

OLIVIA SHIVERS Teacher Notes/Ideas



General Ideas for all ages:

Art

Decorate your classroom like the assembly hall at the start of the book. Make lanterns, fake pumpkins, ghostly trees and cobwebs.

Create your own scribble ghost. Make a scribble on a blank page and turn it into a ghost.

Design a poster for a visit by one of your favourite authors. What should you include in the poster?

Science

Make ectoplasm.

You can make DIY ghost slime (ectoplasm) using clear glue, water, borax, and green or yellow food colouring.

DIY Ectoplasm Slime Recipe

Mix the borax: Stir 1/2 teaspoon of borax into 1 cup of water in a bowl until dissolved.

Mix the glue base: In a separate bowl, combine 5 ounces of clear glue, 1/2 cup of warm water, 2 drops of green food colouring, and 5 drops of yellow food colouring.

Combine: Slowly pour the borax mixture into the glue mixture while stirring until it forms a slimy consistency.

Store: Keep the slime in a sealed plastic bag when not in use so it does not dry out.
(Youtube Super News Live- How to Make Your Own Ectoplasm)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=loODbcRljws&t=2s>

PE

Instead of 'Stuck in the Mud' play the S.C.A.R.E version- 'Ectoplasm Freeze'. Chasers pretend to zap the runners who are ghosts. If the ghost is zapped, other ghosts must rescue their friends by wielding their glowspindle.

Reading & comprehension

- Chapter-by-chapter comprehension questions
- Retrieval, inference and prediction questions
- “Prove it!” questions where children find evidence in the text
- Vocabulary activities
- Character analysis
- Summarising each chapter
- Sequencing events
- True/false and multiple-choice activities

Writing

- Write a description of a ghost
- Create your own secret agent
- Write a diary entry as Olivia
- Write a newspaper report about Grandpa's disappearance
- Continue the story
- Write a spooky setting description
- Create a SCARE agent mission report
- Persuasive writing: *Why should Olivia become a SCARE agent?*

Fun Olivia/Shivers activities

- Design your own SCARE identity badge
- Create a Spook Sense test
- Ghost-hunting investigation
- Secret agent code-breaking
- Design a SCARE headquarters
- Create a “Wanted” poster
- Invent a new supernatural creature

- Character passport for Olivia, Roop and Grandpa

Speaking & drama

- Hot-seating Olivia
- Hot-seating Roop
- Role-play the author visit
- “Conscience alley” — should Olivia investigate?
- Freeze frames of important scenes
- Interview a SCARE agent

Themes & PSHE

There are some lovely discussion opportunities around **fear, courage, friendship, self-belief and keeping secrets**. The book is specifically described as exploring courage, bravery and hope, as well as friendship.

We could have questions such as:

Olivia is often frightened. Does being brave mean you aren't scared?

How does Roop help Olivia?

What do you think Olivia learns about herself?

Is there a difference between being brave and being reckless?

Olivia Shivers - Ages 7–9

1. Secret Agent Character Profile

Children create an identity card for Olivia.

My Secret Agent Profile

- Name:
- Age:
- Special ability:
- Best friend:
- Things I am good at:

- Things that frighten me:
- My secret-agent code name:
- My mission:

Challenge: Draw Olivia as a SCARE agent and give her three pieces of special equipment.

2. Spook Sense!

Talk about Olivia's special ability and then let children invent their own.

If I had Spook Sense...

- What would I be able to see/hear/feel?
- When would it help me?
- What might make it difficult?
- Would I want to have it? Why?

Creative challenge: Draw a scene where your Spook Sense suddenly activates!

3. Crack the Secret Code

Give children a simple alphabet code:

A = 1, B = 2, C = 3 ... Z = 26

Then give them messages to decode, e.g.

15 – 12 – 9 – 22 – 9 – 1

They can decode **OLIVIA**.

Then children create their **own secret message** for a partner to crack.

4. Fear → Courage

Create a two-column worksheet:

Olivia might feel... Olivia could...

Frightened Ask for help

Nervous Take a deep breath

Worried

Think carefully

Then ask:

What does it mean to be brave?

Children draw/write about a time when **they did something even though they were nervous.**

Olivia Shivers - Ages 9–11

For this group, I'd make the activities a little more challenging and get them thinking beyond simply recalling what happened.

1. Detective Reading - Evidence Hunt

Give children statements about Olivia and ask them to decide:

True / False / I need more evidence

For example:

Olivia is courageous.

Olivia always makes sensible decisions.

Roop is important to Olivia.

Being frightened stops Olivia from taking action.

The important part is:

“What evidence from the book makes you think that?”

This gets them practising **inference + evidence**, rather than simply answering comprehension questions.

2. Olivia's Character Arc

Create a character-development timeline:

At the beginning → During the adventure → At the end

Children complete:

Olivia thinks...

Olivia feels...

Olivia does...

Olivia learns...

Then the bigger question:

How has Olivia changed during the story?

Challenge: Find **three moments from the book** that demonstrate this change.

3. BREAKING NEWS!

Children become journalists reporting on the events of *Olivia Shivers*.

NEWSPAPER REPORT

HEADLINE:

Byline:

What happened?

Who was involved?

Where did it happen?

When did it happen?

Why is this important?

Witness quote:

" _____ "

Challenge: Include a dramatic headline, an eyewitness quote and at least **three facts from the story**.

4. Was Olivia Right?

This could make a great **P4–P7 discussion/debate** activity.

Give children a statement:

“Olivia should have followed her instincts and investigated what was happening.”

Children have to consider **both sides**.

FOR

-
-
-

AGAINST

-
-
-

Then:

What would you have done? Explain your answer using evidence from the story.

This is particularly good for developing **reasoning and talking/listening skills**.

5. The Secret Agent Mission

Children become SCARE agents themselves! Use the back of the book to help you!

MISSION BRIEF: TOP SECRET

Agent name: _____

Mission:

Location:

Threat:

Your special skill:

Equipment:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Your plan:

