SHE FLED THE MARSH TO SAVE HERSELF.
NOW SHE MUST RETURN TO SAVE THE WILD.

WILDER

PENNY CHRIMES
ILLUSTRATED BY MANUEL ŠUMBERAC

Teaching Notes & Resources

Key Stage 2

Themes: Natural World | Rewilding | Desolation | Magic

Purchase *Wilder*

Wilder by Penny Chrimes

AN INTROUDCTION AND TEASER ACTIVITIES

These Teaching Notes focus on the opening pages of *Wilder* by Penny Chimes to introduce the themes and ideas in the story. The notes include book cover prompts, reading questions for pages 1–14 that support children's reading comprehension, inference and predictive skills, accompanying activities, and a 'spotlight' extract from Chapter One.

ABOUT THE BOOK

A desperate village. A child who emerges from the marshes. A falcon that helps her save them all.

The child – if child it was – came out of the wild-ness. It came out of the sparse bleak marsh where few dared go and none came back. And though the village grew accustomed to the creature they did not forget from whence it came. And they whispered that there was no knowing whether she was sent as a blessing or a bane.'

When the child emerges from the wilderness, no one in the village knows what to do with her. She is odd – half-wild, without speech and seems to have an unnatural bond with animals – especially the falcon, who is always circling above her. The Wise-Woman takes her in, and names her Rhodd, but the rest of the villagers remain suspicious.

Over the years, as Rhodd grows, the village realises that the river, which is their connection to the wider world, is beginning to die, and eventually a dark sickness begins to spread. Soon, too soon, the villagers turn their suspicion on Rhodd and her falcon.

And so, Rhodd sets out to discover what – or who – is causing the river to dry up . . . to protect her mother, her falcon and herself…

A beautiful and enthralling adventure about love, belonging, the delicate balance of nature – and the wildness within us all, for fans of *The Last Wild* and *Where the Crawdads Sing*, for 9+ readers.

SCAN ME

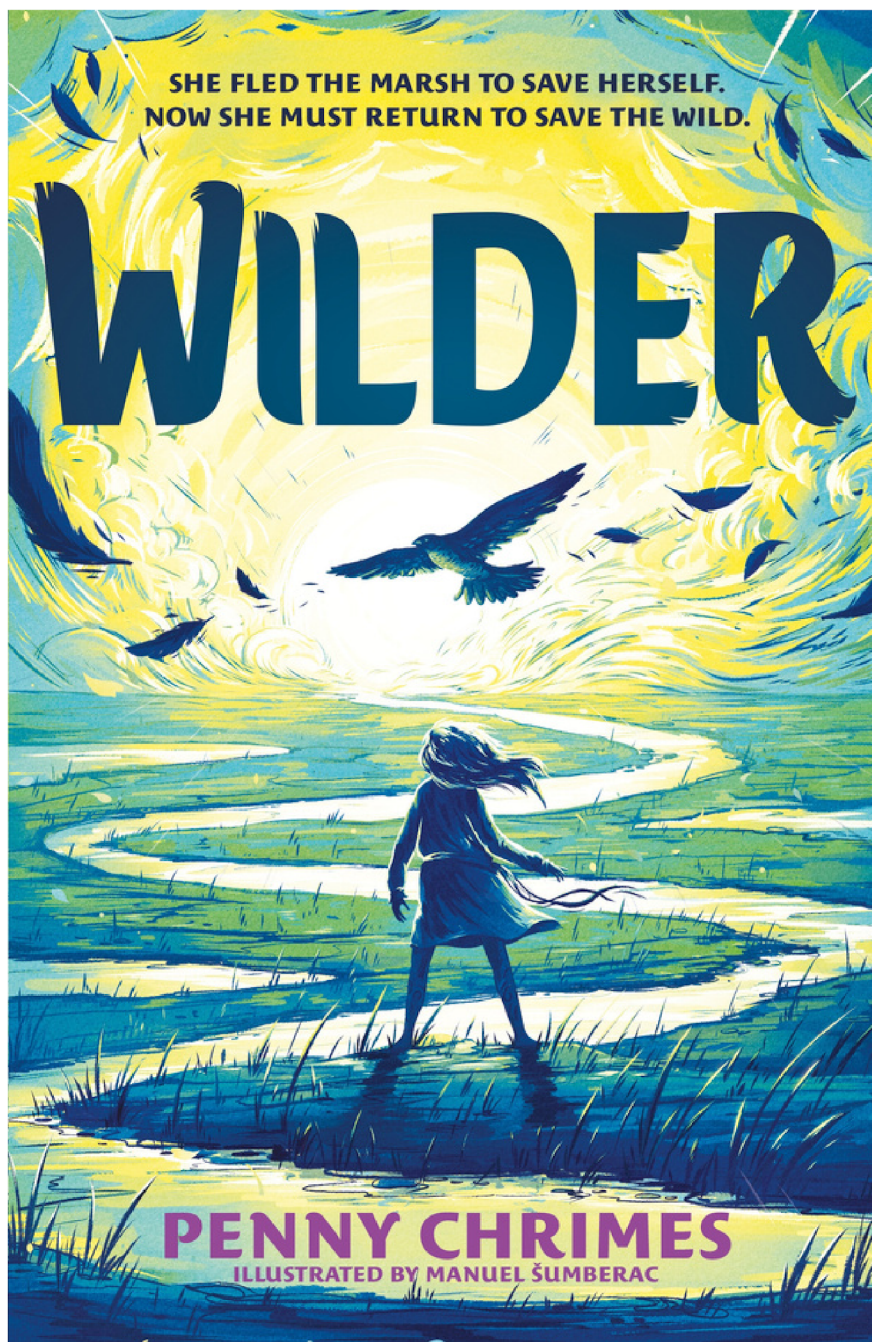Discover more books at
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BOOK COVER PROMPTS

