



Teaching Ideas for the Klaus Flugge Prize Shortlist 2020

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: When Sadness Comes to Call

Author Illustrator: Eva Eland

Publisher: Andersen Press

These notes have been written by the teachers at the [CLPE](#) to provide schools with ideas to develop comprehension and cross-curricular activities around this text. They build on our work supporting teachers to use picture books to enhance critical thinking and develop creative approaches in art and writing. They encourage a deep reading of and reflection on the text, which may happen over a series of reading sessions, rather than in just one sitting. We hope you find them useful.

Reading aloud and key talking points:

- Look at the front cover of the text and spend time closely looking at the illustration, before exploring the words you can see. *What do you notice about the two characters that you can see? How do you think they are feeling? What makes you think or feel that way?*
- If you have the hardback edition of the book, pass it round to the children, so that they can feel the debossed expression on the green character's face and literally feel its emotion. *Who do you think this character is? What do they look like? How do you think they feel? What tells you this?* Invite the children to hold the same facial expression and body position as this character, to support them in articulating their ideas. *Can they think of a time when they have felt this way before?* Invite the children to share their personal experiences if they feel comfortable to talk about these.
- Now look at the second character, in the red coat and boots. *Who do you think this is? What do you think they might be thinking or doing? What ideas do they have about what the story involving these characters might be about?*
- Now read the title of the book '**When Sadness Comes to Call**' – *what do you think this means? Does it give you any more ideas about the story to come? Who do you think sadness will call on? What makes you think this?*
- Now open the book to reveal the front endpapers. Spend time looking closely at the different images they can see and talking about these together. *What do you think these images show? What are these people doing? How do you think they are feeling? What makes you think this? What similarities are there in the images? What are the differences?*
- Consider the placement of the character from the front cover interspersed between the images of the people. *Why do you think this character sits alongside these images? What more does this make you think about this character, who they are and what they might represent?*
- Now look at the inside title page. *Who can you see in the illustration? What is happening? Does this give you any more ideas about the title of the book?* Re-read this again, as you see it on the page. *What do you think is happening here? Do you think the child with the book will answer the door? What might happen if they do?* Collect examples of the children's responses. You could display these around a copy of this illustration to come back to later.
- Turn the page and read the first spread, looking closely at the illustration alongside. Look at the way the child is answering the door. *What do you notice? Do you think this is a visitor they want to*



see? Why or why not? Discuss the text together – *what does 'unexpectedly' mean? What do you think it means for sadness to arrive unexpectedly? Does it really knock on your door like this? Can we see sadness? Can you think of a time you have felt sadness? What do you think could have happened for sadness to come to this child?* Collect examples of the children's thoughts and ideas around a copy of this illustration.

- Read on to the next spread, 'It follows you around'. Think about the space that the blue/green character takes up on the page, compared to the child. Look at their body positions, and their facial expressions. *How do you think the child might feel here? What do you think they might be thinking?* You could collect the children's ideas in speech bubbles, around a copy of this illustration. Look carefully at the props in the room. *What do you notice about the flowers in the vase? Why might the illustrator have chosen to illustrate these this way?*
- Now turn the page, read the text and take time to look at the illustration. *What does the illustration do to intensify the feeling of being smothered, implied in the text?* Look again at how large and close the blue/green character is to the child and how the character covers the child's face, particularly over their nose and mouth. Look at the illustrator's choice of making the sofa so long, yet placing the two characters right at the end, with the child huddled and the other character taking up the space around them. *How does it feel to look at the image? What do you think the child is feeling?*
- Turn over to look at the next spread 'You can try to hide it'. *What do you notice about the child in this spread? How do they look different from in previous spreads? Do you think this will work?* Take some time to look at the other props in the illustration, there are two chairs, a teapot and teacup, a broom and a bucket – *why do you think the illustrator might have chosen to place objects in pairs in this way?*
- Read on to 'But sometimes it feels like you've become sadness yourself. *Is this what they thought would happen?* Compare the events with the children's predictions. Re-read and revisit these pages, looking in close detail at the illustrations and discussing what is happening as the spreads move on. Children might notice small details like the withered plant in the vase, the fact that sadness's presence on the page becomes bigger as the spreads progress and how, eventually, the child is encompassed in sadness. *How do they think the child feels about the sadness? What tells them this? How do the other people in the last spread in this section react to the child's sadness? Why do you think they don't notice? Is there anyone who does?*
- Talk with the children about how we recognise and respond to our own emotions and those of friends and family. *Can they think of a time when they have seen someone who has felt sad? How did they know this? What did they do? Or, have they ever felt sad and no-one has noticed, like this child? What did they do, or, what would they have liked other people to do?* Now, ask them; *what do they think the child should do next?* Collect examples of predictions made by the children and make a note of these around a copy of the illustration to come back to.
- Turn the page to read and explore the next spread. *What has the child chosen to do here? How had this changed the relationship between the child and the other character?* Look at the way they are positioned on the page, separated and sitting on chairs at the same level with the child on the left. *How do you think the child feels now? What has changed?* Now, look at the reaction of the



