



INTRODUCTION

When Tom is sent to stay at his aunt and uncle's house for the summer, he resigns himself to endless weeks of boredom. As he lies awake in his bed he listens to the grandfather clock chiming in the hall downstairs.

Eleven . . . Twelve . . . Thirteen . . .

Thirteen! Tom races down the stairs and finds, outside the back door, a wonderful garden. A garden everyone told him didn't exist. Tom's midnight garden is full of magic and adventure, and children too. Are they ghosts? Or is it Tom who is really the ghost . . . ?

Tom's Midnight Garden is a magical, much-loved, and timeless classic children's book. It was first published in 1958.

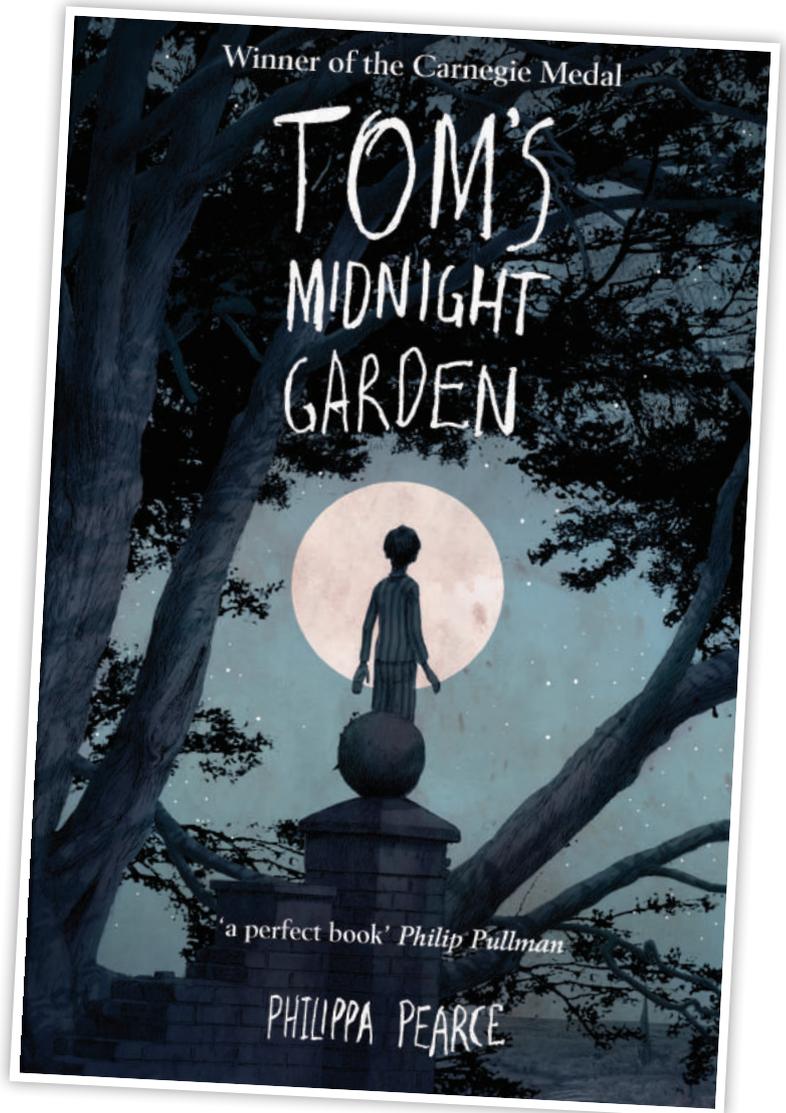
PHILIPPA PEARCE

Philippa Pearce spent her childhood in Cambridgeshire and was the youngest of four children. Her father was a flour miller and corn merchant in the village of Great Shelford, and the family lived in the mill house there. The village, the river, and the countryside in which she lived appear more or less plainly in her books *Minnow on the Say* and *Tom's Midnight Garden*.

She studied English and History at Cambridge University and then worked for the BBC as a scriptwriter and producer, before going into publishing as an editor. She wrote many books, and for *Tom's Midnight Garden* she won the Carnegie Medal. She was also awarded an OBE for services to Children's Literature.

She died in 2006 at the age of 86.

She described *Tom's Midnight Garden* as 'a story about the power of memory, the relentless passage of time, and the fleeting but intense beauty of the world of childhood.'



