

Spotlight on ERICH KÄSTNER

ERICH KÄSTNER was a German author, poet, screenwriter and satirist, known for his humorous, socially astute poetry and children's literature. He was born in Dresden, Germany in 1899. Like Emil, Erich was an only child and was devoted to his mother who worked as a hairdresser to supplement the family income. He was drafted into the army in 1917 and the brutality of his experiences made him strongly anti-war. He published *Emil and the Detectives* in 1929 and *Emil and the Three Twins* in 1933. The books were extremely popular with young readers but when Hitler came to power the books were labelled anti-German and burnt during the infamous book burnings of 1933, instigated by the then Nazi propaganda minister, Joseph Goebbels. Erich Kästner was one of the only authors actually present as his books were tossed on to the flames. During his lifetime Erich Kästner received many awards including the Georg Büchner Prize (1957) and the prestigious Hans Christian Andersen Prize (1960). He died in 1974.

'EMIL IS A WONDER... THE BOOK HAS THE EFFECT OF MAKING ME FEEL PART OF EMIL'S LITTLE GANG OF BOYS... EMIL AND THE DETECTIVES IS A LITTLE MASTERPIECE... READ IT AND YOU WILL BE HAPPY.' **Maurice Sendak**

Events

PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

EMIL-THEMED FAMILY FILM SCREENINGS
DUKE OF YORK'S PICTUREHOUSE (BRIGHTON)

Sunday 5 May 11am

Emil and the Detectives
(1935) Director Milton Rosmer
A charming British version of the story, in which Emil travels to London rather than Berlin.

Thursday 9 May 6.30pm

Hue and Cry
(1947) Director Charles Crichton
In the first of the famous Ealing Comedies a gang of street boys in London foil a master crook.

Friday 24 May

MICHAEL ROSEN ON EMIL AND THE DETECTIVES
Theatre Royal, Brighton 1.30pm – 2.30pm Tickets: £5 or £3 for schools
01273 709709

CONCLUDE YOUR YOUNG CITY READS ADVENTURE AS MICHAEL ROSEN TAKES CENTRE STAGE FOR A LIVE, INTERACTIVE, SCHOOLS EVENT CELEBRATING ERICH KÄSTNER'S **EMIL AND THE DETECTIVES...**

VINTAGE CHILDREN'S CLASSICS

Vintage Children's Classics is a beautiful and affordable series of books intended to inspire and nurture a life-long love of reading in children and adults alike. The series launched in 2012 with 30 titles and featured perennial favourites such as Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden* and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* alongside much-loved contemporary classics exclusive to Random House including *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* by John Boyne. Further titles in the series will be launched later this year.

The series is accompanied by a dedicated interactive website for children worldofstories.co.uk. The website includes fun quizzes, downloads and extra material where children are able to find out more about their favourite characters and stories.

SUGGESTED FURTHER READING

THE EXTRAORDINARY CASES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, Jonathan Stroud & Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

NANCY DREW SERIES, Carolyn Keene

HARRIET SPIES AGAIN, Louise Fitzhugh

THE LONDON EYE MYSTERY, Siobhan Dowd

WILD BOY, Rob Lloyd Jones

FROM THE MIXED-UP FILES OF MRS. BASIL E. FRANKWEILER, E. L. Konigsburg

LAURA MARLIN, Lauren St John

RUBY REDFORT SERIES, Lauren Child

YOUNG SHERLOCK HOLMES SERIES, Andrew Lane

THE BLACK CAT DETECTIVES, Wendy Meddour

THE DIAMOND BROTHERS SERIES, Anthony Horowitz

THE ROMAN MYSTERIES SERIES, Caroline Lawrence

THE ADVENTURES OF THE NEW CUT GANG, Philip Pullman

THE BAKER STREET BOYS SERIES, Anthony Read

JUDY MOODY GIRL DETECTIVE, Megan McDonald

WILMA TENDERFOOT SERIES, Emma Kennedy

MONDAYS ARE MURDER, Tanya Landman

THE MYSTERIOUS BENEDICT SOCIETY, Trenton Lee Stewart

THE SECRET BREAKERS SERIES, H. L. Dennis

ADVENTURE ISLAND SERIES, Helen Moss

THE SECRET SEVEN, Enid Blyton

THE FAMOUS FIVE, Enid Blyton

ATTICUS CLAW BREAKS THE LAW, Jennifer Gray

FOR OLDER READERS

MY NAME IS MINA, David Almond

THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME, Mark Haddon

BRIGHTON & HOVE
07 MARCH – 24 MAY
2013

YOUNG CITY READS



ONE CITY. ONE BOOK.
A THOUSAND CONVERSATIONS.

Emil
AND THE
Detectives
ERICH KÄSTNER



YOUNG CITY READS

2013

WHAT IS YOUNG CITY READS? IMAGINE SHARING A BOOK WITH YOUR BEST FRIEND, YOUR TEACHER, YOUR BUS DRIVER OR YOUR FAMILY. READING A BOOK TOGETHER IS A FUN EXPERIENCE. EVERYONE SHOULD TRY IT.

