

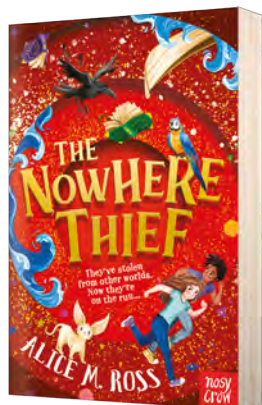


# THE NOWHERE THIEF

## Discussion Notes

Warning!  
Spoilers  
ahead!

1. We meet Elsbeth in another Somewhere stuffing cutlery into her backpack, but she doesn't take everything:  
*"The last thing she picked up was a small spoon with a cartoon mouse on the handle. She saw her face reflected upside down in it, like an alien. Elsbeth looked at it for a second, then put it back in the drawer. She paused, pulled two adult knives and forks from her backpack and put those back too."* (p. 2)
  - Why do you think Elsbeth chooses to put some of the items back?
2. In the first chapter when Elsbeth is almost caught by the little boy whose house she is in, she wants to tell him *"I'm just a twelve-year-old girl ... I'm not really a thief."* (p. 3)
  - Now that you've read the book, do you think that Elsbeth is a thief? Do her reasons for taking other people's things justify her actions? Discuss.
3. *"For the first time since she could remember, Elsbeth found herself opening her mouth to say something to Mum that wasn't true".* (p. 48)
  - Why do you think Elsbeth lies to her mum about selling items to Mr Persimmon? Once Elsbeth starts telling lies do you think it gets harder for her to stop? If so, why?
4. The author uses complex descriptions for characters' eyes:
  - Elsbeth's eyes *"changed colour from blue to green to grey"* (p. 4)
  - Idris' eyes are *"charcoal ... with white specks, which looked like a starry night sky"*, *"The other-worldliness of the midnight eyes was offset by his chin"* (p. 60)
  - Look at your eyes in a mirror or look into the eyes of the person next to you and think how you could describe them
5. Elsbeth travels to different Somewheres through the kaleidoscope of Nowhere when she can feel an opening or when she creates one herself. Can you think of any other fantasy stories where characters travel through time and space? How do they do it? Can you create your own method and explain how it would work?



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ALICE M. ROSS

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6. *"Had she been so wrong about Mr Persimmon? Her gut had told her he wasn't lying about Mum. And he'd just helped her with Mr Lennox. But maybe he'd done that so Mr Lennox didn't call the police. So that he could take Elsbeth away himself. And yet. He didn't seem evil. Not underneath it all. Elsbeth trusted her instincts."* (pp. 115-116)

  - Throughout the story Elsbeth isn't sure who she can trust. What makes someone trustworthy? As a group make two lists, one with actions that make a person trustworthy and one with actions that make a person untrustworthy, these can be examples from the book or elsewhere.
7. *"Your friend?"* laughed Racine. *"But, Idris, you don't have any friends!"* (p. 136)


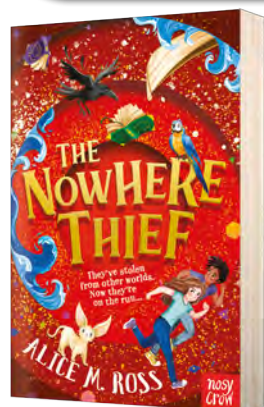
  - Idris' grandmother doesn't treat him like other grandparents treat their grandchildren. Can you think of at least three examples of things Racine says or does that are not what we should expect from our family and explain why?
8. *"Elsbeth had that same feeling she'd had when she was talking to Mr Persimmon: Racine wasn't lying."* (p. 163)

  - Throughout the book Elsbeth relies on her instincts to help her make difficult decisions. Do you think this is a wise thing to do? Discuss.
9. *"All this time I thought you had no talents. It turned out I was just looking in entirely the wrong place for them."* (p. 182)

  - Idris is expected to have the same powers as his mums, but it turns out he has an entirely different talent altogether. What we are best at is not always what is expected. Can you think of something you're good at that was a surprise to you or the people around you?
10. *"Elsbeth looked at Racine ... and realised something: she had been alone all this time. Not just alone but lonely. Here, surrounded by her children, she seemed softer – and happy. Elsbeth had never seen her look that way before."* (p. 249)

  - Elsbeth sees a change in Racine after she is reunited with her daughters. Did your opinion of Racine change whilst reading the book? Did you feel sorry for her, or did you still think of her as the villain?

