

# A KIND OF SPARK

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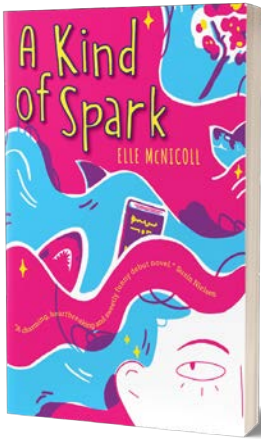
KS2 NOTES FOR TEACHERS & LIBRARIANS

## CHAPTER BY CHAPTER RESOURCES

For use in the classroom or at home.

Includes for each Chapter:

- Comprehension and Inference Questions
- Writing Tasks
- Suggestions for Extra Activities
- Inspirational Quotes from the story!



## ABOUT THE BOOK

A Kind of Spark tells the story of 11-year-old Addie as she campaigns for a memorial in memory of the witch trials that took place in her Scottish hometown. Addie knows there's more to the story of these 'witches', just like there is more to hers. Can Addie challenge how the people in her town see her, and her autism, and make her voice heard?

CHAPTER	COMPREHENSION AND INFERENCE	WRITING TASKS	EXTRA ACTIVITIES
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why does Miss Murphy put Addie's work in the bin?</li><li>• How do you think this makes Addie feel?</li><li>• Who is Keedie? How does she help Addie?</li><li>• Where does Addie often spend her lunchtimes?</li><li>• Who is Mr Allison? How is he described?</li><li>• What do you learn about sharks on pages 4-5?</li><li>• What does Addie love about reading?</li></ul>	<p>Research one of your favourite animals and create a fact-file about them!</p> <p>Draw a shark outline and inside write down all the things Addie loves about sharks!</p> <p>Do the same for your favourite animal.</p>	<p>LITERACY = Consider the title of the book and its cover. Can you make any predictions about what the story is about? What words stand out to you? What might Addie be like?</p> <p>DRAMA = Act-out this scene with Miss Murphy. In your first performance, use details from the text. In your second performance, change it so that Miss Murphy is kinder and more considerate towards Addie.</p>

<p>2.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does Addie's family have for dinner on a Monday?</li> <li>• Who is Nina? Who does she talk to through her camera?</li> <li>• Why doesn't Addie understand Nina on page 10?</li> <li>• Who is the only person Addie ever hugs and why?</li> <li>• How is Keedie 'like' Addie? What does this mean?</li> <li>• What are 'motor skills'? How do they affect Addie's handwriting?</li> <li>• What do the words 'stimming', 'masking', and 'neurotypical' mean?</li> </ul>	<p>Write a paragraph summarising how Addie experiences the world differently due to being autistic.</p>	<p>PSHE = Discuss what 'difference' means and why it is something to be celebrated. How can you be inclusive and make everyone feel welcome in your classroom? What can you say? What can you do? Create an Inclusive Classroom Plan.</p> <p>ART = Draw a picture of yourself and around it, note down things that make you different. Discuss your ideas together to celebrate your differences.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is Jenna? Who is her new friend?</li> <li>• How does Audrey stick up for Addie?</li> <li>• Why might people in Juniper 'insist on pretending' they are from Edinburgh?</li> <li>• Who was 'dunked in the Nor' Loch' and why?</li> <li>• What does Addie mean when she says she is 'overstimulated'?</li> <li>• How is Emily unkind on page 24? How should Miss Murphy respond to this?</li> <li>• Why is Addie 'cautious' around Audrey on page 27?</li> </ul>	<p>Research the history of witch trials in the UK and create a Non-Chronological Report showing what you find.</p>	<p>HISTORY = Conduct more research about the history of witch trials in your local area, nearest city, or the whole country you live in. Make a list of ten bullet points of your favourite facts.</p> <p>DRAMA = Create and perform a 1-minute news report in which you detail the history of witch trials in your local area, nearest city or the whole country you live in.</p>

When I am trying to sleep at night, I like to imagine diving deep beneath the cold waves of the ocean and swimming with a shark. Page 6

