

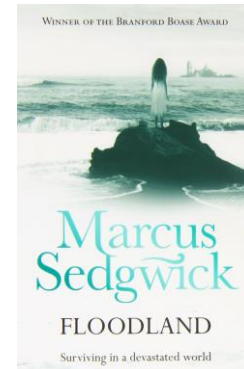
Take 5: Ideas for Independent/Home Learning

Floodland by Marcus Sedgwick (Orion)

1. Explore it

Look at this image from the opening of the novel:

- What do you notice about this image? What can you see in the picture? Where might it be?
- What do you like about the image? What don't you like? Does it remind you of anything you have seen before, in real life or in other books, or on TV and in film? Do you have any questions about the image?
- What do you think about the word 'before' that accompanies this image? What do you think this refers to? What does this make you think about? How does this connect to the ideas you have about the story?
- Why do you think the novel opens with this image? What does this suggest to you about the story that will unfold? What impression is made on you by this image? From whose viewpoint may this image be taken?
- Now look at the front cover and title of the book. What does this make you think about? What is a flood? What do you think the title, Floodland means? How does this relate to the image you have looked at? Does it confirm or challenge any of the initial ideas you had?



before

2. Illustrate it

Read the opening to this novel:

'Zoe ran. Harder than she had ever run in her life. Her feet pounded through the deserted streets of derelict buildings. Somewhere, not far behind, she could hear the gang coming after her. It felt as if her heart would burst, but she didn't slow down. She'd been planning to leave the island for a long time, but had been putting it off. It was a big decision to set out to sea in a tiny rowing boat. Now she had no choice.'

Before, no one had bothered her. Zoe was a loner. Most of the people left on Norwich hung around together in groups. But she preferred to be on her own. It was safer that way, because you never knew whom you could trust. Somehow, someone had found out about the boat she'd been hiding. A boat was an escape route, a way to get away from Norwich, which got smaller every year, as the sea kept on rising. It didn't matter that there could only be room for two people at most in her boat. Others had joined in the chase, and now a mob of about fifteen people was hot on her heels. There was only one way out; to get to her boat before they got to her.'

Re-read the passage, or ask someone to read it to you, or maybe record it for yourself so you can play it over again. What do you feel or think when you read or hear this?

After you have read the extract a few times, think about what you can see in your imagination – people, places, objects or events, whatever stood out most to you. Then take a pen or pencil and a bit of scrap paper. You can use the back of an old envelope, letter or cereal packet; whatever is to hand if you don't have paper. Draw what you see in your imagination; anything that captures the place and the mood of this story opening. Remember, everyone has their own ideas and imagines things their own way. This is a good thing!

Add to your illustration any words and phrases that have helped you make your picture, which might come from the passage or from your own imagination.

3. Talk about it

- Think about the text again. How has the author created a sense of drama and intrigue in this opening? What do you notice about the way in which the paragraphs are structured? What is the impact of the mix of long and short sentences? How do these make you feel?
- How did you imagine the events as you read the passage? What helped you to imagine this? Does it remind you of anything you have read before? Or anything you may have watched? What do you predict will happen in the story?
- Think about the adjectives used by the author to describe the place, '*deserted*' and '*derelict*'. What do these mean? Use a dictionary to look these up or an online dictionary, such as: <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/>. What do these words make you think about this place?
- Now think about the text and the illustration together. Was this what you expected to accompany this picture?

4. Imagine it

Think about this line in the text: ***A boat was an escape route, a way to get away from Norwich, which got smaller every year, as the sea kept on rising.***

Have a look at the map of Norwich below. Does it make sense, given what you can see, that Zoe would need a boat to escape Norwich? Why do you think she refers to Norwich as an Island? What does this suggest to you about what has happened in the book?

Looking at this map, what do you notice about the geography of this location? Can you imagine what could have happened to the sea levels to create such devastation that Norwich has become surrounded by water?



5. Create it

Marcus Sedgwick was inspired to write this novel in response to climate change.

Can you plan some small ways in which you can help prevent climate change? For example, record what items you use on a daily basis that use single use plastic such as a plastic cup. Can you think about possible alternatives that you could use instead? Are there other ways in which you can reduce, reuse or recycle the items you use on a daily basis to limit your impact on the planet? Once you have discovered these you may want to share these ideas with other people you know.