

Look at the front cover of the book.

Activity: What do you notice about artwork on the book cover? Make a quick note of everything you see. Now look at the back cover of the book and make some notes. Now compare your notes. Which emotions does the front cover evoke, compared to the back cover? What differences did you notice?

Discuss: What does the title suggest to you? What is a 'tree of memories'?

Discuss: Why is the symbol of a tree used so often to represent other things – such as a family 'tree', a 'tree' of life?

Activity: Create your own tree of memories – this could be on paper, perhaps based on the idea of a family tree and memories of events with each person – or 3D, created from recycled materials that represent memories.

Look at the title page, and the subtitle of the story, '*A Story of Dance, Magic and Liberty!*'.

Discuss: If you were writing a story about your life, what would the subtitle be? Which three words would you choose? What do you notice about the colours of the title page illustration?

Activity: Decorate your own story's title page as Avelino has this one – which symbols and colours will you choose?

Dedication: Read the dedications from the author and illustrator. What do you understand by the words, 'revellers' and 'carnival'? If you are unsure, consult a dictionary.

Activity: Create an illustration based on the words 'revellers' and 'carnival'.

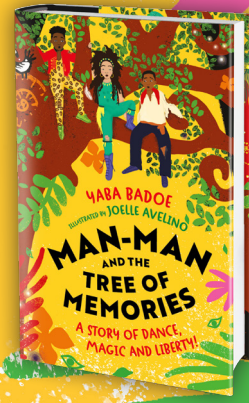
'Once, not so long ago...' (Page 1)

Discuss: Which type of stories begin 'once, not so long ago,' or a variation thereof? What does this imply about the story to come?

Examine the first paragraph.

Discuss: What else about this paragraph indicates a 'trope' about storytelling?

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**MAN-MAN
AND THE
TREE OF
MEMORIES**
TEACHING RESOURCES



Activity: Continue the story from the end of the first paragraph. Can you write an entire short story? Will it have a happy ending? Can you include other ‘tropes’ from this kind of storytelling? What are they? (You may wish to brainstorm or list them before you write).

Activity: When you have read the entire novel, come back to your list of ‘fairy tale’ tropes. Match the tropes to elements of Badoe’s story.

Discuss: What does it mean when the book is described as a ‘modern’ fairy tale? What does that imply? What’s the difference between a traditional fairy tale and a modern fairy tale? Can you think of any examples of either?

Writing Style

Read the first chapter.

Discuss: What do you notice about the rhythm of the text? How does the vocabulary speak to the topic of ‘carnival’?

Activity: Make a list of the vocabulary associated with movement.

Discuss: How does Badoe blend the emotions of happy and sad in the first chapter?

Activity: Make a Venn Diagram with one circle happy and one sad, and place into it the phrases that emit those emotions. Are there any phrases that seem to do both?

‘Disgusted.

Defiant.

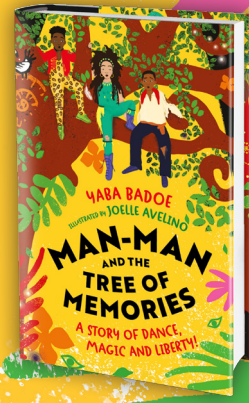
A duo, daggers drawn.’ (Page 18)

Read the first two chapters.

Activity: Use your knowledge of literary devices to pick out those that Badoe has used in her lyrical writing style, e.g. alliteration, metaphor, simile, imagery, symbolism, repetition. You may wish to draw a table and fill with phrases and words as examples.

‘She created spinach and coconut milk smoothies, conjured mango and pumpkin pies. She whipped up endless chicken and vegetable broths, scrumptious dumplings on top; cups of soup

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**MAN-MAN
AND THE
TREE OF
MEMORIES**
TEACHING RESOURCES



followed by bowls of curried goat and callaloo. After marinating delicate morsels of fish, she baked corn bread and fish patties to entice her daughter to eat.' (Page 15-16)

Discuss: Does food give the reader an idea of the cultural background of a story? How? How does Badoe emphasise the sensual feel of her novel, exploring all the senses?

Activity: Take one chapter and make a list of the senses and how Badoe evokes them in her writing.

Activity: Which foods exemplify your cultural background? Ask an older relative for a recipe that makes you and them think of family and heritage.

Characters

Man-man

'He was their little man, though his real name was Emmanuel.' (Page 9)

Discuss: What's your nickname? How does it relate to your proper name?

On page 103, the reader discovers that Emmanuel is named after his grandfather.

Activity: Find out why you were given your name. Is it in memory of a relative? Create a name plaque for yourself, perhaps a bookmark or hanging artwork, and decorate your name to reflect its meaning.

'Their names are like a shield, a good luck charm to protect them and us.' (Page 32)

Discuss: The women in Man-man's family all have names of a certain type. Can you think of other families in literature who have names that group together? Why do authors place so much importance on the names of their characters?

Activity: If you could rename yourself, what would you choose and why?

