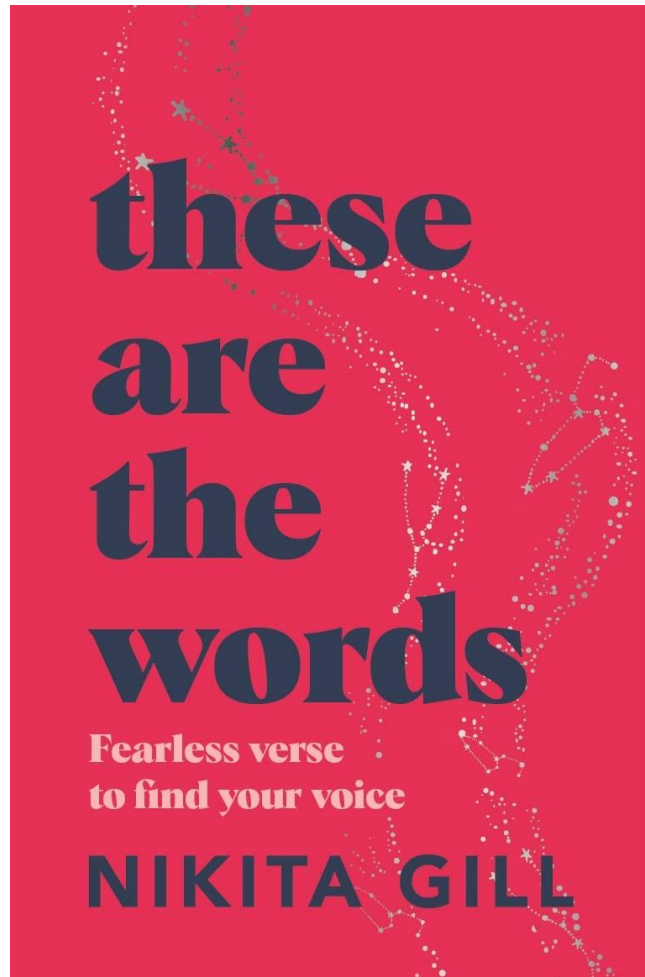


Discover and Heal your Inner Child with Nikita Gill's 'These are the Words: Fearless Verse to Find your Voice'

Find self-compassion with *These are the Words: Fearless Verse to Find your Voice!*



Level:

S2–S5 / KS3–4

Explore themes of

√ Friendship √ Family √ Hope √ Self-Expression √ Community √ Sexuality

Subject Checklist:

√ Expressive Arts √ English Language √ Social Studies √ Wellbeing and Health √ Creative Writing

Note to teachers: These books contain some material that may not be suitable for some students. We recommend that teachers read the books carefully before using it in the classroom or recommending it to students and/or seek parental guidance.

At a Glance

Before watching Nikita's event or reading the set poems!

What does the title mean to you?

1. What might the illustrations of the constellations across the front cover represent or symbolise?
2. Look at the text on the back cover, after reading it, what do you think might be the aim of this book?

Book Cover Activity: Inside my Head . . .

There are many different ways to express yourself! Look at the cover of *These are the Words*. Note down some inferences you can make about the content of the poems:

- *The colour palette: how many colours have been used and what effect does that have?*
- *The bold text of the title- how does this impact the cover?*
- *Where is the illustration in relation to the text, does it sit behind or alongside the title?*
- *Anything else you find interesting*

Reflect on how you are feeling today. What colours reflect your mood? What book title could express what it is inside your head? How would you express this in an illustration on a book cover?

Read the Extract

Take a look at the poems 'When you aren't ready to say I love you' on page 27

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think is the message behind this poem? Who is it meant for?
2. What is the dramatic effect of comparing the reader to nature?
3. What kind of natural imagery is invoked?
4. How does the illustration support the meaning of the poem?
5. What kind of tone does the narrative voice adopt?
6. How is the theme of time invoked in this poem?

7. What feelings does this poem inspire within you?
8. What does the poet imply about love? Is it portrayed as a simple or complex emotion?
9. What connection does the poet establish between nature and emotions?
10. What do you understand by the first line 'there are a dozen nameless countries inside you,' what do you think the poet means by that?
11. Can you think of a few different contexts in which this poem might be appropriate?
12. What does the poet imply about the relationship between care and love? Can one exist without the other?



Nikita Gill

Get to Know the Book!

The Theme of Healing

Nikita's book is not only beautifully written and illustrated, but also encourages readers to look within to heal childhood wounds and prejudices. Nikita also shows us a way to take care of ourselves whilst looking after others around us.

- In *These are the Words*, the book is organised into different stages of life, such as 'for when you are hurting' and 'for when you need to protest', what does this kind of structure mean to you? What kind of manual for life might Nikita be providing us with?
- Discuss the following questions as a group:
 - *What do you understand by the term 'inner child'?*
 - *Why is it so important for us to heal our inner child?*
 - *What does the inclusion of the illustrations contribute to the book?*
 - *The book is also interspersed with instructions for each star sign at the start of a new season, what effect does this have on the rhythm of the poems?*
 - *Why is a poetry a useful and powerful tool for healing?*

- Use these ideas to design an eye-catching poster to express what you understand by the term 'inner child, your poster can include anything that you might want to say to your own inner child.
 - Finally, can you make a list of actions for the categories 'for when you need to protest' and 'for when you are hurting'- what kind of advice would you give to people during these times?
 - Write a letter to a friend asking them
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Your Turn: Creating your Own Poem!

Expressing Yourself Through Poetry

The power of poetry enables us to heal and inspire each other. Create your own poem inspired by the things you wish you had known as a child, feel free to accompany your poem with an illustration

- Spend a few moments reflecting on the line 'These are the Words: Fearless Verse to Find your Voice', think about the words needed for these situations:
 - *When you needed to be comforted*
 - *When you need to believe in yourself*
 - *When you need to tell your friend that they are perfect the way that they are*
 - *When you need to take some rest*
 - *When you need to take a risk*
 - Draw your own illustration or collage inspired by the words 'These are the Words'. Think carefully about the main themes of the poems and how you may wish to express in your artwork. You might want to use different visual tools like:
 - *Experimenting with different textures*
 - *Variations of light and shade*
 - *Using monochrome or multicolour*
 - *Drawing and writing with varying sizes*
 - *Experimenting with how your text is structured*
 - If you are comfortable sharing your work, then place all your posters together on the floor or stick them to the wall to create a big collective collage. Reflect on the feelings that are inspired by looking at your work, how have you expressed yourselves in your artwork. Can you recognise any repeating patterns in your work?
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Reflection and Further Questions

Reflection Activity

Think over all that you have explored within yourself. Perhaps you have been inspired to

think about the ways in which poetry can help us better understand ourselves. Or maybe you have thought about the ways in which poetry can be used as a source of comfort...

Plan a trip to a natural space at the beginning of a new season, think about the feelings that the space inspires. How has the environment changed with the new season, what observations can you make? Write a poem in response to the arrival of the new season, and what a new season may beckon for each of us!

Lastly, do you have any final questions you would like ask Nikita Gill if you got the chance? Try to think of at least two and make a note of them.

Keep your eye out for more awesome books from Nikita Gill, as well as the other authors and illustrators from the Edinburgh International Book Festival!



Actual Investors