WHAT READERS SAY . . .

“ a classic slipstream novel, utterly wonderful ”

“ haunting and tender and very atmospheric ”

“ a magical story that plays on the nature of time ”



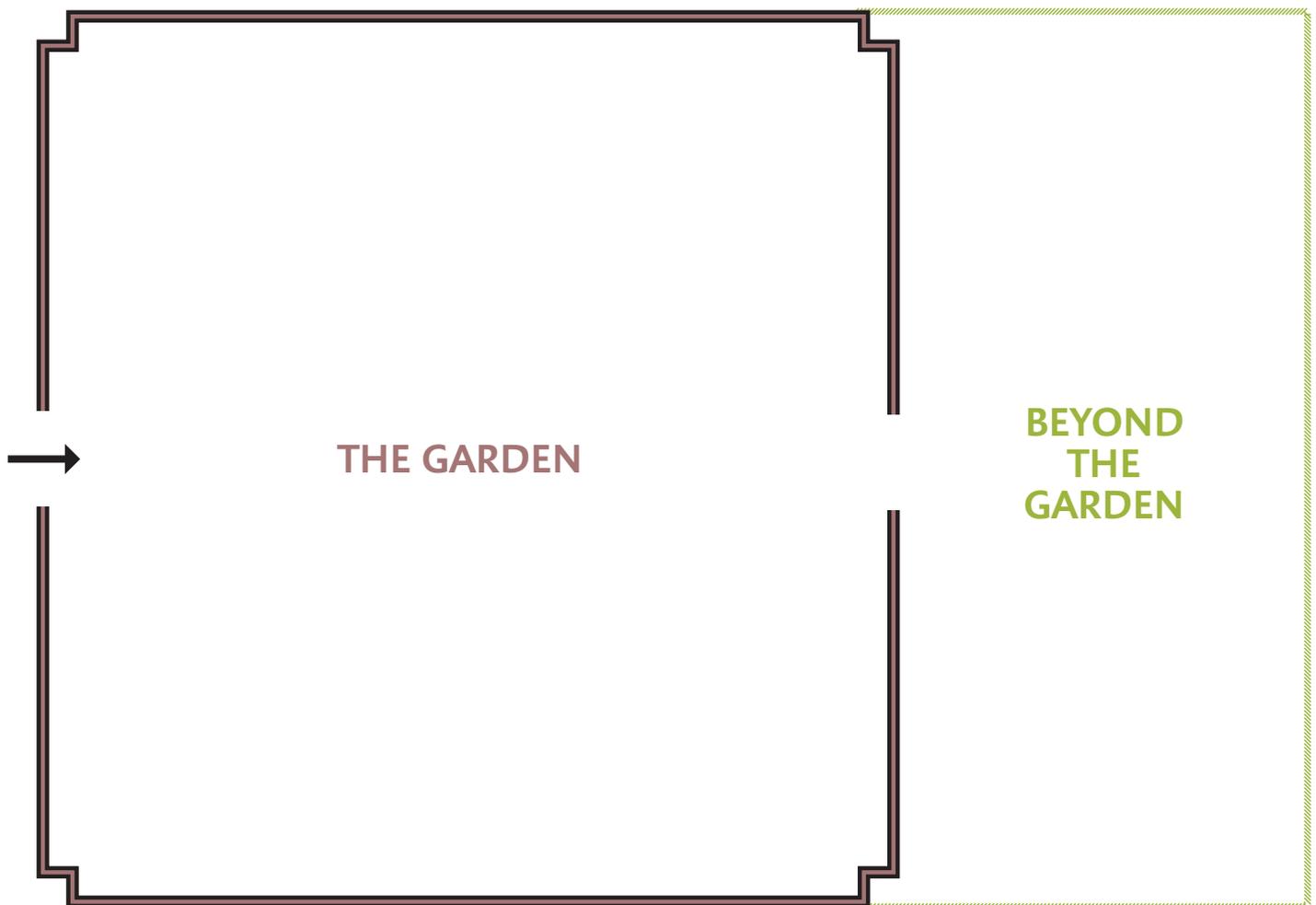
WHAT'S IN TOM'S MIDNIGHT GARDEN?