'You're a dancer, a reveller, a child born for masquerade. I've watched and seen your gift. Above all, I've noticed that when you're dancing, Man-man, you're able to winkle memories of life from objects long dead.' (Page 92-93)

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**MAN-MAN
AND THE
TREE OF
MEMORIES**
TEACHING RESOURCES



Discuss: What does the Revel Queen mean by this? How has Man-man used memory up until this point in the story?

Activity: Can you ‘winkle memories of life from objects long dead’? Take an object from your home, and see if it contains memories of the past – perhaps it belonged to an older member of your family, or has travelled far. Write about how the object conjures memories of events in the past.

‘Razor at the ready, Jules began to create a flash of lightning on the side of Man-man’s head. Gradually, a bolt of light appeared in a Z of skin.’ (Page 29)

Discuss: Which other fictional characters have a bolt of lightning on their bodies or costumes? What does the lightening do or symbolise?

‘They call him Shango,’ Dad had said. ‘And in his hand he holds a mighty axe!’ (Page 26)

Activity: Investigate the god Shango from the Yoruba religion. How has Badoe used elements of Shango in the story? Look carefully through the text to see when Man-man’s lightning tingles or sizzles or thrums. What does this symbolise?

Fedora Roberts

‘De pickney dem today always making noise! Man-man, why you thumping and strumming? Why you stomping your feet on the ground?’ (Page 1-2)

Discuss: What is your first impression of Fedora? What dialect does she have? Why has Badoe chosen to use this dialect in her dialogue?

‘That’s how bad things were, for his dad didn’t much like Nan. ‘She too prissy-prim for her own good,’ he always said.’ (Page 2)

Discuss: Why does Man-man’s Dad call Fedora to come visit? What does ‘prissy-prim’ mean?

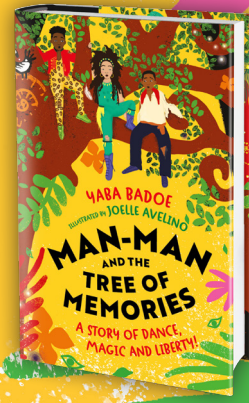
Activity: Do you think Man-man’s Dad is right? Use evidence from the text to explain your answer.

Discuss: How does Fedora dominate the first chapter? Think about how we are first introduced to the other characters, as well as to Fedora.

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MAN-MAN AND THE TREE OF MEMORIES

TEACHING RESOURCES



'Large like an orchestra of clashing cymbals and shaking tambourines. Nan loomed, an ogre, skin pale as topaz, a smattering of salt and pepper curls on her scalp.' (Page 11)
'Fedora a woman of strong opinions, Man-man. She a woman with a will that cannot yield. A hard-headed woman with a skull tough as an old nanny goat.' (Page 33)

Activity: Draw your own illustration of Fedora Roberts.

Trilby

'She smiled, a smile that tickled his skin like a prickle of sunlight in winter.' (Page 4)

Discuss: How is the reader first introduced to Trilby?

'She lapped him up like a camel drinking water after a long desert trek.' (Page 6)

Discuss: What is Trilby's relationship with Man-man? Does she fit the ideal of a mother? How much does her illness impact Man-man?

'You want your mum to be proud, don't you?' Man-man nodded.' (Page 43)

Discuss: How important is it for Man-man to make his Mum proud? Why do children seek their parents' pride?

Activity: Think of an event or a moment that made your parent or caregiver proud. Write up the experience as a newspaper report. Imagine what your parent/caregiver would say to the interviewer.

Read pages 98-99.

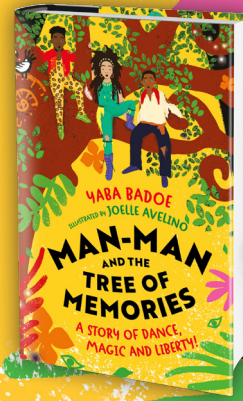
Discuss: What else does the reader learn about Trilby? How has Avelino portrayed her in these illustrations and how are they different from illustrations of Trilby throughout the rest of the book?

Pan

'Pan's eyes had flung daggers at Nan. Daggers that said: I am nobody's slave.' (Page 5)

Discuss: What is the reader's first impression of Pan?

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**MAN-MAN
AND THE
TREE OF
MEMORIES**
TEACHING RESOURCES



'How he'd shrivelled inside at what she could do to him with that glint in her eyes.' (Page 13)
'Pan's presence rarely left Man-man. But it didn't stop him doing what he wanted. If anything, it made him more determined, especially when it came to Kareem.' (Page 25)
'Pan had growled at his question, and roared: "Cause we four is MIGHTY, lil' bro. And when we glare at you with the full blast of our eyes, small boys like you wither.' (Page 30-31)

Discuss: What impact does having an older sister have on Man-man? Does her presence wither Man-man or give him more strength?

Activity: Hold a debate about whether Pan's attitude causes Man-man to be weaker or stronger. Which side would you take? Can you find arguments for both?

