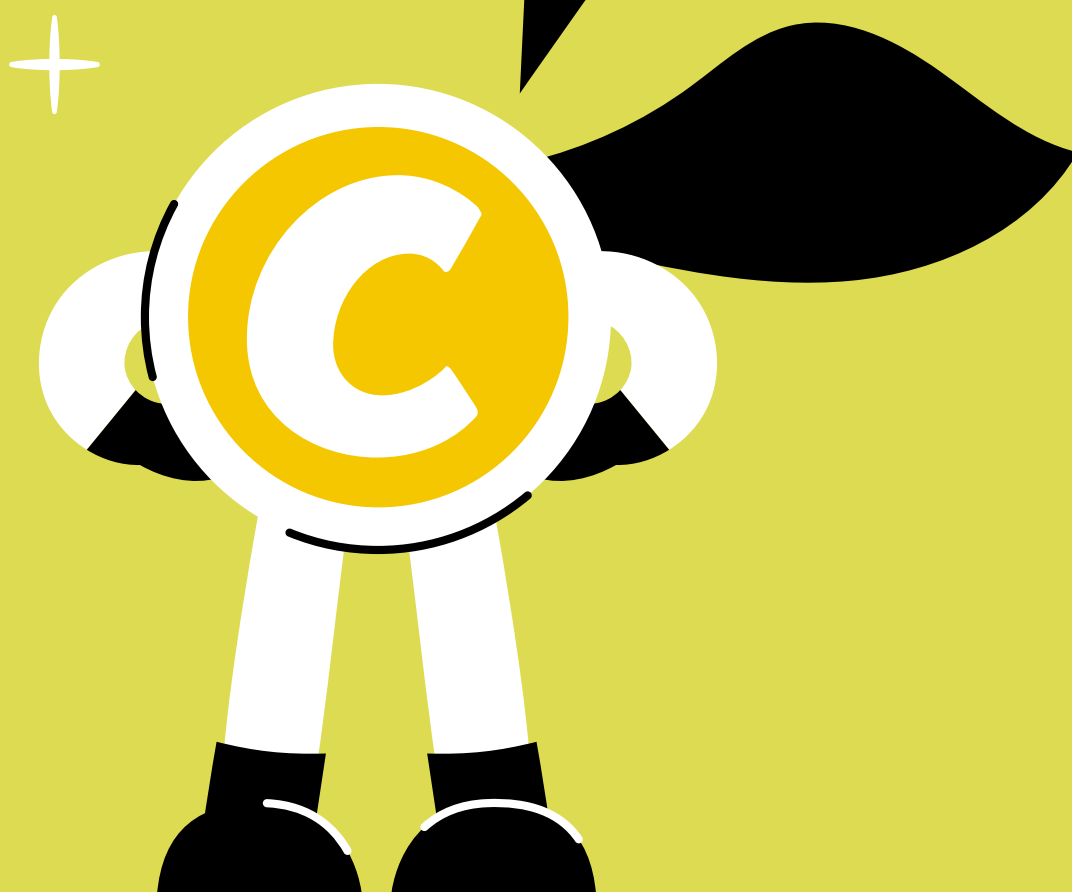




Authors'  
Licensing and  
Collecting  
Society

# Understanding and communicating **about copyright**



A Guide for Children

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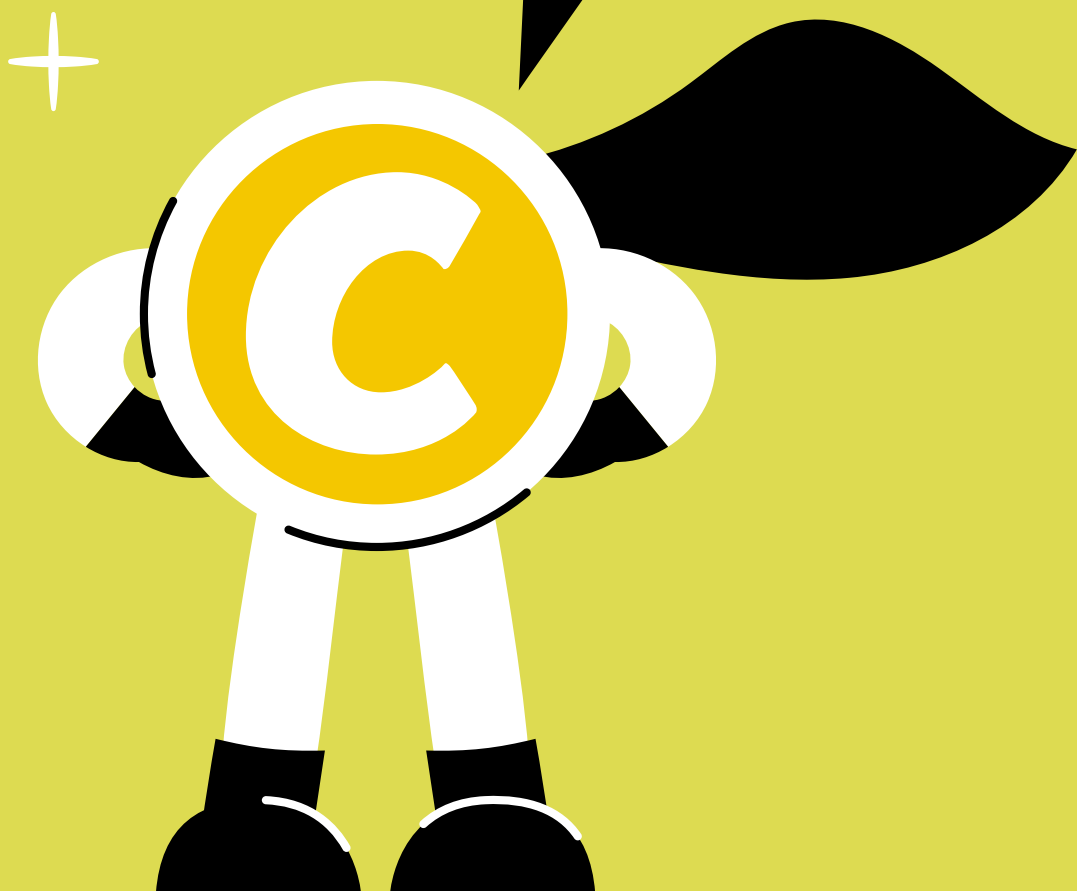
## **This booklet is designed to teach you more about:**

