Teaching Ideas for the Klaus Flugge Prize Shortlist 2018

Set up to honour Klaus Flugge, founder of Andersen Press, this award is for the most promising & exciting newcomer to children's picture book illustration.

Title: Curiosity
Author/Illustrator: Markus Motum
Publisher: Walker Studio

These notes have been written by the teachers at CLPE to provide schools with sessions which focus on the importance of illustration in building a narrative and supporting children's response. They build on our work supporting teachers to use picture books to enhance critical thinking and develop creative approaches in art and writing.
The teaching notes show you how to use picture books with your class to enhance children's reading comprehension and understanding of how to convey messages through illustration. We hope you find them useful.

Before beginning this sequence:

Collect together a range of art materials that will allow the children to engage in the activities exploring illustration, for example: cartridge paper, acrylic or poster paint, coloured pencils, sponges, a variety of brushes, including toothbrushes

Suggested Activities:

Session 1:

Share the front cover of the text with the children. *What sort of text do they think this is going to be? Why?* Explore the language of the title; *do they know what a rover is and does?* Now focus on the illustration. *What do they think about the style of the illustration? Is this what they would expect from this type of text? What sorts of illustrations do they think they might see inside the book?* Allow children to jot down their ideas on a post-it note and stick these around a copy of the front cover on a working wall display.

Now open up the book to see the full spread across the front cover and blurb. Look at the direction in which the rover is travelling, as if it is leading us into its journey. Read the blurb aloud. Do they still agree with their first thoughts about the book? Use this opportunity to find out the children's prior knowledge about the subject of the book. *What do they already know about rovers, space travel or Mars missions? What would they like to find out?*

You may wish to set up an information sharing and collection grid for the children to add to throughout their reading. Children could do these individually, in mixed pairs or groups or you could complete one as a whole class:

What do we already know about rovers/space travel/Mars missions?	What do we want to find out?	What have we learnt?

Look at the first title page. Discuss the use of perspective – *from where do you think we are viewing this? How does the perspective used take us into the book?* Markus Motum, the illustrator, noted on his blog that his plan for the book was 'to have it printed as large as possible, much like my final major project book. And like that book, this story involves a long journey, and I like the idea of having a huge double page spread to read across, making the expanse of the journey seem as big as possible'. Look at how the left side of the spread makes us feel the expanse of space around us, but the placing of the planets on the right hand side of the page leads us in to the journey that lies ahead.

Turn the page; *where do you think the page turn has taken us?* Read the accompanying text and look at the way Markus Motum has chosen to face the rover's lens to us as the audience. Why do you think he has chosen to do this? What effect does this give?

Read on to *'Even with our modern technology, we don't have a practical way to get humans to Mars – the journey would take at least six months – or to get them back.'* Take a moment to reflect on the children's first thoughts about what sort of book they thought this would be; *do they still agree? What have they learnt so far from this part of the text?* This can be added to the information grids. *How do the illustrations and text work together to convey the information to the reader?* Look at the way that the text is placed and sized – *why do you think he has placed the text in small chunks in the expansive illustrations? Why do you think he has chosen to show the questions and the statistic about the distance to Mars in larger text?*

Look closely at the illustrations throughout; what media and techniques do the children think have been used? Markus Motum works in photoshop but here you can explore different paint techniques that will allow the children to create some of the effects used in the illustrations. These could include dry brush, layering, stippling, splattering, dabbing and overlaying with coloured pencils. Watch videos that allow children to see the planets, exploring colours, textures and shapes such as those on the BBC Solar System web pages: http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/space/solarsystem/sun_and_planets or on NASA's website: https://www.nasa.gov/topics/solarsystem/videos/index.html. Allow them to create their own representation of all or part of our solar system on A3 black sugar paper using acrylics or poster paint.

Session 2:

Read up to *'Some of these earlier missions had become lost in Space, while others had crashed into Earth, never to be heard from again.'* Discuss where things children thought they already knew might be correct

or have been challenged, whether any of their questions have been answered and collate any new knowledge on the information grid.

Look at the illustrations in these spreads. These start with an iconic image of the first person on the moon. *What feelings does this image invoke in you? What has the illustrator done to allow this to happen?* You might look at the choice to put the astronaut alone on one side of the spread, with the gutter separating him from the flag and his ship, with Earth far away in the distance. The next spread in the NASA office is much more colourful, shown from a closer perspective and mixes illustration with diagrams. *What do they think the purpose of this illustration is? What do they like or dislike about this image? What questions do they have about it?*

Finally, explore the spread showing the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Los Angeles. *What can the children tell about this place from the illustration?* Give mixed pairs or groups a copy of this illustration and allow them time and space to annotate this with their ideas. They might note that it is modern, referring to the technology they can see such as satellite dishes, or may refer to the style or materials used for the buildings. They may say there is lots going on there as there are so many different parts to the building, note its relative isolation from other towns or buildings, but that it is accessible via the major road, or that the colours and shapes suggest it is in a dry, mountainous location, surrounded by forests. Come back together to discuss children's observations and to explore the style of the illustration. *What would they say about the style and composition?* They may explore the fairly flat and geometric style, picking out the very definite shapes used to build the picture, for example the repeated triangles and rectangles to simplify the shapes of the buildings, the way that shadow has been used to bring these to life, the richer colours used to foreground the land where the building sits and the paler colours used to distance the background creating perspective. Compare the illustration with a photograph of the Laboratory, as shown here: http://www.microcosmologist.com/blog/3160-2/

Print the photo out for the children and allow them time and space and access to a range of materials to work on their own simplified representation of this landscape; *how will they draw on the techniques Markus Motum has used to represent the size and scale of the lab, but also how it sits in its expansive surroundings?* The children may want to use collage as a technique here, building up the layers from the background to the foreground as the illustrator would do in Photoshop.

