

### Methods to understand:

1. Simile – “My insides are quivering like goats in a bombing raid”
2. Metaphor – “my insides turn to yoghurt”
3. Exaggeration - ‘For the millionth time since we set sail, I remind myself why we’re doing this”
4. Dramatic irony – “Even though this is just pretend”
5. Repetition – “Her arms are bare. Her legs are bare.”
6. Tripling - “girls playing soccer is completely, totally and absolutely against the law.’ (p4)

### Main characters

The characters in *Boy Overboard* are strong, multi-dimensional and believable for the reader.

**Jamal** – narrator, eleven years old. He is brave, caring and resourceful.

**Bibi** – Jamal’s sister, nine years old. She is audacious and courageous.

**Mum** – She is determined, compassionate and has strong morals.

**Dad** – He is cunning, brave and caring.

**Omar** – Jamal’s friend, also a refugee. He is cunning, mischievous and bold.

**Rashida** – Jamal’s friend, also a refugee. She is more liberal, caring and optimistic

**Structure:** A chronological sequence of events narrated by the central character/ protagonist – Jamal.

## Oasis Academy Wintringham *Boy Overboard* Knowledge Organiser

Published in 2002

### Key vocabulary:

**Adjectives for Afghanistan:** unstable; volatile; dangerous; perilous

**Reader response:** concerned; sympathetic; nervous; anxious; heart-broken; distraught; distressed

**Negative emotion words:** Petrified; nervous; apprehensive; chaotic

**Positive emotion words:** courageous; optimistic; hopeful; sanguine



### Context

1. The capital city of Afghanistan is called Kabul.
2. The main religion in Afghanistan is Islam (99% of the population).
3. Followers of Islam are called **Muslims**. Muslims believe there is one true God called **Allah** (the Arabic word for God).
4. Afghanistan has experienced lots of war and violence. The country was invaded in 1979 by the Soviets (now Russians). In 1994, the Taliban – a political group who believe in an extreme (or fundamentalist) form of Islam – was founded to try and take control. In 1996 the Taliban took control of Kabul and made people follow a hard-line version of Islam. There was lots of death and violence. In 2001, the US attacked Kabul to remove the Taliban. The US were successful and a new government was formed. However, the Taliban started to reform and threaten the new government.
5. As a result of all the war, there around 6 million (6,000,000) Afghan refugees. A refugee is a person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster.
6. Afghanistan is also one of the poorest countries in the world. About 9 million (9,000,000) people live in extreme poverty.
7. Over 70% of adults cannot read and write and it is also estimated that at least 30% of children aged 5-14 are involved in child labour. This is when children are forced to work.
8. Women did not have the same rights as men – gender discrimination.

### Why did Morris Gleitzman write this book?

“For weeks I’d been seeing small overcrowded boats on the TV news. Back then we didn’t know much about who was on those boats, and the government didn’t seem to want us to. Some governments called the people on the boats criminals and terrorists. I decided to tell a different kind of story. A sort of antidote to the nameless faceless fear one. I was lucky enough to meet a family who had come to Australia as refugees. I got to know them and they kindly read the first draft of *Boy Overboard* and helped me hugely with details of life in Afghanistan. I dedicated the book to them, and the friendship I have with them is one of the most precious things my writing career has given me.”

### Themes

#### 1. Survival

- What keeps people going?
- What effect does stress have on people and how do different personalities cope?

#### 2. Conflict

- Between people in general
- Political and social conflict
- The history of conflict in Afghanistan

#### 3. Friendship and relationships

- Importance of ancestry – knowing who and where you’ve come from, sense of family history and a place to belong
- Putting needs of others before your own
- Friendships formed in times of adversary