The London Eye Mystery by Siobhan Dowd

Age 9-11

Reasons for selection and synopsis

When Ted and Kat watched their cousin Salim get on board the London Eye, he turned and waved before getting on. After half an hour it landed and everyone trooped off - but no Salim. Where could he have gone? How on earth could he have disappeared into thin air?

Since the police are having no luck finding him, Ted and Kat become sleuthing partners. Despite their prickly relationship, they overcome their differences to follow a trail of clues across London in a desperate bid to find their cousin. And ultimately it comes down to Ted, whose brain works in its own very unique way, to find the key to the mystery.

This is an unputdownable spine-tingling thriller!

Before reading…

Ask the children to look at the front cover. What do you think the book will be about? What things can you see on the front cover?
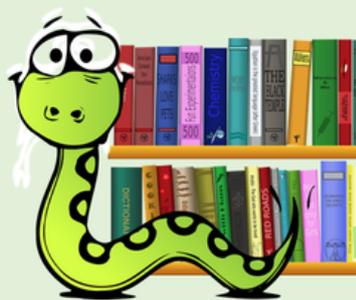
What sort of story will it be? Who might enjoy it?

Now read the blurb – were any of your predictions correct?

What sort of mysteries could occur on The London Eye?

Reading Vipers

Vocabulary
Infer
Predict
Explain
Retrieve
Sequence or Summarise

The following questions are designed as prompts only – allow the children to come up with their own questions and ideas. They will be much more engaged this way!

Chapter 1 and 2	
Vocabulary	Why do you think the author chose the phrase 'toy-town' to describe how London looks form above?
	Define 'cantilevered'.
	What does 'larger than life' mean?
	What is a meteorologist?
	Ted takes things very 'literally'. What does this mean?
Infer	Why would you be glad of the slow and smooth movement?
	Why shouldn't they have taken the free ticket?
	Why does Dad call Gloria 'Hurricane Gloria'?
	Why was Mum annoyed at Kat?
Predict	Predict where Salim went.
Explain	Find evidence that Ted is different from other boys his age.
Retrieve	What is Ted's favourite thing to do?
	How far can you see from the London Eye?
	What time did Salim go up the London Eye?
	What is Ted's Mum's job?
Summarise	Summarise the character of Ted in one word and explain your choice of word.

Chapter 3 and 4	
Vocabulary	What does it mean to 'make up'?
	Define 'entitled'.
	What is a rebel?
	What does 'vast' mean?
Infer	Why do you think Kat's letter might be more in depth?
	Why doesn't Ted want Salim to stay in his room?
	Why do you think Ted is so good at laying tables?
	Why does Dad cough?
	Salim hunches up his shoulders and smiles. Why do you think he does this?
Predict	Predict what will happen in the run up to getting on the London Eye.
Explain	Explain the differences between the two letters?
Retrieve	Why did Ted try and find the letter?
	What was the only bit of the letter both children remembered?
	What told Ted that he and Salim could be friends?
	What diet is Gloria on?
	What job does Salim intend to do?
	What does Salim call the London Eye?
Summarise	Summarise the arrival of Glo and Salim in less than thirty words.

Chapter 5 and 6	
Vocabulary	What's the difference between small talk and big talk?
	What does 'system' mean? What systems do you know?
Infer	Why do you think Salim likes big talk?
	Why do you think Ted's response to Salim asking about his syndrome is to say 'hrumm'?
	Why might Ted like the phrase 'talking up a storm'?
Predict	Predict what will happen in Chapter 6, before you read it.
Explain	Do you think Mr Shepherd sounds like a good teacher? Why?
	Do you think they should have taken the free ticket? Why?
Retrieve	Where did Salim sleep?
	Why does Ted like the weather so much?
	Why didn't Salim like his old school?
	What was Salim doing in the bathroom?
	Why did the mums groan at the line?
	Draw the man that offered the free ticket?
	How many people were in Salim's pod?
Summarise	Summarise Chapter 6 in less than twenty-five words.