CHILDREN'S AUTHOR, POET AND BROADCASTER MICHAEL ROSEN INVITES YOU TO JOIN US IN A CITYWIDE READ OF ERICH KÄSTNER'S CLASSIC CHILDREN'S DETECTIVE STORY **EMIL AND THE DETECTIVES** FROM 7 MARCH TO 24 MAY 2013.

WHO IS IT FOR?

Young City Reads is for everyone: whether you're an amateur sleuth, avid junior bookworm, outright brilliant teacher or doting parent who loves to read aloud to your children. It doesn't matter who you are: Young City Reads is about opening up the world of words and ideas to everyone.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

It couldn't be simpler. The idea is to get young readers (and grown-ups) everywhere reading *Emil and the Detectives* between now and the end of May 2013. All you need to do to get involved is pick up a copy from your local library or bookshop and start reading! If you're a teacher you can sign up your whole class and read the book together in school.

THE GUIDE

This guide provides you with everything you need to know about Young City Reads. Taking you on a whistlestop tour of Erich Kästner's *Emil and the Detectives*, providing background information, reading hints, biographical facts and ideas for further reading.

Young City Reads is a Collected Works CIC Project

COLLECTED WORKS CIC
Collected Works is a Brighton & Hove based social enterprise, devoted to reader development through the shared act of reading fiction in the community. The organisation is led by Artistic Director, Sarah Hutchings.

Join the adventure... Password Emil!

For more up-to-the-minute information visit cityreads.co.uk



www.citylibraries.info



brightonfestival.org



worldofstories.co.uk

About the book

EMIL AND THE DETECTIVES

When young Emil awakes on a city-bound train to find his mother's precious money gone, and with it his strange bowler-hatted travelling companion, so begins an unforgettable adventure. To catch the thief, Emil teams up with a gang of young detectives and together they stalk their prey in a gripping cat and mouse chase across Berlin...

Emil made his dramatic debut back in 1929 with the book's original German publication. Since then, *Emil and the Detectives* has been translated into over 60 languages and adapted for the screen half a dozen times. Almost a century on, the world's first child super sleuth (and his daredevil accomplices) still cut a heroic dash as they outmanoeuvre, outwit and outthink their sinister foe. With its wry humour, hair-raising plot, and timeless themes of friendship and cooperation, *Emil and the Detectives* is an international classic of children's literature.

THE REAL DEAL...

From *Alice in Wonderland* to *Harry Potter*, children's classics down the ages have drawn on fantasy and make-believe for their storylines. What made Emil's story stand out from the crowd (particularly for the time) was its everyday setting and real-life scenario. No gnomes, no elves, no magic spells – just a gang of young boys on the city streets with a common goal: to catch a dastardly thief and bring him to justice.

rites of passage

When Emil – a wide-eyed country lad in an ill-fitting Sunday suit – finds himself all alone and penniless in the sprawling city, he's immediately a fish out of water. Everything around him is unfamiliar and he doesn't know who to turn to. Yet as his story unfolds, our resourceful hero rises to the occasion, gaining in confidence and learning valuable lessons about trust, friendship and doing the right thing whatever the circumstance. His is also a story of tolerance and acceptance: for though Emil sticks out like a sore thumb, he is soon befriended by the Berlin boys and their streetwise leader Gustav, who accept his difference and embrace his quest as if it were their own.

book

EMIL AND THE DETECTIVES

CHILDREN ALONE

Like all great children's adventures *Emil and the Detectives* places its daring young heroes at the heart of the story. In the tradition of *The Famous Five*, *Swallows and Amazons* and other such classics, here the kids are in charge: making the rules, calling the shots and overcoming extraordinary odds – all by themselves. Together they plan, reason and organise with ingenuity and discipline, tracking and apprehending the villain of the story without a grown-up in sight to mess things up. For Erich Kästner (the book's author), the unsupervised children aren't tearaways. Far from it: Emil and his brave band of brothers are seen as responsible and clever young citizens. And childhood itself is a fertile ground for the very best of human qualities to flourish.

ALTOGETHER NOW...

In many detective stories or spy adventures a lone hero (with trusty sidekick if lucky) is cast in a battle of wits against a shadowy enemy. Think Alex Rider, James Bond, Young Sherlock. For good to triumph over evil they must draw on their own resources, courage and powers of deduction. *Emil and the Detectives* breaks this mould, as here it is teamwork and cooperation that win the day. Emil might be the ultimate hero but without Gustav and his young recruits pooling resources, sharing ideas and pulling together, the bowler-hatted fugitive might still be at large today!

DID YOU KNOW?

When *Emil and the Detectives* was published in Germany in 1929 Emil was one of the first child detectives to appear in a book. Emil and his friends are heroes, they stick together, they outwit the thief and accomplish something that even the policemen hadn't been able to do. Today you can read all sorts of brilliant stories about clever child spies (*The Famous Five*, Anthony Horowitz's *Alex Rider* books and Eoin Colfer's *Artemis Fowl*) but little Emil Tischbein was the very first!

