

INTRODUCTION

And here, all alone on the million billion miles of midnight is one solitary moving speck. A fragile parcel, filled with sleeping people and their dreams. A ship.

Astra's family are all snoring in their sleeping pods aboard their spaceship, but Astra is WIDE AWAKE. With her robot friend, Pilbeam, she goes off exploring and finds that the ship is in deep trouble. It's been knocked off course and invaded by a gang of Poglites, an alien salvage crew searching for spoonage (they just LOVE collecting spoons)!

But there is something far more sinister lurking in the canteen . . . Sure, they're cakes; but no one would describe them as sweet.

WHAT READERS ARE SAYING ABOUT THE BOOK

“ *Cakes in Space* is the most fun book I've read recently, completely mad and zany. It all works, though, and any younger readers will love the adventure that awaits them. ”

“ With a host of aliens and robots (our favourite is the Bedbot) to entertain and delight this is a great story, and actually it's great that it has a feisty female heroine who I think will appeal to girls and boys alike. The action comes thick and fast and there are plenty of fantastically nonsensical twists and turns to the plot. ”

READING CAKES IN SPACE

Cakes in Space is a great read-alone book for children aged 7+ and is also lovely to share as a bed-time read or with a class or children's reading group.

Here are discussion ideas and activities for groups and for individual enjoyment.





ABOUT PHILIP REEVE

Philip Reeve was born and raised in Brighton, where he wrote his first story at the tender age of five about a spaceman called Spike and his dog Spook. He is a talented illustrator and writer, and he has illustrated several titles in the *Horrible Histories* series.

Philip is best known for his multi award-winning *Mortal Engines* quartet, which won the Nestlé Children's Book Prize, the Blue Peter Book Award, and the Guardian Children's Book Award. Philip has also won the prestigious CILIP Carnegie Medal with *Here Lies Arthur*. His much-anticipated next book, *Railhead*, will publish in October 2015.

Philip studied an Art Foundation Course at Brighton, followed by a diploma at Cambridgeshire College of Arts and Technology. Three years as an art student having rendered him almost unemployable, he returned to Brighton where he worked in an independent bookshop while pursuing non-paying sidelines as writer/producer/director of low budget film and comedy projects.

Forced by lack of funds to track down some cartooning work, Philip finally entered the wonderful world of freelance illustration where he remained for several years, before he turned to writing novels. Philip escaped to the country in 1998, and now lives in Dartmoor with his wife Sarah and his son Sam.

You can visit Philip's website and blog at www.philip-reeve.com

ABOUT SARAH MCINTYRE

Sarah McIntyre is a British-American writer and illustrator of children's books and comics. She grew up in Seattle in the United States and studied Russian language and literature at university. She thought she wanted to be a journalist, and worked for a year at a newspaper in Moscow. One of her articles caused a huge scandal, and she ran off with a British diplomat named Stuart, who married her and took her back to London with him. She thinks he probably wasn't a spy, but she is not entirely sure.

She tried professional illustrating for a bit and found it was VERY hard work, so she applied for a job as a ship's rigger on the *Cutty Sark*, intending to run away to sea. The ship hired her to work as its illustrator, so she kept drawing pictures, and she also ran an art gallery with some friends for six years. At last she decided that making books was what she really wanted to do, studied Illustration at Camberwell College of the Arts and graduated in 2007.

The books she's both written and drawn include *There's a Shark in the Bath* and *Dinosaur Police*, and her comic book *Vern and Lettuce* won the Leeds Graphic Novel Award. She co-wrote and co-illustrated *Jampires* with David O'Connell and has illustrated picture books for other writers, including *Morris the Mankiest Monster* with Giles Andreae, *You Can't Scare a Princess!* with Gillian Rogerson, and *When Titus Took the Train* with Anne Cottringer.

Sarah loves blogging and tries to post on her own blog every day. She shares a studio with two friends in an old police station in Deptford, south London (complete with jail cells!).

You can visit Sarah's website and blog at <http://www.jabberworks.co.uk>





CAKES IN SPACE SCRAMBLED!

Can you unscramble these words to find characters—human and otherwise!—from *Cakes in Space*?

