

## LESSON PLAN

### Activity 1:

#### Michael Morpurgo

##### **Biography**

Michael Morpurgo is the author of many books for children, five of which have been made into films. Born in St Albans, Hertfordshire, in 1943, he was evacuated to Cumberland during the last years of the war, then returned to London, moving later to Essex. After a brief and unsuccessful time in the army, he took up teaching and started to write. He left teaching after ten years in order to set up 'Farms for City Children' with his wife. They have three farms in Devon, Wales and Gloucestershire, open to inner city school children who come to stay and work with the animals. He is also a father and grandfather, so children have always played an important part in his life.



Morpurgo has a gift for magical storytelling, and his books also often tackle social issues. *The Butterfly Lion* (1996) draws on the author's own unhappy experiences at boarding school, and is the story of a young boy who rescues an orphaned lion cub from the African bush. It won the 1996 Nestlé Smarties Book Prize (Gold Award). *Kensuke's Kingdom* (1999) tells the tale of a boy who survives on an island after falling from his parents' yacht and learns how to survive with the help of the mysterious Kensuke. This book won the Children's Book Award in 2000. *Private Peaceful* (2003) is set during the first world war and telling the story of two brothers, Charlie and Tommo. Morpurgo firmly believes that 'literature comes before literacy' and wants all children '... to discover and rediscover the secret pleasure that is reading, and to begin to find their voice in their own writing ...'

**Now answer the following questions:**

- 1) Does Morpurgo write books for adults?
- 2) How many of Morpurgo's books have been made into films?
- 3) When and where was he born?
- 4) How many years did he teach?
- 5) What is "Farms for city children"?
- 6) When was "The butterfly Lion" written?