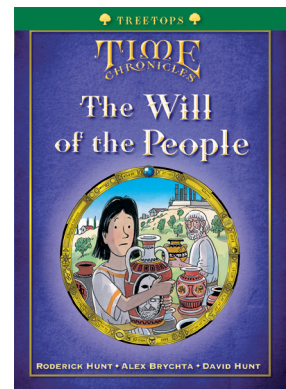


Stage 12+

# The Will of the People

Written by David Hunt and illustrated by Alex Brychta

Teaching notes written by Gill Howell



## Historical background

- This story takes place in Ancient Greece in the 5th Century BC, when the city of Athens was beginning to be rebuilt after the occupation by the Persians.
- At this time, all decisions relating to the running of the country were decided by democratic vote. Neena and Wilf find themselves searching for a Viran who wishes to create chaos by getting the people to turn against Pericles, a popular figure on the Athenian Council, hoping that this will begin the downfall of the Greek democracy.

## Group/Guided reading

### Introducing the book

- Look together at the illustration on the front cover and read the title. Ask the children to suggest where and when the story is set.
- Turn to the back cover and read the blurb. Were their suggestions correct? Ask them what they already know about the Ancient Greece. Turn to pages 46 and 47 to familiarise them with the historical background to the story.
- Ask the children to suggest why rebuilding the Parthenon was important to the Athenian council.
- Before beginning to read the story, ask the children to turn to page 44 and read the glossary together to help fluent reading.

### Reading the book

- Ask the children to read the story independently, pausing occasionally to discuss what they have read.
- At the end of Chapter 1, invite the children to say what the councillor thought the smashing of the pots meant. Take a moment to talk about what 'a sign' is and why people used to believe in them.
- At the end of Chapter 3, ask the children who they think the potter really is. Ask: *How do they think he might be able to stop 'the so-called will of the people'?*
- At the end of Chapter 7, ask the children what they think has happened to the money. Ask: *Do you think holding a vote about Tektos' guilt or innocence is a fair way to decide?*

### Returning to the book

- Ask the children to say if and when they first suspected that the potter Bedros was really a Viran. Ask them to find the page in the text.
- Ask the children if it was a good idea for the Neena and Wilf to get work helping to rebuild the Parthenon. Ask them to say why or why not.
- Turn to page 42. Ask the children why the name *Mortlock* had such an effect on the Viran. Ask: *What might have happened if Neena hadn't used the name? Would the ending be different?*

