



Text:

The Firework Maker's Daughter

By Philip Pullman



Plot:	<p>A young girl called Lila wants to become a firework-maker, like her father Lalchand. Despite her talents, Lalchand believes this is an unsuitable job for girls. Lila disagrees, and journeys to get Royal Sulphur from Razvani the Fire-Fiend at Mount Merapi, as all aspirant firework-makers must do.</p> <p>The quest is nearly unsuccessful, as she does not have protection from the Fire-Fiend's flames or the Three Gifts to present to Razvani. However, her friends Hamlet, a talking white elephant, and Chulak, Hamlet's caretaker, manage to deliver the water of the Goddess of the Emerald Lake that will protect her. To Lila's surprise, Razvani recognizes her as a firework maker who has brought the Three Gifts, despite Lila being unaware of what the Three Gifts are.</p> <p>Upon her return home, she learns that Lalchand has been imprisoned because of the disappearance of Hamlet. To save his life, Lila and Lalchand must win the upcoming competition for the Firework Festival against other extremely talented firework makers. Upon their victory, Lalchand explains to his daughter that she does possess the Three Gifts: rather than tangible objects, they are talent, perseverance, and luck, all of which she has. She has talent, having worked with her father at firework-making for many years; courage and perseverance, for having undertaken the journey; and good fortune, which lies in having loyal friends, Chulak and Hamlet.</p>		
Genre:	Narrative – Fantasy Adventure/Quest Novella	Tense:	
Structure:	<p>Some features of a <u>fairy tale</u> (a traditional story for children that usually involves magic, imaginary creatures, royalty and fantasy elements). There is often a happy ending. For example, Lila becomes wise and happy by the end of the novel.</p> <p><u>Fantasy</u> stories involve magic, good and evil characters, and adventures. For example, this book features a talking elephant and a Fire-Fiend called Razvani.</p> <p>In this <u>adventure story</u> the main character undertakes a quest to prove herself.</p>	Theme/s:	<p><u>Stereotypes</u> Lalchand's views are stereotypical of traditional ideas around the role that girls and women should play. Lila's desires challenge stereotypes for girls and she defies her father in pursuit of her dreams. In the end, her father recognises and respects her talents.</p> <p><u>Ambition/Determination/Courage</u> Lila is a headstrong, confident female character who does not want the traditional fairy-tale ending of getting married. She is an active character who takes charge of her future. Explore the concepts of trust, self-belief, standing up for your rights, reaching your ambitions and challenging stereotypes and how this can create positive change (even when it is not approved of).</p> <p><u>Friendship</u> The friendship the main character has plays a central role in her success.</p>
Familiarity of content:	<p>The story is influenced by South-East Asian culture and there are clues that imply it is set in Indonesia.</p> <p>Create opportunities for children to make links to prior learning about challenging stereotypes e.g. suffragettes.</p>	Perspective:	Written in the third person, focusing mostly on Lila but also her friends Chulak and Hamlet.

Other language choices:	<p><u>Signposting</u> - the author provides lots of hints in his writing to give the reader clues and help them form predictions about the plot.</p> <p><u>Onomatopoeia</u> - words that sound like their meaning, such as '<i>sizzling and bubbling</i>'. Onomatopoeia is used to bring the jungle environment to life. For example, the animals '<i>gibbered</i>' and '<i>screeched</i>', while the fire-imps '<i>clanged</i>' and '<i>clashed</i>'</p> <p><u>Sensory descriptions</u> - for example, the book describes '<i>the occasional rumble from the mountain, which was so deep that she felt it through her feet</i>'. This novel uses sensory descriptions to vividly describe the setting. The reader is encouraged to 'listen to the fizz and crackle of the gunpowder' and to imagine how the 'fire flared and the sparks danced' in Lalchand's workshop.</p>	Explanations:	<p>Quest (noun): a long or difficult search for something</p> <p>Workshop (noun): a room or building in which goods are made or repaired</p> <p>Gunpowder (noun): an explosive mixture of powders used in fireworks</p> <p>Scorched (verb): burnt by flames or heat</p> <p>Graffiti (noun): writings or drawings scribbled, scratched or sprayed on a surface</p> <p>Rickshaw (noun): a light, two-wheeled passenger vehicle</p> <p>Rupees (noun): the currency of money used in India and other Asian countries</p>
Vocabulary:	<p>Asia, workshop, rupee, rickshaw, gunpowder, graffiti, Royal Sulphur, grotto, fire-imp, goddess,</p>	Diversity:	<p>Young female Asian protagonist</p>
Other links:	<p>https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/articles/zhxhy9q</p>		