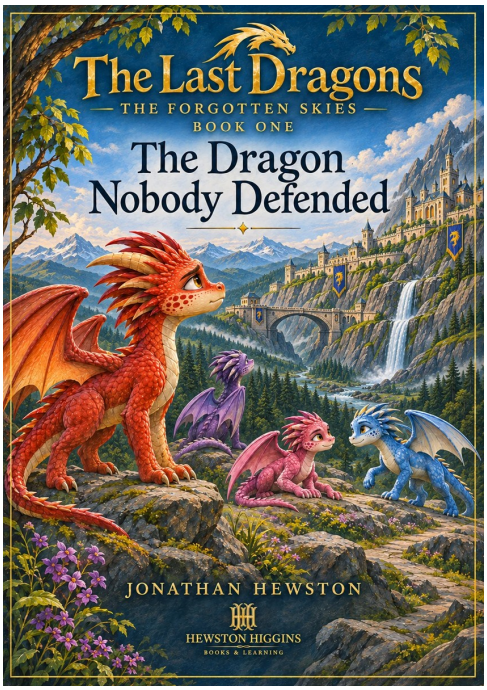
The Last Dragons

The Dragon Nobody Defended

Ages 8-11, with adult support



Meet Rufus, a red dragon beginning at Skyreach Academy. Explore unfair assumptions, belonging and the choices people make when someone is left out.

A free taste of the book, plus a new supplementary activity. The full book and complete teaching resources are separate.

Look inside / buy the paperback:

hewstonhiggins.com/the-last-dragons-the-dragon-nobody-defended

The Forgotten Skies

At the end of the mountain road, Rufus stopped. Skyreach rose from the cliff ahead. Its oldest towers had been carved straight from the rock. Newer walls climbed the ridge above them, their windows catching the morning sun. Far below, a river cut through black pines. Dragons circled the battlements, riding the wind that swept up from the gorge. Rufus stood on a rocky ledge and watched. Somewhere among those towers was Skyreach Academy. Tomorrow, he would belong there. At least, that was what the letter said.

Meet Rufus

Rufus had never brought down a mountain. He had once brought down a kitchen shelf while reaching for a biscuit, but nobody had written a warning about that. He liked stones with stripes through them, difficult cloud shapes and the quiet before everyone else woke up. A sky owl swept over the garden path. A small blue pebble slipped from her claws, bounced once and rolled towards a crack. Rufus stopped it with one careful claw. The owl clicked her beak impatiently. “I'm helping,” Rufus told her. “You could try being grateful.” She swooped down to reclaim it.

A fair beginning

Rufus likes striped stones, difficult cloud shapes and quiet mornings. What could someone ask him to get to know him better?

A question I could ask Rufus

Something I learned from the extract

A safe and kind action a character could take

Speak, point, draw, write, sign, use AAC or ask someone to scribe. You can skip a question.

A little guidance for adults

Begin with a choice

Offer the activity and explain what it involves. Let the learner choose how to take part, take a break or stop.

Read and notice

Use the included extract or the real page previews on the book page. Invite observations before giving your interpretation.

Make space for a response

Allow processing time. Accept speech, gesture, pointing, drawing, signing, AAC or silence. Avoid turning a shared story into a test.

Try one small next step

Use the supplementary activity. Notice the learner’s ideas and adapt the materials, pace and response method.

Use fictional examples. Do not ask children to disclose bullying or confront anyone. Listen to concerns privately and follow your setting’s reporting and protection procedures.

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