'She gave him a rare smile, a smile that tasted of honey as a sudden rush of sister-love overwhelmed him.' (Page 50)
'Kissing her lips, she raised an eyebrow. You too fool-fool! her eyebrow scolded. Boy, 'nuff of your nonsense!' (Page 84)
'Unused to Man-man taking the lead and loath to follow, she grunted.' (Page 108)
'Pan, rather unhelpfully, raised an eyebrow. Raised it and snorted. The glint in her eyes sparked.' (Page 123-124)

Discuss: Even when whisked away by the Revel Queen, does Pan remain practical and pragmatic? Use evidence from the text to explore your answer.

Activity: Draw an outline of Pan. Inside the lines, describe her personality. Outside the lines, describe her appearance.

'For example, if Panama had been called Beret, or Trilby's name was Beanie, he'd have twigged long ago.' (Page 30)

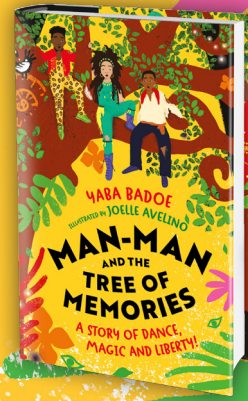
Discuss: Why are the women in Man-man's family named after hats?

Activity: Make a poster of pictures of different hats and their names. Investigate the origin of the names.

'If you can imagine them wearing the hats they're named after, the chance of anyone disrespecting them is almost zero. No one can see their anger, no one can accuse them of casting an evil eye.' (Page 32)

Discuss: Does a hat afford you more respect? Does the way you dress?

YABA BADOE
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**MAN-MAN
AND THE
TREE OF
MEMORIES**
TEACHING RESOURCES



Discuss: What protection do the hats give? Are women more likely to be accused of casting an evil eye? What is an evil eye?

Activity: Research the history of the belief in an 'evil eye'. Where did it first occur? What did ancient classical writers say about it? Collect your answers into a Power Point or poster.

Themes Carnival

'This year at Notting Hill, he was going to take his mum's place and lead the procession. Pan would be at his side. He'd listen to the beat of his dad's sound system, feel the rhythm, and, when he was in its groove, he'd move.' (Page 8)

Activity: Find Notting Hill on a map. Now, research the route of last year's Notting Hill Carnival and see if you can draw it onto a map. Using pictures from newspapers and the Internet, create a collage of the carnival.

Activity: Research the history of the Notting Hill Carnival and display your findings on an annotated timeline or image of the carnival.

Activity: Create a word cloud to represent the word 'carnival'. Summarise the key themes and emotions involved.

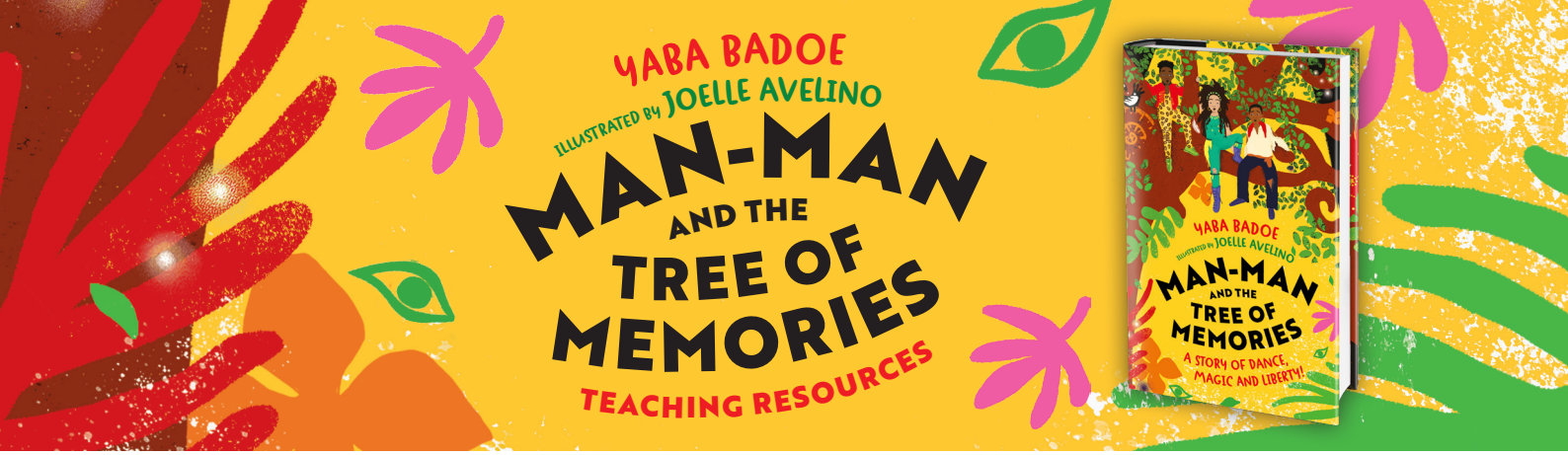
'Kareem relished tofu and vegetables, anchovies and olives. He even liked runny cheese.' (Page 22)

Discuss: Kareem likes different foodstuffs from his peers. How important is it to have a mix of people, likes and dislikes, in life? How does this reflect the carnival?