He moved down the hall to the door at its far end. It was a door he had never seen opened—the Kitsons used the door at the front. They said that the door at the back was only a less convenient way to the street, through a back-yard . . . (P19)

Fill in this plan with all the things which Tom sees in the garden, and the countryside beyond the hedge. You could draw them, or write them in.

Put them where you think they are when you are looking at the garden from the back door—eg. the greenhouse is at the right of the lawn.

It doesn't have to be exact—this is your midnight garden as well as Tom's!



Here are some of the things you could put in:

the fir tree; the lawn; the flowerbeds; the paths; the yew trees (give them their names!); the greenhouse; the kitchen garden; the hedge; the meadow; the river.



WHAT'S IN THE HALL?

The only illumination was a sideways shaft of moonlight through the long window part way up the stairs. Tom felt his way downstairs and into the hall. (P18)

Here are all the things which were in the hall in Hatty's time and the things there in Tom's time. They've all been mixed up: can you sort them out and put them in the right columns?

Electric light switch

Tall Gothic barometer

Pictures

Rusty door bolt

Laundry box

Dinner gong

Fan of peacock feathers

Bare stone floor

Umbrella stand

Tiger skin rug

Grandfather clock

Travel posters

Empty milk bottles

Glass cases with stuffed birds and animals

Hatty's Time	Tom's Time



THE PEOPLE IN THE STORY—WHO'S WHO?

Here are some descriptions from the story of some of the characters in Tom's Midnight Garden. Can you match each excerpt to one of these characters?

- | | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Tom | Peter | Tom's mother | Tom's uncle Alan |
| Hatty | Hatty's aunt | Mrs Bartholomew | Young Barty |
| | Hatty's cousin Edgar | Abel, the gardener | |

N.B. For some of the characters there is more than one description.

Who is this—or who said this?		Name
1	. . . his first interest in a garden, as Peter's would have been, was tree-climbing.	
2	. . . her secrets and stories poured from her with haste and eagerness as though she were afraid that Tom's company would not be hers for long.	
3	He wanted two different sets of things so badly: he wanted his mother and father and Peter and home . . . and on the other hand he wanted the garden.	
4	She had told herself again and again that she completely trusted Gwen and Alan with the boy.	
5	'Tom, there must be no more of this. You are not to put the light on again once it has been put out . . . you must see the reasonableness.'	
6	The third brother . . . had brindled hair and brindled brown eyes that moved round remarkably quickly, missing nothing.	
7	She was as he had expected her to be—old and small and wrinkled, with white hair. All that he had not been prepared for were her eyes: they were black, and their blackness disturbed him . . .	
8	'(he) used to say afterwards that, before he had turned the gig into the drive here, he'd as good as made his mind up that he wanted me for his wife.'	
9	.'I suppose that, if Tom doesn't want to come away from Aunt Gwen's yet, I couldn't go there too, and stay there with him . . .'	
10	Tom had thought her stern-looking before; he liked the expression of her face even less now.	
11	. . . he was a large-framed young man, with a weather-reddened face, and eyes the colour of the sky itself—they now looked straight through Tom and far away.	



THE GRANDFATHER CLOCK

Its ticking sounded to him like a human heart, alive and beating . . .

