

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: *The Baker by the Sea*

Author Illustrator: Paula White

Publisher: Templar 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 cover, which wraps from the front to the back. *Who do you think this boy might be? Where do you think he is standing? What clues do you get to the time or place where this story is happening? What do you think the boy might be thinking or feeling? What makes you think this?*
- Now read the title ***The Baker by the Sea***. *What associations do you have with the trade of baker, a bakery or with baking? What might be special about this story being **by the sea**? Look at the illustration of the boy now astride his bike, his basket full of loaves and buns, and read the illustrator's explanatory dedication: *what do you learn from this piece of text, does it support your predictions about the story? What do you think might happen in this story?**
- Read on up to **...everything you might need**, led by the illustrations **over the hills [...] across the fields [...] to the edge, where the land meets the sea**. *How do these opening spreads transport you to a specific time and place, what sense of the story setting do they give you, how do they make you feel? Encourage the children to locate the boy in the next two spreads and to imagine what it might be like to be where he is: *what do you notice about the village, how is it the same or different from where you live, and how might it be different from the same village in the present day? How do the illustrations convey this, not just in what they show, but in how they are drawn?**
- Continue reading, pausing after **the land meets the sea** to discuss this part of the story. *What more do you learn about life in the village, the activities of all who live and work there? Consider the sentence **The sea is the beating heart of all we do**: *what do you think this means, how do the illustrations convey this message, and how does it affect the boy's interests and ambitions as we understand them, for example in his bedroom?**
- Now read on, up to the question **why is he just a baker?** *What sense of the baker's activity do you gain from the words and pictures, how is it different from life at sea. Support the children in considering how the predominantly indoor scenes are depicted, the use of colour — they may notice yellow introduced to suggest light, warmth and comfort — and ask them how the boy feels about his father's trade.*
- Now, read on to the end of the book. *Is this the outcome you expected, the **weary smile** shared with the **tired fisherman**, the boy proud of his father's vital contribution to the village life? How does the*

final spread of father and son kneading side by side make you feel? How is the emotion elicited by the words and how by the illustration? What does it make you think about the story you have read?

- 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:

- Paula White is both the author and illustrator of this book, so look at how she tells the story partly through words and partly through pictures. Revisit the spread that starts **This is my home**, discussing how she gives a strong sense of a certain community at a certain point in time: consider how she achieves this not just with the words or what she shows in the illustration, but in her illustration style.
- Look back through the book, focussing on particular spreads, such as those that set the location and time of the story, or that show life at sea, or the key contribution the baker and his goods make to the community. Explore together how the words and pictures in these spreads convey a nostalgic, gentle, lyrical atmosphere, but how they can also convey bustling industry and activity and the movement and challenges of life at sea. Consider also the distinctive colour palette, with soft greys and tonal blues but also limited use of yellow, the oven bathing a scene in warm light. 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 atmosphere is achieved.
- Paula White was inspired by a personal connection and drew on old photographs and interviews. Much of the way of life and many of the trades she captures are now lost: invite the children to consider other places or jobs that have changed or disappeared over time — they could draw on their personal family histories as the illustrator did — to travel back in time. Invite the children to share what they come up with and pool ideas so the class has a bank of ideas to draw on. It would also be helpful to source historical photographs of past times and trades.
- Model how to use soft drawing pencils (2B-4B are ideal) to draw scenes and jobs from the past, borrowing the illustrator's limited colour palette. Allow the children to draw scenes from the past for themselves, focussing not just on what they show but also how it is shown, with soft textures and muted hues conveying a gentle and tender feeling. Draw alongside the children as they work. When their drawings are complete, allow them to use a limited range of ink wash or water-soluble pencils to add colour and bring their drawings to life, concentrating on the shades and tones seen in the book.
- 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 characters and settings 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