Session 3:

Read on, up to *'So I boarded a carrier plane and flew from Los Angeles… to the Kennedy Space Center.'* Revisit the information grid, confirming thoughts, answering questions and noting any new information gleaned.

Look at the different types of illustration used in these spreads to share information with the reader, the fact boxes in the illustration inside the lab, the labelled blueprint drawing and large illustration of the rover itself, the map with flight path to share the journey of the rover. *What is effective about each of these illustrations. What do they allow for that words alone do not?*

Give the children the chance to pick one piece of information linked to space travel, rovers or Mars missions that they are particularly interested in, linked to the information grids that have been filled in so far. This may be something simple like the journey of the rover from the lab to the space center or something more complicated like how rovers are designed and built.

Allow time and space for the children to plan a double page spread to convey their information to a reader in words and illustration. They should think about everything they have learned so far in terms of using text and images to convey information and can draw on styles and techniques practiced. When the children have completed their artworks, pin them up around the room. Allow them to walk round, exploring each other's work and evaluating the effect of the techniques used in achieving their goal.

Session 4:

Read up to *'One the fuel had done its job of getting the rocket into space, stage-by-stage the empty boosters broke off and fell safely into the ocean.'* Add any new information to the information grid.

Copy each of these five spreads for mixed groups of children to explore and discuss: *how effectively do the spreads in this section of the text highlight the magnitude of the mission?* They can annotate the illustrations with their thoughts and opinions, before presenting back to the group as a whole. On the first spread, children might talk about the size and scale of the rocket compared to the people, trucks, buildings and pylons around it as well as the space left to show the expanse of sky marking the immense journey ahead. On the next spread, they may compare the previous spread to the vast expanse of space. The right hand side of the spread shares the focus of the journey from Earth to Mars, set within the double page spread of our solar system and sharing the orbit patterns of each planet around the sun. The spread inside the control room shows the scale of the operation on the ground, the mass of screens and controllers involved in monitoring and controlling events. The large scale screens on the wall dominate half of the page, showing the importance of what is going on. The wonder of the launch is shown in an epic double page spread, where the reader has to turn the book vertically to make this an immense experience for the reader. The final spread shares the process of the other parts breaking free from the module, allowing it to complete its journey to Mars. The way the actions are broken up over the spread allows the reader to see the different processes involved clearly.

Allow time for the children to select the spread or spreads they think are most impressive then present their opinions back to the class, explaining the techniques that most drew their attention. Do they all share the same opinions or are different groups drawn to different spreads?

Session 5:

Read to the end of the rover's story. Explore the impact of colour in these final spreads. Mars is famously known as the 'Red Planet' and the rich reds and pinks chosen over these spreads highlight this. The pinks of the ground are reflected in the sky when it is white and in the text on the page as it gets dark. What can you tell about the landscape on Mars from these illustrations? How is it similar or different to the Earth landscapes portrayed earlier in the book?

Allow the children to watch some of the Curiosity footage available from Nasa, for example the image gallery at: https://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/msl/images/index.html or videos available here: https://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/msl/videos/index.html. Discuss words and phrases that would describe the landscape, its colours, textures and physical features.

Allow the children time and space to complete their own illustrations reflecting the landscape of Mars. Talk about how they will represent the colours, textures and physical features they have seen in the photographs and videos. Once again, the children may want to use collage as a technique here, building up the layers from the background to the foreground as the illustrator would do in Photoshop. When they have completed their illustrations, pin these up around the room and allow the children to take the time to look at each other's interpretations, comparing and contrasting thoughts and techniques.

Finish by discussing the book as a whole. Allow lots of time for the children to explore the book independently following these sessions. They may want to re-read, or they may continue to be inspired to create their own illustrations; allow time and space and access to art materials and reference photographs or videos to allow children to do this. You may want to get extra copies of the book to explore in group reading sessions or for interested children to borrow from the reading area or school library and read together.

This sequence of activities was designed by CLPE for the Klaus Flugge shortlist. To access more resources to support your literacy teaching, visit: www.clpe.org.uk/freeresources

Further teaching sequences and resources to support children's understanding of picturebooks for all ages and research on the importance of using picturebooks across the primary years can be found at: https://www.clpe.org.uk/powerofpictures

If you have enjoyed this teaching sequence you might want to look at our Power of Reading resource. This contains in depth teaching sequences for more than 200 other high quality texts helping you to plan and deliver a rich literacy curriculum with quality children's literature at its heart. www.clpe.org.uk/powerofreading