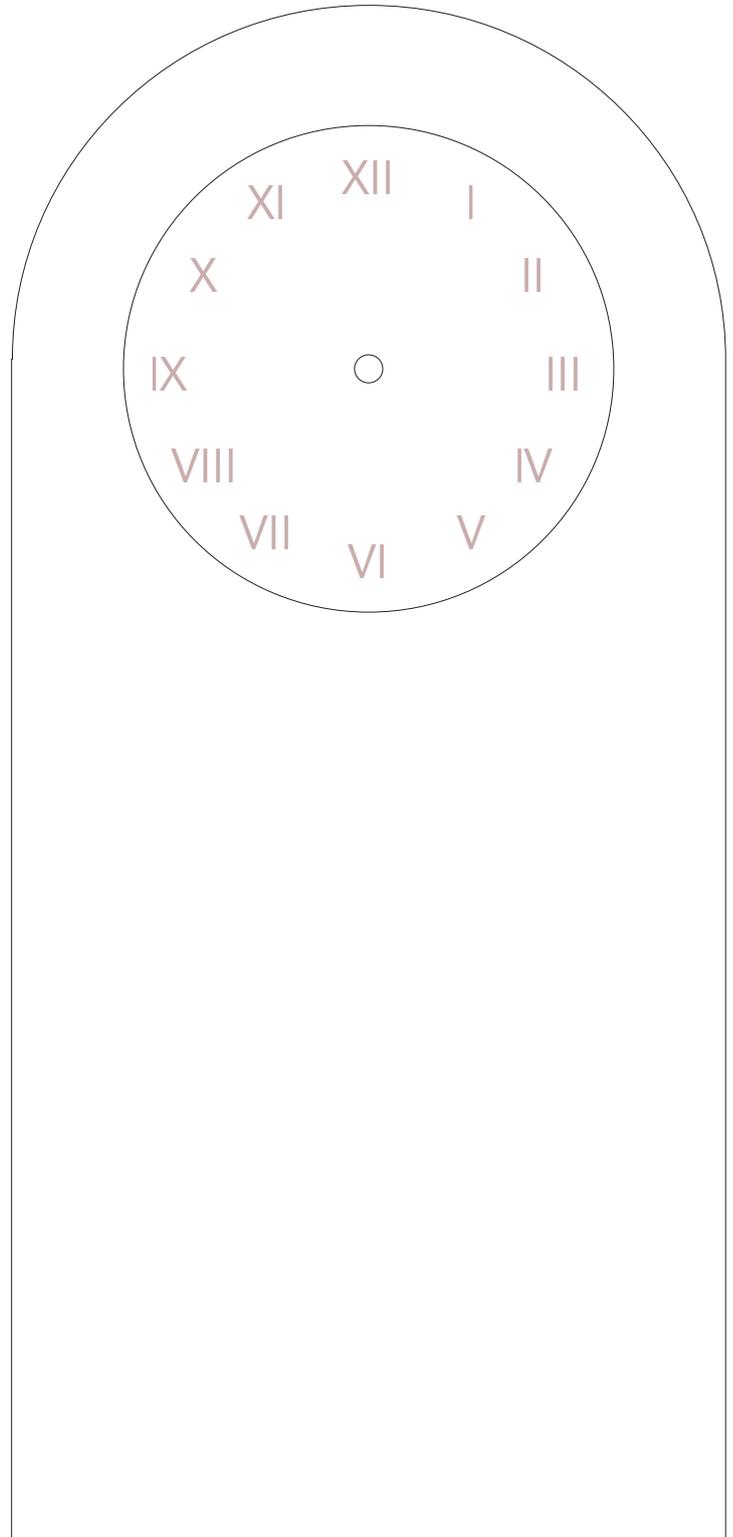
Find out some more about grandfather clocks from library books and the internet—maybe you know someone who has one, or could see one in a museum or an old house? See if you can find the song *My Grandfather's Clock* which gave this kind of clock its name.

In *Tom's Midnight Garden* the words 'Time No Longer' are written on the end of the clock's pendulum. What do you think this could mean?

Look at this description of the decoration on the clock face—what do you think is the 'creature like a man'?

Based on this description, have a go at drawing a design around the clock face below.

The dial . . . was decorated with a design that now struck Tom as peculiar and interesting. In the semicircular arch above the dial itself stood a creature like a man but with enormous sweeping wings. His body was wound about with something white. His face was a round of gold, and his feet were of the same colour and were planted on either side of the clock dial. One foot seemed to stand on a piece of grassy land: the other went into the sea—Tom saw painted fishes that swam round the creature's foot, and seaweed. In one hand he held a book, opened towards himself. (pp32-33)





SAYINGS ABOUT TIME

There are lots of sayings and proverbs about time—here are some of them. What do you think they mean? If there are some you don't know, have a look in books or on the internet, or talk about them with your family and friends.

