

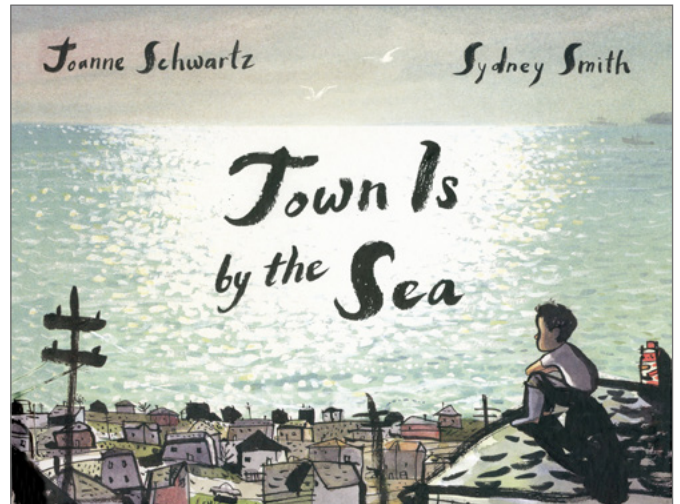
# TOWN IS BY THE SEA

By Sydney Smith (illustration) and Joanne Schwartz

Walker Books

2018 Kate Greenaway Medal shortlist, eligible for Amnesty CILIP Honour

*'Stunning illustrations bring to life a bygone era... Contrasting darkness and confined space with freedom and light above ground, these pictures linger in the mind.'* Judging panel



## UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

**Article 25:** We all have the right to enough food, clothing, housing and healthcare. Mothers and children and people who are old, unemployed or disabled have the right to be cared for.

**Article 29:** We have a duty to the community.

### ABOUT THIS BOOK

A boy wakes up by the sea, plays and explores, while being aware that his father digs for coal deep under the sea, and that too is his future. Stunning illustrations show the striking contrast between a sparkling seaside day and the darkness and danger where the miners dig. Set in the 1950s, this book reveals the sense of community and traditions in mining towns. It also illustrates the importance of children's rights to play and be educated, and the right to safe working conditions.

### HUMAN RIGHTS IN THIS STORY

Right to play; to rest and leisure; to safe working conditions; to family life; to peace and order; to free choice of employment.

### QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE HUMAN RIGHTS

- Does this town look like where you live? What is different and what is similar?
- Which images make you feel happy and sad? Why?
- When the family eat, why is there a black shadow under the kitchen table?
- Is this how childhood should be? Is it how you spend your time?
- What do you notice about the girls and women in the book?
- How do you feel knowing that the boy will one day go down the mine like his dad?
- How would you feel if your future had already been decided for you? Should you have the right to choose your career?

### ACTIVITY

Draw or write a day in your life crosscut with a day in the life of an adult you know. How are they different?



## RESEARCH

Find images and information about working in a coal mine in the UK. Draw a picture of a coal mine, showing the shaft and tunnels.

**In the 1800s, boys as young as nine or 10 would work a 12-hour mining shift in the harsh and dangerous underground tunnels. Even into the 1950s, around the time when this story takes place, boys of high-school age would carry on the tradition of their grandfathers and fathers working in the mines.**

## WE ARE ALL BORN FREE AND EQUAL

The atrocities of World War II sparked a determination to protect the rights of all human beings everywhere. On 10 December 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The preamble says it must be shared, learned by children and be a part of all our lives.

When using these notes, you can download for reference:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights simplified version, especially useful for younger children [amnesty.org.uk/udhr](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/udhr)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child [unicef.org/crc](https://www.unicef.org/crc)

For more free educational resources from Amnesty International go to [amnesty.org.uk/education](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/education)



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