RASTA

TOBBED

BIPLAME

GETSPOIL

ANNIDOVUM

REAL NORM HORSES

TOMMHAM

MONTROON

CUT METAL IKEA

LOOPLED



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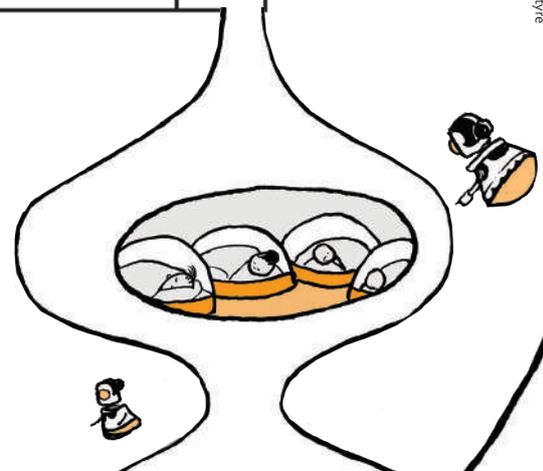
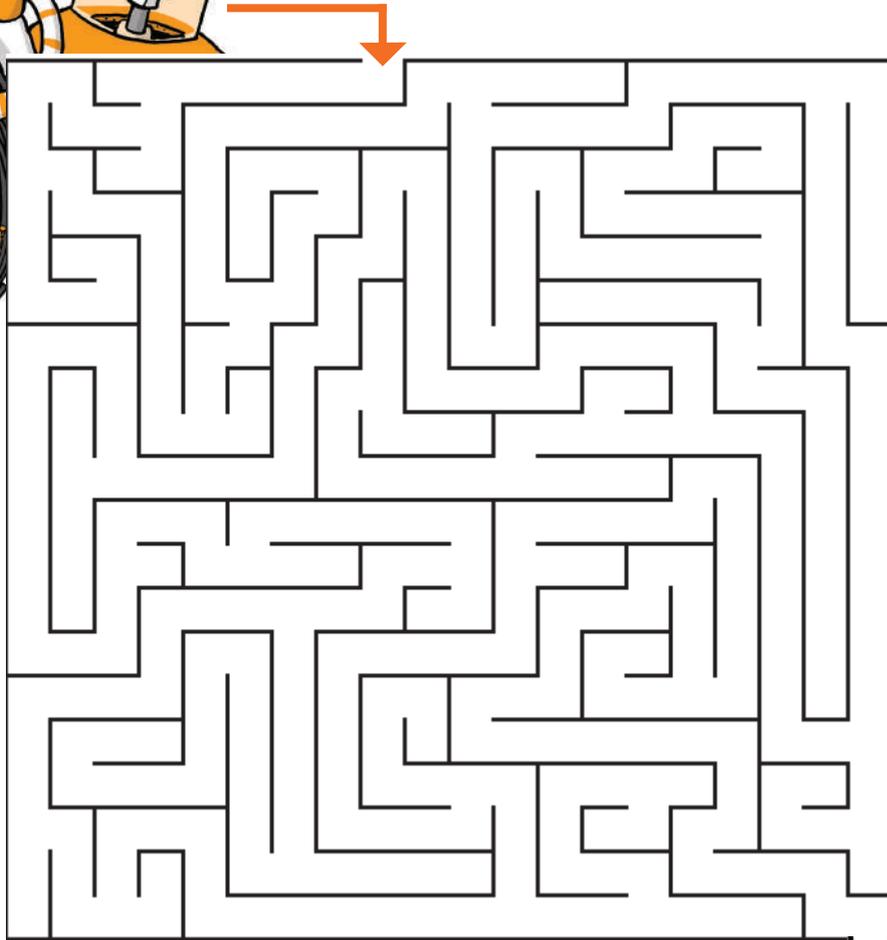
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INSIDE THE SPACESHIP

...she screamed as she was bounced and bundled on alone through the maze of corridors... (p98)

After their adventures with the cakes and the Poglites, Astra and the Nameless Horror make their way back to the sleeping pods through the rooms and corridors of the spaceship. Can you find the route they need to take?





DANGEROUS CAKES!

'Killer cupcakes! Ferocious Florentines! Ravenous Rice Krispie slices! They'll eat you alive!' (p119)

Here are some more cakes—turn them into scary bakes by adding fearsome adjectives to their names!

Muffins!



Swiss Rolls!

Meringues!



Tarts!

Brownies!

Croissants!

Jammy Dodgers!



Birthday Cake!

Hot Cross Buns!



DESIGN YOUR OWN ULTIMATE CAKE

Have a look at cake recipes in books and on the internet to get some ideas.

What cakes do you like best? Ones with lots of icing? Something creamy or crispy? Marshmallow, meringue or melon? Or all your favourite things in one cake! You can design your cake using the plan below.

