

KS3 The Black Flamingo Knowledge Organiser – SPRING 2

Events

Leventis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Michael, Mum, Anna and Daisy go on holiday to Cyprus. Michael wishes Uncle B was his dad – not for the first time! Michael becomes Michalis in Greek – identity altering by culture Parental relationships – short and dismissive. (Michael, Mum and Grandma), Bob Marley label: and touching his hair - fun at first but a form of casual racism. Leventis: means Handsome man, beautiful boy and brave. Irony as Michael feels that he is none of these things despite the Greek girl on the beach calling him it. Mum buys Michael an Attitude magazine – he feels this is her giving her blessing. Grandpa shows acceptance: What does it matter that the flamingo is black, the other flamingos don't care. Michael thinks this is Grampa saying he loves him. Michael dreams that he and Kieran are a pair of black flamingos together.
Show business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Michael goes to watch Moonlight, a film that could be his life! Kieran is at the film, his arm around a girl. Daisy thinks its cool he came to see it. Mum takes him to Kinky Boots: the story of a black drag queen. Daisy asks if he will ever do drag – Michael says he doesn't think so. Possibility of a Jamaica at Christmas- fears over different rules. Drama class: The mean girls apologising, getting to kiss Rowan and an A grade! Michael & Daisy fall out after a night out at the gay club, Daisy was homophobic.
University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the way to Uni Uncle B is pulled over by the Police for driving a BMW. Michael become Mike at university and checks out several clubs at fresher's week. Mike goes to various clubs and doesn't fit in to any until the drag society.
Drag	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mike meets the Drag society – the are diverse and preparing for a performance. Mike declares his drag identity as The Black Flamingo on black pages. Mike meets Lennie the only other black man on his course: They bond over racial bias', Locs and ideas about white entitlement. He gives Mike a nickname: Mikey. Mike performs at Open Mic night. He meets Jack and loses his virginity. Daisy calls & explains she is gay and the night at the club it was her denial talking. On a night out Lennie calls Mike and Sienna on their dating internalised racism. Mike defines who the Black Flamingo is and starts to define his true self. Mike dances with Kieran in a club in London the night before his performance. Mike invites his friends to watch the performance and Jack is back at Uni.
Glitterball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mike performs his act: it is a summary of his journey and addresses the key issues of gender, race, acceptance, belonging and identity. After the show Jack tells Mike that Simon wasn't truthful, Jack is bi-sexual – this is Mike's fantasy conversation, the real conversation was not so accepting.
Just be a Man	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mike faces Jack's judgement for being 'extra' gay. They shout at one another. Mike fights (verbally) for his own identity – for the first time he is truly confident in who he is and what he is all about.
Epilogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poem: How to come out as gay. An empowering poem about self-awareness and making decisions that are right for you. Atta presents lots of contrasting ideas to exaggerate the idea of choice: he wants his last message to be 'You do you, your way!' Atta ends the book with a single image of a Black Flamingo. Michael is now able to stand out and stand independently from other's thoughts and prejudices. He has become a proud and confident person.

Context and cultural reference.

Context

There are many complex and, changing contextual matters in this novel. If you want to know more please ask your teachers and we can point you in the right direction for some further reading and support you in any concerns you may have surrounding any of these issues.