Activity: Conduct a poll among friends to see which foodstuff they like best (give them a choice, perhaps fruits or pizza toppings). Place your findings on a bar chart, so that you can see the differences clearly.

'Every outfit was wrapped in plastic to keep it clean, the nametag of its wearer attached.' (Page 42)

Activity: Make a flowchart of all the things involved in preparing for a carnival. Imagine you are creating a carnival at your school – including floats, procession route, dances, costumes, makeup and hair, music. Do you have a theme?



Read pages 52-53.

Discuss: How does Badoe create a sense of movement in these pages?

Look at the illustration on pages 54-55

Discuss: Why are the only faces with features those of Pan, Kareem and Man-man? How does Avelino create flow or movement in her illustration? What do you notice about the colours and shapes she has used? What is the focus of the image? What is in the background?

Activity: Look at the following two links that discuss artworks depicting the Notting Hill Carnival.
<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2022/nov/03/paul-dash-errol-lloyd-john-lyons-artists-on-carnival>
<https://www.kettlesyard.co.uk/events/paint-like-the-swallow-sings-calypso/>

Discuss: Which painting is your favourite? Describe why you have picked that painting.

Activity: Try and summarise why the exhibition curators included so many different types of painting. Take one of the artists featured and research their life and work. What is their background? What type of artwork do they create?

Read pages 56-61.

Discuss: How does Badoe build pace and anticipation in this scene?

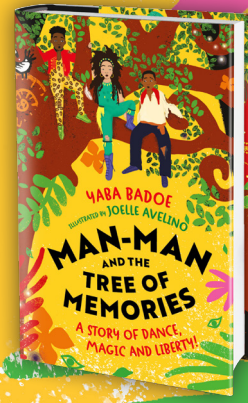
Activity: Use emojis to show the intensity of the emotions in the scene. Plot a line of emojis to follow the action.

Activity: Write a diary entry of this chapter from Pan's point of view. How does she feel? What does she see and sense happening? Remember to include the colour and joy of the carnival, Trilby, Pan's emotions at the carnival, and her thoughts at seeing the Revel Queen.

Costume

'For one day and one day only, you can decide who you are and feel it deep down.' (Page 9)
'when you put these clothes on, you should wear them with care and rejoice in who you become.' (Page 42-43)

YABA BADOE
ILLUSTRATED BY JOELLE AVELINO
**MAN-MAN
AND THE
TREE OF
MEMORIES**
TEACHING RESOURCES



'Like I said, wear that costume as if you mean it.' (Page 44)

Activity: Each child chooses their own costume. Which costume would you choose? Design your own costume – and annotate the different elements to show their meaning. Source fabrics as if you are creating a mood board or design plan for your costume. Now write a paragraph explaining why you chose your design and who you have become.

Read pages 46-47 about Man-man's costume

Activity: In your own words, write about the different elements of Man-man's costume and what they mean. Investigate further the first ruler of independent Haiti and the man considered the Father of Haiti.

Look at the illustrations of Man-man on page 46 and Pan on pages 48-49.

Activity: Create a float out of recycled materials, such as egg-boxes, that would befit Pan and Man-man's costumes. Remember to think about the vibrancy of the colours you are using. Use your new knowledge of Haiti to create symbols of the country on your float.

Dance

'Will you dance me better, Man-man?'

'I'll dance you to the moon and back, Mum' (Page 8)

'if she could only see him lead the procession, he would be able to dance her back to good health.' (Page 15)

'What better way to express love of life and freedom than by dancing?' (Page 20)

'He was going to find his mum in the fog and dance her back to the light.' (Page 29)

Discuss: Why do you think dancing might be seen as a healing art? Think about dancing as a group, the movement, the emotion, the rhythm.

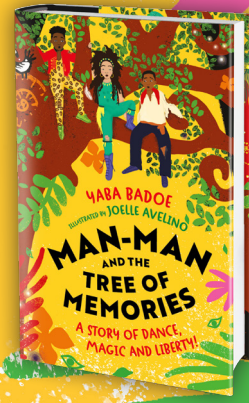
Activity: Brainstorm ideas about why dancing could be healing. Now create a leaflet advertising dancing as a healing art. What will you say to entice customers to your healing dance?