Make a list of all the things you'd like in (or on!) your cake e.g. chocolate icing; fruit filling

Work out all the ingredients you'll need and make a list of these e.g. chocolate, flour, eggs

Write the recipe for your cake. What do you mix together, in what order? What needs baking? Any tips for icing it?

Draw a picture of the cake—with notes to show what's on each part of it





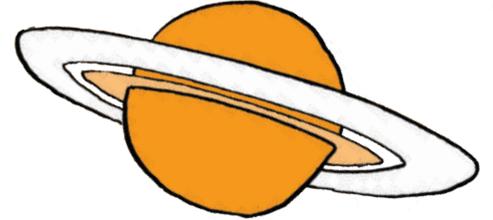
NOVA MUNDI – A NEW WORLD

She was excited to be going to Nova Mundi. She had seen videos and pictures of it. She and Mum and Dad and Alf were going to live in a big house there, between the wide green ocean and the fern forests, with a garden of blue grass. (p11)

Imagine you are going to live in a new world on another planet.

What will your world be like? Think about the climate, the landscape and the plants and trees.

Draw a picture of your new house and garden, set in the landscape of your new world.

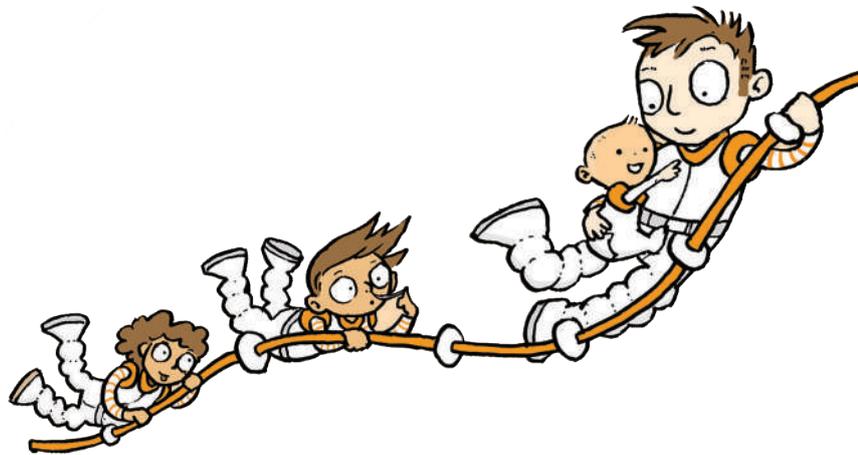




CAKES IN SPACE QUIZ

See what you remember from the story!—choose a, b, or c, for each question.

1. **What is the name of the world where Astra and her family are going to live?**
 - a. Nova Mundi
 - b. Rosamundi
 - c. Nova Scotia
2. **How long will it take them to get there?**
 - a. 5 minutes
 - b. 10 years
 - c. 199 years
3. **Where do people sleep in the spaceship?**
 - a. In rows of bunk beds
 - b. In pods
 - c. On special reclining seats
4. **What is Pilbeam?**
 - a. A special nightlight
 - b. A robot
 - c. An alien language
5. **What does the Nameless Horror look like?**
 - a. It has tentacles like wet black ropes
 - b. It is a cloud of thick black dust
 - c. It is a massive black jelly
6. **What do the Poglites do?**
 - a. Make furniture for space ships
 - b. Salvage useful things from deserted space ships
 - c. Make new space ships
7. **What do the Poglites collect as treasure?**
 - a. Egg cups
 - b. Teapots
 - c. Spoons
8. **What's the name of the special eating utensil which Astra uses to threaten the attacking cakes?**
 - a. A spife
 - b. A spork
 - c. A knoon





DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITY IDEAS FOR TEACHERS AND READING GROUP LEADERS

TALKING ABOUT THE BOOK

Get everyone to share their first responses to this book. This could be with everyone together—or discussion in pairs or small groups, before sharing key feelings and questions.

Ask lots of open questions to get people talking:

- What did you like best in this book?
- What do you remember most?
- What didn't you like?

Then talk about the story in more detail—e.g:

- Was this book what you expected?
- Did you read it straight through, or did it take a while?
- What age person do you think would like this book best? Why?
- What did you think of the characters? – the people and the robots! Who is your favourite? Why?
- Astra's request for 'the Ultimate Cake' has scary results! What lesson do we learn from this?!
- What did you think of the way everything turned out? Had you worked out what might happen? How?



