



# RIDA & MADIYA



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**BOOK BAND: DARK RED**

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## **BEFORE YOU START**

Prepare a group **journal** to help you record group discussions and responses to the text as you work through the book.

# SESSION 1: CHAPTER ONE – SISTER BLISTER



## Focus: Empathising and Scanning

Before you begin reading the text, share the chapter titles with the group. They don't necessarily have to be in order. Discuss any unfamiliar vocabulary and their potential meaning in this context. Ask the children what they can infer about the text, and the characters in it, from these chapter titles. Invite the children to consider which one of the chapter titles would match them best if they were a character in this story.

Then, ask the children to reflect on some of the things that makes them different from their siblings or their friends.

- How do the differences affect your relationships?
- Does it make you closer or does it make you disagree, or something else?

Ask the children to share their thoughts with the group, and then make a list of the top three things friends and siblings seem to disagree on.

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Share the first sentence of the book with the children. Ask them whether they have heard the phrase 'chalk and cheese' before.

- What does it imply about Rida and Madi?
- Why are chalk and cheese seen as opposites?
- Can you think of two other opposing items that could fit in this sentence? Note down the examples in the group **journal**.

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Read to the end of page 7, '...clutch tightly.'. Pause and think about Rida's revelation of how she feels about privacy.

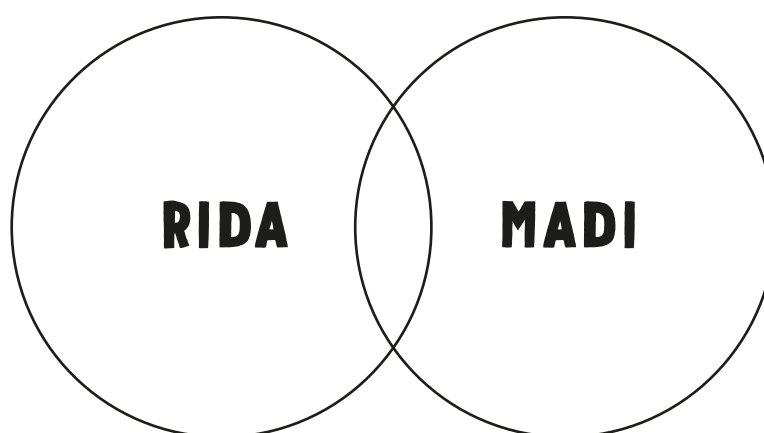
- Have you ever felt like this, whether that's with a parent, sibling or friend?
- Why is it important to have privacy and time to yourself?

Discuss children's different experiences of privacy, and whether they feel that they have a space that is private in their lives.

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Read to the end of Chapter One. We have met three characters in this chapter: Rida, Madi and Abu. Discuss the characters' relationships within their blended family, creating a list of things that we know about them and a list of questions the children may have. Keep these observations and questions in the group **journal**, to revisit over the course of the sessions.

Draw a **Venn diagram** on the whiteboard or in the group **journal**. Write in each circle what you know about the characters' appearance and personality. Where the circles overlap, write down anything the characters have in common. Encourage the children to scan back through the chapter and find evidence to support their ideas about their similarities and differences.



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End the session by asking the children to reflect on why they think the chapter was called 'Sister Blister'. Invite the children's predictions for what will happen next. Encourage them to draw on their knowledge of the story so far, but also their personal and real-world experiences and what they know of other stories that begin in similar ways.

# SESSION 2: CHAPTERS TWO AND THREE – SISTER GLISTER AND SISTER ENLISTER



## Focus: Predicting and Questioning

Begin the session by reminding the children of the **Venn diagram** activity completed yesterday. Share the titles of the next two chapters.

- What do these make you feel or think about? Why?
- What do the words *glister* and *enlister* imply about the way the sisters' relationship might evolve?

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Read from the beginning of Chapter Two to near the bottom of page 23, 'Where most people saw dusty, wooden bookcases, Rida saw worlds.'. Pause over this line and discuss the following questions.

- Do you feel the same way about books and reading? Why / why not?
- Does Rida remind you of any characters you have read about in other books, or anyone else in your life?
- Why might Rida want a world in which to escape?

The children might be inspired to talk about their favourite imaginary world – from a story, film or video game – and write a short story about what would happen if they one day woke up in that world. This could be followed by a discussion about what the children find comforting or fascinating about the world they have chosen.