Chapter 7 and 8	
Vocabulary	What do you think dishrag means in the context of Chapter 7? Which word shows that Salim's pod wasn't a second late? What does livid mean? Think of a word that shows this more than livid and less than livid. What is claustrophobia?
Infer	Why do you think Kat wants to know if Ted likes Salim? Why does a bad feeling slither up Ted's oesophagus? Why do you think Kat wants to lie? How can you tell Ted does not want to lie? Why do you think mum goes from puzzled to cross? Do you think Gloria is actually mad at Ted?
Predict	Predict what will happen when Mum and Aunt Gloria find out Salim is missing. Predict where Salim has gone.
Explain	How does the author create a sense of mystery in these chapters?
Retrieve	What does 'four o clock' mean? What do they say when Salim's pod reaches the highest point? Who came out of Salim's pod first? How does Ted suggest tracking down Salim? Why couldn't they ring Salim?
Summarise	Summarise what happens in these chapters in less than thirty words.

Chapter 9 and 10	
Vocabulary	What is a routine? What is a theory? What does it mean to have a 'love-hate' relationship? Define 'palaver'.
Infer	Why does Ted bang the wall? Why does Kat cry? Why does Kat slap Ted's hand?
Predict	Predict what the camera will have on it? Predict why the police are here.
Explain	Explain the effect of a cliffhanger at the end of Chapter 10.
Retrieve	What does Ted read? Which bird does Ted bring up and why? What was in Ted's pockets? How many pictures had Salim taken? Who is at the door?
Summarise	Summarise Ted's thoughts on Salim's disappearance, in the style of him, using no more than forty words.

Chapter 11 and 12	
Vocabulary	Define 'tracked'.
	What is a process of induction?
	Define 'fretting'. Why isn't Gloria happy with this word?
Infer	What would a hot and close atmosphere be like?
	Why does Faith make Ted leave for the personal questions?
	Why did Ted think it wasn't fair that the police would know more?
	Why do you think Kat cried even louder when dad put his hand on her shoulder?
	Why does Ted need a five point code?
Predict	Predict what the family will do next.
Explain	Do you think Salim would have run away? Why?
Retrieve	What was Aunt Gloria holding?
	What did the detective want to look inside?
	Why could they hear murmuring voices?
	What angers Aunt Gloria?
Summarise	Summarise these chapters in less than thirty words.

Chapter 13 and 14	
Vocabulary	What does it mean to draw the curtains?
	What is 'instability'?
	Define 'haywire'.
	What is 'amnesia'?
Infer	Why won't Gloria call Rashid?
	Why is it so silent in the living room?
	Why can Ted often not sleep?
	Which theory do Ted and Kat deem most likely?
Predict	Ted has eight theories. Predict what one might be.
	Predict what the ninth theory is.
Explain	Which of Ted's theories do you think the most likely? Why?
Retrieve	Where did Aunt Gloria get a photo of Salim from?
	What sandwiches does Kat make?
	What did Ted try to ignore that night?
	How many theories does Ted have?
Summarise	Summarise Ted's theories using one word to summarise each.

Chapter 15 and 16	
Vocabulary	What are globules? What is a morgue? Define 'void'. What is humidity? Define 'sleuth'.
Infer	Why do you think Gloria's teeth were chattering? Why was Aunt Gloria sick? Why do you think Dad is still upset? Why did Kat take lots of photos of the garden? Why doesn't Mum want Ted to talk about his theories? What is the third thing you shouldn't drink?
Predict	Predict what will happen when they go on the eye?
Explain	Who is your favourite character so far? Why is this?
Retrieve	Why did the police call? What is the only thing Salim can think about while his dad is gone? What was Kat doing when Ted woke up? What are Kat's three plans? Why does Ted go up the back of Kat's dressing gown? What did Ted do when Mum wasn't listening? How did Ted and Kat get out of the house? What nickname does Dad have for Kat?
Summarise	Summarise Kat's plan in less than forty words.

Chapter 17 and 18	
Vocabulary	What is a 'vantage'?
	What is an estuary?
	Define 'icky'.
	What is 'process of elimination'?
Infer	Why were the crowds thinner?
	Why was theory number one disproved?
	Why does Kat tell Ted to shut up?
	Why did Ted wish that Kat would spontaneously combust?
Predict	Predict what the ninth theory is.
Explain	Do you think theory number nine is possible? Why?
Retrieve	Did it take a long time to get a ticket?
	Who else was in their pod?
	Where do you have to face for the souvenir photo?
	Why does Kat want to go to the shop?
	What caused the smog?
	What is theory number nine?
Summarise	Summarise theory number nine in less than ten words.