- what it means to have a job as a writer
- what copyright is and how it protects written work
- why copyright is important to writers and creators
- why you should be aware of copyright for yourselves as writers and creators
- who owns written work
- what copyright does
- how to keep to copyright rules – what can and can't be used in schools and classrooms.



# Section 1

Be a writer



## Section 1

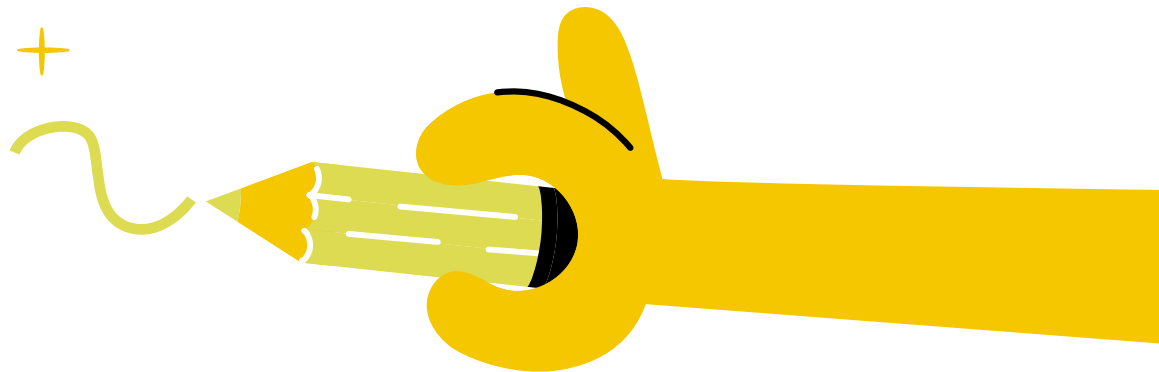
### Be a writer

## Can writing be a job?

Adults work to earn money. Some adults work in offices and shops. Some are teachers or doctors. Some drive buses, trains or lorries. Writers are paid for their writing.

A baker produces bread. A car manufacturer produces cars. A writer produces words. These words are there to entertain us, to inform us, to share worlds beyond our own.

Writing is important in so many different ways to so many different people and other industries. Companies need writers to write advertisements, articles and slogans; people need books and writing to learn, to feed our imaginations, to entertain us and to help us to escape into other worlds, meeting, learning from and empathising with different characters and situations.



### Think and talk about:

- Do you know someone who writes for their job? What do these writers write?
- What is your favourite book? Why is it important to you?

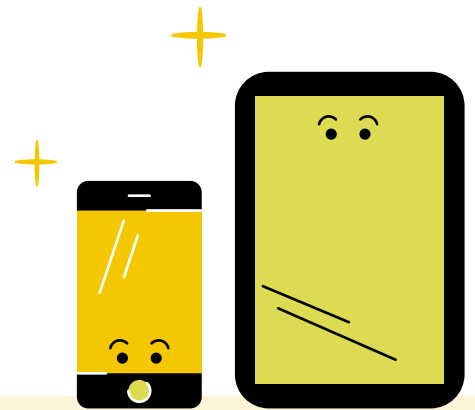
## Section 1

### Be a writer

## What does a writer do?

There are many different types of writers: novelists, short story writers, poets, theatre, TV, film and radio scriptwriters and journalists, as well as people writing non-fiction, textbooks or encyclopaedias. They produce content that might be of interest to the public.

In their day-to-day lives, writers work in many different ways, using different materials and technologies. They are creative, have a good command of language and are able to communicate effectively with an audience.