We hope you enjoyed reading *The Nowhere Thief*!  
Share your thoughts and reviews with us on  
Twitter @nosycrow #TheNowhereThief



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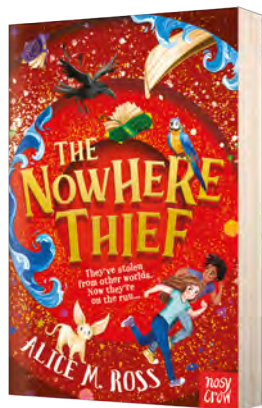
## Activity Ideas

### I. Create your own Somewhere

Imagine you can travel to another Somewhere of your choosing, what would that world look like? Write three to four paragraphs describing your new sphere, either as if you are walking into it for the first time, or you are introducing it to a newcomer. If you need help, think about the below:

- Are you in a city, the countryside, the jungle, or somewhere else?
- What types of buildings are there and what do they look like?
- What is everyone wearing?
- Is it hot, cold, stormy, and how does this affect everything else?

A large rectangular area with horizontal dotted lines for writing.



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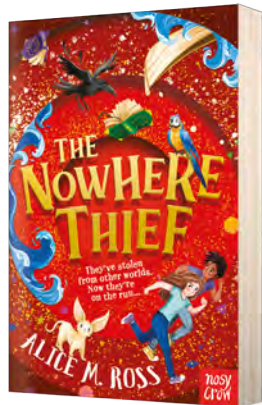




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## Activity Ideas

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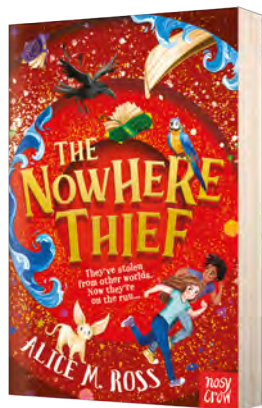
# THE NOWHERE THIEF

## Activity Ideas

2. Design an object or creature from another Somewhere

Elsbeth finds lots of interesting objects and creatures in other Somewheres. They look similar to items and animals we know, but are a little different, like a music box where the ballerina can jump out and dance across the floor, or a cat that uses its ears as wings.

Design your own mysterious object or creature and explain its special or unusual powers. You could try basing it on something you know: your favourite keepsake or your pet.



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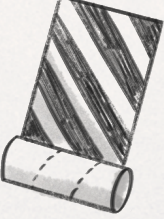

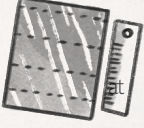




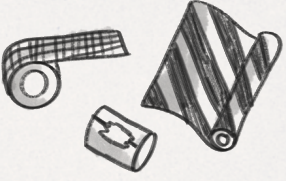



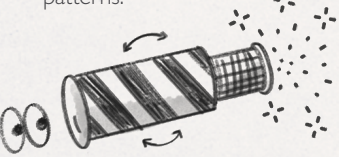
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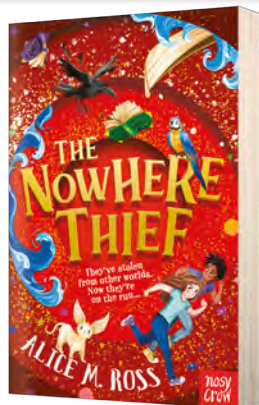
You may need an adult to help you!

### 3. Create your own kaleidoscope

You'll need:



1. Cut out a piece of decorative paper measuring 10.5cm x 14cm and use glue to stick this to the outside of one of your toilet paper tubes. 
2. Next cut out a piece of plain card and tin foil both measuring 9cm x 11cm and stick these together, make sure the shiniest side of the foil is facing up. 
3. Using a ruler, make a tiny mark every 3.5cm along the longer edge, then make folds where each of these marks are. You should have a smaller bit left the end. 
4. Fold into a triangle and use some tape hold it in place. 
5. Now grab your other toilet paper tube and cut off a section 2.5cm tall. You may need help with this as they can be quite difficult to cut. 
6. Cut into it and make the tube slightly smaller by sticking the overlapping edges together. It needs to fit snugly into your other, decorated tube. 
7. Get your plastic and use your new smaller piece of tube as a template to cut out two circles. Use your larger tube as a template to cut out one more circle. 
8. Cover the outside of your smaller tube with more paper or wash tape. 
9. Using glue carefully stick the slightly larger circle to one end of the larger tube and one of the smaller circles to one end of the smaller tube. 
10. Once this is dry fill your smaller tube with beads and put your card and tinfoil triangle into the larger tube. Don't overfill the smaller tube, give your beads enough room to move around. 
11. Seal up the smaller tube using glue to stick the last circle to the open end. When this is dry carefully slot the smaller tube into the larger tube, you should be able to twist it round gently. 
12. Enjoy! Use your kaleidoscope in a light room or outside and look through it, twisting the smaller tube to make different patterns. 



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