'This was the fortnight in which Man-man and Pan perfected their moves: high kicks, belly rolls, the limbo stroll. They practised dancing side by side, and then thighs wide apart, they strutted, bottoms gyrating like bundles of bouncing balls. Finally, arms outstretched, back to back, they waggled their legs before slip-sliding in splits.' (Page 14)

YABA BADOE
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MAN-MAN AND THE TREE OF MEMORIES

TEACHING RESOURCES



'Arms swaying, hips rolling, they twirled in a jig until, hands raised, they bumped fists.' (Page 37)

'They fist-bumped again and performed a routine they'd made up when they were younger, bumping everything they could: fists, knuckles, elbows, knees and heads. They clicked fingers, slapped palms and yowled like coyote pups at night.' (Page 38)

Activity: Create a words wheel of synonyms for the word 'dance'. How many other words can you find in the text? Use a thesaurus as well.

Activity: Choreograph your own dance moves with a friend to the theme of freedom.

'Daughter, if you prance about like the pickney dem you may as well dance with the devil. And if you do that you'll go to a place where your tongue can't move and there's no coming back.' (Page 21)

Discuss: Why does Nan think dancing is wicked?

'He tried to press pause in his mind and reel back time, but the impulse to dance was urgent, inescapable.' (Page 76)

Read pages 76-80

'That's how it feels when I'm dancing – that there's more to me than just me, and it stretches way, way back.' (Page 119)

Discuss: When Man-man has to move, does it feel dangerous, or thrilling? How does Pan react? Which emotions are evoked on these pages?

Activity: Research the idea of dance in ancient mythology and religion. You may wish to take a certain religion, such as the role of dance by the Yoruba god Shango, or the Gelede ritual dance, or dance as exemplified by the Hindu god Shiva, or perhaps dance by Apollo in Ancient Greek mythology.

Discuss: How does dancing link to the past?

Activity: Compare the flight of the Revel Queen on page 117 with the dancing at carnival. How are they described similarly?

YABA BADOE
ILLUSTRATED BY JOELLE AVELINO
**MAN-MAN
AND THE
TREE OF
MEMORIES**
TEACHING RESOURCES



The Force of Nature

'They heard an echo of the forests they'd come from. They felt the shiver of cool breezes that had once lifted their leaves.' (Page 62-63)

Discuss: How does the personification of the planks of wood fit with the story? How much is the natural world part of the story?

'Wherever they were was warm and sultry. A scent of jasmine hung in the air.' (Page 74)

'It grew at the bottom of Nan's garden in Jamaica. Myrtle.' (Page 75)

Discuss: Why does Badoe emphasise nature in the magical place to which Man-man, Pan and Kareem are whisked away? What does myrtle symbolise?

'A wormhole, it pummelled them at the same time as it sucked and blew them along.' (Page 70)

'A warm flurry of air caressed her cheek, drenching her in perfume.' (Page 95)

'The tornado flipped and looped, circled, and shook, wreaking havoc in the glade.' (Page 113)

Discuss: Why does Badoe use the element of wind to indicate change and the supernatural?

Activity: Air is an elemental force. What are the other three elemental forces? How are they represented in the novel? Choose extracts to support your answers.

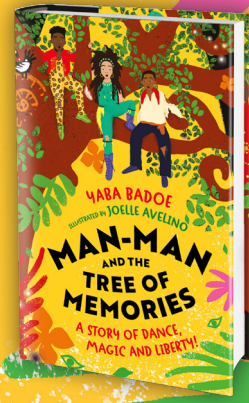
Activity: Create a piece of artwork that represents the wind in the novel. You may choose the tornado of page 113, or perhaps the flurry of page 95. Where else in the novel gives you inspiration for your wind artwork?

'He knew that his grandpa had been a roots man just like his dad. Emmanuel Baptiste had used the wisdom of plants and trees, sea and sky to help those who needed healing. And like his dad, he'd celebrated those who came before him who carried him all the way back to Africa.' (Page 103-104)

Discuss: What does 'roots man' mean? How does someone use the 'wisdom of plants and trees, sea and sky' to heal? Do we do that today? How does nature link to ancestry?

'Tall, with a wide canopy and trunk, its bark was a dark, ashen colour, the scaly skin of an ancient, grandfather tree.' (Page 121)

YABA BADOE
ILLUSTRATED BY JOELLE AVELINO
**MAN-MAN
AND THE
TREE OF
MEMORIES**
TEACHING RESOURCES



Activity: Research the Iroko tree. Where does it grow? Which species is it? What does it look like? How is it tied to Yoruba culture? Write a poem about the Iroko tree, using the new knowledge you have gained. Will you concentrate on its look and growth, or on its spiritual nature?

Supernatural/Traditional Tales

'A shimmering creature with lips, forehead, chin: a mingling of blue sky and the colours of carnival. That's the face of a warrior, thought Man-man. It was a woman's face, blue-black in colour, hair hidden under a helmet of gold coins. He took a step back as eyes dark as coal marvelled at him. It was those eyes which frightened him. They seemed hungry. Hungry for him.'

'You called me,' the woman said. 'Didn't you ask me to help you?' (Page 65)

Discuss: How does the Queen of the Revels compare to the women in Man-man's family? How does Badoe make her appearance feel threatening but also magical?

Discuss: Does the Queen of the Revels seem like any other character in books you have read?