### Activity:

Watch the following video of picture book writer and illustrator Benji Davies:  
<https://vimeo.com/244687726>

### Think and talk about:

- What have you learnt about what this writer does and what his work involves?
- How did he start writing?
- What qualities does he have that makes him a good picture book writer?
- What goes into making a picture book? Were you surprised by this?  
What did you find out that you didn't know before?

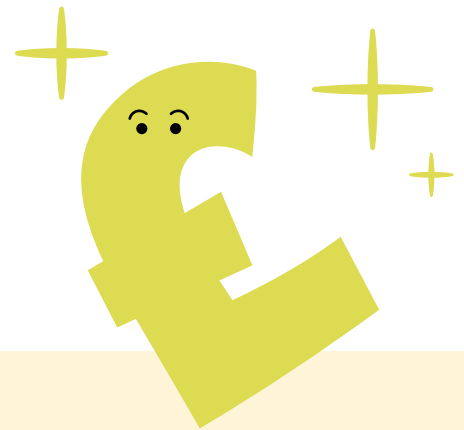
## Section 1

### Be a writer

## How do writers earn money?

If a copy of a writer's book is sold, they receive a percentage of the selling price, known as a royalty.

A small payment also goes to the author if a book is borrowed from a library. If it is an ebook, the publisher has obtained permission from the writer to create a digital copy and to distribute it online. Authors are paid for this by their publishers.



### Activity:

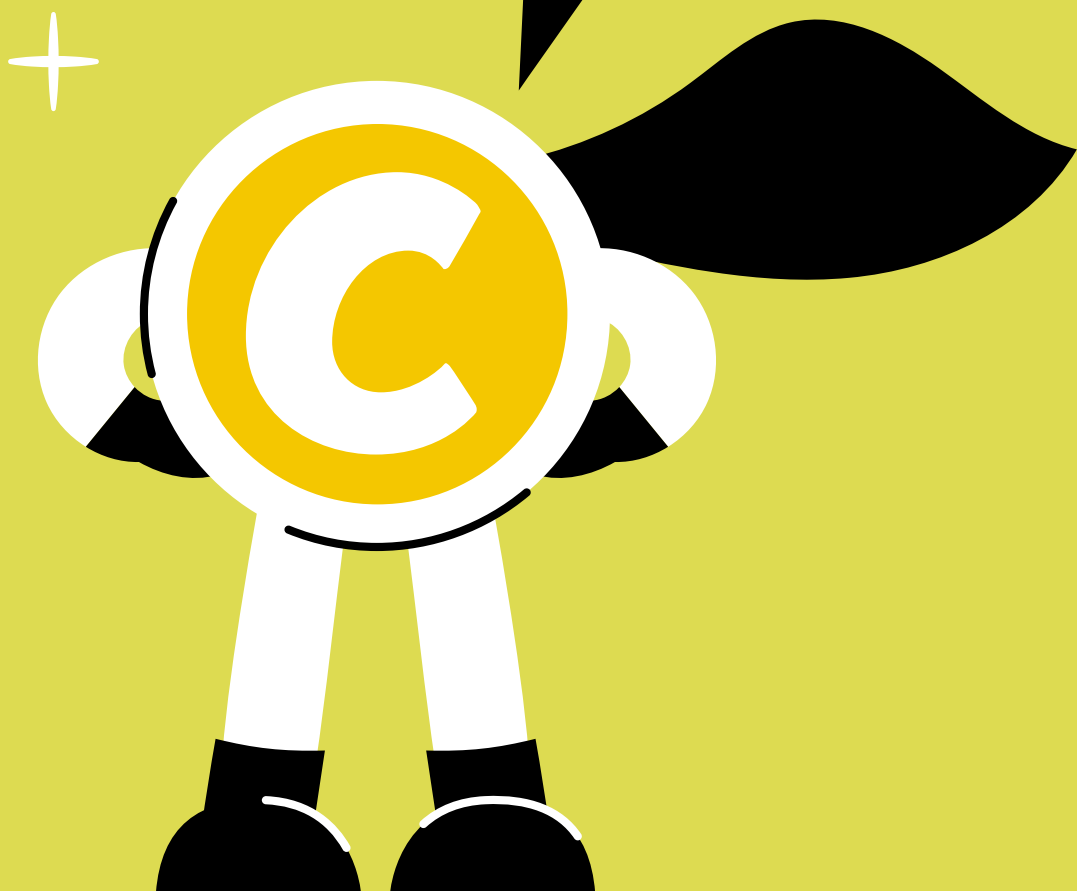
How do royalties work?

#### Think and talk about:

- If a book costs **£12.50** in a shop and the publisher gives the writer **10%** as a royalty payment, how much would this earn the writer per copy?
- If they sell **500 copies** of the book, how much would the writer earn in total from royalty payments?
- If the publisher decided to increase the royalty payment to **15%**, how much would this make the writer per copy? And how much would the writer now earn for the **500 copies** that were sold?

## Section 2

Protecting written work –  
Importance of copyright





## Section 2

### Protecting

## When you write a story or poem, who does it belong to?

Your writing is your property.

