

# Knowledge Organiser - Varjak Paw by S.F. Said

## Important Information

### Plot

When the Contessa dies in the house where a family of Mesopotamian Blue cats live, a gentleman arrives with two mysterious black cats. Both Varjak and the Elder Paw realise something is wrong and Varjak begins to communicate with his ancestor Jalal, who trains him in cat martial arts known as 'The Way'. Varjak leaves the house on an unforgettable adventure into the unknown where he uncovers the 'vanishings'.

### Themes

Rebellion, Perseverance, Courage, Family, Exploration, Friendship, Bullying, Open-Mindedness, Trust, Self-Awareness

### Setting

The book initially set in the Contessa's house but Varjak climbs over the stonewall of the garden and escapes into the town where he has to contend with new characters, roads, cars and even dogs!

## Characters

Varjak Paw	Protagonist – A young 'Mesopotamian Blue' kitten with amber eyes.
Elder Paw	Varjak's grandfather who is wise and knows something is wrong.
Jalal the Paw	Ancestor of Varjak who teaches him 'The Way' through dreams.
Father / Mother Paw	Father and Mother of Varjak Paw.
The Contessa	An old lady who feeds the cats who unexpectedly dies.
Julius	Antagonist – Varjak's brother who is always making fun of him.
Jethro, Jay & Jerome	Brothers of Varjak Paw.
Juni and Jasmine	Aunt and cousin of Varjak Paw.
The Gentleman	A man who turns up at the house with two black cats after the Contessa's death.
The Black Cats	Two mysterious cats who enter the house with 'The Gentleman'.
Tam and Holly	Two friends whom Varjak meets outside of the stonewall house.
Sally Bones	An unpleasant, thin, white cat owning some territory within the town.
Razor	Lieutenant of Sally Bones.
Cludge	A clumsy dog who Varjak meets on his adventure.
Ginger	Leader of a gang of cats who beat up Varjak.



### What Can the Book Teach Us?

With courage and belief,  
anything is possible.  
Listen to your elders for  
wisdom and advice.  
Stay loyal to your friends.

### Quotes

"Outside! For the first time since  
Jalal, a paw stood on  
the edge of the world."

"'Believe something is  
impossible,' said his ancestor  
calmly, 'and you will surely fail.  
But believe in yourself and you  
can do anything.'"



Name of Book: Varjak Paw

Date Published: 2003

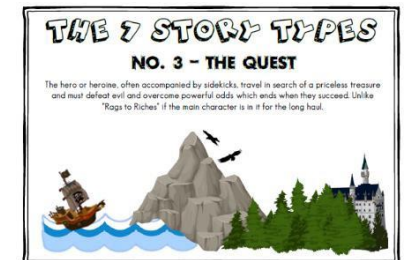
Author: S.F. Said

Illustrator: Dave McKean

Reading 'Reconsidered' Spine:

Year 5 Pie Corbett Spine

Genre: Fantasy / Adventure



## Key Vocabulary

ancestor	a person from whom one is descended (great relatives)
bristled	when hair is or becomes short and stiff on an animal
tutted	a noise used to express irritation or impatience
corrupted	someone that has become disloyal or dishonest
deliberately	to do something on purpose
cackled	a wicked laughter, often made by at someone's expense
spluttered	to make spitting noises or unable to get words out
bellowing	to make a deep, loud shout or cry
cowering	to hide, often protecting the head by keeping it down
desolate	an empty, abandoned area
potent	having strength or power (often used for smell or taste)
rancid	unpleasant odour or taste due to it rotting
swaggering	over confident mannerisms
forage	to hunt and look for something
enthralled	excited and captivated by something
intoxicating	an experience which takes over the body and mind