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Read on to part way through page 25 '...she had cried herself to sleep.'.

- Why do you think fewer people are going to local libraries?
- Do you have a library near you or know where your local library is?
- Are libraries important? Why / why not?

Continue reading to the middle of page 26 '...and she sincerely hoped that her efforts would be enough.'. Pause and ask the children to predict what kind of plan Rida might have made. Ask the children what they would do if they needed to save a building or local institution that they cared about. This might not be a library, but they might use their local park often, or have a local football club that they attend.

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Read to the end of Chapter Two.

- Are you surprised by Rida's actions? Why / why not?

Reflect with the children on a time when they felt protective over someone, whether that was their sibling, friend, cousin or anybody else.

- What happened to make you feel like that? How did you react?
- Why do we feel such strong feelings about particular people?

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Before starting Chapter Three, pause over the word *enlist*. Think back to when you discussed the meaning of the chapter titles in Session 1. Ask the children what they think Madi or Rida might do in this chapter.

Read up to the asterisk on page 41, '...to the car.'. Ask the children to think of questions to ask Madi about why she decided to entertain the crowd. Ask the children to reflect on what their parents or sibling might do if they did something like this.

- What might happen next?

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Read to the end of page 43, pausing over Rida's comment, '...maybe you need to learn to listen to people.'.

- How could Madi learn to listen to people?
- What advice could you give Madi to help her listen to people better?

Ask the children to write a quick **note of advice** to Madi with suggestions of how she could listen to others better.

Read to the end of the chapter and end the session by discussing how Rida might enlist Madi's help with saving the library.

# SESSION 3: CHAPTERS FOUR AND FIVE – SISTER PERSISTER AND SISTER DISASTER



## Focus: Re-reading and Clarifying

Before beginning Chapter Four, recap the events from the end of Chapter Three. Discuss how Rida might be feeling at the beginning of this next chapter, having enlisted Madi's help. Return to the **Venn diagram** and add anything more to it that you have learnt about both characters.

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Read up to near the bottom of page 48, '...Just forget it!'.

- How might Rida be feeling now, in comparison to how she was feeling at the beginning of the chapter? Why?
  - Remind the children of the title of the chapter, 'Sister Persister'. How is the chapter title relevant here?
  - Who do you think will 'persist' in this chapter? Will Rida persist in enlisting Madi's help? Or will Madi persist in being a bit of a nuisance?
  - Why will it be important?
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Read to the end of Chapter Four and pause. Discuss why Madi keeps ending up in trouble, when she thinks she is doing the right thing. Ask the children to pair up and assign each pair either Chapter Two or Chapter Three. Ask them to re-read the chapter and complete the table below for each of Madi's escapades that they come across.

What Madi does	Why Madi does it	How others react

Ask the children to reflect on any common themes that are emerging.

- Can you think of any advice for Madi to avoid getting in trouble?

Note that the next chapter is called 'Sister Disaster', and so things might get worse for her before they get better.

- What might this look like?
- How will the story events develop?

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Read Chapter Five up to the asterisk on page 61, '...leave the vehicle.''. Discuss what the children think Madi might get up to next. Re-read the chapter so far and look for clues that tell us Madi has not heeded the advice of others.

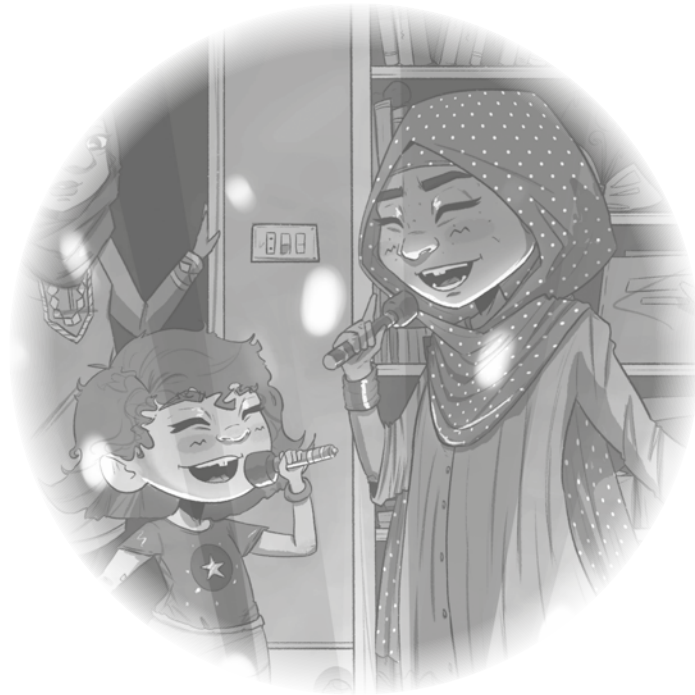
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Read to the end of Chapter Five.