Chapter 19 and 20	
Vocabulary	What does it mean if something is a good likeness? Who are 'the press'? What is eavesdropping? What's an injunction?
Infer	What does mum mean when she says it isn't much of a half term? Why does Ted say 'hrumm'? Why are they shouting their heads off? Why doesn't Rashid want the press involved?
Predict	Predict the relevance of the boy on the train.
Explain	Do you think contacting the press is a good idea? Why?
Retrieve	Is Salim in the souvenir photo? Where had Salim possibly been sighted? Who was at the door? What does Ted tell Inspector Pearce before she leaves? How was Ted's drawing of an egg different? What had Salim asked Rashid last time he visited?
Summarise	Summarise the character of Rashid so far in one word and explain your choice of word?

Chapter 21 and 22	
Vocabulary	What is deduction?
	What does scoffed mean? How is it different from 'ate'?
	What does it mean to blow up photos?
Infer	Why does Ted wake Kat up?
	What does Ted say Kat was looking for and why?
	Why is Kat so impressed at Ted's lie?
Predict	Predict why Kat is open mouthed.
	Predict what the screech is about.
Explain	What is the effect of leaving Chapter 22 on two cliffhangers?
Retrieve	How does Ted make the eating of his crisps quiet?
	Why does he do this?
	Who does Ted see in the picture?
	What time was it when Ted looked at the clock?
	What letters could they see on the jacket?
Summarise	Summarise Chapter 22 in less than twenty words.

Chapter 23 and 24	
Vocabulary	Define 'obeyed'. What does it mean to drone something? Why do people say 'Bingo'?
Infer	Why might Gloria not want anyone to touch the mobile phone? Why won't Kat let Ted go with her? Why did Ted go upstairs at the start of Chapter 24?
Predict	Predict what is on the mobile phone?
Explain	Why do you think sometimes the author chooses to use very short chapters?
Retrieve	Where had the shriek come from? How was the airline kind? Who had the missed call been from? What does Ted search for and why isn't it easy to find? What company had Kat found?
Summarise	So far, sum up the whole story in three words and explain your choice of words.

Chapter 25 and 26	
Vocabulary	What does 'of their own accord' mean?
	Define 'diverted'.
	What does it mean if something is crippling you?
	Define 'deflected'.
	What does it mean if something is corrugated?
Infer	Why have they got a TV crew involved?
	Why do you think Ted hung up the phone?
	The woman on the phone says he's the second person after Christy. Who might the first have been?
	What does Ted mean when he says he's a dyslexic geographer?
	Why do you think Ted got a bad feeling on the tube?
Predict	Predict what Ted will find in the motorcycle show?
Explain	How does the author make you empathise with Ted in Chapter 26?
Retrieve	Who are Frontline Security?
	Does Ted get straight through to Frontline Security?
	How many takes does it take Aunt Gloria to record her message?
	Where is Christy?
	What does Ted's note say?
	Why does he feel bad about leaving it?
	What is the coriolis effect?
Summarise	Summarise Ted's journey in less than thirty words.

Chapter 27 and 28	
Vocabulary	If you 'scour' something what do you do?
	Define 'revved'.
	What does it mean if your nostrils quiver? Why do Kat's do this?
	What does 'jostled'mean?
Infer	Why did Ted feel like he was in a space station?
	Why did Ted close his eyes when the bike went up the ramp?
	Kat is surprised to see Ted. Find evidence of this.
	Why does Kat ask Ted if he's alone?
Predict	Predict what will happen at the biker show.
	When they see Christy, predict what he will say.
Explain	How does the author make you want to continue reading in these chapters?
Retrieve	How big was the hail?
	How many people were at the show?
	Why did Ted stare at the people?
	Why did the audience gasp at the biker?
	When did Kat figure out that Christy was lying?
Summarise	Summarise the time at the show so far, in less than twenty words.

Chapter 29 and 30	
Vocabulary	Define 'reverting'.
	Define 'blathering'.
	What does it mean to 'saunter'? Why might Kat want to do this instead of run?
Infer	Why is Christy getting fired?
	Why does Kat tell Ted to run?
	Dad says pubs are black holes. What does he mean by this?
	Why do you think Christy is initially angry with Ted and Kat?
	Why does Kat burst into tears?
Predict	Predict what Christy will do in Chapter 30.
Explain	How does the author create suspense in Chapter 29?
Retrieve	Why was it hard to find Christy?
	Where has Christy gone?
	What do Ted and Kat see on TV and how do they react?
	Where had Christy gotten the ticket from?
Summarise	Summarise these chapters in less than thirty words.