- Tom Daley:** is an inspirational olympic diver who is openly gay. He has been quoted in the press to say "I hope that any young LGBT person out there can see that no matter how alone you feel right now, you are not alone. You can achieve anything."
- Casual Racism:** Casual racism is one form of racism. It refers to conduct involving negative stereotypes or prejudices about people based on race, colour or ethnicity. Examples include jokes, off-handed comments, and exclusion of people from social situations based on race. Some associate racism with a belief in racial superiority or deliberate acts of discrimination. Casual racism concerns not so much a belief in the superiority of races but negative prejudice or stereotypes concerning race. Unlike overt and intentional acts of racism, casual racism isn't often intended to cause offence or harm. However, therefore it is so important to talk about it and rid from society, whilst casual racism is excused racism remains in our society.
- Internalized racism** is a form of internalized oppression," Internalized racism involves both "conscious and unconscious acceptance of a racial hierarchy in which whites are consistently ranked above people of colour including, but not limited to, belief in negative stereotypes, adaptations to white cultural standards, and thinking that supports the status quo (for example denying that racism exists).
- Brighton:** The gay capital of Britain.
- Attitude** is a British gay lifestyle magazine
- Moonlight (film 2016):** This multi award winning film presents three stages in the life of the main character: his childhood, adolescence, and early adult life. It explores the difficulties he faces with his sexuality and identity, including the physical and emotional abuse he endures growing up. It became the first LGBTQ film, the first film with an all-black cast and the second lowest-grossing film domestically.
- Kinky Boots:** a musical in the West End that is based on the story of a shoemaker who is about to go out of business and meets a drag queen that changes the focus of his business from traditional men's shoes to drag queen footwear, heels strong enough to support a man's body. It is a show about acceptance and how changing your mind about someone can change the world.
- Homosexuality in Jamaica:** Homosexual acts are illegal in Jamaica, levying sentences of up to 10 years of imprisonment with hard labour for those convicted under Article 76 of the Offences Against the Person Act. The law is predominantly enforced against homosexual men.
- Gil Scott- Heron:** was an American soul and jazz poet] musician, and author, known primarily for his work as a spoken-word performer in the 1970s and 1980s. As well as lyrical content concerning social and political issues of the time. His own term for himself was "bluesologist", which he defined as "a scientist who is concerned with the origin of the blues". His poem "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised", delivered over a jazz-soul beat, is considered a major influence on hip hop music.
- DRAG:** stands for 'Dressed Resembling A Girl. This is the original definition and goes back a long way in history. But as with all things DRAG has developed and there are lots of different types of DRAG that allow people to express their true, genuine selves.

Themes

The power of a name.	Previous alterations to names helped Michael to become more of the person he wanted to be, he was disconnected from his father's family; the Browns and had a fascination with the idea of flight and freedom. This led to his name change to Angeli (Angel) his mother's family name. In Cyprus he becomes Michalis, a name change forced upon him. At university he chooses to be referred to as Mike. Later he choses a name and identity for himself: The Black Flamingo!
Quote	'My Grandparents call me Michalis, (...) a more Greek way to say Michael'. 'Mike feels right for this new chapter'

Features of form (Prose, Poetry & the Spoken Word).

1. Allegory	A story which can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning, typically a moral or political one.
2. Tone	How the narrator or a character speaks; can also be set through description.
3. Genre	A genre (type of story) a Fairy-tale – a story of morality and finding one's true self.
4. First Person narrator	When the story is being told by the character it is happening to, In this case Michael.