Time and tide wait for no-one	
Time is of the essence	
Time is money	
Killing time	
Procrastination is the thief of time	
Time heals	
The sands of time	
There's no time like the present	
Playing for time	
Taking your time	
Time and tell	
A stitch in time saves nine	
Prime time	
In the nick of time	
Have a whale of a time	



SEEING THROUGH COLOURS

Then Hatty led Tom back to the doorway of the green-house and showed him the coloured panes that bordered the glass panelling of the upper half. Through each colour of pane, you could see a different garden outside. Through the green pane, Tom saw a garden with green flowers under a green sky . . . (p76)

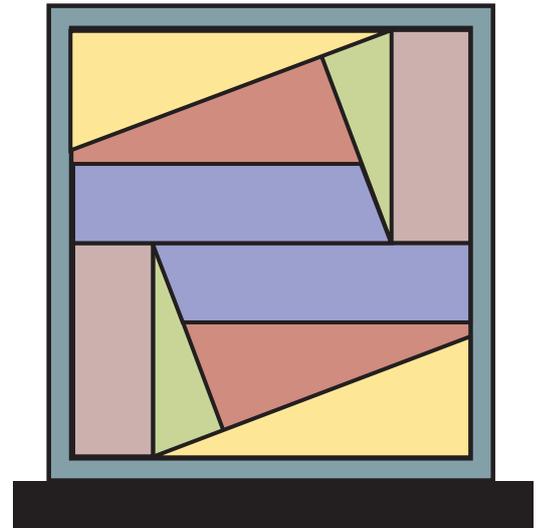
Get some sheets of different coloured see-through cellophane , and look through them at a view out of the window.

Or use each sheet to look at a garden as you walk around it.

How different does the window view or the garden seem with each colour?

Tom finds that *the purple glass filled the garden with thunderous shadow . . . the yellow glass seemed to drench it in lemonade.*

Try writing a poem about what you see, with a line for each colour, describing the effect it has on what you are looking at.





CROSSWORD PUZZLE

			1							2			3			4		
5					6													
																	7	
				8				9				10			11			
			12										13					
	14																	
	15									16								
											17							

ACROSS

1. What colour hair and eyes does Hatty have? (5)
2. What are the white birds in the meadow? (5)
4. This tree falls in the thunderstorm (3)
5. How many times does the grandfather clock strike instead of one o'clock in the morning? (8)
8. What does Tom wear in the garden? (7)
10. What illness does Peter have? (7)
12. Who is Abel? (8)
14. Tom helps Hatty make a * * * and arrows (3)
15. Tom's surname (4)
16. Who was Queen when Hatty was born? (8)
17. Who does Hatty marry? (5)

DOWN

1. What does the B stand for in B.A.R. in Tom's letters to Peter? (4)
3. What does Hatty hide under the floorboards for Tom? (6)
6. Which cathedral do Tom and Hatty visit? (3)
7. What kind of tree is Tricksy? (3)
9. This lights up the garden at night (4)
11. Tom uses this to prop open the flat door at night (7)
12. What is Tom's aunt called? (4)
13. To which town does the river flow? (10)



For teachers and reading groups

READING AND TALKING ABOUT *TOM'S MIDNIGHT GARDEN*

Introducing the book

Look at the cover and the blurb, set the scene, and read aloud the first chapter to introduce the book.

Then read this book all the way through, either reading aloud to everyone together, or letting everyone read and experience the book for themselves.

Try not to interrupt the flow of the story—as this story moves backwards and forwards in time you may find it works to read a chapter or so at a time and then talk about what people think is happening in the story.

At the end allow time for people to reflect on it and think about their responses to it.

Talking about the book: some book-talk questions

Get everyone to share their first responses to this book. This could be with the whole class/group—or children could discuss in small groups, and then share their main feelings and questions with everyone.

Ask lots of open questions to get people talking and encourage discussion about feelings and responses to the story, the characters, and the writing.

Explain that there are no right or wrong answers—we'll all have our own feelings and opinions about the book, and the things we like, or don't like.

Here are some questions you might use.

- How did you feel when reading this book? And when you'd finished it?
- Which parts of the story do you remember most?
- Did you skip any parts? Which ones?
- Was there anything that took you by surprise?
- Were there any parts you didn't make sense of?
- Did any parts make you laugh/cry? Which parts?
- What was the thing you most liked finding out from the book?
- What kind of a book did you think it was going to be?
- Did you feel swept up by this story, all the time wanting to know what happened next?
- Did you stop and start, or did you want to read it all through in one go?
- Are there parts you want to read over again?
- If you gave up on this book can you say why?
- Does the story work for you? Could you follow it? What does the book say to you?
- Has reading the book changed or affected you? At the end of the story did you feel as if you'd shared in something real?