'spinning and tumbling, head over heels.' (Page 71)

Re-read pages 70-72

Discuss: Why does Badoe use the imagery of a fairground when showing the children being swept away by the Revel Queen?

'On her head was a crown of orange hibiscus flowers, and row upon row of pearl-like seeds dangled around her neck.' (Page 87)

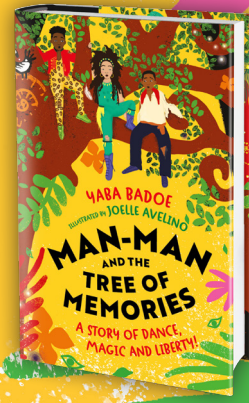
Read the description of the Queen of Revels from page 87-92.

'Man-man glowed in a way that helped him feel the music of leaves and trees, the pulse of the earth beneath his feet. Best of all, the caress of the sun's smile on his face as the sky trembled.' (Page 91)

Discuss: Why is her description tied up with nature?

Activity: Write the important facts about the Revel Queen. Separate out the figurative language Badoe uses about the Revel Queen. Why does she use this language?

YABA BADOE
ILLUSTRATED BY JOELLE AVELINO
**MAN-MAN
AND THE
TREE OF
MEMORIES**
TEACHING RESOURCES



Now think of your own ten adjectives to describe your impression of the Revel Queen from what she says and does.

Activity: Compare the illustration on page 88-89 with the illustration of carnival on pages 54-55. How does Avelino create a sense of calm and stillness in the latter compared to the former?

'Wherever people have feasted and danced, whether in caves or in palaces beside the Nile and Zambesi rivers, the Queen of Revels has been with you. I'm told that at different times, you've given her all manner of names: Hathor, Shiva, Dionysus, Bacchus.' (Page 131)

Discuss: Is the Revel Queen like a fairy godmother? Or is she like a goddess?

Activity: Who are the deities that the tree references here? Can you find illustrations of each? Do they have things in common? Create a poster about one of them and compare with your peers.

*'Revel Queen, Revel Queen,
Queen of carnival,
Show me the key to my mother's past!
Revel Queen, Revel Queen,
Empress of the dance,
Heal my mother at last!'* (Page 143)

Activity: Man-man's wish and incantation summon the powers of the Revel Queen. Create your own rhyming poem to write your own wish. What will you wish for?

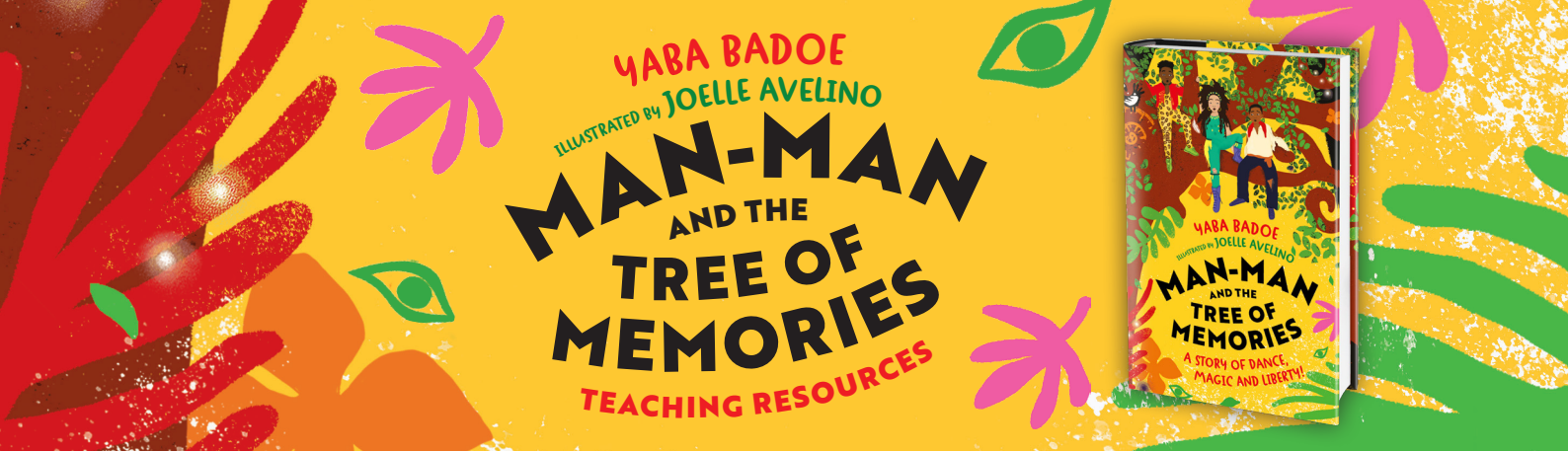
In her story of the Tree of Memories, Badoe uses three ideas that are commonly used in traditional tales: resurrection, shape-shifting, and girls transforming into birds.

'Because if she dies, I'll have to follow her and bring her back.' (Page 100)

Discuss: Do you know of any other stories about somebody being brought back to life?