blue/green character. *How do you think they feel? Why might they feel this way? How do you think this might move the story forwards? What do you think will happen next?*

- Look at the next spreads, talking about the things the child has chosen to do and the way the two characters interact. Look at the symmetry in their actions, the shift in the equality of the space each character takes up on the page. The way the child is now leading the action, rather than the blue/green character. *What do you think this tells us?*
- Read on to 'You can listen to their sounds together.' *Were they surprised by what happened next? How did it compare to their predictions? How did the child learn to cope with sadness by itself? Did doing these things take the sadness away? Why do you think these things might have helped? What do you do when you feel sadness that helps you to cope with or begin to overcome this feeling?* Talk about the different things they mention, comparing these with what the child does in the book. It would also be a good idea to keep a note of the children's responses so that teachers, adults and classmates know what might help different children cope with or overcome any sadness they might feel.
- Turn the page and read aloud the next spread; 'Maybe all it wants to know is that it is welcome.' Look at this image carefully where the child is literally embracing sadness. Talk with the children about this image. *What does it mean to them? What do they think it is saying about sadness?* Now turn the page again and look at how sadness is represented here. *How do you think the child is feeling now? What makes you think this? How do you think they feel about sadness now?*
- Now, read on to the next spread, looking at all the details in this illustration. What do they notice about the child's blanket? Look at the change in the scale of the blue/green character from the earlier spreads? What might this tell you about how the child is feeling? Look at the drawing on the wall – *what does this show us? What does the facial expression of the child in the drawing tell us? How do you think they feel about sadness?* Talk together about the range of emotions that we experience and let children talk about different ways they can embrace and control these emotions. Talk about the fact that it is ok to be sad sometimes, and think about ways to help work through this emotion. *Would they do similar things to the child in the book, or different things?* Talk about how the child chose to work through this emotion by themselves. *What might this suggest about the child? Do we always need to go to someone else to help us manage our emotions? Do we always want to share our feelings with another person?* Talk about how different people deal with feelings in different ways – sometimes people want to be left alone to work things out for themselves, sometimes people want to share their feelings and gain the support of another person to work through these. Explain that there is no right or wrong way to manage feelings, but that we should all be aware of what helps us most when we are feeling a particular way, and that it is important that we know what to do or who to go to to help us.
- Now read to the end of the book. *What changes can you see from the start of the story to this final spread?* Look at how the plants in the vase are now colourful, alive and upright, the colour brought into the, walls, the vase and the plants outside the door and how this compares with the emptiness on the facing spread and the previous spreads. Look again at the child. *How do you think they are feeling now? How can you tell?* Come back together to talk about the range of emotions we all experience. Encourage the children to name and recognise these emotions through sharing images and other texts. You may find the following examples useful:



