take to send two people there by using flight booking websites.

18

- Who was the captain on board the plane?
- Why does Novak love England 'especially when it rains'? (pg. 163)
- What is involved in the stages of metamorphosis?
- What is Lucretia Cutter planning on using Novak for?

Write the silent prayer as an internal monologue that Novak could be sending to Darkus for help.

DRAMA • Act out the stages of metamorphosis in an insect's life cycle. Act out the stages of the metamorphosis that Lucretia Cutter has gone through, sprouting her black orb eyes and other beetle-like features.



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- Describe the differences between how Lucretia Cutter feels on the plane, and how Bartholemew Cuttle feels, even though Novak ends up losing sight of him.
- What do you think is a holometaboly?
- What emotions was Novak feeling at the end of this chapter?

- List all the signs that show Darkus does not want to be in school today.
- What does the phrase 'smelt a rat' mean on page 172?
- How does the repetition of 'tears of...' on page 176 and 'Sorry...' on page 182 affect the reader?
- 'Baxter's face was downcast.' (pg.177) Can beetles feel emotion?
- Why might this be the first time Darkus had seen Virginia upset? What does this suggest about her character?
- Define these words linked to sadness: melancholy, solemnly
- Why do you think Darkus needs to clear his throat?

Write a diary entry as Darkus sharing your feelings at the funeral of the beetles.

Write the next part of the story explaining how Darkus might destroy Lucretia Cutter.

SCIENCE • Use animation and ICT to create an animated life cycle of the beetle using the objects that Virginia uses to represent the stages or objects you can find in your classroom.



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- How does the author create humour at the start of this chapter, especially after a sad situation?
- 'Darkus smiled sheepishly...' (pg. 185). What does 'sheepishly' mean here? What word class is the word in this sentence?
- Read to the end of page 188. Predict what Bertolt suggests is going to happen on the 22nd December.
- How did Darkus' mood change within this chapter?
- What does it mean to 'take a detour'?
- Do you think the plan to go to America will work?
- Who might Dr Yuki Ishikawa be? Can you recall any links this person might have to a previous part of the story?

Write the next part of the story, predicting what will happen on the 22nd December.

RE • Understand more about the rites and customs of funerals in other religions such as Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism and Judaism. Look at the significance of the wake and how people celebrate the life of a person.

21

- How do you think Emma Lamb lost her job?
- Why do you think all the memory cards with footage of Lucretia Cutter have been deleted? By whom?
- Why is Emma Lamb going to the Amazon rainforest?
- What was on her back? Why was it there?
- What does the phrase 'collateral damage' mean?
- Do you think they should try to be smuggling beetles into the country?

Imagine you are Barbara Wallace or Calista Bloom. Write the conversation that you had with Mrs Crips about hearing that your child was on their way to America without you knowing.

GEOGRAPHY • Locate the Amazon rainforest on a world map. Research the features of it and the animals you would find living here. Locate Greenland on a world map. Research its history, how it became colonised and who governs it.



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22

- What does Barbara Wallace think about her daughter when she says 'You've always been a fine fighter'?

- Look at the title of this chapter. Predict what the significance of the place Narsarsuaq will be.
- What does Virginia mean when she says 'Normal means being invisible'?
- Through her body language, how does the reader know that Calista is not confident with experiencing flying?
- Discuss the meaning of this quote: 'A force that that is made to do good can also be used for evil. Whoever controls that force has the power to choose.'
- Why does M. G. Leonard choose to use the repetition of questions when Darkus is thinking of his dad?
- What does Bertolt teach his mother towards the end of the chapter?
- How do you think that arriving in Greenland to meet Dr Yuki Ishikawa will impact upon the storyline?

Write a TripAdvisor review of the aeroplane journey.

Think about what the world would be like without insects. Bertolt tells his mother 'you'd be up to your knees in animal dung' without them. Research and write a list of other things that would happen on our planet without insects.

SCIENCE • After reading page 208, consider the future of planet Earth and the environment linked to sustainability, recycling and preservation. Will beetles work in landfill sites breaking down waste? Discuss ways in which how humans can work with the animal kingdom better to protect the planet.