Activity: Research resurrections in ancient cultures. Look at the story of Eurydice and Orpheus, or Ishtar and Tammuz, or Savitri and Satyavan. Why were these stories created?

'What had once been a flame tree had changed into what appeared to be a sphinxlike creature with the gleaming wings of an eagle and the shape of a lion. The creature glimmered, its form shifting, as in a dream.' (Page 113)



Discuss: Think about which other stories have shape-shifting in them. Why is this a traditional tales trope?

Activity: If you could shape-shift, what would you become? Draw a comic strip portraying your shape-shifting entity. Think about the sounds that might accompany your illustrations.

'With a click of her fingers, she transformed the girl into an egret.' (Page 153)

'Flabbergasted, Pan opened and shut her mouth as more egrets followed the first. 'The Sweet Bird of Freedom,' she muttered, remembering the plumage of her outfit for carnival.' (Page 156)

Look at the picture on page 154-155.

Discuss: In which other traditional tales do we see girls transformed into birds? What do birds represent? What is special about an egret?

Activity: Write your own traditional or fairy tale about a girl's transformation into a bird. What does the bird represent? Which type of bird is it? Why is there this transformation?

Voice

'But her voice is disappearing again.' (Page 28)

'Gatsby took to her bed and simply stopped talking.' (Page 31)

'The fog of musket fumes and sea mist that had silenced her voice had gone.' (Page 173)

Discuss: How does the silencing of Man-man's mother's voice relate to the slave trade and a loss of freedom?

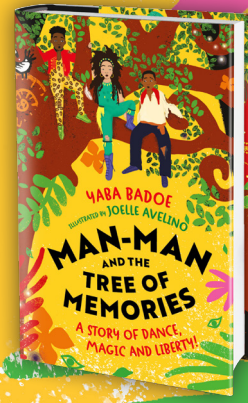
Activity: Look through the novel for references to Trilby's voice. Which similes does Badoe use to describe the silencing of her voice, and then the rediscovery? Can you extend this list of similes, and create your own?

Activity: In which other stories, does a woman or girl lose her voice? What is the deeper meaning behind this loss, and eventual regain?

Cultural Heritage/Slavery

'They were going to celebrate the freedom of Africans everywhere – from Port-au-Prince to London, Solihull to Salvador, Cape Town to Cairo, Zanzibar to Spanish Town, Jamaica. At the

YABA BADOE
ILLUSTRATED BY JOELLE AVELINO
**MAN-MAN
AND THE
TREE OF
MEMORIES**
TEACHING RESOURCES



same time, they were going to honour freedom fighters of yesterday, such as Queen Nanny, Marcus Garvey, Toussaint Louverture, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, Martin Luther King and Yaa Asantewaa of Ghana.' (Page 10)

Discuss: What is a freedom fighter?

Activity: Choose one of those freedom fighters mentioned and write a biography of them.

'I think of as the past trying to talk to us; the past trying to tell us something we need to know. It's a bit like when I play a track of music again and again. Eventually, I hear something new in it that helps me see it in a different light.' (Page 34)

Discuss: Why do we learn about the past?

Activity: Do as Jules suggests, listen to a piece of music several times. Do you notice anything different about the music each time you hear it?

'Why does anyone think they're better than someone else?' Jules leaned into his son and caressed his cheek.' (Page 35)

Discuss: Why does Jules say this to his son? Why is it important to respect other cultures? How is this connected to learning about and understanding history?

'Africa riding us, folks! She's in us! Feel her rhythm. Feel her vibe. Jump up, 'cause today all of we Africans!' (Page 67)

Discuss: What does Jules Baptiste mean by this?

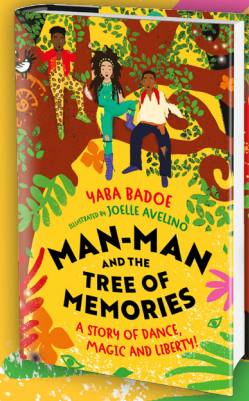
'Our heritage: how it enlivens us at carnival, and reminds us who we truly are.' (Page 104)

Discuss: What is cultural heritage? How does our heritage remind us who we truly are? How do you celebrate your own heritage? Why is it important to know about and remember our heritage?

'Girl, don't you realise that the past lives in our bodies? We carry the past in us and often, if it brings pain, if it hurts us deeply, it can destroy us.' (Page 105-106)

Discuss: Do you think the past lives on in us? Does it affect our future?

YABA BADOE
ILLUSTRATED BY JOELLE AVELINO
**MAN-MAN
AND THE
TREE OF
MEMORIES**
TEACHING RESOURCES



Activity: Create a poster to show your cultural heritage. What are your family's beliefs? What foods do you eat? When do you celebrate? Which languages do you speak?

