

### Teaching Ideas for the Klaus Flugge Prize Shortlist 2021

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:** I'm Sticking With You

**Author:** Smriti Halls

**Illustrator:** Steve Small

**Publisher:** Simon & Schuster

*These notes have been written by the teachers at the CLPE to provide schools and settings with ideas to develop comprehension and extended provision around [Klaus Flugge Prize-shortlisted texts for children of all ages](#). They build on our work supporting teachers to use picture books to enhance critical thinking and develop creative approaches in art and writing. We hope you find them useful.*

*This book is particularly suitable for children aged 3-11.*

#### Reading the book and close reading of illustration:

- Before you begin to read, look at the front cover illustration. What are these animals? What do you think these characters might be thinking or feeling? What makes you think this?
- Now read the title, ***I'm Sticking With You***. What do you think this means? Who do you think might be saying this? And to whom? Look at the two inside title pages, the first with the insects and the second with the squirrel and the bear. What do you see in these images? What do they make you think about, or feel? What do you think might happen in this story?
- Read up to, ***Whatever you're doing, I'm sticking with you***. Who do you think is telling the story? What makes you think this? What do you think you know about the relationship between the bear and the squirrel? What can you see in the words or illustrations that makes you think this?
- Continue reading, pausing after ***No river too wide*** to discuss this part of the story. What more do you know about the relationship between the bear and the squirrel? If the squirrel was telling the story, do you think it would be the same? How might their version of events be different? Support the children in looking back through the illustrations and considering what is happening from the squirrel's perspective. Do you think they are as enthusiastic about the friendship as the bear?
- Read on, up to ***I miss bear***. What do you learn from hearing the squirrel's voice? How do the squirrel's feelings change throughout these images and why do you think this happened? How would you describe the squirrel's feelings in the last image, as they look into the teacup?
- Now, read on to the end of the book. What do you think the squirrel and bear learn about friendship by the end of the story?
- After reading, encourage the children to tell you what they liked about the book. Was there anything they disliked? What did it make them think about? Do they have any questions about the book? How did it make them feel? Has anything like this ever happened to them?

#### Engaging in illustration:

- Consider how the text and illustrations work together to convey meaning. Look at how Steve Small, the illustrator shows us how the characters are feeling at different points in the book. Revisit the

spread that starts, **Whether you're grumpy, or silly or mad** and discuss how the illustrator has shown these emotions through the facial expressions and body positions of the squirrel.

- Look back through the book, focussing on particular spreads, such as:
  - **Whatever you're thinking, I am ALL EARS...**
  - **Like peas in a pod, you and I fit...**
  - **We sit by the clifftop, we sit by the lake...**
  - **Ah! That feels better, each thing in its place...**
- Explore together how we are not told in the words how the squirrel is feeling in these spreads, but shown through the illustrations. Encourage the children to look at the illustrations in greater details and talk about these spreads in more depth, looking at what is really happening here and how the squirrel might be feeling and why. Encourage children to make personal connections with the situation to develop greater empathy and engagement with the character.
- Now look at the spread which show Bear's reaction to the squirrel's return, **So lump it or like it, YOU'RE stuck with ME...** How would you describe Bear's feelings here? What gives us clues to how Bear feels? What do you think made Bear feel this way? What do you think Bear might be thinking at this point?
- Now look at how Bear and the squirrel are drawn in the book, and how we can tell how they are feeling because of the way their eyes, noses, mouths and ears look, the way their bodies are placed and additional details like the angry cloud or the surprise lines and exclamation mark drawn over their heads at different points in the book.
- Use your faces and bodies to show some of the different emotions that these characters go through in the story. Look at what you do with your eyes, mouths, arms and bodies when you express each emotion.
- Model for the children how to use soft drawing pencils (2B-4B are ideal) to draw Bear or the squirrel feeling a certain way, focussing on how their facial expression and body position shows this emotion. Look at how to break the illustrations down into easy to follow shapes and how expressive the characters' eyes can be.
- Allow the children to draw the characters for themselves, expressing different emotions and connecting these with key moments in the story. Draw alongside the children as they work. When their drawings are complete, allow the children to use watercolour paints to add colour and bring their drawings to life, concentrating on the shades and tones seen in the fur of the characters.
- Give space for the children to pin up and share their drawings, allowing them to look at the similarities and differences in their work and to talk about what is effective in their own work and that of others.
- Allow access to art materials to draw and make up their own scenarios or stories featuring Bear and the squirrel or to create characters, scenarios and stories of their own.

**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](http://www.clpe.org.uk)**

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