



# Charlie Higson



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## Charlie Higson

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Charlie Higson is the author of the hugely successful Young Bond and The Enemy series. The series have now sold over a million copies in the UK and has been translated into 24 different languages. The new book, *The Dead*, is published in September 2010 and is the second in The Enemy series.

Charlie is a successful actor, comedian and writer for television and radio, and has been writing books for children since 2005. Charlie has always been a fan of horror. While at university, he studied gothic literature and took a film course on horror. After studying at the University of East Anglia, Charlie formed a band, The Higsons. He then became a decorator before turning to the world of television. His successes include Saturday Live, the Harry Enfield Television Programme, The Smell of Reeves and Mortimer, Shooting Stars and the Fast Show.

The activities provided in this resource focus on two Higson novels: *The Enemy* (2009); and *Silverfin* (2005), the first in the Young Bond series. They are designed to be fun, engaging, cross-curricular activities which should enhance the children's enjoyment of the author's work. Please see the websites below for further information about Higson and the two novels:



[www.the-enemy.co.uk](http://www.the-enemy.co.uk) – the official site for the novel, contains extracts and a trailer for the novel as well as downloads and a picture gallery



[www.youngbond.com](http://www.youngbond.com) – the official site for the Young Bond series



[http://youngbonddossier.com/Young\\_Bond/Home.html](http://youngbonddossier.com/Young_Bond/Home.html) - website with games, gallery, interviews and information about all books in the series

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## Charlie Higson Introductory Activities

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Use the information in the following websites to help you find the words in the wordsearch found in Additional Resource 1:


 [http://youngbonddossier.com/Young\\_Bond/Home.html](http://youngbonddossier.com/Young_Bond/Home.html) and

 [www.the-enemy.co.uk](http://www.the-enemy.co.uk)

Read extracts from different Higson novels and find out about Bond characters at the following website: <http://www.youngbond.com/>

Higson has written a range of horror and action/adventure novels for young people. Discuss other novels and authors of this genre that you have read – What do they have in common? What do you enjoy about them? Would you recommend any to a friend?

Read interviews with Charlie Higson at the following website:

 [http://youngbonddossier.com/Young\\_Bond/Interviews.html](http://youngbonddossier.com/Young_Bond/Interviews.html)

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## The Enemy Activities for Primary (Level 2)

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### INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES

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Look at the front and back cover of the novel. What can you tell about:

- the genre
- the story
- the character
- the setting

How does the cover make you feel? Would you choose to read this novel if you picked it up in a library or book shop? Explain your answer!

Listen to the extract from the novel at the following link:

 [www.the-enemy.co.uk/site/teHome.php5](http://www.the-enemy.co.uk/site/teHome.php5)

## DREADED DISEASE!

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Design your own 'grown-up disease'. Think about how the disease will affect:

- appearance
- behaviour
- actions of the grown-ups

See how many similes and metaphors you can find to describe the adults in *The Enemy*:

“He had the familiar look of a vegetable, or a piece of fruit, left too long in the sun.” (p. 6)

“A fat little father with useless legs hobbled out in a crouch, like some horrible, ungainly frog.” (p. 21)

“His face was so swollen with boils he looked like some ghastly sea creature, a puffer fish.” (p. 129)

“One wore her underwear on the outside, like some freakish superhero...” (p. 207)

Write a paragraph describing the appearance, behaviour and actions of the grown-ups with your invented disease. Give your paragraph to a friend and see if s/he can draw an accurate picture using your description – try to use similes and metaphors to help your friend get a clear image in his/her head!

## REFUGE

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The children in the novel are constantly seeking to find refuge from the grown-ups – in Waitrose, down alleyways, in the Tower of London, in Buckingham Palace...

In groups, discuss what made a good refuge for the children in the novel. Ideas might include:

- a good look-out spot
- access to food and water
- good security
- somewhere to sleep

Imagine you are left to fend for yourselves with a group of friends. Think of a building in your own village, town or city which would make a good refuge. Think about how you could convert different parts of the building to suit your needs. Draw a diagram and label different parts of the building, explaining what they would be used for.

## BIRTHDAY SURPRISE

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In pages 401 – 402, we learn that Ollie is about to turn fourteen and is worried about catching the grown-ups' disease. Write the next chapter, describing what happens when he wakes up on the morning of his birthday. Will he see signs of change? Will he start to act differently? Will he fight off the disease? Will he want to eat the other children?

## HOT SEATING

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Take it in turns to be in the hot seat for different characters at different points in the novel. Find out about how the character felt at that point in time, what thoughts were running through his/her head, how s/he felt about other characters, what s/he thinks will happen in the future.



### Homework Activity

Grown-up Freeze – imagine that grown-ups were frozen for a day. What would you do? Write a timetable or diary entry for the day outlining all the different activities you would do, the food you would eat, the places you would go etc.