'I think it's wonderful that a whole city is going to read the book at the same time. I think this will build up a great sense of everyone exploring the book together.' **MICHAEL ROSEN**



Chapter Summary

CHAPTER 1

Emil prepares to travel by train to Berlin on his own for the first time. He is going to stay with his grandmother and is carrying a lot of money that his mother has worked hard to save for her. She tells him he must take great care of it.

Guess!

Let's look at the book's cover. What do you think the story will be about?

CHAPTER 2

On their way to the station Emil and his mother run into the sergeant. Emil feels guilty about a prank he was recently involved in, and although the sergeant doesn't mention it, he fears he will be in trouble when he returns from his trip. Emil boards his train and waves to his mother as it pulls out of the station.

Role Play

Imagine the conversation that Mrs Tischbein may have had with her next customer after returning from the station.

CHAPTER 3

Emil chats to the other passengers in his carriage. Worried that the bank notes he is carrying aren't safe he decides to pin them to the inside of his jacket. Everyone except the man in the black bowler hat gets off the train, leaving Emil feeling very nervous, but try as he might to stay awake, he eventually falls asleep.

Role Play

Recreate a conversation between the passengers in Emil's train carriage.

Guess!

What do you think will happen? (Review after next chapter.)

CHAPTER 4 & 5

Emil has a wild nightmare. When he wakes up both the man and the money are gone! He gets off the train one stop early to follow the suspect.

Guess!

What is Emil going to do? What will the man in the hat do?



CHAPTER 6 & 7

Emil follows the thief by train. He has no money but a kind man pays his fare. Meanwhile his grandmother and cousin are waiting for him but start to worry when he doesn't arrive.

Discuss

The differences between town and city life. How would your life be different if you lived in the countryside? What would be frightening about the city? What would be exciting?

CHAPTER 8 & 9

Emil tracks the man in the bowler hat to a cafe. He meets Gustav and his friends who offer to help him catch the perpetrator. The boys make a plan and Emil writes a letter to his grandmother which Gustav delivers, telling her he has something important to do and he'll be there soon.

Discuss

Emil's options. Has he made mistakes? What would you have done so far?

CHAPTER 10 & 11

The boys follow the man to a hotel by taxi. Gustav reappears with Emil's cousin Pony who wants to be involved in the adventure too.

Guess!

How will they catch the thief?

CHAPTER 12

The gang decide they need a spy inside the hotel so they befriend the lift-boy, who lends Gustav a spare uniform so that he may move unnoticed around the building. The boys discover which room belongs to the thief and Gustav and Emil settle down for the night in an empty room in the servant's quarters.

Discuss

If you were hiding out with the detectives for the night what supplies would you take with you?

CHAPTER 13

The boys decide to surround the thief when he leaves the hotel the next morning, with the hope of embarrassing him into returning the money. Crowding around the man does indeed unsettle him but he dashes into a nearby bank...



Discuss

Why do you think Pony acts so grown-up 'just like her grandmother'? Do you think she would act the same way if the book was set in 2013?

CHAPTER 14

The thief tries to change the stolen bank notes but Emil and his friends intervene. Thanks to the tiny pinholes through the notes that Emil had made by pinning them to his jacket, he is able to prove that they were stolen from him.

Freeze-Frame

Create a tableau scene of the moment at which the thief is confronted in the bank!

CHAPTER 15 & 18

Emil is rewarded £50 for catching the man, who is a wanted bank robber! Emil's story fills the newspapers. He returns to his grandmother's house and gives her the money from his mother, who is sent for. The whole family are reunited for a party.

Discuss

If you were to rewrite the title of the book, what would you call it?

'IT IS TERRIFIC THAT ERICH KÄSTNER, THE ROALD DAHL OF GERMANY, WILL BE BEING READ AND ENJOYED BY BRIGHTON & HOVE CHILDREN. I HOPE THE STREETS ARE FILLED WITH KNOWING CRIES OF "PASSWORD EMIL!"'

Laura Hassan, Editorial Director of Vintage Children's Classics

Ideas for Discussion - themes

COURAGE OR FOOLISHNESS?

A true hero needs to show courage and strength of character.

Question for Class Discussion:

Do you think Emil is a good hero? Or do you think he is wrong to pursue the villain without the help of a grown-up? Can you think of a time when you had to be brave or show courage? Can you talk about that experience?

DIFFERENCE AND TOLERANCE

Emil doesn't look like the rest of the boys in the city yet they help him out.

Question for Class Discussion:

Imagine the story was set now and a boy of Emil's age arrived at Brighton Station having been robbed on the train asking for your help. What would you do? And what if that little boy couldn't speak English? Would that change things?

MORAL ISSUES

Emil has to make some important decisions throughout the story, you might not agree with all of them.

Question for Class Discussion: Is it right to steal something back from the person who stole it from you?

WORKING TOGETHER

Emil couldn't have caught the thief alone and thankfully he met some new friends at the right time.

Question for Class Discussion:

How important was it that all the gang worked together? If they hadn't do you think they still would have caught the villain?

rites of passage

Emil's confidence builds as the story unfolds and he learns some valuable lessons about life.

Question for Class Discussion:

Do you think Emil has changed at the end of the book? And if so, how?