

Teaching Ideas for the Klaus Flugge Prize Shortlist 2023

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: *Lost in the City*

Author Illustrator: Alice Courtley

Publisher: Orchard Books

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 5–8.

Reading the book and close reading of illustration:

- Begin by looking at the front cover illustration. *What do you think is happening here? Who do you think the story might be about? What do you think the girl, the cat, and other characters might be thinking or feeling? What makes you think this?*
- Now read the title, **Lost in the City**. *Who do you think might be **lost**? Look at the **This Book Belongs to...** page, and the title page: *what do you see in these images? Does the title **The Great Adventure** give you any clue to the story; how do you think the two people inside, the cat outside and the city in the distance might be connected? Have you seen any of them before? What do the images you have seen so far make you think about, or feel? What do you think might happen in this story?**
- Read the first two spreads — of Maya, Gran and Sammy in the kitchen, and of Gran's **epic tales** — looking carefully at the details, such as the photos in Gran's kitchen, the variety of **exotic food** on the table, the diversity of **beautiful people** dancing, the museum exhibits. *What do we learn in these opening spreads about Maya and her home situation? What kind of person do you think Gran is? What can you see in the words or illustrations that makes you think this? How do you think Maya feels about living with her, what in the words or illustrations tells you this?*
- Continue reading, pausing after ... **took Gran's hand**: *what do you learn about Maya's feelings about her first visit to the city, how she feels about leaving home and Sammy, and how she feels as they get nearer the city? Support the children in looking back carefully through the illustrations and considering anything happening in the illustrations (focus on Sammy) that the words do not convey. *What do you notice happening in the illustrations, and how might this affect the way the story develops?**
- Now read on through the next seven spreads capturing Sammy, Maya and Gran's progress through different settings, up to the scene in the **sculpture room** and the text **It was Sammy — at last! Then...** Encourage the children to look forensically at every detail of each page to see the different stories that are going on in each place the trio visits. *How easy do you find it to spot Sammy in the market, library, department store, Pride March, art gallery? What else do you notice happening in each place they visit? Do you think Gran is aware that Maya is leading her in Sammy's tracks? How do you think Maya, who was already nervous about visiting the city, deals with the added anxiety of losing sight of her cat? How do you think Gran feels? How do you know?*

- Now, read on to the end of the book. *Is this how you expected things would turn out after Maya lost sight of Sammy in the crowd? Do you think Gran knew that Maya was pursuing Sammy all along? Why do you think Maya was waiting **for Gran to get angry** — and why do you think she didn't? How do you think each of the trio feels on the train home, what does this spread convey about the city and the day they have spent in it? Why do you think Maya **didn't feel so small anymore**?*
- 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?*

Engaging in illustration:

- Alice Courtley is both author and illustrator, so look at how she tells the story through words and through pictures: from the illustrations it is clear that Sammy has stowed away in Maya's bag and returns home in Gran's, but is this explicitly mentioned in the text? Revisit the **This Book Belongs To...** page and the spreads where Sammy gets in Maya's bag while she eats breakfast, his tail poking out as they hasten from the house, discussing how the story is set up by these illustrations.
- Look back through the book, focussing on the spreads in the city — the market, the library, the department store, the Pride March, the gallery — considering how the words are telling the story of Maya leading Gran through various attractions, where the pictures show — and we (and possibly Gran?) know — that she is actually following Sammy.
- Explore how and where Sammy is shown in each spread, his path conveyed by people's reactions and objects moving: how these spreads convey movement, speed, drama and mischief, often through squiggles and swooshes that suggest motion. Consider also the lively colour palette and how this helps track the characters. Encourage the children to look closely at the illustrations and talk about these and other spreads in more depth, looking at what is happening here and how the action is conveyed.
- Invite the children to consider other settings that an inquisitive cat like Sammy (pursued by Maya and Gran) could have visited: they will need to look with fresh eyes, to be creative and open-minded, changing their viewpoint by looking at things from a cat's eye level. Invite the children to share their possible locations and pool ideas so the class has a range of settings to draw on.
- Model how to use soft drawing pencils (2B–4B are ideal) to draw Sammy in other settings, conveying both the “big picture” panoramic view and the small details that indicate Sammy's path, and imitating the illustrator's bold and striking colours. Allow the children to draw Sammy for themselves, showing him in different places and imagining scenarios that might arise. Draw alongside the children as they work. When their drawings are complete, allow them to use oil pastels or crayons to add colour and bring their drawings to life, concentrating on the shades and tones seen in the setting.
- 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.

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