'Month after month, year after year, with the help of our chiefs and merchants, they marched captives to the beach ahead. There, they rowed them to ships that carried them to captivity.'
(Page 134)

Discuss: Is this the climactic part of the story? How does the slave trade link to the carnival? Think about the research you conducted about the history of Notting Hill Carnival.

Activity: Brainstorm what you know about the slave trade. Why is it important to remember this event in history?

Activity: Research (with an adult's help to sort suitable material) the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Which routes were taken? Map the routes on a world map. Create a timeline of the slave trade.

Activity: Think about the legacy of the slave trade on different cities in Britain. Now look at the 2020 debate on statues of slave traders after the toppling of the statue of Edward Colston. Hold a debate on whether or not statues of those involved in the slave trade should be removed.

Activity: Create a poster of egret outlines flying through the air. In each, either write a reason why we need to remember our past, even if it is painful, or a way in which we can remember the slave trade.

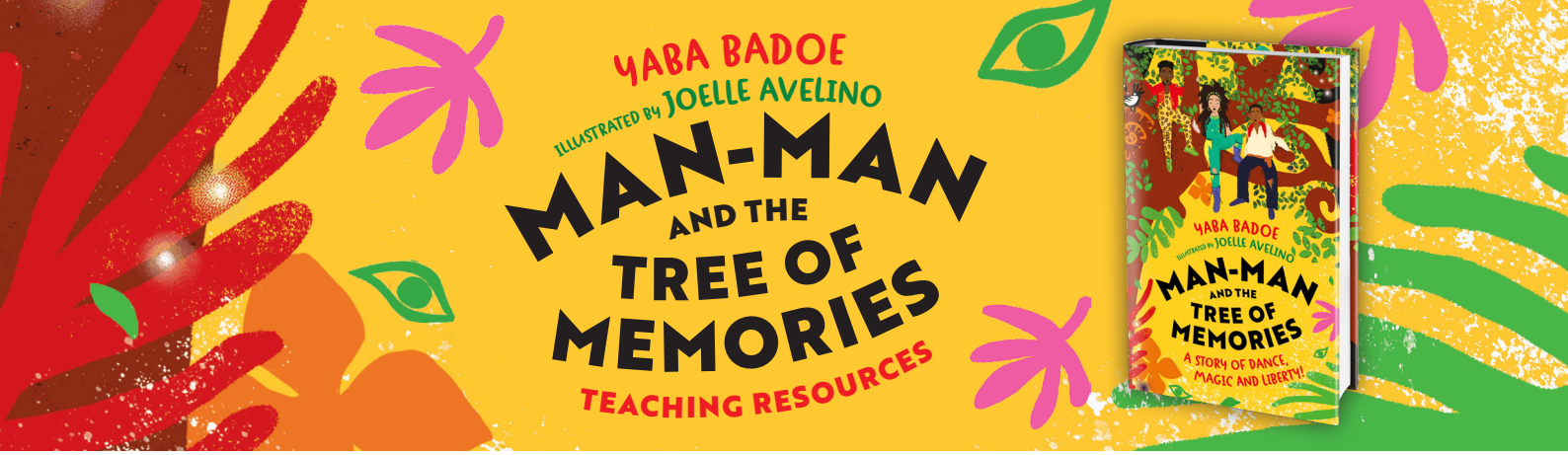
'You will live with the most precious of my gifts: the ability to slice and dice your enemies with a glance. You will pass this on to your daughters, and they, in turn, will give it to their daughters to help them endure the strange land these traders are taking you to. They trade in flesh and bone. You will fight them with Shango's power, the machete hidden in your eyes.' (Page 158-159)

Discuss: Why is it important to hold onto belief even in dark times?

Activity: Research (with an adult's help to sort suitable material) the end of the slave trade. How did abolition of slavery come about?

Discuss: Why is the legacy of slavery still relevant to today's descendants?

'A people's art is the genesis of their freedom.' Claudia Jones, founder of the Notting Hill Carnival (Page 184)



Discuss: Do you feel you understand what Claudia Jones means now that you have read Badoe’s novel?

Activity: Now that you’ve read and examined the whole novel, what are three things you’re sure about in the text? Write down two things you’re unsure about. Now write one question that you would like to ask the author or illustrator? See if a friend can answer the things you are unsure about, or whether you think you can answer them with some further research.

Further Reading

Freedom (1783) by Catherine Johnson

Journey Back to Freedom: The Olaudah Equiano Story by Catherine Johnson

Granny Came Here on the Empire Windrush by Patrice Lawrence, illus Camilla Sucre

The Boy Whose Wishes Came True by Helen Rutter

The Girl Who Talked to Trees by Natasha Farrant, illus Lydia Corry

To Carnival! A Celebration in St Lucia by Baptiste Paul, illus Jana Glatt

Festival Folk: An Atlas of Carnival Customs and Costumes by Rob Flowers

Black and British: A Short, Essential History by David Olusoga

Stolen History: The Truth About the British Empire and How it Shaped Us by Sathnam Sanghera

Bright Stars of Black British History by J.T. Williams and Angela Vives