For teachers and reading groups

TOM'S MIDNIGHT GARDEN: THINGS TO TALK ABOUT

Tom and Hatty

Talk about Tom and Hatty—what are they like? Collect words for how you could describe them—for example, you might include 'imaginative', 'lonely' for Hatty; 'likes climbing trees', 'curious' for Tom.

Would you like to be friends with Tom and/or Hatty? Why? What would you enjoy doing together, either in the garden with them, or if they were with you in your present time?

How did you feel, and what did you think when you read the last few pages of the story when Tom says goodbye to Mrs Bartholomew?

Who is a ghost?

'That proves what I say!' said Tom. 'I'm not a ghost, but the orchard door is, and that was why I could go through it. The door's a ghost, and the garden's a ghost; and so are you, too!' (p106)

Tom and Hatty quarrel about whether they are ghosts—do you think one of them is? Or both of them?

How soon in the story did you realise what might be happening, and who Mrs Bartholomew is? What gave you a clue to this?

Imagine that you are a ghost.

Can people see you? If they can, how do you look to them? Misty? Scary? Like real life? Do you have any special powers? eg. making things move; passing through solid objects. How did you become a ghost?

Write a description or a short story—or poem—about yourself as a ghost, haunting your home or garden.



For teachers and reading groups

TOM'S MIDNIGHT GARDEN: THINGS TO TALK ABOUT

Then and now

Tom's Midnight Garden was written and is set in the 1950s. When first published its setting would have been up-to-date and familiar to readers but now the Fifties are as much history to us as Hatty's Victorian times are to Tom.

Here are some themes where you could explore and talk about differences between then and now. How might you change the plot for this story if it were set in the present day?

Communications

To keep in touch with his brother Peter about his adventures in the garden Tom writes a letter every day. And to change arrangements at short notice about Tom's journey home, his aunt and uncle send a telegram to his parents.

How might this be a different story today, with mobile phones, text messaging, tablets and emails? Could Tom have sent pictures from the midnight garden?

Being ill

Peter having measles means Tom is sent to stay with his aunt and uncle for several weeks, and he is kept alone and not allowed to be in contact with anyone, in case he should infect them. He is able to stay longer (and continue his garden adventures) when he catches a cold by standing in a puddle.

Talk about today's attitude to illnesses—how do we now deal with measles and colds? Would we have to think of different reasons for Tom's long stay with his aunt and uncle?

Freedom to wander and play

Hatty in her time is free to play in and explore the whole garden, and go to the meadow and the river, with no-one supervising her. Tom is more constrained by his aunt and uncle, mainly because of the measles, but at home he would have been free to climb trees and build a tree-house with his brother.

Talk about where people play now, and how much freedom they have now to wander where they would like and play as they like?

Are there differences between town and country? What constraints might there be now?—for example, busy roads/traffic; more organised activities; fewer open/playing spaces; more time spent on computers and digital games.

They had planned to spend their time here so joyously these holidays. (p1)

What do people now look forward to doing when it's the school holidays?



For teachers and reading groups

TOM'S MIDNIGHT GARDEN: THINGS TO TALK ABOUT

Connecting with the past

'And then I knew, Tom, that the garden was changing all the time, because nothing stands still, except in our memory.' (p221)

Get your group/class to talk in pairs or small groups about their favourite memory—the thing they have most enjoyed in their life so far, and love to think about and talk about.

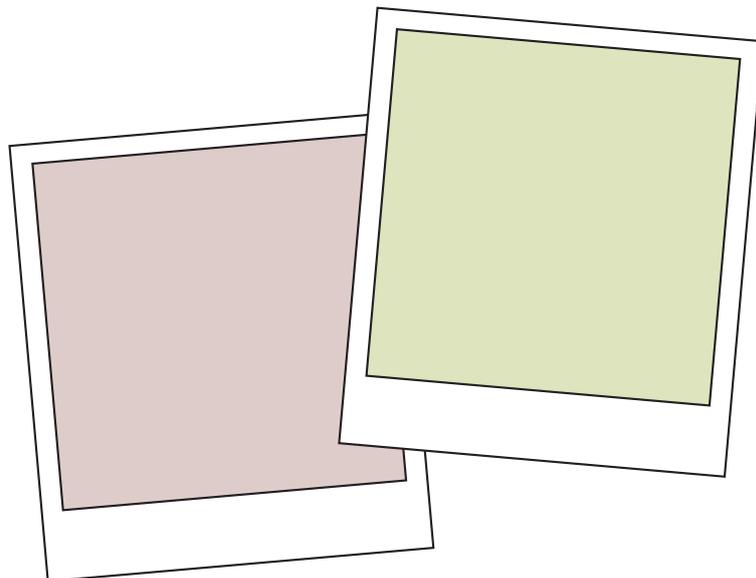
Then share with the whole group—write about them and collect together as a 'memories book'.

