

THE BOY I AM · BY K.L. KETTLE

READING ACCESS – REACHABLE FOR EVERY READER

Pre-teach vocabulary, sentence stems & strategies · SEND · EAL · lower-prior-attainment

The pack's extracts are **more accessible than they look**. They decode at a reading age of about **9**: short sentences, mostly plain words. What makes the book *feel* harder is its invented vocabulary and Jude's distinctive voice, not the decoding. Pre-teach a handful of terms and the extracts open up for almost any reader, with the thinking kept fully intact.

PRE-TEACH THESE TEN two minutes before reading: the words that carry the world

meritocracy: the idea people get ahead by their own effort and ability. In this world it's a lie.

the Chancellor: the all-powerful woman who rules the Tower.

a "lot": a thing sold at auction. Boys are called lots and given numbers, not names.

House Fathers: the men who run the House of Boys day to day.

the mines: where a boy is sent if no one buys him before he turns seventeen.

merit / demerit: points that measure a person's "worth". Girls are born with merits; boys inherit debt.

the House of Boys: where boys are raised, trained and prepared to be sold.

Above: the wealthy, powerful women who live in the upper Tower.

a Ward: a boy owned personally by a woman.

the dark-hours / "night": in the Tower there is no real night; someone flips a switch.

PRINT THESE ONTO THE PUPIL SHEET not just said aloud: put the scaffold in their hands

Sentence stems — the mask task

- "On the outside I... but inside I..."
- "I showed them ____, but really I ____."
- "My face said _____. My hands said _____."
- **Bold opener**: "My name is ____ and I am _____."

Describe & reveal — the garden task

- "It looked like... It felt like... It smelled of..."
- "I had never ____ before."
- **End on a question**: "I wondered who _____."
- Feeling words to bank first: *dread, wonder, longing, safe, exposed*.

LOWER THE READING DEMAND — WITHOUT LOWERING THE THINKING

Before & during

- Pre-teach the ten words above (two minutes).
- Read the extract aloud first — the voice carries the meaning.
- Chunk it: one paragraph, one question at a time.
- Pair a confident reader with a developing one.

Make it stick

- Dual-code: sketch the stage or the garden before writing.
- Give the stems on paper; tick each as it's used.
- Let students answer in a sentence before a paragraph.
- Accept a drawing + label as a first response.

Audio & read-aloud. Each extract is about a page — ideal for reading aloud. Model the first, then let pairs re-read. Most devices will read the PDF aloud (Immersive Reader, or the built-in "Speak" tools) for students who need it. **Reading age noted above is for the extracts**; the whole novel is a longer, more demanding read best kept for confident readers.