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23

- What is a fjord?
- Why do you think Dr Ishikawa prefers the company of insects to people?
- How might the mention of Dr Ishikawa's work on breaking down toxic substances be foreshadowing what is going to happen later on in the story?
- Using the text, give three examples of what a microbiologist does in their job.
- Read to 'I don't understand what's wrong with him' on page 219. Predict why the beetles are acting oddly.
- Why does the man keep his praying mantis close to his heart? Do you think it is just to keep it warm?
- What does it mean when someone has 'lines of kindness' on their face?
- 'Darkus felt bereft.' Define 'bereft'.
- Explain the quote 'the greatest power you have is knowledge'. Do you agree?

Write a diary entry as Darkus sharing your feelings at the funeral of the beetles.

Write the next part of the story explaining how Darkus might destroy Lucretia Cutter.

GEOGRAPHY • Set up your own classroom or school weather station, measuring climate data including temperature, rainfall, air pressure, wind direction and wind speed using instruments such as a barometer, anemometer, wind vane and rain gauge.

MATHS • Take readings and record averages, graphing your results.

GEOGRAPHY • Discuss the concept of climate change. Introduce your class to Greta Thunberg and her speeches.

ENGLISH • Write a story using the title of her book, *No One Is Too Small to Make a Difference*, as inspiration.



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			ART • Watch videos of the Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights). Create a piece of artwork linked to the fantastic colours and landscape using chalks.
24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How was Los Angeles different from Greenland? Find the that phrases keep on coming back to Darkus. Why does he keep thinking about them? How can you tell that Motty had not been back to her house for a while? Why does Motty roll her eyes at what Calista Bloom says about her house? What does this suggest about both their characters? Why has Darkus been quiet since they left Greenland? What is the address of Lucretia Cutter? How does Calista Bloom surprisingly know where Lucretia Cutter lives? 	Imagine you are Calista Bloom and you have just won an award at the Film Awards. Write a prospective Film Award-winning speech from her perspective.	ART • Make a disguise to get you in to see Novak without arousing suspicion. Think about what materials you could use.



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- How had Darkus, Bertolt and Virginia disguised themselves to see Novak?
- Why are the fountains described as 'ostentatious'?
- Looking at the illustration, why has Novak been drawn in this way? What does it suggest about what she is thinking and feeling?
- How had Novak been nominated for the award?
- What does 'bribe' mean? Is it ever right to bribe somebody to do something for you?
- What does Darkus' dad think about Lucretia Cutter's big plans?
- What does Novak mean at the end of the chapter when she says 'I thought I was alone'?

Write a diary entry, as Novak, after seeing Darkus was alive at the doorstep.

MUSIC • Make up your own raps based on songs that are already released. Change some of the words to suit a topic that you are studying in school, like beetles.

26

- How does the author show that what Humphrey is wearing is very strange?
- What does 'Nothing to Declare' at the customs border mean?
- How did Humphrey and Pickering escape the officers?
- Explain why M. G. Leonard has described the large red X on the map, instead of just telling the reader what is there.
- Does anything comical occur in Chapter 26? Did anything make you laugh?
- Predict what happens next to Humphrey and Pickering.

Write the police report of the escape scene from the perspective of a police officer. It is up to you to interpret how your policeman feels during the scene. For example, if they find parts of it funny or annoying etc.

ART • Draw what you imagine Humphrey looks like walking through the airport when everyone is staring at him. Label the clothes he is wearing and their colours and patterns.



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- The word 'rummaging' is closest in meaning to...
- What is a pooter? Explain how the device works when collecting bugs.
- Why does Bertolt want to take apart the pooter?
- How many bodyguards does Lucretia Cutter have and who are they?
- What is Bertolt's idea to smuggle the beetles into the theatre?
- Why did Bertolt's mum really come with them?

Using the website <https://www.discoverwildlife.com/how-to/make-things/how-to-make-a-pooter/>, write a set of instructions to create your own pooter.

