

# Year 6 Knowledge Organiser - PIG HEART BOY Book Study

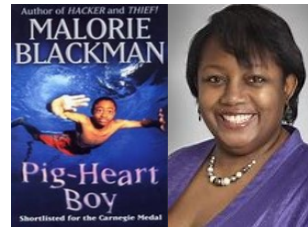
## Important Information

**PLOT:** When Cameron's dad organises a surprise meeting between the family and Dr Richard Bryce, it causes serious concerns about where a heart will come from: a pig. Conversations about the ethics and morality take place, along with the riskiness of the medical issues involved. Once the operation takes place, more problems are brought to the family from those they least suspected.

**THEMES:** Life Vs death, animal rights, religious beliefs, science, medicine, ethics and morality.

**SETTING:** The family live in Dealworth, London and this is also where Cameron goes to school. Part of the book is set in the research facility of Dr Richard Bryce, in a secret location in Yorkshire.

## Text



**Name of Book:** Pig Heart Boy

**Author:** Malorie Blackman

**Genre:** Realistic Fiction/ Science Fiction

**Date Published:** 1997

## Main Characters

Cameron Kelsey	Protagonist – 13-year-old boy from London with a failing heart who decides to go ahead with a risky heart transplant procedure
Marlon	Cameron's best friend from school who he entrusts with his secret.
Cathy Kelsey	Cameron's mum who is initially against the idea of the operation.
Tyler Kelsey	Cameron's dad who organises a meeting between the family and Dr Bryce without forewarning them
Dr Richard Bryce	Heart surgeon who has been experimenting with the use of pig's hearts to transplant into humans.
Alex Kelsey	Cameron begins to record video diaries for Alex.
Trudy	The pig who is kept in a research facility whose heart Cameron will take.
Dr Janice Ehrlich	Dr Richard Bryce's assistant who works at the research facility and picks the family up from the train station.
Mr Stewart	Cameron's school teacher, otherwise known as 'Sticky'
Julie	Cameron has a crush on this student in school.
The Press	Antagonists – Newspaper journalists who hear of Cameron's operation.
Travis	Antagonist - The school bully who is mean to Cameron.
Nan	Cameron's grandmother who gives advise to Cameron.

## Key Vocabulary

**Appendectomy:** A simple operation which removes an appendix.

**Assumption:** Something accepted as true without proof.

**Brusquely:** Abrupt, curt or blunt manner in speech.

**DNA:** Hereditary material in humans and other organisms.

**Earnest:** Being sincere or serious.

**E.C.G.:** Electrocardiograms detect electrical signals from the heart.

**Frankenstein:** Doctor from a classic novel (written by Mary Shelley) who was a 'mad scientist' and created a monster.

**Immoral:** Not conforming to accepted standards of morality.

**Mortify:** To cause someone to feel very embarrassed or ashamed.

**Preamble:** An introduction often stating purpose and aims.

**Precaution:** Action taken to stop something bad happening.

**Publicity:** Attention given to someone/something by the media

**Rejection:** When the body's immune system attacks transplanted cells, tissues, or organs.

**Scandalised:** To be shocked by someone's immoral behaviour.

**Sow:** An adult female pig, especially one which has given birth.

**Sumptuous:** Splendid, expensive-looking or delicious (food)

**Transgenics:** Biology concerned with the transferring of genes .

**Transplant:** To move something to another place .

**Vegan:** Someone who does not eat meat or dairy food.

## What Can the Book Teach Us?

What are your own beliefs?  
Can medicine take things too far?  
How do religions view this issue?