**Chapters 1-4**

The Lewis Chessmen are very famous archaeological artefacts. Create a LEAFLET with some of the details we know about them (there is a section at the back of the book which may help you). Throw in some great illustrations if you can.

You have already heard some places mentioned in the text. Using research, create a MAP of Norway, Shetland, Orkney and the Hebrides including Lewis and Harris. This way you can follow the journey of the chess pieces.

CHARADES: Get kids into groups or choose volunteers to perform to the whole class. Get them to act the following out for their peers to guess: Helmet, Adventure, Ship, Storm, Village, Fight, Beard, Axe, Wool, Saga/story, Chief, Board games, Fish, Hunting, Brave, Gods, Treasure, Sword

Chapter 2 mentions HNEFATAFL. Look at <http://www.stormthecastle.com/Things/hnefatafl.htm> and create your own game. You could also watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dNM4054Io7I>

**Chapters 5-8**

The end of chapter 5 is the first mention of a barn owl in the book. There will be two more. Find out five facts about barn owls and present them to the class, or create a display for the classroom.

CHESSMAN MODEL: In Chapter 6, the craftsmen discuss the carving process. Find a picture of one of the chessmen (the British museum have wonderful 3D resources at https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/lewis-chess-set-eddbebab12424c8aa610a21b9b7e19e5) and try your hand at creating such a chess-piece out of Play-Doh, clay or soap. Good luck! If you like, you could share them with the author at @scattyscribbler on Twitter or Instagram.

By now you will have seen many pictures of the famous Lewis Chessmen, and Kylan describes one on page 36, Chapter 7. Create a photo portrait where you strike exactly the same pose as one of the figures. If possible, you can even use costumes. Now print those out in black and white and glue them beside a picture of the chess figure you were copying. Take care to copy the staring eyes! 😊

*‘‘See the fjords shimmer, Kylan? See the Northern Lights in the sky during winter nights.’* (Ch 8 p.40)

*Here is short video explaining what happens to cause this natural lightshow:* [*https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p07tn17v*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p07tn17v)

Now, why not create some stunning art:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZgxmD2KmRz8>

*‘Margrét hin* haga’ (Chapter 7 p. 35) is the character’s full name. It translates as Margret the Adroit (which means skilful and clever. She was a famous carver in Viking times and really existed. Find one famous craftsman or craftswoman or artist working today and be prepared to tell the class about them.

On pages 40-41 in chapter 8, the Cathedral in Trondheim is described. Research this building and find out what it looked like. Now find out about the nearest Cathedral to you. Are the buildings similar?

**Chapters 9-12**

Why not attend a proper storytelling event? <https://www.scottishstorytellingcentre.com/> has lots of options.

There are some storytelling games at <https://pjlibrary.org/beyond-books/pjblog/january-2019/storytelling-games-to-play-with-kids-of-all-ages>

In Chapter 11, the skald recites a poem about the creation of the world. Find out what the Vikings believed about this, and while you are at it, explore some of the other Viking myths: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/20stJyBvh9mv7kpSVgDfKPw/viking-sagas-age-7-11>

Now you can create a True and False Quiz and test your classmates!

In Chapter 12. Erik gives Kylan an overcoat. Research Viking clothing and report back to the class about what Vikings used to wear.

**Chapters 13-16**

Chapter 13 and 14 are very dramatic and visual. Using the template provided, create a simple storyboard for a film treatment, including a variety of different camera shots, ranging from wide and mid-shots to close ups. <https://www.teachwire.net/teaching-resources/blank-storyboard-templates-various-portrait-and-landscape-styles>

The sea cn be a dangerous place. Find out about organisations which help to keep sailors safe. There are quite a few. You could start with <https://rnli.org/> and <https://www.fishermensmission.org.uk/> for example.

**Chapters 17-20**

These chapters take place in Orkney. Make a collage of Orkney images and the places of interest to these chapters like the Earl’s Bu at Orphir. Who looks after these old monuments – explore Historic Environment Scotland and the National Trust for Scotland. Should the government spend money on preserving this heritage, do you think? Would you like to work for such an organisation?

Ingirid was the daughter of the Earl of Orkney. Find out which Norse names are still common today.

Plovers (or ringed plovers) are mentioned at the beginning of Chapter 17. Find out what kind of bird this is and try to find its call on the internet. This is what Kylan would have heard.

In these chapters, Kylan learns to play chess. Why not create your own chess board? Easy instructions here <https://www.easypeasyandfun.com/diy-chess-board-game/>

Some of the characters in The Chessmen Thief also appear in Orkneyinga Saga – like Sven Asleifsson. Create a collage about Orkneyinga saga and find out what other sagas existed then. <https://academickids.com/encyclopedia/index.php/Orkneyinga_saga>

**Chapters 21-24**

In Chapter 22, the Jarl is impressed that Kylan knows how to arrange figures for chess. Mark 16 or 32 squares out on the gym hall floor with masking tape. Create a card for each chess figure, both crimson (the colour of the dark Lewis chessmen) and white. If you have 32 pupils in the class, you can do a full board, if only 16, you can do just one side/colour. Each pupil picks a card and, on the whistle, arrange themselves in the right order, holding their cards up. Pupils may have to help each other to get it right.

Why not invent your own myth about the whirlpool, instead of the Sea Witch story. The more creative, the better!

Ch 22 and 23 refer to the whirlpool called the Swelkie. Research why whirlpools exist. There are some cool whirlpool experiments like <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5E9v7BqIxgs>

Standing stones in Orkney and on Lewis are mentioned on p. 121 in Ch 23. Research famous standing stones, including the Ring of Brodgar, Callanish and Stonehenge. What do you think these stones were used for?

**Chapters 25-28**

Kylan leaves in a coracle in chapter 27, and he is followed by skiffs. He arrived in a galley, or longship. Find images for all of these types of seagoing vessels, or draw them.

Learn about the history of chess <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=19oTGb0C_cA> (for slightly younger kids)

**Chapters 29-END**

Invite a local volunteer to teach you the basic chess moves. Maybe there is even a pupil who can do it. Then have a go at playing a game. You could also watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KlTEQZ5Sy4E> and <https://www.chesskid.com/how-to-play-chess>

Create a soundscape for Ch 33. Try to recreate all the sounds Kylan would hear in that chapter and record them.

Read the Epilogue. Land ownership was simple in Viking days. How is land ownership governed today? How many people own how much of the land in Scotland. Is this fair?