You probably say to your teacher or to the grown-ups at home: "This is my story. Would you like to read it?" Well, you are right. If you have written it, it is yours. Words that you have written belong to you as much as your shoes or pencil case do. That is the law. If you've written the words, they are yours. And you have rights over them. You can, for example, refuse to allow your work to be published in the school magazine (although very few children would!).

If teachers want to make a photocopy of your story, one each for every child in the class perhaps, they have to ask your permission. You own the **copyright** in your work – the **right** to **copy** it. You also have the right to be named as the creator of your work and to object if someone tries to change it without your permission. Just as you might give away your toys or clothes, you can give away your copyright. Laws about copyright are there to protect the rights of writers.

### Activity:

Think about the following scenario:

Jayden writes a poem in class and thinks it would be a nice thing to give to his mum for Mother's Day. His teacher loves the poem and puts it into the school newsletter without asking Jayden first. Jayden's mum sees it before Mother's Day. She's really proud of it being in the newsletter, but Jayden is very disappointed as it spoils the surprise of her reading it in the card he made for her.



### Think and talk about:

- The poem was produced by Jayden in a lesson taught by his teacher. Jayden thought of all the ideas and did all the writing himself. Who owns the writing?
- What should the teacher have done in this situation?
- How do you think Jayden could talk to his teacher about this? What advice would you give him?

## Section 2

### Protecting

## Why is copyright important to writers?

The law protects writers of books, magazine articles and web pages too. Unless you have permission from the 'owner' of a piece of writing, you must not photocopy or scan it so that you can show it to lots of other people.

We call the owner of the words the copyright holder. Unless the writing you're using is covered by an exception or out of copyright, except for the kind of situations mentioned below, if you take, and use, someone else's words you are breaking the law. Taking someone else's words without permission is theft. You wouldn't take someone else's purse or mobile phone would you? If writers' books and other writing are taken, used and not paid for, they lose out on money they should be earning.

What would you do if people kept taking something you had produced and not paid you? Would you stop producing it? Imagine a world without new books being written!

### Activity:

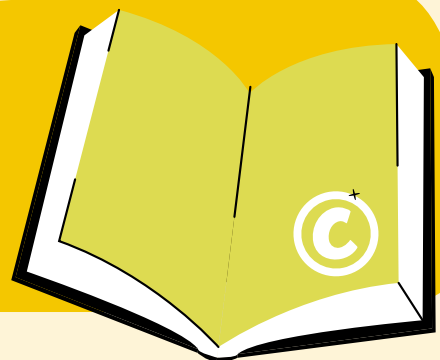
Can you find out which writers wrote the following works and which publishers published them?



- The novel **Varjak Paw**?
- The picture book **How to Find Gold**?
- The poem **The Sound Collector**?
- The non-fiction text **Tiny Creatures: The World of Microbes**?

### Think and talk about:

- What effect would it have on you, your life and your education if there were no books like these?



## Section 2

### Protecting

### How long does copyright last?

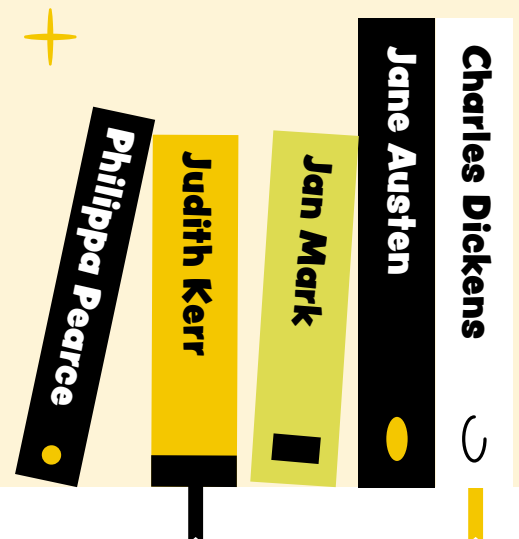
Copyright lasts for 70 years after the writer's death. For example, Roald Dahl wrote ***Charlie and the Chocolate Factory***, ***The BFG***, ***Fantastic Mr Fox*** and many other popular books. He died in 1990 so all his stories and poems will stay in copyright until 2060.

Charles Causley, a poet whose work is in many anthologies, died in 2003. His writing therefore lost copyright protection in 2073. Former Poet Laureate Ted Hughes, however, died in 1998 so his copyright will last until 2068.