<p>4.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is vlogging? What does Addie think about Nina's vlogging?</li> <li>• Who is Mr Macintosh? What does it mean to be 'head of the committee'?</li> <li>• What does Addie propose to the committee on pages 32-33?</li> <li>• Why does Keedie think this is a good idea? What do you think?</li> <li>• What does Keedie mean when she says, 'this village is stuck in the dark ages'?</li> <li>• Why might Addie not want to talk about her autism to the camera?</li> <li>• What makes Addie happy on page 37?</li> </ul>	<p>Write a diary entry from Addie's perspective after being turned down by the committee.</p>	<p>PSHE = List some of the pros and cons of social media.</p> <p>DRAMA = Write down some ideas about why it was wrong of Nina to post her vlog. Role-play a conversation with Nina giving her advice about why it was wrong.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why do you think Keedie says, 'it wasn't easy at school for me'?</li> <li>• Which 'difficult' memory does Addie recall about Mrs Craig?</li> <li>• How has Keedie changed over time on page 41?</li> <li>• Why are some people described as being 'like trees' on pages 42-43?</li> <li>• How does Mr Macintosh respond to Addie's idea?</li> <li>• What does Keedie mean when she says, 'it was textbook'?</li> <li>• What does Addie decide to do at the end of the chapter?</li> </ul>	<p>Write a persuasive article or speech about a topic you care about. Include some facts and opinions to inform your audience about your chosen topic.</p>	<p>PSHE = With a partner, have a chat about someone who is like a tree to you and is always there (page 42). Draw an outline of a tree and decorate it with the names of all the people who mean a lot to you.</p> <p>ART = Draw the outline of a picture to colour in when you feel overwhelmed or anxious. How does this activity help you?</p>

I feel... angry. The unfairness of it sits in my stomach like a stone. Page 23

<p>6.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does Addie compare her brain to when talking to Audrey?</li> <li>• How else does Addie explain autism to Audrey?</li> <li>• What does Addie 'realise' about Jenna on page 48?</li> <li>• Why is Keedie upset on page 49? What has come at 'great personal cost'?</li> <li>• What is the problem with the word 'normal'?</li> <li>• Why does Addie wish she 'was like everybody else'?</li> <li>• What else does Addie wish on page 59 and why?</li> </ul>	<p>Design an anti-bullying poster to be put up at your school. Include information about what bullying is and what your classmates should do if they find out it is happening.</p>	<p>PSHE = List down important qualities that you look for in a friend or write a 'Friendship Recipe'. Consider the friendship between Addie and Audrey in the story.</p> <p>PSHE = Perform breathing exercises to help you to feel calm when you are in a stressful situation.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why does Addie describe school trips as 'gambles'?</li> <li>• Who is Mr Patterson? What does a PhD stand for?</li> <li>• What is the first stop of the trip? Have you ever been there yourself?</li> <li>• Why is Mr Patterson's question described as a 'trick question'?</li> <li>• Who is Jean and how is she described on page 57? What about Mary on page 60?</li> <li>• Why does Addie get so upset at Mr Patterson's story?</li> <li>• Which word does she says she hates? Why do you think she hates it?</li> </ul>	<p>Write down or summarise the ways in which Addie is affected by the story of the witches in this chapter. What are her reactions to the story? Why do you think Addie has so much empathy for the witches?</p>	<p>PSHE = Create a colour chart putting the name of a feeling or emotion next to different colours. You could include places or sounds instead if you prefer.</p> <p>HISTORY = Research the history of your local community. Can you find out any local secrets or new information about your town or city's past?</p>