Chapter 31 and 32	
Vocabulary	What does disobedient mean? What is enlightenment?
Infer	Why was Kat stomping? Why does Kat start laughing? Why do you think Mum goes to slap Kat?
Predict	Predict what Ted knows.
Explain	How does the author make you empathise with Ted in these chapters?
Retrieve	Why did Kat think they would get in trouble? Where does Ted go in Chapter 32? Find some ways that Ted knows he is having a meltdown?
Summarise	Summarise Ted's meltdown in less than fifteen words.

Chapter 33 and 34	
Vocabulary	What's a 'row'?
	What does it mean if someone is dashing?
	Define 'deduce'.
Infer	Why do you think Kat doesn't want to listen to Ted talk about the theories?
	Do you think Kat meant to be so horrible to Ted?
	Why does Ted call Inspector Pearce in the end?
	Why does Gloria storm out?
	What is the flashing in the garden?
Predict	Predict what Ted will say to Inspector Pearce.
	Predict why the police have arrived?
Explain	How does Ted's internal monologue affect the story?
Retrieve	How many times did Ted kick the shed?
	Why is Aunt Gloria sleeping so soundly?
	What book did Ted spot?
	Which part had Salim played in The Tempest?
	What did the family have for dinner?
Summarise	Summarise these chapters in less than twenty-five words.

Chapter 35 and 36	
Vocabulary	What is a state of shock?
	Define 'humid'.
	What is an alibi?
Infer	Why is everyone shocked that Ted had spoken to the police?
	What is the relevance of the boy on the train?
	Why had Salim run away?
	Marcus is crying. What does this foreshadow?
Predict	Predict what Marcus will say about Salim.
Explain	Did you like this reveal? Why?
Retrieve	Who is the boy?
	When was a good time to get changed?
	Why had Salim shaved his moustache off?
	How was Christy connected to Salim's escape?
Summarise	Summarise Salim's escape in less than thirty words.

Chapter 37 and 38	
Vocabulary	What does 'loomed' mean?
	What is a 'bottomless pit' as used in this context?
	What is the Richter scale?
	Define 'unwillingly'.
Infer	Why had Salim and Marcus spent a few hours ago?
	How did Salim get Jason back?
	Why did Salim turn his phone off?
	Why did Salim decide not to run away in the end?
	How do they retrace Salim's steps?
Predict	Predict if Salim is inside the Barracks.
Explain	Why do you think the author chose to write the statement in capital letters?
Retrieve	Why does Ted think Marcus wouldn't want to be friends?
	What did Jason used to say to Marcus?
	How are Christy and Marcus related?
	What did Marcus say to Christy about the plan?
	Where was Salim's phone?
	At what time did the statement finish being read?
	How did Ted figure out that Salim was looking at the Barracks?
Summarise	Summarise Marcus's statement in less than twenty words.

Chapter 39 and 40	
Vocabulary	What is rasping?
	What does 'reconciliation' mean?
	Define 'dubious'?
Infer	Why does Kat shout 'mother of god'?
	Why does dad bring torches?
	Why do you think Salim finds it hard to talk about the experience?
	Why did Jacky Winter lose his job?
Predict	Predict how the story will end.
Explain	How did you feel when they found Salim?
	Why do you think the author brought the London Eye back in Chapter 40?
Retrieve	Where was Salim?
	How had Salim tried to attract attention and why hadn't it worked?
	How does Salim change the meaning of the word 'neek'?
	Why had Salim gone into the Barracks?
Summarise	Summarise Salim's experience in less than thirty words.

Chapter 41	
Vocabulary	What does 'within reason' mean?
	What is a consultation?
Infer	Why did Gloria quit smoking?
	Why do you think Mum offered to get them presents?
	Why won't Mum get Kat a scooter?
Predict	Predict what a sequel to this book would be about?
Explain	Did you like this book? Why?
Retrieve	How many days later did Salim and Gloria leave?
	What present did Ted pick?
Summarise	Summarise the whole story in less than 100 words.