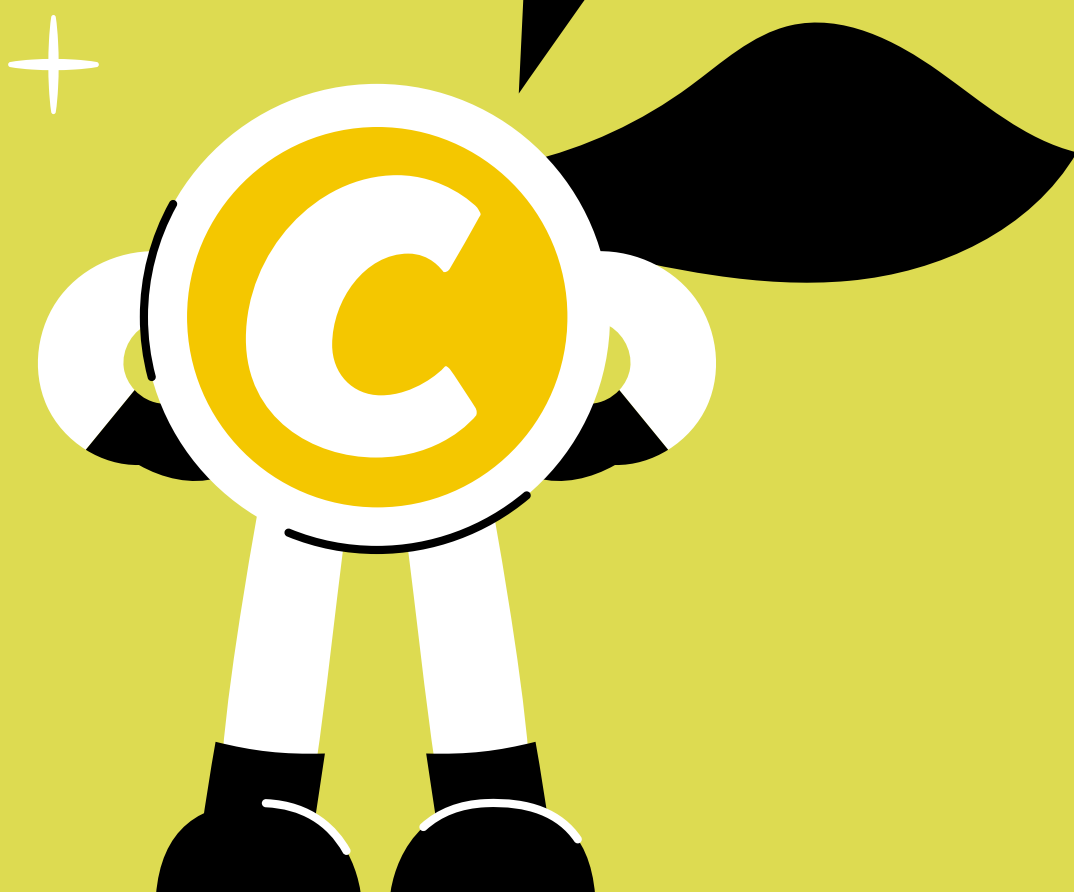
### Activity:

Use the internet or reference books to work out when books written by these authors and poets are out of copyright:



# Section 3

Owning books  
and written works



## Section 3

### Owning

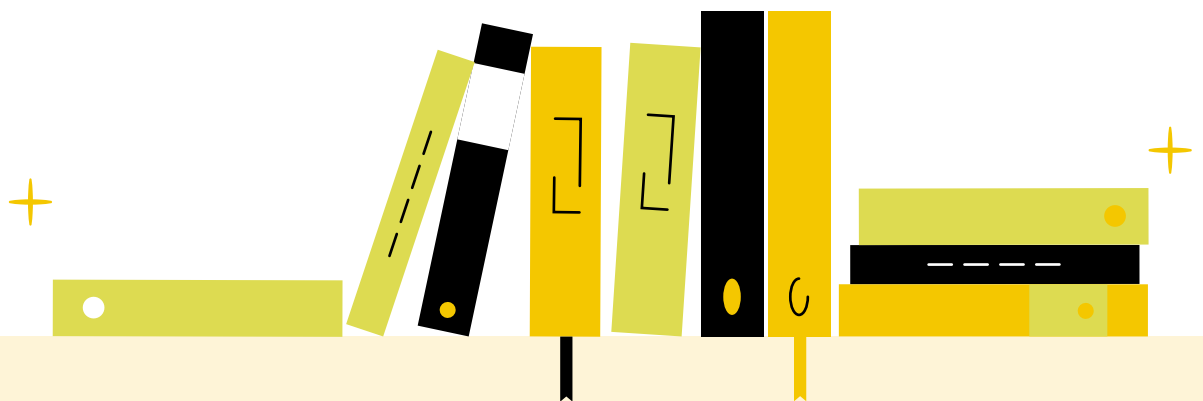
## Who owns writing in books?

Words in books are usually owned by the person who wrote them. Sometimes they are owned by someone representing that person, such as a publisher.

You often see, for example, ©Mary Jones, at the bottom of a newspaper or magazine article. And you see it at the front of books. See the foot of this page, for example.

The symbol for copyright is ©. It tells you who owns the copyright. And it reminds you it isn't you.

Writing is copyright-protected even without the © symbol. So you cannot say, "There was no © on it so I thought it was OK to copy it." If you don't have permission, you are still stealing.



### Activity:

Look in the front of any **ten books**. See for yourself who owns the copyright.

### Think and talk about:

- Now see if you can find out who owns the copyright in ***Peter Pan*** by ***JM Barrie***. It's a very unusual case and a lovely story.

