

Skellig - David Almond

Vocabulary

Literary devices

<p>Summary</p>	<p>12-year-old Michael and his family have recently moved into a house. He and his parents are nervous, as his new baby sister was born earlier than expected and may not live because of a heart condition. When Michael goes into the garage, he finds a strange emaciated creature hidden amid all the boxes, debris and dead insects. Michael assumes that he is a homeless person, but decides to look after him and gives him food. Michael meets a girl named Mina from across the road and over the course of the story they become really close. Mina is home-schooled. Michael decides to introduce her to the strange creature. The creature reveals itself to be something very unexpected.</p>
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Character	Themes	Other texts:
<p>Michael is the main character of the novel. He has just moved house and is struggling with the new change. His newborn sister is premature and his parents' time is taken up being in hospital or worrying about her.</p>	<p>Life</p>	<p><i>My Name is Mina</i> - a prequel to Skellig and is about Mina, a homeschooled girl who lives across the road from the house that Michael's family moves into at the beginning of Skellig. The novel takes the form of a stream of consciousness journal.</p>
<p>Mina is Michael's neighbour. She is home-schooled and tries to think of the world differently to other people. She becomes Michael's very good friend.</p>	<p>Death</p>	<p><i>The Savage</i> - a graphic novel about a boy called Blue who, to cope with his father's death starts drawing and writing a comic book story about a wild boy living in the woods.</p>
<p>Skellig - Skellig is the homeless man Michael finds in his garage. Skellig is not all that he seems though</p>	<p>Education</p>	<p>'Slog's Dad' - a short story about a boy called Slog who, sees a man he believes is his father returned from death to visit him.</p>
<p>Michael's mum and dad are preoccupied with Michael's ill sister.</p>	<p>Friendship</p>	<p><i>The Fire Eaters</i> - Bobby Burns, who lives in the quiet coal-mining village . His father falls mysteriously ill, and he loathes his new school which is pervaded by bullying. Perhaps worst of all, Bobby is worried there will be a nuclear war.</p>
<p>Leaky and Coot are Michael's friends from school</p>	<p>Family</p>	<p>David Almond</p>
<p>Historical and social context</p>	<p>Isolation</p>	<p>David Almond</p>

Literary context		
<p>Magical realism - Magical realism, or magic realism, is an approach to literature that weaves fantasy and myth into everyday life. In books, stories, poems, plays, and film, factual narrative and far-flung fantasies combine to reveal insights about society and human nature.</p>		
<p>William Blake - Blake was an English poet and painter. He was one of the first Romantic poets. Blake's poems embraced creativity and imagination, encouraging freedom of expression and reflection of the self. He was particularly interested in children being locked away from the creative, outside world.</p>		
<p>David Almond (born 1951) is a British author and was born near Newcastle. Although he says he had a mostly happy childhood, he also felt great sadness due to the death of his sister and his father. Almond is a Catholic and spent a lot of time in church as a child.</p>	<p>Greek mythology - Icarus and Daedalus - Icarus is the son of the master craftsman Daedalus, the creator of the Labyrinth. Icarus and his father attempt to escape from Crete by means of wings that his father constructed from feathers and wax. Icarus' father warns him first of complacency and then of hubris, asking that he fly neither too low nor too high, so the sea's dampness would not clog his wings nor the sun's heat melt them. Icarus ignored his father's instructions not to fly too close to the sun; when the wax in his wings melted he tumbled out of the sky and fell into the sea where he drowned, sparking the idiom "<i>don't fly too close to the sun</i>".</p>	

anaesthetic
arthritis
congealed
despair
famished
fledgling
fixated
hobbled
hubris
inhibit
ossification
oblivious
plunder
protruding
recoil
retched
remnants
stifle
tepid
vagrant
wary

First-person narration
Simile
Metaphor
Zoomorphism
Personification
Dialogue
Symbolism
Situational irony
Irony
Protagonist
Foreshadowing
Allusion
Parallelism
Paradox