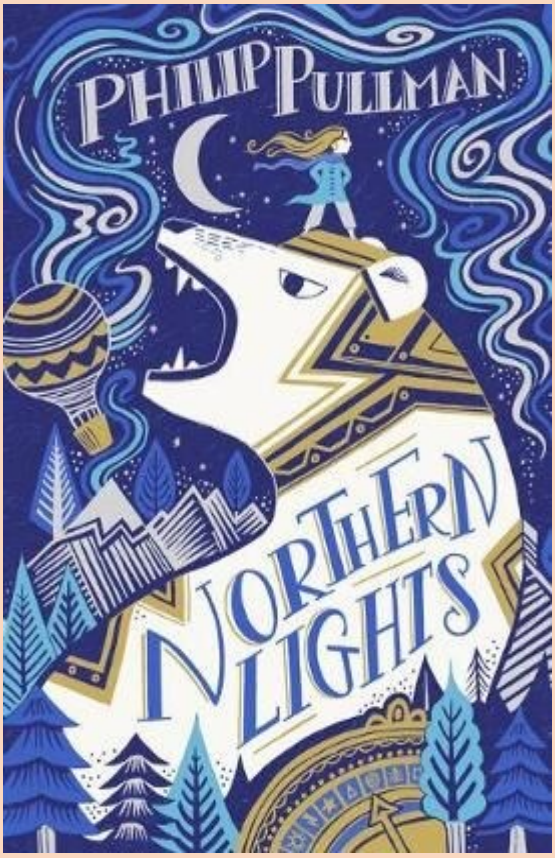
Name: Mr Jackson 6J

Title- Northern Lights- From His Dark Materials Series

Author: Phillip Pullman



Background- 'Northern Lights' has been a favourite story of mine since I was a child in primary school and I have read it over 5 times. The story is focused around Lyra Belacqua, supposedly an orphan, who is looked after by the old scholars at Jordan College, Oxford.

The Setting- Lyra lives in a world which is very different to our own, a world where humans have spirit animals called daemons each with their individual name (Lyra's daemon is called Pantalaimon). Lyra resides in Jordan College, Oxford which consists of several grand old buildings with various towers, spires and lots of space on the roof for mischievous Lyra to hide when playing games with her friends. Lyra's quest leads her to Trollesund and then to the icy north named Svalbard, which is in the middle of nowhere, surrounded by ice and snow and home to the deadly armoured bear kingdom.

The Plot- Lyra spends her days playing with friends in the nearby town and exploring with her daemon (her spirit animal) Pantalaimon. One day her friend, Roger, disappears and Lyra, devastated and determined, begins a quest to find him which leads her to the bleak terrains of the North where armoured bears rule and witch queens fly through the frozen skies—and where a team of scientists are conducting experiments too horrible to speak about. All of this is dangerous for Lyra and she has many more perilous obstacles ahead. Fortunately for Lyra, she acquires a very valuable object, that only a very few special people can interpret, from a Jordan scholar which can help and support her in her quest to find Roger .

Reader comments– This has been one of my favourite books since I was a child. I love the fact that all humans have daemons, which represent a part of their souls and support them in their day to day lives.

Lyra is a very resilient character who has many special qualities, including being able to read the alethiometer and being able to communicate effectively with lots of different types of characters, including armoured bears, Gyptians and Witches. Furthermore, I like the settings in which the story is based because they go from being a normal town to the extreme cold of the north.

Recommendation– I recommend this book to Year 5 and 6 readers who like both adventure and mystery. 'Northern Lights' is part of the 'His Dark Materials Trilogy' ('The Subtle Knife' and 'The Amber Spyglass)' which has been made into a television series on BBC. However I would definitely recommend reading the books.