- *A Book of Feelings*, Amanda McCardie and Salvatore Rubbino (Walker)
- *The Great Big Book of Feelings*, Mary Hoffman and Ros Asquith (Frances Lincoln)
- *Everybody Feels...* (series), Moira Butterfield and Holly Sterling (Quarto)
- Now look at the back endpapers. *What do you notice about the way the people and the character of sadness are represented in these illustrations?* Compare these with the front endpapers and explore the differences. *What do you think the illustrator is showing us in these two different spreads?*
- Read the entire book from the beginning and continue to read aloud until the end. Allow the group to begin to explore their responses to it through booktalk with the help of what Aidan Chambers calls 'the four basic questions'. These questions give children accessible starting points for discussion:
 - Tell me...was there anything you liked about this story?
 - Was there anything that you particularly disliked...?
 - Was there anything that puzzled you?
 - Were there any patterns...any connections that you noticed...? Did it remind you of anything else you've read or seen?
- The openness of these questions unlike the more interrogative 'Why?' question encourages every child to feel that they have something to say. It allows everyone to take part in arriving at a shared view without the fear of the 'wrong' answer.
- As children reply it can be useful to write down what they say under the headings 'likes', 'dislikes', 'puzzles', 'patterns'. This written record helps to map out the group's view of the text and the important themes and ideas around the story from the children's perspective and is a way of holding on to ideas for later. Asking these questions will lead children inevitably into a fuller discussion than using more general questions. You may, for example, ask the children if they had favourite parts of the story, and why this was.
- Extend the children's thinking through a more evaluative question, such as *Why do you think Eva Eland chose to write this book? Who do you think would like this book? Why?*
- Leave multiple copies of the book in the book corner for the children to revisit and re-read in independent reading time, by themselves or socially in a group.

To continue work around the book:

- Use watercolour paints to make shapes of your own to express what sadness looks like. *How do you make a shape that looks sad?* Encourage the children to explore and experiment with their own bodies to investigate what posture, facial expressions and body positions might best represent sadness. Look at the colour that the illustrator chose to represent sadness in the book. *Do you think this was a good choice? Why or why not? What colours would you choose to represent sadness? Why?*
- Extend this work by getting the children to think more widely about different emotions. *What other emotions could you represent with the paints? What colours would they be? What would the shapes look like that represent surprise, happiness, fear etc.?*



- Write and draw about your own experiences of feeling sadness or other emotions. Display these in the class so that children can see and reflect on their individual and shared experiences.
- Create a space in the classroom where children can display their work around feelings and use this as a focal talking point for children to share and discuss their feelings more widely. You could make a display of other texts that focus on feelings to support the children in sharing and discussing experiences, related to different characters and story events. These could include:
 - *Silly Billy*, Anthony Browne (Walker)
 - *Owl Babies*, Martin Waddell and Patrick Benson (Walker)
 - *Dogger*, Shirley Hughes (Red Fox)
 - *A Book of Feelings*, Amanda McCardie and Salvatore Rubbino (Walker)
 - *Happy*, Mies Van Hout (Lemniscaat)
 - *Feelings: Inside my heart and in my head*, Libby Walden and Richard Jones (Caterpillar Books)
 - *Lost and Found*, Oliver Jeffers (HarperCollins)
 - *The Girl With a Parrot on her Head*, Daisy Hirst (Walker)
 - *Little Mouse's Big Book of Fears*, Emily Gravett (Macmillan)
 - *Glad Monster, Sad Monster*, Ed Emberley (Little, Brown)
 - *The New Small Person*, Lauren Child (Puffin)
 - *A Great Big Cuddle*, Michael Rosen and Chris Riddell (Walker)
- Read the companion text *Where Happiness Begins* and explore the similarities and differences between the two texts.
- Encourage the children to make up their own stories about their adventures with a different emotion. *What have they learnt from reading these two texts that could help them tell this story in words and pictures?* Allow time and space for children to come up with initial ideas, to draft and create their own stories, to reflect on these with an appropriate response partner and to publish these in handmade books using appropriate art materials. More information about following an authentic writing process in the classroom can be found at:

<https://clpe.org.uk/powerofpictures/teaching-approaches/following-authentic-writing-process>

This sequence of activities was designed in partnership with CLPE. CLPE is a UK based children's literacy charity working with primary schools to raise the achievement of children's reading and writing by helping schools to teach literacy creatively and effectively, putting quality children's books at the heart of all learning. Find out more about their work, and access further resources and training at: www.clpe.org.uk