- Are you surprised about how the chapter turned out, given it was entitled 'Sister Disaster'?
- What do you expect will happen next?

Return to the **Venn diagram** and invite the group to add anything more, in particular to the intersection now that the sisters are working together.

# SESSION 4: CHAPTER SIX AND CHAPTER SEVEN – SISTER TRICKSTER AND SISTER TWISTER



## Focus: Predicting and Empathising

Before reading the next chapter, ask the children to recap the story so far, encouraging them to try to summarise what they think is the key point or theme in the story.

Share the name of Chapter Six, 'Sister Trickster', with the group.

- Who do you think will be the trickster? What will they do?
- What kind of trick would Rida play on Madi? And what kind of trick would Madi play on Rida? Use your knowledge of these characters to support your decision.

Next, share the chapter opening illustration on page 66 with the children.

- What can you see?
- What does it tell you about the chapter?
- Look closely at the three characters' expressions in the picture. What might each of them be thinking and feeling?
- Look closely at Rida's expression. Is she pleased to see Madi on the stage?
- How might Rida now be feeling about Madi's involvement in saving the library?

You might ask the children to note down what they think each character might be thinking in this moment and create thought bubbles to add to the illustration.

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Read the first few lines of page 67, up to 'It was overcrowded.'. Pause over the word 'overcrowded' and ask the children whether they think it is a good or bad thing that lots of people are at the library. Then ask them how they think Rida feels about lots of people being in the library.

Read on to '...absolutely had to.'. Ask the children why they think Rida doesn't want Madi to be in the library. Pause for a moment and pose the following statement to the children: 'Rida loves the library, but does not want to share it'. Do the children agree or disagree with this statement? Rida values the library because it is her own quiet, private space, but for the library to survive lots of people need to value it and see its importance. Ask the children to consider how she may overcome this feeling, and who might help her, in particular in relation to Madi.

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Read on to the top of page 69, '...thought Rida.'

- What do you think about Abu's treatment of Madi?
- If you were Rida, how might you feel towards your sister if your parent didn't keep a promise?
- How might this feeling affect how Rida acts towards Madi moving forward?
- What would you do if you were Rida?

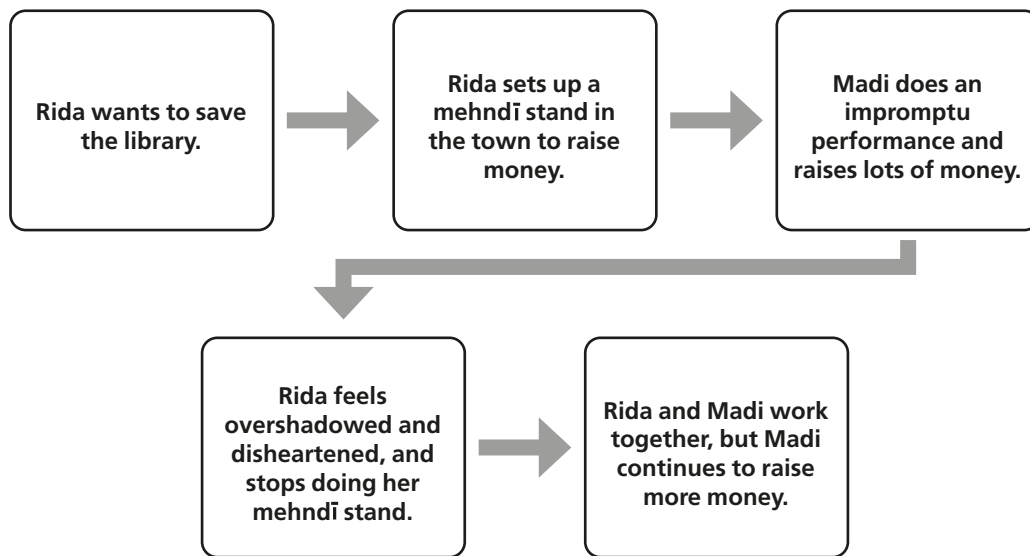
Read on further down the page, up to '...starting to fester.'. Explore what the word *fester* means in this context, and in relation to other familiar contexts. Ask the children how they think these festering feelings might affect how Rida behaves.