**CfE**

Literacy –  
Writing – LIT 2-  
26a / LIT 2-27a  
/ LIT 2-31a

Literacy –  
Drama – EXA  
2-12a / EXA 2-  
13a

Literacy –  
Writing – LIT 2-  
26a / LIT 2-27a  
/ LIT 2-31a

# The Enemy Activities for Secondary (Levels 3-4)

## INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES

Think about conventions of the horror genre. Look at the front and back covers of the novel and see how many of these are introduced. Amongst other aspects, you could consider the following:

- illustrations (type, colours, style)
- vocabulary (title, blurb, extracts, reviews)
- general presentation (text font, title, layout)

Listen to the extract from the novel at the following link:



[www.the-enemy.co.uk/site/teHome.php5/](http://www.the-enemy.co.uk/site/teHome.php5/)

## LEADERSHIP

Throughout the novel, different children act as leaders. Some lead the entire group, some lead the fighting party, some lead the security party and some take charge of looking after the children. Work in groups to make a table like the one below, providing information about different leaders found in the novel. An example of the character Arran might include:

Leader's Name	Position	Role/Actions	Characteristics
Arran	Leader of the Waitrose gang	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Makes decisions for the group</li><li>● Leads scavenges for food</li><li>● Leads group to Buckingham Palace</li><li>● Killed in action</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Patient</li><li>● Rational</li><li>● Resilient</li><li>● Strong</li><li>● Calm</li></ul>

The children often have to fight for their leadership positions. For example, Blue, Arran and Maxie struggle to keep leadership of their groups. David seeks leadership of all the children and ultimately of London.

Compare tables with those completed by other groups. Allocate a character to each group. Work in groups to prepare an argument for why the character would make the best leader of the children. Think about actions/events that the character has been involved in, as well as personal characteristics. Hold a class debate to see which character would make the best leader.

## MOVIE-MAKING

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Books are often made into films. Discuss whether you think this book would make a good film. Is there a particular scene you can envisage? Which parts would be difficult to make into a movie?

Choose a scene from the novel and change it from a narrative into a script. Think about using a range of adverbs such as nervously, cautiously, furiously as stage directions in brackets before a character's speech. Using these will help develop characterisation, action and atmosphere.

## TENSION

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During the novel, there are key moments of tension. Work with a partner to discuss where these might be, for example the swimming pool scene, Sam escaping from the football stadium or regular street-fighting between the grown-ups and children.

Tension is created in a number of different ways. Look for examples of different tools used to create tension throughout the novel. Use the sub-headings given in the mindmap (additional resource 1) to help, and complete the map using examples from the text.



### Homework Activity

Refuge Research – look up images of the different refuges made in famous buildings in London. Which of these do you think you think would make the safest place to hide? Which one would you most like to stay in and why?

CfE

Literacy –  
Writing – LIT 3-  
26a / LIT 3-27a  
/ LIT 3-31a /  
LIT 4-26a / LIT  
4-27a / LIT 4-  
31a

Literacy –  
Listening and  
Talking – LIT 3-  
02a / LIT 3-09a  
/ LIT 4-02a /  
LIT 4-09a

Technologies –  
TCH 3-04a /  
TCH 4-03b /  
TCH 4-09b

# Silverfin Activities for Primary (Level 2)

## INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES

Follow the link to look at the information about the other books in the Young Bond series – which one would you most like to read and why?



[http://youngbondossier.com/Young\\_Bond/Book\\_1.html](http://youngbondossier.com/Young_Bond/Book_1.html)



Play the different young Bond games at the following website:

[http://youngbondossier.com/Young\\_Bond/Games.html](http://youngbondossier.com/Young_Bond/Games.html)

## SUPERHEROES

Lord Hellebore is trying to create a race of superheroes that are strong and powerful. Imagine you are trying to create a race of superheroes. Discuss with a partner which human qualities you would give your heroes. Think about physical, social and emotional characteristics. If you could give your superhero one superhuman characteristic what would it be and why? Write a description and draw an illustration of your superhero, and then present it to the class.

## SCRIBBLE CAFÉ

Sellotape together large sheets of sugar paper or source cheap paper tablecloths and cover four tables. Children should work in groups and spend three minutes at each table, taking a pen with them as they move. At each table, they should scribble down freely their ideas, responses and feelings about a given aspect of the novel. Allocate aspects such as 'favourite character', 'scariest moment', 'scene that would be most effective in a movie' or 'setting I would most like to visit' to the different tables. Afterwards, children can visit each station to read and discuss ideas of peers.

## COVER STORY

Follow the link below to see the different versions of the book cover found in different countries of the world and on different editions.

Draw a cover for the novel being sold specifically in Scotland. Make sure the cover portrays aspects of genre, content and setting whilst luring in the reader...