PICTURES AND WORDS TOGETHER

Philip Reeve and Sarah McIntyre are joint authors of *Cakes in Space*: writer and artist partner together to tell the story through words and pictures. The text tells you more about the pictures, the pictures tell you more about the text, and the combination of the two gives you the whole story.

Talk about how the book works for you—do you focus more on the words or the pictures, or both together?

Have a look at these pages in the book and talk about the effects produced by the combination of words and pictures:

- The first and second pages—black, with the small white shuttle and the stars.
- P20 – with the shuttle and the space ship
- P62 – a cake with teeth!

What if you only had text? Or just had pictures? Would this work? Do pictures stop you imagining things, or help you to imagine them more?

Talk about how some of us have more 'visual' minds and respond better to pictures, and express ourselves by drawing things, while for other people words are what we especially need to make things meaningful for us.



DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITY IDEAS FOR TEACHERS AND READING GROUP LEADERS

ADDING PICTURES TO WORDS

Here's a passage from **Cakes in Space**. The words already give you a picture—but now create your own illustrations to work with it. Be as inventive as you like—you could set out the text differently, instead of it being a single block; or your pictures could go around the words e.g. p160, or within the text e.g. p193.

You could also highlight words and make them do the work of pictures (p125).

It was nothing like Astra's ship. It was a rusty, musty, dusty place, full of big plastic bins, where the things that had been sucked from other ships had been stored. Things that might have been cobwebs billowed from the battered ducting. Things that might have been sweet-wrappers drifted to and fro. It looked as if these aliens had never heard of tidying up.

MAKING PICTURES WITH WORDS

Pens and cameras and cuddly toys went tumbling through the cabin, and the shuttle crew flew after them, graceful as swimmers in clear water, catching the lost things... (p15)

...a sort of dining area, where clean white surfaces shone coldly in the dim light, like icebergs on an Arctic night. (p35)

It was the soft whoosh of a door opening, and it was as chilling as someone whispering in your ear on a dark night when you think you're all alone. (p74)

The highlighted phrases are all **similes**—where you make a comparison, often using the words 'like' or 'as', to build up your description of something.

Have a go at creating your own similes for the sentences below:

Astra thought the sleeping pod was like
The cakes snapped their teeth at Astra like
The Nameless Horror was like a slithering around the spaceship
The Ultimate Cake shimmered in the light like a
When Astra saw the cakes fly away she felt as as
With all their lovely spoonage the Poglites looked like



DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITY IDEAS FOR TEACHERS AND READING GROUP LEADERS

MAKING UP WORDS

'If you try and make trouble, Ploodle here will zap you with her Arkle-spifficator!' (p108)

The aliens flapped their tentacles and eye-stalks and floobed and plooged like three blocked gutters gurgling (p109)

What do you think an Arkle-Spifficator is?

And what could floobing and plooging be?! Make up your own translations for these words—and then have a go at making up some new words for these actions:

- Enjoying a creamy gooey sticky cake
- Looking in six directions at once with eyes on stalks
- Wrapping your tentacles round something
- Moving through space where there is no gravity

Think of some more 'space' and 'alien' actions, and make up even more words!



ASLEEP FOR NEARLY 200 YEARS

The distances in space are truly mind-boggling! A space ship going at 80 miles an hour would take 124 days to get to the moon; and, just as in **Cakes in Space**, it would take more than a lifetime to reach even the nearest stars.

In real life the Voyager 1 Space Station, launched in 1977, is now 11 billion miles from earth.

Light travels 5,800,000,000,000 miles a year—and so to reach the galaxy Andromeda, which is 2 million light years away, it would take you 2 million years to get there, if you travelled at the speed of light.

It takes Astra and her family 199 years to get to Nova Mundi. It seems almost impossible to imagine how you would survive this! As you see in the story they travel in special sleeping pods, fast asleep and their bodies cooled down so that they don't age.

Talk about how you would feel about this.

Compare it to hibernation, the deep sleep that allows animals to survive winter extremes.

And find out something about cryonics, which is similar to what Astra and her family used. It's about keeping the bodies of animals or humans at a low temperature, in the hope that they can be revived at a future time.

Can you think of any stories or films where people sleep for a long time? E.g. the Sleeping Beauty, Rip Van Winkle

Have a go at writing your own story about this:

- Imagine that you fell asleep tonight and didn't wake up for 200 years.

Where might you be when you wake up? What is the world around you like? And the people? Is everything very different? Or are some things still the same? What do you do?

- Or you could imagine that you are someone from Victorian times who has been asleep for more than 100 years and wakes up to find themselves in the present day. What will they think of our present-day world?



DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITY IDEAS FOR TEACHERS AND READING GROUP LEADERS

ALIENS

'What are little green men?' asked Astra. 'Aliens.' 'Oh,' said Astra, losing interest, because everyone knows there aren't any aliens. (p25)

What do you think?

'Alien' can mean 'stranger'— 'someone you don't know yet.'

The word 'alien' comes from the Latin word 'alius' meaning 'other'—and so it can mean someone or something 'other' or 'different'; or from another place.

Talk about all the different ways we use the word 'alien' – for example:

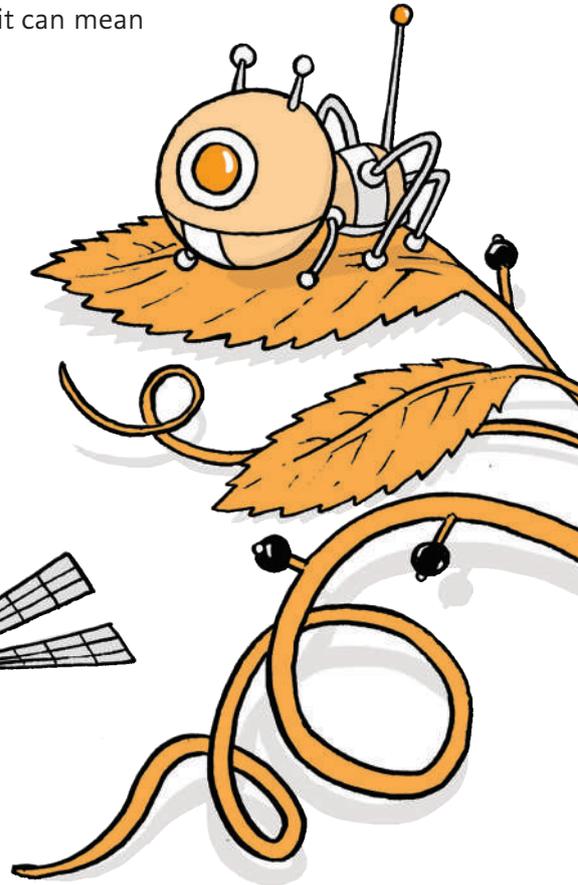
- From another planet
- Strange – maybe with a sinister element
- From another country

Which creatures turn out to be aliens in *Cakes in Space*?

What do they look like?

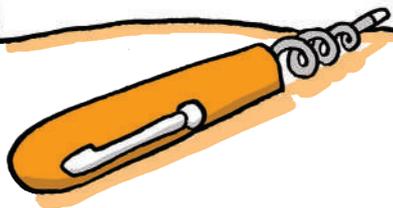
What's their main occupation?

And what do they specially like?!



Have a look at this Chatterbooks pack 'Alien Invasion' for more stories about aliens

<http://readinggroups.org/resources/693>





DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITY IDEAS FOR TEACHERS AND READING GROUP LEADERS

MORE READING

MORE BOOKS BY PHILIP REEVE AND SARAH MCINTYRE

Philip Reeve / Sarah McIntyre	<i>Oliver and the Seawigs</i>	OUP	9780192734884
Sarah McIntyre	<i>Jampires</i>	David Fickling	9781910200124
	<i>There's a Shark in the Bath</i>	Scholastic	9781407121918
	<i>Dinosaur Police</i>	Scholastic	9781407143286
Philip Reeve	<i>Goblins</i>	Marion Lloyd	9781407115276
	<i>Here Lies Arthur</i>	Marion Lloyd	9781407132754
	<i>Mortal Engines</i>	Marion Lloyd	9781407131276



MORE SPACE ADVENTURES

Ros Asquith	<i>Letters from an Alien Schoolboy</i>	Piccadilly	9781848120945
Neil Gaiman	<i>Fortunately the Milk</i>	Bloomsberry	9781408841792
Cas Lester	<i>Harvey Drew and the Bin Men from Outer Space</i>	Hot Key	9781471402234
Jamie Thomson	<i>The Wrong Side of the Galaxy</i>	Orchard	9781408330265



ANSWERS

CAKES IN SPACE SCRAMBLED!

ASTRA

BEDBOT

PILBEAM

POGLITES

NOVA MUNDI

NAMELESS HORROR

MAMMOTH

NOM-O-TRON

ULTIMATE CAKE

PLOODLE

QUIZ

1 **a**

2 **c**

3 **b**

4 **b**

5 **a**

6 **b**

7 **c**

8 **b**