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Read to the bottom of page 70, '...I want to give up.'.

- Do you think Rida should give up on the project?
- Why do you think Rida wants to give up?
- Is she right to feel so disheartened?

As a group, pause and create a **story map** to show how Rida has ended up feeling this way. For example:



Ask the children to identify what they think is holding Rida back from joining in with Madi, and what would happen if she was able to overcome this. Predict two possible outcomes for the next box in the **story map**: one where Rida gives up on her efforts to save the library, and one where she does not.

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Read to the end of Chapter Six.

- Which sister do you think is the 'trickster'? Why?
- What has made Rida change her mind about Madi's performances?

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Read Chapter Seven straight through without stopping. Ask the children how they feel about Rida and Madi's relationship now. Make some quick predictions about what Rida's plan might be in the next chapter.



# SESSION 5: CHAPTER EIGHT AND CHAPTER NINE – SISTER ASSIST HER AND SISTER TONGUE-TWISTER



## Focus: Visualising and Scanning the Text

Read to the asterisk on page 85, '...saved their sisterhood.' Pause over the word 'sisterhood' and ask the children what they understand by this word. Write it in the middle of a page in the **journal**, and ask the children to think of, or scan through the text for, examples of 'sisterhood' between Madi and Rida. Re-read these examples together and ask the children to think of a time when they have felt a similar bond with a friend or family member and how this made them feel. Encourage them to share an example. Ask them what made it special or significant.

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Read to the end of Chapter Seven.

- Why do you think Rida feels more able to talk to Eitan?
  - What has changed about her character, and her personality, since organising the variety show?
  - Considering this development in Rida's character, how do you think Madi and Rida's performance will go?
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Before reading Chapter Nine, pause over the chapter title.

- What do you think the title 'Sister Tongue-twister' indicates about what might happen in this chapter?
- How might Rida and Madi be feeling before their performance?
- Imagine being in Rida's and then Madi's shoes. How do their feelings differ?

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Read the final chapter straight through without stopping. Return to the **Venn diagram** from Session 1 and reflect on how Rida and Madi's relationship has changed since the beginning of the story. Discuss how this might play out moving forward.

Ask the children to **role play** the final moment of the story, with Rida and Madi laughing together about the whoopee cushion. Discuss what the characters might say to each other as they leave the variety show.

The children could go on to write a 'thank you' letter to the local council, thanking them for supporting the re-modelling of the library. Encourage them to write **in role** as either Rida or Madi, and to talk about why local libraries are an important resource in a community.

Explore the children's responses to the book using the **four basic questions**.

- Tell me... was there anything you liked about this text?
- Was there anything that you particularly disliked... ?
- Was there anything that puzzled you?
- Were there any patterns... any connections that you noticed... ?



# IDEAS TO SUPPORT THE SESSIONS:

These are areas you could further develop depending on your professional judgement of the children's learning needs and their interests.

## Developing wider reading experiences:

Read and explore other stories featuring family relationships, such as:

- *My Big Mouth* by Steven Camden, illustrated by Chanté Timothy – Macmillan
- *Proud of Me* by Sarah Hagger-Holt – Usborne
- *Little Light* by Coral Rumble – Troika

## Vocabulary Building

- Make **word collections** based on the text. In particular, you might explore words that describe the characters. There is also the opportunity to explore meanings behind word play like 'sister blister' and formulaic phrases like 'chalk and cheese'. This could lead to a discussion around why authors use certain words rather than others to help them to create meaning for a reader and, in turn, how reading helps us to expand our vocabulary.

## Opportunities to revisit the text independently:

- Use **hot-seating** to explore the main characters further. One member of the group **role plays** a central character and is interviewed by the other children. This activity involves children closely examining a character's motivation and responses.
- Encourage the children to take the book home to read alongside a parent or carer and suggest that they use the 'Tips for grown ups' pages to support their discussions.

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These resources were created by Bloomsbury and The Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE). For more teaching resources, visit:

[www.bloomsburyguidedreading.com](http://www.bloomsburyguidedreading.com)

[www.clpe.org.uk](http://www.clpe.org.uk).