'To whomever may find this. These skates are the property of Harriet Melbourne but she leaves them in this place in fulfilment of a promise she once made to a little boy.' (P179)

Tom asked Hatty to hide her skates for him to find. What might you hide and where, for someone to find in 50 years' time? What would you say in a note to go with it?

This river no longer flowed beside meadows: it had back-garden strips on one side and an asphalt path on the other. (P156)

See if you can find old photographs of where you live, and nearby towns and villages. Go to your local library or records centre, and ask family and friends. Then take pictures of the same places now. Compare the old and new pictures—what has disappeared, what has been built or changed? See if you can find at least five differences for each scene.





MORE READING

Author	Title	Publisher	ISBN
More books by Philippa Pearce	<i>The Minnow on the Say</i>	OUP	9780192792419
	<i>The Way to Sattin Shore</i>	OUP	9780192792402
	<i>A Dog So Small</i>	Puffin	9780141339436
	<i>The Battle of Bubble and Squeak</i>	Puffin	9780141320007
More books like Tom's Midnight Garden			
Lucy M Boston	<i>The Children of Green Knowe</i>	Faber	9780571231461
Helen Cresswell	<i>Moondial</i>	Puffin	9780140325232
Frances Hodgson Burnett	<i>The Secret Garden</i>	OUP	9780192727992
Penelope Farmer	<i>Charlotte Sometimes</i>	Red Fox	9780099433392
Penelope Lively	<i>A Stitch in Time</i>	HarperCollins	9780007443277
Catherine Storr	<i>Marianne Dreams</i>	Faber	9780571231454
Joan G Robinson	<i>When Marnie Was There</i>	HarperCollins	9780007591350
Alison Uttley	<i>A Traveller in Time</i>	Puffin	9780140309317



ANSWERS

HATTY'S TIME AND TOM'S TIME

Hatty's time: Tall Gothic barometer; Pictures; Dinner gong; Fan of peacock feathers; Umbrella stand; Tiger skin rug; Glass cases with stuffed birds and animals; Grandfather clock

Tom's time: Electric light switch; Rusty door bolt; Laundry box; Bare stone floor; Travel posters; Empty milk bottles; Grandfather clock

WHO'S WHO?

1. Tom 2. Hatty 3. Tom 4. Tom's mother 5. Tom's uncle Alan 6. Hatty's cousin Edgar

7. Mrs Bartholomew 8. Young Barty 9. Peter 10. Hatty's aunt 11. Abel

SAYINGS ABOUT TIME

Time and tide wait for no-one	No-one can stop time moving on
Time is of the essence	No time to waste: we must do this right now
Time is money	Don't waste time, you could be using it to work and make money
Killing time	Doing anything to pass time when you're waiting for something important
Procrastination is the thief of time	By putting something off we are wasting precious time
Time heals	Things feel better as time passes
The sands of time	Time passing by—like the sand in an egg-timer
There's no time like the present	Better to do something now than leave it for later
Playing for time	Delaying something till you're ready
Taking your time	Spend as much time as you like
Time will tell	You'll only know how something will turn out, after some time has passed
A stitch in time saves nine	If something needs fixing, do it straightaway or it will only get worse
Prime time	The best time to do something. The time of the day when TV gets its biggest audience—and so the best time to reach most people.
In the nick of time	Just in time; at the last possible moment
Have a whale of a time	Having a really good time

CROSSWORD

Across: 1. BLACK 2. GEESE 4. FIR 5. THIRTEEN 8. PYJAMAS 10. MEASLES 12. GARDENER
14. BOW 15. LONG 16. VICTORIA 17. BARTY

Down: 1. BURN 3. SKATES 6. ELY 7. YEW 9. MOON 11. SLIPPER 12. GWEN 13. CASTLEFORD