"I'm autistic," I finally say, looking up at the cloudy Scottish sky. Page 47

<p>8.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which 'common misunderstanding' is addressed on page 67?</li> <li>• What does it mean to have empathy?</li> <li>• What does Addie's mum say she 'needs'? How might this help her?</li> <li>• How are Mrs Hazel and Miss Elspeth different to Miss Murphy?</li> <li>• Which other qualities make a great teacher?</li> <li>• Why might it be difficult for Audrey to fully understand Addie's 'way of thinking and feeling' on page 75?</li> <li>• Why is Addie worried about what happened to Bonnie?</li> </ul>	<p>Create a character profile for Keedie. What are her strengths and weaknesses? What are her interests? Who does she care about?</p>	<p>LITERACY = Note down a definition for the word 'empathy'. Write a short reflection about a time you showed empathy.</p> <p>ART = Using the text as inspiration, create a bookmark to take home. Make it colourful and eye-catching!</p>
<p>9.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why is Audrey a good friend? How does she support Addie?</li> <li>• What qualities do you look for in a friend?</li> <li>• What does it mean to 'think outside the box'? Why is this a powerful thing?</li> <li>• What does Keedie mean when she says she has to 'hide every day' on page 85?</li> <li>• Why shouldn't you listen to people who 'say nasty things on the internet'?</li> <li>• How does Keedie stand up for Nina on page 88?</li> <li>• What do Addie's sisters have in common?</li> </ul>	<p>Write down all the ways that the three sisters in the story love each other. How do they show their love?</p>	<p>ART = Create a Friendship Bracelet to give to a special friend or family member.</p> <p>PSHE = Consider the section in this chapter about having to 'hide' (page 86). Do you ever feel like you 'hide' your true self from others? Create a drawing of yourself: on the outside write down the ways you present yourself in front of others. On the inside, write down words and feelings to show who you really are deep down.</p>

I think it must be hard for neurotypical people to imagine a completely different way of thinking and feeling. A heightened one where everything is louder, brighter. Better. Worse. Page 75

<p>10.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why does Addie travel into Edinburgh by herself? Is this the right thing to do?</li> <li>• What is unpleasant about the lecture hall on page 94?</li> <li>• What makes Addie so worried about Keedie on page 95?</li> <li>• Why is Mum so cross with Nina?</li> <li>• What could Nina have done differently?</li> <li>• What advice does Mum give Addie?</li> <li>• Why does Addie think Keedie is lying?</li> </ul>	<p>Design your own flyer campaigning for the plaque or memorial in Juniper.</p> <p>Write a short description about a favourite place of yours.</p>	<p>PSHE / ART = Have a chat with a partner about a place that makes you feel safe and comfortable. It could be indoors or outside! Draw a picture of your 'safe space' and label it with the emotions that you feel when you are there.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why might animals be 'preferable' to people sometimes?</li> <li>• Why doesn't Emily deserve a response?</li> <li>• What advice would you give Emily if you could?</li> <li>• Why might Addie find her own workings out easier in Maths?</li> <li>• Which subject do you find tricky? Do you have strategies to help you?</li> <li>• Why does Audrey prefer dolphins to sharks?</li> <li>• Why do you think this conversation makes Addie feel sad?</li> </ul>	<p>Write an account of a time that you felt pressured by a certain subject or situation in the classroom – just like Addie feels pressured in Maths. How did it make you feel? What helped you to cope? Why is it important to share how you feel with your friends?</p> <p>Create a list of reasons why Addie loves sharks so much.</p>	<p>PSHE = Imagine having a conversation with Emily in which you ask her about her behaviour towards Addie. What do you think Emily would say to you? Why do you think she behaves this way towards Addie?</p> <p>SCIENCE = Both sharks and dolphins live in the ocean. What do you know about the ocean? Carry out some research into where these two creatures live.</p>

<p>12.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who hears Addie out at the meeting?</li> <li>• Why is it important to make sure people feel heard?</li> <li>• What are Mr Macintosh's 'issues' with Addie's idea on page 108?</li> <li>• What is powerful about Addie's speech on page 110?</li> <li>• What does Addie 'decide' at the end of the chapter and why?</li> <li>• Why is it important to stand up for things you believe in?</li> <li>• Which personal traits does each character show in this chapter?</li> </ul>	<p>Write a formal letter to the members of the committee urging them to listen to Addie and to support her cause.</p>	<p>MUSIC &amp; DANCE = Choose a song that is about believing in yourself and makes you feel empowered. Play along to the music or perform a dance to it.</p> <p>LITERACY / CREATIVE WRITING = What does the word 'courage' mean? Write a poem based on the events of the story so far entitled 'COURAGE'.</p>
<p>13.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does Audrey show consideration on page 114?</li> <li>• How do Dad and Keedie make Christmas less overwhelming?</li> <li>• How are Juniper and London different?</li> <li>• Why does Addie think of London as like a 'coral reef' on page 117?</li> <li>• Have you been to a big city? What 'sensory stuff' do you find in cities?</li> <li>• What is the difference between 'nice' and 'good'?</li> <li>• Why do you think Addie says Miriam is like her? Do you agree?</li> </ul>	<p>Create a sensory description of your own local area – then contrast it with a sensory description of a bustling city (or a quiet place) of your choice, anywhere in the world! How can you use the five senses in your writing to create mood and atmosphere? Why is Addie nervous about big cities?</p>	<p>GEOGRAPHY = Locate the different places and cities that are mentioned in the extract on a world map. Consider the differences between small, rural towns or villages and big, bustling cities. Divide a page into two columns to write down these differences.</p> <p>MUSIC = Use instruments and your voice to create the different sounds of a city. Then, create the sounds of a small town or village. How are they different?</p>