SCIENCE • Go outside the classroom to collect some bugs using pooters. Make your own pooter, using a container, some bendy straws, cloth, elastic band and plasticine.

28

- Look at the title of this chapter. Who is Cleopatra?
- What does it mean when the author says 'letting the sun flood into the room'?
- What might Novak be thinking and feeling about trying on her new dress?
- Do you think Gerard is in on it and knows about Lucretia Cutter's plans?
- How does Lucretia Cutter's room in LA look similar to the one that she had in England?
- Why does Lucretia Cutter demand that Novak will wear the dress that she has made for her?
- Read to the end of page 260. Predict what Lucretia Cutter's dress will look like.

'It's time to let the world see who you really are, Novak.'
Write the conversation that Novak would have had with Lucretia Cutter after she said this to her. Split your page in two and on one half, write what she says to Lucretia Cutter and on the other half, what she's thinking on the inside.

HISTORY • Discuss child labour with your class. Talk about its history in this country where children worked through the Industrial Revolution and that child labour still exists in some parts of the world today.

HISTORY • Research and find out more about who Cleopatra and Nefertiti were. Present your findings.



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- Where did Humphrey and Pickering decide to hide until the police had gone away?
- What does the phrase 'getting up with the sun' mean?
- Why did the crowd draw breath and then burst into spontaneous applause when Lucretia Cutter got out of the car?
- Read to the end of page 272. Predict what Lucretia Cutter will be wearing.
- What does it mean when it says that Humphrey saw Lucretia Cutter 'bristle' for a millisecond?
- Do you think that Humphrey and Pickering will find another way in?

Pretend you are a reporter on the red carpet. Write a transcript of an interview with Ruby Hisolo Jnr and Stella Manning about their dresses and how they feel about wearing them.

DRAMA • Using ICT, film an interview in groups taking on the roles of reporter, Ruby Hisolo Jnr and Stella Manning. Try to act as glamorous, attention-seeking and famous as you can.

30

- Write a definition for the word 'opulent' (pg. 276). Use a dictionary if you wish.
- What does the author mean when she says it was time for Novak to do the best acting of her life? (pg. 276)
- Why did Novak choose an elderly usher with a kind smile to help her?
- How might Novak be thinking and feeling when the usher knows her by name?
- Why didn't Nancy look up from her card game?
- How does Novak get Darkus, Virginia and Bertolt into the theatre?

Write some secret messages in Morse code using dots and dashes to represent letters.

HISTORY • Research Morse code and how to decipher it. Create some secret messages of your own using a range of light and sound sources.



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- What type of code has Hepburn learned, that's the same code that Newton (Bertolt's beetle) knows?

- What is a 'proscenium arch'?
- Why does Darkus' dad pretend to laugh at what is happening on stage?
- Why do the big awards for Best Actor and Best Actress happen towards the end of the ceremony?
- Read to 'Nominated in the category of Best Actress are:' on page 285. Predict who will win the award.
- Why did loud music suddenly play whilst Lucretia Cutter was speaking?
- What do the words or phrases 'abruptly', 'decimated' and 'infinitesimal' mean?
- Lucretia Cutter says that the beetles have lacked a leader. What do you think makes a good leader? Can you list all the qualities a leader needs and explain why they are important to have?
- Why does M. G. Leonard choose to leave this chapter on a cliffhanger?

Pretend that you are Novak Cutter. Write the speech that she may or may not have had prepared for her unexpected win of the Best Actress award.

MFL • Look at the many ways that Lucretia Cutter says hello in different languages. Learn greetings in as many languages as you can.



Chapter

Comprehension Questions

Writing Opportunities

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- What does 'prosthetics' mean?
- Read to the end of 'shimmering white beetles' (pg. 294). Whose famous scream could be heard in the theatre?
- What happens to the bullet that is fired at Lucretia Cutter?
- Define the term 'aspirator'.
- What does Darkus instruct the titan beetles to do?
- Why does Ling Ling do most of the fighting?
- After reading this chapter, explain why the title of it is effective.

