Word Analysis

1. Read page 19
   a) Find and copy one word used to describe Gerard's hands.
   b) Can you find any other adjectives to describe Gerard's hands in the chapter?

2. What simile is used to describe Tosher's hair on page 23?

3. "*The wind in the alley cut through them instantly.*" What does 'cut through them instantly' mean?

4. On page 17 we read, "*flues … ran up the backbone of the house like a river with many tributaries*"
   a) What are tributaries?
   b) What image does this give you?

5. On page 21, we read that Gerard "a*dopted the writhing, fawning attitude he reserved for the clients …*" What do these words mean:
   a) writhing
   b) fawning

6. On page 23 we read the word "*obsequious*". What do you think this might mean?

Inference

1. On page 19 Billy does something surprising.
   a) What does this tell you about Billy's character?
   b) How do the little 'uns respond, and what does this tell you about their character?

2. On page 20 it says, "*to his way of thinking every speck was coin stolen from his purse.*" What are these words telling us about Gerard?

3. What is the difference in the relationship between Billy and the little 'uns, and Billy and Tosher? How can you tell there is a difference?

4. Why do you think Gerard's clients say nothing about his treatment of the boys?

5. Where do you think the silver spoon could have come from? What does its appearance mean for Billy and Tosher?

Activity 1: Money

In Victorian times, money was in pounds, shillings and pence. There were

- 12 pence in 1 shilling
- 20 shillings in 1 pound

But there were many more coins - which made things very confusing! Can you fill out the table below? You'll need to remember your fractions! Work with a partner or in groups.

	How many **pence**?	How many **shillings**?
Farthing		
Half penny (ha'penny)		
Penny		
Threepence (thrupenny bit)		
Sixpence		
Shilling		
Florin		
Half Crown		
Crown		
Pound		

Farthing = ¼ pence
Half Penny (ha'penny) = ½ pence
Penny = 1 pence
Threepence (thrupenny bit) = 3 pence
Sixpence = 6 pence

Shilling = 12 pence
Florin = 2 shillings
Half crown = 2 shillings and six pence
Crown = 5 shillings
Pound = 20 shillings

OUT of the SMOKE

Activities
Chapter 2

<u>Teacher's Notes</u>

Adapt this activity based on the ability in your class. Pre-fill parts of the table if necessary. You may just want to discuss the kinds of money used, and use the images on the resource sheet to talk about the imperial and decimal system. For older classes, remind them of their fractions and practice finding common denominators (eg 12).

Sheet solution

	How many **pence**?	How many **shillings**?
Farthing	1/4***	1/48***
Half penny (ha'penny)	1/2**	1/24***
Penny	1	1/12***
Threepence (thrupenny bit)	3	1/4**
Sixpence	6	1/2**
Shilling	12	1
Florin	24*	2
Half Crown	30*	2 1/2*
Crown	60*	5
Pound	240*	20

Difficulty level:

* moderately difficult
** very difficult
*** extremely difficult

Activity 2: Creative Writing

Write a diary entry as Billy or Tosher, as you go from house to house

- What are you feeling?

- What happens to you?

- Who are the people you meet?

Activity 3: Formal writing

Read the quotes on the resources page, and look at the images below. Imagine you are living in the Victorian era. Write a letter to your local MP, explaining the working conditions of climbing boys and persuading them to vote to ban their use.

A: "Don't cheek your master …"
B: A mechanical chimney sweeper
C: "They took apart an upstaors wall brick
    by brick …"
D: Inside a flue (about 10 inches wide)

Resource Sheet

Death of a Climbing Boy

Hall [the master sweep], Mrs. Bishop [the baker's wife], and the landlord of the public house were in the shop when he went in. They told him a boy was in the flue; he asked the master how long; he said an hour; witness said, "My good God! why don't you break down the flue and run down to the bakehouse?"

Got a poker, Hall followed him, and said he was too hasty: witness put his head up the chimney, and could hear the boy breathing hard; took the poker up stairs, and began to break open the flue; in a moment he had room to put his hand in, and cleared away the soot from his [Dowland's] head; held it up, but seemed not to have life in it.

He went down stairs and broke the flue below, and got at his feet: when the master saw that, he said, "Let me get at him, and I will get him down, as he is only sulky, and is taking a nap." Mr. Smith then came and made a greater aperture above, and he and witness lifted him out.

The Testimony of Rodger Kaye

Rodger is 19 years old and works as a chimney sweep. He lives with his employer Thomson Black, a master chimney sweep, in Gallowgate Street in Glasgow.

He works beside Francis Hughes, another chimney sweep, and each of them has an apprentice. Rodger's apprentice or climbing boy is Laurence McAllister. Hughes has a boy called John O'Neill, aged about 8 or 9, working for him.

Rodger saw Hughes and O'Neill between 8 & 9 o'clock on the morning of Thursday, 23 January 1840 when they left the house in search of work and he didn't see them till about 5 o'clock when Hughes came back in a panic.

He says that he and Thomson Black arrived at the house where O'Neill was, but they didn't know which vent O'Neill was in. They shouted but couldn't get an answer. McManus, another apprentice, knew where he was and tried to climb down to him but it was too tight. He thought he heard O'Neill coughing.

They went to the bottom of the vent but the fireplace was blocked with stones left by the builders. They then broke a hole in the wall to make an opening.