[http://youngbondossier.com/Young\\_Bond/Galleries/Pages/SilverFin.html](http://youngbondossier.com/Young_Bond/Galleries/Pages/SilverFin.html)

Literacy –  
Listening and  
Talking – LIT 2-  
02a / LIT 2-09a,  
Expressive Arts  
– Art and  
Design – EXA  
2-02a / EXA 2-  
05a / EXA  
2-06a

Literacy –  
Listening and  
Talking – LIT 2-  
02a / LIT 2-09a

Expressive Arts  
– Art and  
Design – EXA  
2-02a / EXA 2-  
05a / EXA  
2-06a

Hold a class debate about whether or not to trust George Hellebore. Think about the way he treats Bond as well as the way he himself is treated by his father and his own troubled upbringing. Does he deserve the second chance that Bond gave him? Would you have trusted him if you were in Bond's shoes?



### Homework Activities

**Bond Kit** – The penknife given to him by Red and the lighter given to him by Uncle Max come in very useful to James Bond. Design a kit of essential tools which James Bond should keep with him at all times. Explain what each item is, why you think it would be useful and when/how you think it could be used.

**A to Z of Bond** – Bond has many character traits which help him to be a successful adventure hero. Try to think of a Bond characteristic or personal quality for each letter of the alphabet. (A – adventurer, B-brave etc.)

## Silverfin Activities for Secondary (Levels 3-4)

### INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES

Follow the link to look at the information about the other books in the Young Bond series – which aspects do they all have in common (Bond Girl, Villain etc)? Which would you most like to read next and why?



[http://youngbondossier.com/Young\\_Bond/Book\\_1.html](http://youngbondossier.com/Young_Bond/Book_1.html)

Play the different young Bond games at the following website:



[http://youngbondossier.com/Young\\_Bond/Games.html](http://youngbondossier.com/Young_Bond/Games.html)

### YOUNG HEROES

The novel describes the adventures of the young James Bond following the success of the novels and films about the adult James Bond. Try to identify different aspects of the young Bond which are precursors of the adult Bond. These could include:

- Physical fitness
- Wide-ranging abilities
- References to his uncle being a spy
- James' disregard for rules

Think about other famous adult heroes or legends such as Sherlock Holmes or Superman. Write a chapter about the character as a child and an adventure that s/he goes on. Try to show the beginnings of some of the characteristics demonstrated by the adult version of the hero!

### GOOD V. EVIL

Notions of good and evil and heroes and villains are explored in different ways throughout the novel. Complete the table below to demonstrate the way in which George and Randolph Hellebore are portrayed as evil through their beliefs, personal characteristics and actions.

Character	Beliefs	Characteristics	Actions
George			
Randolph			

### GRAPHIC NOVEL

The book has been made into a graphic novel by Higson and illustrator Kev Walker . Choose a scene from the novel and put it into graphic novel format. You could use the Comic Life IT programme and images from Google image to produce an electronic version. The following link shows illustrations from the graphic novel to give some ideas:



[http://youngbondossier.com/Young\\_Bond/Comic.html](http://youngbondossier.com/Young_Bond/Comic.html)

### HISTORICAL SETTING

Throughout the novel, there are references to the time in which the story is set (references to Eton, to Hitler and to lifestyle). Try to find these and to estimate when you think the novel was set. Which aspects of that time would you like to experience? Which aspects are you glad no longer exist!



#### Homework Activity

Think of a place you have visited which would make a good setting for a Bond novel. Think about which creature would live there and what would happen. Create a novel factfile like the ones found at the following website:



[http://youngbondossier.com/Young\\_Bond/Book\\_1.html](http://youngbondossier.com/Young_Bond/Book_1.html)

Literacy –  
Writing – LIT 3-  
26a / LIT 3-27a  
/ LIT 3-31a /  
LIT 4-26a / LIT  
4-27a / LIT 4-  
31a

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## Additional Resource 1

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S	R	K	L	O	N	D	O	N
H	I	E	T	J	U	S	L	F
O	L	L	R	I	P	G	M	O
R	P	L	V	K	M	X	N	U
R	N	Y	P	E	L	T	T	R
O	D	S	X	E	R	U	F	T
R	E	I	J	L	O	F	R	E
T	C	V	G	J	O	P	I	E
O	S	W	P	U	F	F	I	N

[www.the-enemy.co.uk/site/teHome.php5](http://www.the-enemy.co.uk/site/teHome.php5)

[http://youngbondossier.com/Young\\_Bond/Home.html](http://youngbondossier.com/Young_Bond/Home.html)

Use the websites above to find the following in the wordsearch:

- The title of the first novel in the Bond series
- The location of the fourth Bond novel
- The name of the Bond girl in the third novel
- The evil creature in the first Bond novel
- The age of catching the adult disease in The Enemy
- The setting for The Enemy
- Charlie Higson's favourite genre
- The publisher of The Enemy and Silverfin

**ANSWERS:**

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Silverfin, Mexico, Kelly, Eel, Fourteen, London, Horror, Puffin