1. What does the title of the book *Wilder* suggest to you? What might the story be about?
2. What do you think the character pictured might be like? Describe her.
3. Where is this story set? What can you see?
4. Can you see a contrast between light and darkness? What does this suggest about the story?
5. Can you make any predictions about what might happen in the story?
6. What could be the key ideas or themes in the story? Pick three that you think are explored on the front cover.

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PAGES & READING Qs	THEMES & REFLECTIONS	CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY!
P.1-5: The Child • How do the villagers feel about the child? Why? Give evidence. • Why do you think the mother protects the child? • What is the significance of the name given to the child? • What do you think might happen to the child?	1. Create a mind-map of everything you know about the child from the story so far. 2. Can you find evidence of environmental ideas or themes on pages 1–5? 3. Write a list of questions you think the different characters might have at this point in the story. 4. How is a sense of magic, mystery or intrigue created by the author?	**Art, Design & Technology** Re-read pages 1–5 and highlight any descriptions of the child. Use them to create an illustration of the child. Annotate your illustration with different words or phrases that you have picked out from the text. Then, create speech bubbles showing what the villagers are saying about the child.
P.6–14: Rewilding • What does 'rewilding' mean? • Why is Rhodd 'swaying, her senses blurred' on page 8? What is happening? • What is Rhodd's relationship with the falcon?	1. How can you tell the Rhodd has a unique relationship with the natural world around her and the creatures that live in it? Find examples. 2. Can you find examples of Rhodd described as more like a wild creature than a human? 3. What is the effect of these descriptions? 4. How does Rhodd feel about the humans in the story so far? 5. How does she feel about the wild creatures?	**Literacy** Find examples in Chapter One where Rhodd sees the world through the eyes of another creature. Choose a creature of your own and try to write from their perspective. How would they experience the world?
P.10–14: A Desolate Place • Why is the village described as 'Nowhere' on page 9? • What is 'gone' from the village? What is the impact of this? • What had 'this desolate place' once been • How has it changed and why?	1. Draw a sketch of the deserted LANDSCAPE in which the story is set. Imagine looking at this landscape from the falcon's point of view. On your sketch, write down what the falcon sees. 2. Create a list of ways that the village has changed since the river disappeared. 3. How is the theme of 'magic' introduced in the opening pages of the story? Discuss with a classmate.	**Geography** Study a city, town or village near you where there is a river. Create a case-study showing the importance of the river for the local people and economy, as well as for the natural world. What would be the impact if the river disappeared?

A CLOSER LOOK: Page 11-12

Read an extract from page 11 starting with 'How could 'A' be apple..." until the line on page 12 the ends with 'And that one day she must face it'.

VOCABULARY	1. Define the words: ageless, earthbound, soar, free-wheel, expanse, brooding.
INFER	1. How do you think Rhodd feels about the alphabet? Why? 2. Why does Rhodd's heart 'drop back into her chest'? How does she feel? 3. Do you get the sense that Rhodd is unique? How? 4. Why does Rhodd 'snatch her head away' when the falcon flies over the marsh? 5. Why do you think Rhodd insn't ready to 'remember the truth of that place'?
RETRIEVE	1. What does Rhodd think about when she sees the letters A, O and T? 2. What does Rhodd think is 'too big for words'? 3. Who or what does Rhodd envy? 4. What is the falcon's 'element'?
EXPLAIN	1. Explain why Rhodd is watching the falcon as it flies – and why she turns away.
PREDICT	1. What we will learn about Rhodd's past? 2. How Rhodd might have an impact on the village? 3. Do you think Rhodd's wish will come true?
SUMMARISE	Summarise what Rhodd wishes for and what she dislikes or is scared of in a few words.
ACTIVITIES	1. Carry out some research into falcons. Create a leaflet and a short presentation. 2. Create an alphabet inspired by the natural world, just like Rhodd's. 3. Write a diary entry in-role as Rhodd. How does she feel? What are her frustrations and desires?

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