"What do you love about sharks so much?"  
I light up at the question. "I love everything about them." Page 103



<p>14.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is your favourite word and why? What does it mean?</li> <li>• Do friends need to like all the same things? Explain your ideas.</li> <li>• What does Addie 'love about sharks' on page 126?</li> <li>• How is Emily acting differently on pages 132-133?</li> <li>• What does 'dreich' mean? Do you know any other Scottish words?</li> <li>• According to Keedie, what do people 'want'?</li> <li>• Why are stories so powerful? What are your favourite stories and why?</li> </ul>	<p>Write your own powerful short story or acrostic poem about someone who is different. Use the word 'DIFFERENT' as your title.</p>	<p>LITERACY / GEOGRAPHY = Create a glossary of words that are unique to your local area. You might want to carry out some research into the history of these words – where do they come from?</p> <p>LITERACY / ART = What is your favourite word? Create a decorated version or collage of your chosen word showing its meaning and why you love it so much!</p>
<p>15.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are Addie's classmates cruel to her at the beginning of the chapter?</li> <li>• Which 'horrendous word' is scribbled in her thesaurus? Why is this offensive?</li> <li>• What do you think has caused Emily to behave this way?</li> <li>• Why do you think the 'silence' on page 141 is described as 'loud'?</li> <li>• Why does Addie lose control? Why is she sorry?</li> <li>• How could Miss Murphy react differently in this situation?</li> <li>• Why does this incident make other things 'spring to mind' on page 143?</li> </ul>	<p>Write a letter of apology to Addie from Emily's perspective, imagining that she has realised all of the things that she did wrong.</p> <p>Consider how you feel reading this chapter and note down your emotions as you read the scene. Why is it a powerful chapter?</p>	<p>DRAMA = Act out this scene as a class. Stop it at different points and think about what each character is doing. What is each character feeling and why? What could characters do differently?</p> <p>PSHE = Create a list of promises for how to treat one another in the classroom and show kindness. Sign this agreement to create an open and inclusive learning environment.</p>

I smile at her. She doesn't get it. I am invisible. The real Addie is behind a mask of social rules, regulations and strange neurotypical customs. Page 119



<p>16.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How is the office described? How does it reflect how Addie might be feeling?</li> <li>• What is confusing for Addie on page 145?</li> <li>• How does Miss Murphy summarise what happened on page 147?</li> <li>• Which important details does Miss Murphy leave out?</li> <li>• Why are Keedie and Nina so upset?</li> <li>• How do Mr Allison and Audrey support Addie?</li> <li>• What does Nina threaten to do at the end of the chapter?</li> </ul>	<p>Write down all the ways that Miss Murphy is presented in this chapter. Would you describe her as the 'villain' in this story? Why or why not?</p>	<p>LITERACY / ART &amp; DESIGN = Consider the phrase: 'All the colours of her hate' (page 144). Draw what you think this looks like. What colours will you use?</p> <p>LITERACY = Write a list of similarities and differences comparing twins Keedie and Nina.</p>
<p>17.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why is Addie worried about Keedie?</li> <li>• How does Nina describe Miss Murphy? Do you agree with her?</li> <li>• What makes Nina feel a bit 'left out' sometimes and why?</li> <li>• What happened at Nina's and Keedie's joint fourteenth birthday party?</li> <li>• What does Nina realise about her old school friends and Keedie on page 158?</li> <li>• What important conversation do Addie and Nina have?</li> <li>• How do you think their relationship might change going forwards?</li> </ul>	<p>Write a diary entry from Nina's perspective about what she has learned and how she is feeling in this chapter.</p>	<p>PSHE = Have a discussion about why it is important to talk about feelings. How can it help to create empathy? How can it bring people closer?</p> <p>PSHE / DRAMA = Hold a class party celebrating each other's differences. Create some inclusive party decorations, posters and invitations.</p>