## Section 3

### Owning

## If someone buys me a book as a birthday present, does it belong to me and can I do what I like with it?

When you buy (or have bought for you) a book – or a magazine or newspaper – you become the owner of the paper and the ink. That's all.

**You do not own the words.** All you have bought is the right to read them. The words still belong to the author, or sometimes to the publisher or someone else to whom the author has given the copyright. The important thing to remember is that they do not belong to you!



### Think and talk about:

- What are your favourite books? Do you own any books?
- Why is it important for the writers that you don't copy and share these books?
- What could you suggest if you want to share a book with someone, which would help the writer earn income from it? Does the other person have to buy it? What if they can't afford to? Think about what you learnt in the first section '**How do writers earn money**'.
- Why do you think libraries are important for both readers and writers? How could you encourage more people to use their local library?

## Section 3

### Owning

## Does this mean you can't even copy a few words from it?

No, it doesn't mean quite that.

If you are writing, say, a book review or writing about a news story, you can legally quote someone else's words. But – and this is the important thing to remember – it should usually be no more than a few sentences. And you should always state clearly where you took it from.

You can also make a copy of a short extract from a book you have bought as long as it is **only for your own use**, for example, to help with some homework – your school will also have a licence, from the Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA), allowing you and your teachers to copy larger parts of books. Suppose, for example, you are going to read aloud in assembly a page from a book you or the school owns. If it's more convenient to have the page on a sheet of paper than holding the whole book, you can photocopy it. That is because the copy is for your own use and you – or the school – have bought the book.

### Activity:

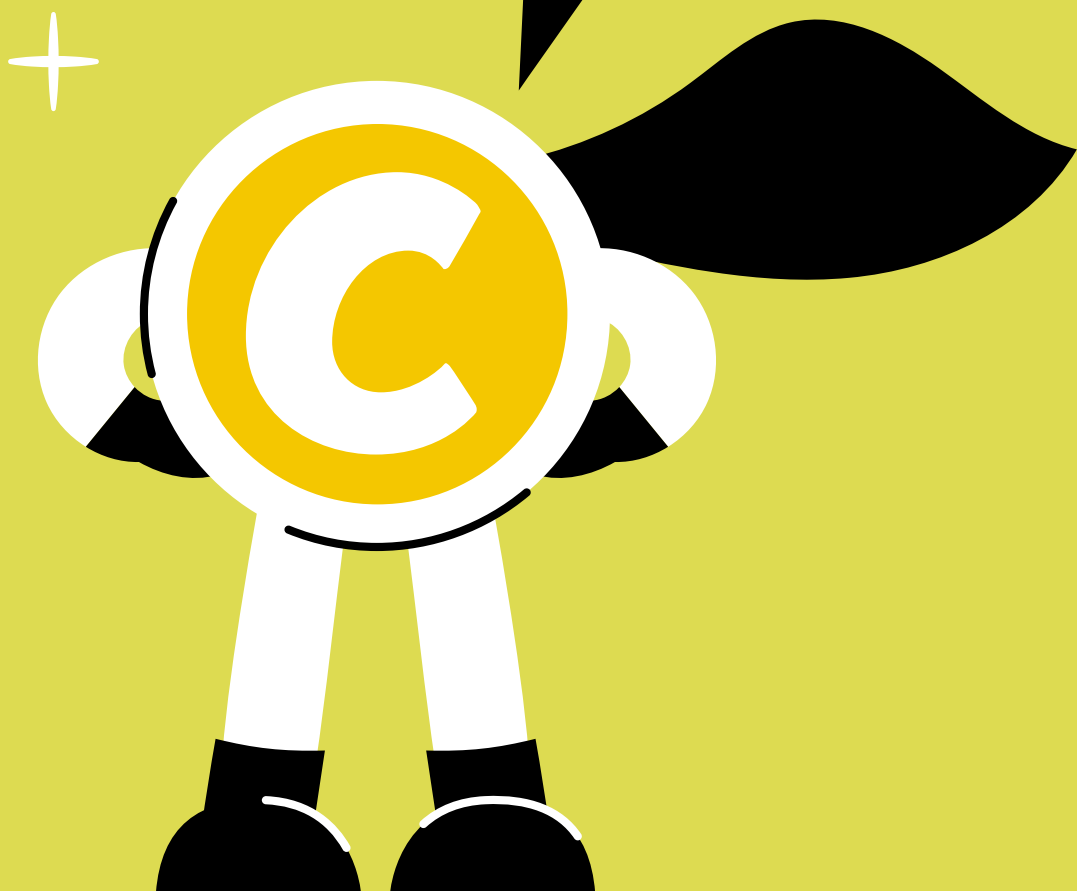
Look at any poetry anthology – a collection of poems by different writers including recent ones. Somewhere in the book – usually at the back – is a list of the poets and publishers who hold the copyright for a poem. They are being thanked because they have given permission for their words to be reproduced.

### Think and talk about:

- How do you get credit for the work you do in school?
- Can you think of a piece of work you've done that you were particularly proud of or received an accolade for?
- What if your teacher reproduced this without referring to the fact that you originally produced it?
- How might it feel not to get credit for work you've produced?