Casual Racism	Casual racism is defined in the context section and is present throughout the novel and often in the form of internalised racism: Daisy not dating black guys despite her Jamaican heritage and Kieran referring to himself as a 'brother'. People calling Michael 'Bob Marley' is a form of casual racism.	5. Dramatic Irony	Where the reader knows something that a character(s) is not aware of.			
	Quote 'Stranger's shout "Bob Marley!" The first few times I laugh and wave but after a while I just roll my eyes' 'ta mavra' mum doesn't want to translate it but I insist. It means 'the black ones' but not in a bad way' (Mum on the aunt's use of the phrase).	6. Protagonist	The leading character in a novel.			
The Black Flamingo	The black flamingo is not just the title but symbolic of how Michael feels in the world and how he wants to be. He feels separate from the world like the black flamingo from his flock, he is different and feels this from his interactions with others. He dreams of being a black flamingo with Kieran, the black flamingo is a metaphor to Michael. He is searching for his place in life, searching for other like him, other black flamingos.	7. Metaphor	Figurative language where you portray a person, place, thing, or an action as being something else.			
		Quote 'But my eye is drawn to that one black body in the flamboyance'. 'We are a pair of black flamingos (...) we're just two of many black flamingos'	8. Sensory Language	Language that connects to the five senses to create an image or description.		
LGBTQ+ culture	As with all cultures within society, the LGBTQ+ culture has its own identity, icons and ideals. Many of these are woven into our text by Atta. Michael picking Brighton (the gay capital of the UK) as his university city and his place of continued self-discovery. Audrey Hepburn is admired in the LGBTQ+ community for her beauty, elegance. Michael has her poster for this very reason.	9. Tension	A building of extreme emotion / anticipation where the outcome is uncertain.			
		Quote Brighton, the gay capital of the UK' (Poem – reasons to go to university). 'I love her long black gloves and her long black dress' (Audrey)	10. Cliff-hanger	A dramatic and exciting ending to an episode of a serial, leaving the audience in suspense.		
Transgender	Transgender is used to describe any person who has a gender identity that is different from the gender that they were assigned at birth. Different societies have different ideas about how people should behave, look or dress depending on their bodies. These ideas and expectations are what makes up the idea of 'gender'. There are many gender identities. Gender identity is defined as the feelings and convictions you have about your gender.	11. Symbolism	The use of symbols to represent ideas or qualities.			
		Quote 'I wish people would understand, some men have vaginas.' 'He wishes his trans identity wasn't questioned with regards to his body'	12. Personification	Attributing a human characteristic to something non-human.		
Becoming & belonging.	Throughout the chapter titled 'Drag' Mike/Mikey/The Black Flamingo develops his identity and becomes the person he always dreamed he would be someone free and fabulous. Atta expresses the idea of being yourself and the importance of getting to know your true self.	13. Simile	A figure of speech involving the comparison of one thing with another thing of a different kind 'like/as'			
		Quote 'I feel closer to becoming' He is me, who I have been, who I am, who I hope to become. Someone fabulous, wild and strong. With or without a costume on'. 'I'm my own man' 'I don't perform for you or anyone else. What I wear is for me. What I perform is for me. What I write is for me. I'm my own man.'	14. Epilogue	a section or speech at the end of a book or play that serves as a comment on or a conclusion to what has happened.		
Characters:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Michael Friend (Daisy) Mum & Sister Uncle & Granny B Kieran Rowan The mean girls Lennie (Uni) Jack. Mzz Behaviour Sienna Kim Katy 	Key Vocabulary & Definitions.	Weekly Spellings:	SPRING 2 – Week 7 – w/c 26/2/2024 No spellings due to it being exam week Week 8 w/c 4/3/2024 Acceptance Significant Conscious Deficient Disingenuous Dysfunctional Eponymous Facetious Fallacious Fascinate	Week 9 – w/c 11/3/2024 Participation Perseverance Phenomena Philosophy Necessarily Omniscient Panacea Persuasion Principle Psychology Week 10 – w/c 18/3/2024 Phenomenon Poignancy Resurgence Prerogative Prodigious Simultaneous Pseudonym Sincerely Substantial Unanimous	Week 11 – w/c 25/3/2024 Reclusive Temporarily Transference Vicious Vigorously Variant Venerate Vilification Xenophobic Zealot
			Rite of passage: a ceremony or event marking an important stage in someone's life especially birth, the transition from childhood to adulthood, marriage, and death Fallacious: an adjective meaning based on a mistaken belief. Homophobia: a noun to show a dislike of or prejudice against gay people. Aesthetics: designed to give pleasure through beauty. Think about Atta's visual design in this book. Perspective: a particular attitude towards or way of regarding something; a point of view. A true understanding of the relative importance of things; a sense of proportion. Transgender: An adjective denoting or relating to a person whose sense of personal identity and gender does not correspond with their birth sex. Constructed: To build and form (an idea or theory) by bringing together various conceptual elements. Tension: the state of being stretched tight including emotional and mental strain. Fantasy: The activity of imagining impossible or improbable things. Prejudice: preconceived opinion that is not based on reason or actual experience Poetic methods: Methods, techniques, devices or features of poetry that are used by poets to create meaning. National identities: a sense of a nation as a cohesive whole, as represented by distinctive traditions, culture, and language. Influence: the capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behaviour of someone or something, or the effect itself.			