Miss Murphy's voice is quiet and deadly. I look up. She is glaring down at me, no longer trying to hide her face. I see it all. All the colours of her hate. Page 144

<p>18.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is 'a burnout'?</li> <li>• What 'stings'? Why might Addie feel this way?</li> <li>• What is Keedie trying to tell Addie about the ocean?</li> <li>• Why is it important to 'be open about who you really are'?</li> <li>• What does 'the real you' mean?</li> <li>• How can you make people feel comfortable being themselves?</li> <li>• What does Addie realise about her friendships with Jenna and Audrey?</li> </ul>	<p>Create a character profile for Addie. Consider what she has learned in the story. How has she developed or become stronger?</p>	<p>PSHE / ART = Draw or create a collage showing what the word 'burnout' means in the story.</p> <p>Write a list of things you can do to feel better when you are sad, anxious, or feeling overwhelmed</p> <p>LITERACY / CREATIVE WRITING = Write a poem about a family member or friend who you are grateful for.</p>
<p>19.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is wrong with Jenna's apology?</li> <li>• What has Addie realised about friendship by this point in the story?</li> <li>• How does Nina explain the behaviour of bullies?</li> <li>• Why is it important to take action if you find out someone is being bullied? How can you do this?</li> <li>• What does Addie realise about grown-ups on page 173?</li> <li>• How does Addie confront the tree on pages 175–176?</li> <li>• What does, 'I will not let people use my difference, as a stick to beat me with' mean?</li> </ul>	<p>Write an article or informative leaflet explaining what you have learned about neurodiversity and autism from the story and its characters.</p>	<p>ART = Draw the tree from page 173 with branches coming out of it. On each branch, note down something Addie has learned by the end of the text.</p> <p>LITERACY / PSHE = Have a discussion about the importance of believing in yourself. Make one promise about how you will be kinder to yourself in future.</p>

She squeezes me and speaks with a wobble in her voice, "And it's not worth it Addie. No one is worth feeling that way for. You've got to find people that accept the real you.' Pages 165–166

<p>20.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why do you think Addie is feeling nervous before the meeting?</li> <li>• How does Addie connect autism to the women accused of being witches?</li> <li>• Why does Mr Macintosh look down at his feet during Addie's speech?</li> <li>• Do you agree that 'we need all kinds of difference in the world'?</li> <li>• What does Addie mean when she says 'we are more alike than we are different'?</li> <li>• How is Addie's autism 'a kind of spark'? What does she mean?</li> <li>• What is Audrey's gift to Addie? What makes them 'best friends'?</li> </ul>	<p>Write a poem or creative piece inspired by the story's title: A KIND OF SPARK. What is your kind of spark?</p>	<p>PSHE / ART = Create an outline or template of a spark or star and write down or draw your kind of spark – what makes you different? What is your superpower to celebrate?</p> <p>LITERACY = Research the author of A Kind of Spark, Elle McNicoll. What is her biography? Has she written any other books that you would like to read?</p>
<p>21.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is there to see the unveiling of the plaque?</li> <li>• Who paid for the completion of the plaque in full?</li> <li>• What do you think of the words on the plaque?</li> <li>• Why do you think Addie doesn't mind not getting any credit?</li> <li>• Why is Addie now 'proud' of Juniper? Why is it 'good'?</li> <li>• What are Audrey and Addie dressing up as for Halloween and why?</li> <li>• Which messages are you left with at the end of the story?</li> </ul>	<p>Write down a list of your feelings at the end of the story. Are you happy with the ending – why or why not?</p>	<p>ART = Design the plaque from the text and take it home to remind you about Addie's story in future.</p> <p>LITERACY / PSHE = Consider the ways you have been inspired by reading this story and by Addie herself. Create a sheet of star templates; inside each one, write how you've been inspired by reading A Kind of Spark.</p>

I will not let people use my difference, as a stick to beat me with. Pages 175–176