# Section 4

Using books and written  
works in school





## Section 4

### Using books

## Teachers give us bits of books sometimes. Is that allowed?

Schools can buy a special permit – known as a licence – from the Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA) **cla.co.uk**

If your school has done so, there will be a large notice displayed near each photocopier. But this does NOT mean that you can copy a whole book or even large chunks of it.

Whatever sort of licence your school has bought (and there are several sorts), there are limits on what you are allowed to do.

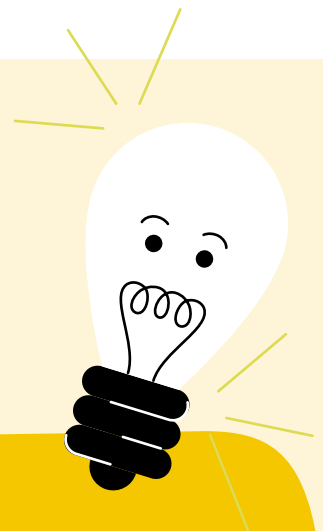
The licence money that CLA collects is passed to another organisation called the Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society (ALCS). ALCS pays money twice a year to authors. That way the authors get a payment for any work that has been copied from their books and articles.

### Activity:

Find out about the CLA Licence held by your school. What does it allow you and your teachers to do?

Watch this video, made by ALCS:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ilz5JG33Nk>



### Think and talk about:

- Why is ALCS so important to writers?
- Have you read any books by the children's writers involved in this video – Baroness Floella Benjamin or Tony Bradman? Can you find out the titles of some of the books they have written that you could buy or borrow from the library?

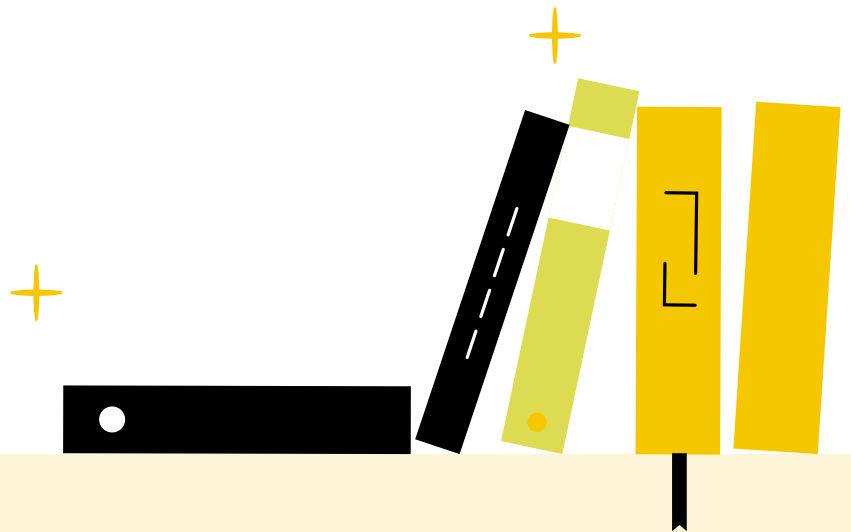
## Section 4

### Using books

## How do you get permission to use something?

The best way to gain permission to use a published work is to contact the publisher for permission.

Lots of publishers have a dedicated page for this on their website. However, if your school has a CLA Licence, the vast majority of UK-published titles are covered by the licence and parts of these can be used for classroom use, including images and some websites. Your teacher should know the rules for using texts under the CLA Licence and should be following these.



