

Resources for Silverborn



Resources for KS2 Teachers

Recommended use: Upper KS2 (9–11)

Core skills: inference, vocabulary, viewpoint, evidence-based reasoning, spoken language, narrative and descriptive writing, character/emotion tracking.

Curriculum Links (Upper KS2):

- Inference and evidence-based reading
- Prediction and thematic discussion
- Writing in role and persuasive writing
- Structured discussion and debate
- Vocabulary development (motive, alibi, inference, identity)
- Exploring identity, belonging and power (PSHE link)

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About *Silverborn: The Mystery of Morrigan Crow* by Jessica Townsend

Hold on to your umbrellas...

Morrigan Crow is drawn into Nevermoor's dazzling Silver District, where privilege, secrets, and a shocking crime collide. Pupils explore setting, mystery structure, and "found family" through creative, analytical, and collaborative activities.

About the book (teacher overview):

Morrigan is invited into Nevermoor's wealthy Silver District, where she uncovers a family mystery – then finds herself caught up in a murder investigation alongside Unit 919.

Silverborn: The Mystery of Morrigan Crow is the fourth book in the bestselling Nevermoor series.



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Before Reading . . .

Morrigan Crow: Timeline of a Wundersmith

Before diving into *Silverborn*, let's remind ourselves who Morrigan Crow is and what she has already survived. Understanding Morrigan's journey so far will help us explore how her identity is tested in *Silverborn*.

Task: Build Morrigan's Journey Timeline

- In pairs or small groups, create a timeline of Morrigan's life so far across the series.
- You may use books 1–3 (if available), your memory, or discussion with others.

Step 1: Order These Key Events

Write the following events on cards and cut them up or list them on the board and ask pupils to put them in chronological order:

- Morrigan is born on Eventide and declared cursed
- Jupiter North whisks her away to Nevermoor
- Morrigan competes in the Wondrous Society Trials
- She discovers she is a Wundersmith
- She joins Unit 919
- She meets Ezra Squall
- The Ghastly Market is uncovered
- Hollowpox spreads through Nevermoor
- Morrigan begins learning the Wretched Arts

After ordering, pupils should explain:

- Which event changed Morrigan's life the most? Why?
- Which event revealed something surprising about her identity?

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Before Reading Continued

Step 2: Character Growth Tracker

- For each stage, pupils fill in a chart with the following as column headers:
 - Event
 - How Morrigan feels
 - What she learns
 - Who supports her
- Encourage specific answers, for example:
 - From being blamed and unwanted in Jackalfax
 - To finding friendship in Unit 919
 - To grappling with the fear surrounding Wundersmiths

Step 3: Morrigan and Belonging

Discuss:

- At the start of the series, who does Morrigan believe she belongs to?
- Who treats her like family in Nevermoor?
- When does she begin to feel confident in herself?
- How do Jupiter and Unit 919 help reshape her idea of “family”?

Step 4: Predictions for Silverborn

Now that Morrigan is entering the Silver District and learning more about her biological family:

- How might discovering wealthy relatives affect her?
- Do you think blood family will feel the same as her chosen family? Why or why not?
- What tensions could arise from this new identity?

Write one prediction beginning with:

“In Silverborn, Morrigan might struggle with...”

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Lesson 1: The Silver District - Setting, Status and Secrets

Task 1: The Symbolism of “Silver”

Why might the district be called “Silver”? For example:.

- Silver shines and reflects light – but it can also be cold
- It can tarnish
- It reflects others rather than revealing itself

What might this symbol suggest about the Darling family or the district itself?

Task 2: Read the Extract (Chapter Ten)

Read Chapter Ten, in which Morrigan visits the Silver District and the Darling House for the first time.

‘It was like entering a painting. Or a dream.’ (p.87)

As you read, think about two layers:

- Layer 1: The Dream – what the Silver District wants people to see.
- Layer 2: The Reality – what might be hidden beneath the polished exterior.

Highlight and label examples of:

1. The Dream (Appearance & Opulence)

Look for:

- Expensive materials and decoration
- Light, colour, architecture
- Signs of wealth or status
- Impressive or grand details
- Formal manners or polished behaviour

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2. The Reality (Control & Power)

Look for:

- Gates, guards, barriers, restrictions
- Who is welcomed and who isn't
- Social rules or expectations
- Subtle tensions or uncomfortable moments
- Anything that feels "too perfect"

Ask:

- Who has power here?
- What might be hidden behind the glamour?
- What is Jessica Townsend suggesting about wealth and power in the Silver District?

Morrigan's Reactions

Track Morrigan's responses in the extract:

- When does she feel impressed?
- When does she feel uncomfortable or out of place?
- Does she feel welcomed or assessed?
- How does she compare this environment to the Hotel Deucalion or Unit 919



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Lesson 2: Detectives of Unit 919 - Clues, Suspects and Critical Thinking

*Note: For this lesson, pupils must read **ONLY up to the end of Chapter 22 (the wedding scenes)**. They must **NOT** read Chapter 23 or beyond, where characters begin forming their own suspect lists.*

The aim is for pupils to:

- form their own theories
- evaluate evidence independently
- experience the mystery as “real detectives”

Introduce key vocabulary:

- suspect
- motive
- opportunity
- alibi
- red herring
- evidence

Task 1: Evidence Gathering – “Freeze the Story”

In pairs, review the wedding scenes only.

Identify:

- Facts we KNOW
- Things that are suspicious
- Clues that might be misleading (red herrings)

Task 2: Create Your Own Suspect List

In groups, create a Top 3 Suspects List using Activity Sheet 1



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Activity Sheet 1: Top 3 Suspects List

Suspect	Motive	Opportunity

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Task 3: The Case Conference

In groups, present your leading suspects using this structure:

Claim: We believe ___ is responsible.

Evidence: The text shows...

Reasoning: This suggests...

Counterpoint: However, it could also mean...

Other groups may challenge:

- “How do you know?”
- “Is that a fact or an assumption?”
- “Could there be another explanation?”

Task 4: Sealed Predictions

Individually, write down:

1. My final suspect is:
2. My strongest piece of evidence is:
3. One thing I’m unsure about is:

Collect these and seal them in an envelope (or photograph them).

Now, continue reading Chapter 23 in the next session and compare your predictions to the characters’ thinking.

After Reading Chapter 23:

Compare:

- How similar were your suspect lists?
- Did the characters notice clues you missed?



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Lesson 3: Morrigan's Family - Blood Family, Found Family, Belonging

Lead-in question

Is family who you're born with, or who you choose?

Task 1: Relationship map / family tree

Build a diagram and use different colours to show:

Morrigan's Blood/biological connections:

Add new family members Morrigan discovers. Include:

- Relationship label (aunt, etc.)
- One trait (public face)
- One possible hidden trait

Morrigan's found family:

Jupiter + Unit 919 friends + Hotel Deucalion circle.

Include:

- How they show care
- One conflict/mistake
- One moment of repair/apology

Task 2: "Feelings timeline"

Across a simple timeline (start / middle / end of the book), plot Morrigan's feelings about:

- family identity
- trust
- belonging

Use emotion words beyond "happy/sad" (conflicted, relieved, exposed, hopeful, resentful, grounded).



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Task 3: Writing in role

Choose one:

1. Letter to Jupiter

- Morrigan explains what she's learned about family, including one hard truth and one thank you.

2. Diary entry

- "I used to think family meant... Now I think..."

Task 4: Reflection

Hold a discussion as a class with the following sentence starters:

- "At first Morrigan believes... but later..."
- "A turning point is when..."
- "The message I take from this is..."

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