Write a newspaper report about the chaos taking place in the theatre. Try to make it as descriptive and detailed as possible.

DRAMA • Using drama, act out the Battle of the Ballgowns scene. Try to make it as dramatic as possible.

MISCELLANEOUS • Choose a character such as Darkus or Novak and create an emotion graph for them charting their feelings. Use it to identify and summarise how they feel at key points during this chapter.

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- Look at the title of this chapter. What is a predator? What is prey?
- Read to the end of page 302. How does Darkus feel about hearing his dad is on Lucretia Cutter's side?
- If you had beetle feet, what would be the first thing that you would do?
- 'Every creature has a predator. That's how balance is maintained.' (pg. 304) Predict what Darkus is going to do next to stop Lucretia Cutter.

Complete a 'Role on the Wall' activity for Darkus during this chapter. Draw the outline of Darkus by asking one person to lie on a large piece of paper to draw round. Annotate the drawing as follows:

GEOGRAPHY • Find out the coordinates of the Amazon rainforest (3.4653° S, 62.2159° W) and use to locate on a digital map. Understand how to use the lines of longitude and latitude to locate places around the world.



Chapter

Comprehension Questions

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What plans does Lucretia Cutter reveal at the awards ceremony? How have the beetles come to Darkus' rescue? Is this similar to how they saved Darkus' dad in Beetle Boy? How does Lucretia Cutter escape? Predict what she will do next with her beetles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write words or phrases close to his heart to represent Darkus' feelings. Write words or phrases inside the head to show what Darkus is thinking. Write words or phrases near to his hands and feet to represent Darkus' actions or what he might do next. Write words or phrases that Darkus says near to his mouth. 	
34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where was Humphrey and Pickering in relation to the Hollywood Theatre at the beginning of the chapter? How did Humphrey and Pickering know that it was Lucretia Cutter's helicopter without seeing her inside? Find a word on page 314 that is closest in meaning to 'fat', 'round', or 'bulging'. 	<p>Imagine you were an onlooker, who secretly saw Humphrey and Pickering smuggling themselves on to the helicopter of Lucretia Cutter.</p>	<p>SCIENCE • Investigate the flying of helicopters. Make paper helicopters and drop them from a given height. See what changes increase or decrease the speed of the drop. When you have attempted it three times,</p>



Chapter

Comprehension Questions

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- How did Humphrey manage to get himself up on to the theatre roof?
- What is a 'commotion'?
- Where did Humphrey and Pickering hide in the helicopter?

Write a letter to a newspaper, telling them what you saw.

edit your helicopter. What sort of things can you add to it to make it fall faster? What about slower? What can you do to the wings? How can you make it a fair test?

- How long do you think a mayfly's life cycle is?
- Read to 'I brought you a present' on page 319. Predict what present Darkus has brought Professor Appleyard.
- What type of venom was found in Professor Appleyard's body?
- What is 'immunity'? How had Professor Appleyard built up immunity against the venom?
- Who do Darkus, Bertolt and Virginia want to find and bring back home?
- What does Barbara Wallace give to each of Virginia, Bertolt and Darkus for Christmas?
- How have the characters changed over the course of the story? Darkus? Bertolt? Virginia? Lucretia Cutter? Novak?
- What did you think of the story's ending? Did you like it? Why? Why not?

Create a summary of the story in a tweet using a maximum of 280 characters.

Write a longer summary of the story. Try to keep it to one side of A4 in length.

At the end of the book, it says the story concludes in *Battle of the Beetles* which is book three in the series. Write an opening paragraph to the first chapter of *Battle of the Beetles*.

MISCELLANEOUS • Virginia says that 'No one should be alone on Christmas Day' referring to Mrs Crips. Do you agree? Using the John Lewis Christmas advert from 2015, discuss this with your class. Create a list of suggestions of things you could do to make someone feel loved and appreciated at Christmas, particularly those who are alone, e.g. volunteer for a local group or church that provides Christmas services for the elderly, bereaved, sick, homeless and people without families.