### Activity:

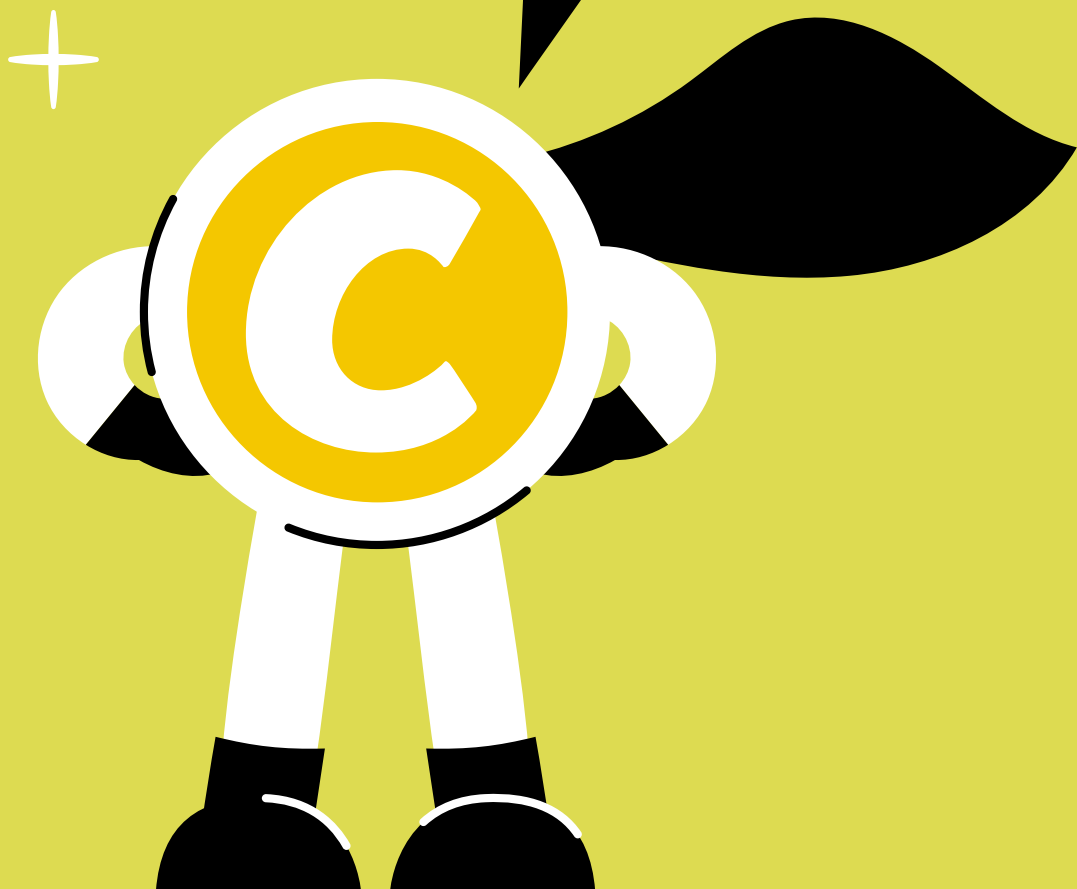
Pick **five books** from your school library or book corner.

### Think and talk about:

- Can you find out who published these so that you would know who to contact if you needed to seek permission to use these texts?

# Section 5

Using other media  
in school



## Section 5

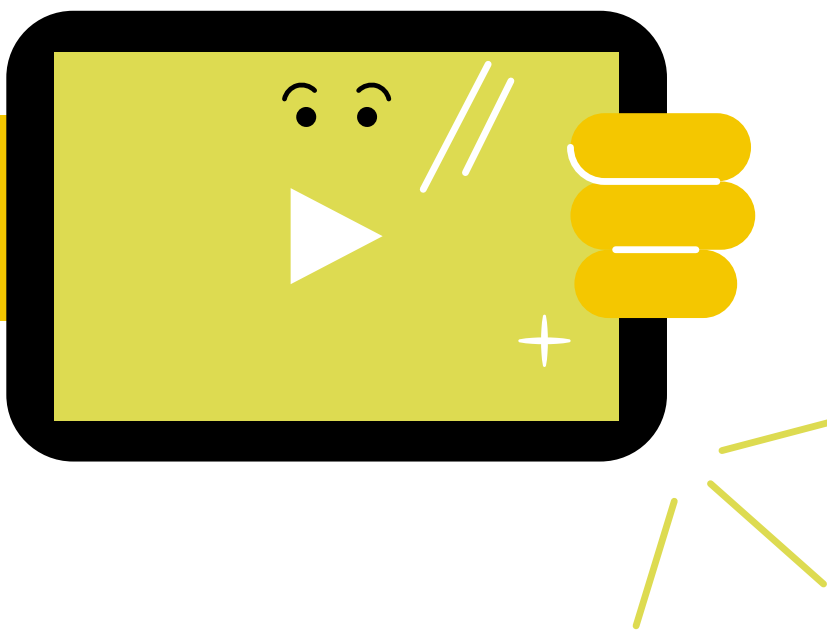
### Using media

### Can we watch programmes and film clips in school from streaming services?

Your school will have a licence from the Educational Recording Agency (ERA) allowing your teachers to copy and share content from TV and radio broadcasts, and online services like BBC iPlayer. Streaming sites like Netflix also offer access to educational programmes like documentaries for classroom use.

### Can we watch films on Netflix or DVDs?

The Copyright, Designs and Patents Act (CDPA) contains an exception that allows films to be shown for the purposes of instruction. So if your teacher is using a film to help you learn about a topic or subject in school, this is fine.



## Section 5

### Using media

## Can I use images, books, music or film that's produced by someone else in my own material?

You need to be aware of copyright if you are making your own material, including making digital content on platforms like YouTube.

If you use copyright-protected material in your video, including music, movies, television shows, video games or writing produced by someone else, such as reading a book aloud, and upload this onto YouTube, the copyright holder can block your video with a copyright removal. The video will be taken down and in its place will sit a message saying **'Video taken down: Copyright strike'**.

Copyright is important and we should all know more about it to protect the rights of the writers whose work we love and appreciate, and our own rights as writers. At the moment, the National Curriculum does not say that you have to learn about copyright in schools – although many people think it should.



### Think and talk about:

- What have you learnt about copyright from this booklet? Who could you share it with? What would be the best way to do this?
- Do you think your teachers could raise awareness of copyright more? What does everyone need to do in their everyday activities to show they are aware of the importance of copyright?