

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: My Red Hat

Author & Illustrator: Rachel Stubbs

Publisher: Walker

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 5-11.

Reading the book and close reading of illustration:

- Before you begin to read, look at the front cover illustration. Whose hat do you think this is? What makes you think this? Who do you think the two people on the cover are? How do you think they might be connected to each other? What do you think they might be thinking or feeling? How does this image make you feel? What does it make you think about?
- Now, read the title **My Red Hat**, and turn to the inside title page illustration where we see the hat again. Talk about these illustrations together. Why do you think the hat is so significant? Consider the possessive pronoun **My** used for the hat. Whose story do you think this might be? What ideas do you have about the story that lies ahead? What might happen in it?
- Read the first spread, **I give you my hat**. Who do you think is telling the story? What makes you think this? What do you think you know about the relationship between the man and the girl? What can you see in the words or illustration that makes you think this?
- Continue reading pausing after, **It will help you stand out in a crowd... sometimes**. What can you infer about how the man feels about the hat? What does this add to our understanding about their relationship? Support the children in looking back through the illustrations and considering how his descriptions show us how special and treasured this hat is to him, and how he is enabling the child to understand this. How does she react to and treat the hat as he describes it to her?
- Read on up to **...wherever your feet might carry you**. What do you learn about the man's life from this part of the text? How do the illustrations show the emotional journey he has been on as well as the things he has experienced? Encourage the children to look at how colour is used to express emotion. What do we learn here about the significance of the hat and its story to the girl? How does wearing it impact on her?
- Now, read on to the end of the book. What does the end of the story make us think about the journey of life, as well as the journey of the hat? What stands out as being important to you?
- 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 – have they been given something treasured or special by someone?

Engaging in illustration:

- Consider how the text and illustrations work together to tell a much broader story about life's journey. Look at how Rachel Stubbs, the illustrator, shows us how the journey from dependence to independence and back to the importance of family. Focus back on particular spreads, such as:
 - *It will keep you warm and dry...*
 - *It will help you stand out in a crowd... sometimes.*
 - *This hat holds dreams, hides secrets and covers fears.*
 - *It is full of possibility... wherever your feet may carry you.*
 - *Until home calls you back where you belong.*
- Work together to explore the lessons the girl is learning about life in each of the spreads, drawing out the subtle layers of meaning between the text and illustrations. What specific knowledge, skills and experiences is the man is leading her through? How might this reflect on the life he has had? Encourage children to make personal connections with the situations shared to develop greater empathy and engagement with the characters. Why do you think the man is passing this knowledge on to her through giving her the hat? What might the hat signify?
- Come back to one of these events to talk specifically about what knowledge or experience might be being passed on in this particular spread. How do we know this through the choice of words and illustration?
- Encourage the children to think about a special object they have. It might be a soft toy, a blanket, or an object or item of clothing, like the hat, that has been with them for a long time. Ask them to recall a specific event where their object has been with them. It might be that the object helped them overcome a fear, it may have been with them when they achieved something special, or at a monumental event in their lives. Demonstrate this by talking about an object and event from your own life.
- Now, model for the children how to use soft drawing pencils (2B-4B are ideal) to capture this moment in a drawing. Talk about how to break down the drawing into simple shapes and stages, capturing the person and their feelings then building up the scenery and props to share the detail of the situation. Come back to the original illustrations to look at how Rachel Stubbs did this.
- Allow the children to capture their own special objects and moment in a drawing. 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 colours shades and tones used to add emotion as they saw in the original book.
- Allow the children to pin up and share their drawings, encouraging them to look at the similarities and differences in their work and talk about what is effective in their own work and that of others.
- Allow access to art materials for the children to continue to draw scenarios from their own lives or to make up characters, scenarios or 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

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