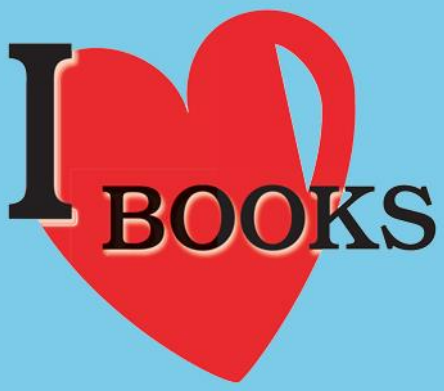


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Opening extract from

The Street Beneath My Feet

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Please print off and read at your leisure.




When you're walking along the city streets there's always so much to see and hear. Cars and buses roar past and beep loudly. People chatter and shout to each other as they go to work and do their shopping. The shop windows are colourful and bright.
But do you ever stop and look down?
What's going on deep in the ground under your feet? Shall we take a peek?
Just underneath the pavement you'll find water pipes taking water to homes, shops, schools and offices.
Here are wires that go up into the buildings to make people's telephones work and to let them use the Internet.
STORM DRAIN
Other cables carry electricity so that everyone can watch TV, boil the kettle and turn on the lights.
When it rains, water flows through gutters in the street. It gushes down into the storm drains below, where it is carried off to nearby rivers.
It's not all cables and pipes underground – there are living things here, too.
Earthworms burrow their way through the soil, loosening it up so water and air can flow through it. Earthworms are expert recyclers, eating dead plants in the soil.
Some insects lay eggs in the soil and their young larvae stay underground during the cold winter months.
TOPSOIL
Look closely and you might see centipedes wriggling through the soil, looking for worms and small bugs to eat. Millions of tiny living things called micro-organisms are also in the soil. They help to break down dead creatures and plants. Mmm... tasty!
Now go a little lower and you'll be in the sewer! Hold your nose – this is where the waste water ends up when it goes down the plughole or you flush the toilet.
Can you spot any rats?
So many stories from history lie under the ground. If you dig down a bit deeper, you might find objects left behind by people who lived here hundreds or thousands of years ago.
There could be gold coins, pottery or swords. Don't be spooked, but there might even be skeletons!
These things have been buried all this time and can tell us a lot about how people used to live.
Who do you think wore this helmet on their head?
Archaeologists dig for these objects and study them to learn more about the past.
What's that loud rumbling noise making the ground shake? It's an underground railway!
CLAY
Passengers travel down to underground stations on escalators. They speedily travel around the city in