



## Teaching Ideas for the Klaus Flugge Prize Shortlist 2018

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 Real Boat

**Author:** Marina Aromshtam

**Illustrator:** Victoria Semykina

**Publisher:** Templar

*These notes have been written by the teachers at CLPE to provide schools with sessions which focus on the importance of illustration in building a narrative and supporting children's response. They build on our work supporting teachers to use picture books to enhance critical thinking and develop creative approaches in art and writing.*

*The teaching notes show you how to use picture books with your class to enhance children's reading comprehension and understanding of how to convey messages through illustration. We hope you find them useful.*

### Before beginning this sequence:

Collect together a range of art materials that will allow the children to engage in the activities exploring illustration, for example: cartridge paper, watercolour paints, poster paints, oil and chalk pastels, coloured pencils, tissue paper, white wax crayons or masking fluid, quality paintbrushes of different sizes, scraper sticks, scissors and glue.

### Suggested Activities:

#### Session 1:

Explore the front cover of the text and the title, *The Real Boat*. Share the illustrations on the front cover and talk about what the book might be about. Look at the boats on the front cover and talk about which you think might be 'The Real Boat' and why.

Read the book up to "Quack! The ocean has so much water that it joins the sky." What can we tell about the character of the paper boat from the first part of the story? Create a 'role on the wall' by drawing an outline of the paper boat in the middle of a large piece of paper and writing on the outside of the outline: things the text and the characters tell us about the boat (the external perceptions) and in the inside of the outline, what we think the boat is really like. Look carefully at what you can tell from the words and then what extra detail is contained in the illustration. For example, in the first double page spread the scale of the boat is large – it takes up nearly a whole half page of the spread, especially when you take into account its reflection – almost like it is outgrowing the pond. On the second spread the boat looks smaller in comparison to the frogs and the placing of it on the page, lower down than the frogs makes them literally look down on it alongside them referring to it as 'rubbish'. Its placing from the left to the right hand side in the next spread where the duck is introduced and the directionality of the waves suggests it is about to embark on a journey, travelling on to the next page – where might it be going? How might the story



continue? You could also look at how the duck is represented, suggesting that the boat's focus is not on the duck itself, but of the wonder of the ocean it describes.

Pause here to reflect on how the children think the illustrator has created these illustrations. What materials do you think have been used? Look at a photograph of Victoria in her studio: <http://www.semykina.com/about> what materials can you see here? Begin to look back at the previous illustrations and unpick some of the techniques, the brushstrokes that make up the reeds and weeds in the pond, the overlaying of pastel and coloured pencils, the paint spattered rocks, the messy brushstrokes of the painted sky, the more precise flies, the way the paint changes from thick to quite watery in different places. In the illustration where the ocean is depicted inside the duck, sharing how the boat is visualising her words, explore how the bright white boats stand out against the rich blue; the bright greens of the foliage on the land around the water and the different ways the foliage is depicted – thin cut out leaves, dotted patterns making leaf shapes wider, more thickly brushed leaves.

Reread the page where the duck describes the ocean, give each child an A3 sized piece of cartridge paper and a variety of different art materials as referenced above and allow them to draw what they think the full landscape of the ocean looks like, drawing on the words that describe – we know it's a tropical setting, there's lots and lots of water and real boats, sailing on the water. The illustration in the duck gives a small window into this, but what would the full picture look like? You could give this piece of the text to the children to refer to and re-read as they work. When they have completed their illustrations, pin these up around the room and allow the children to take the time to look at each other's interpretation, comparing and contrasting thoughts and techniques.

Turn the page and allow the children to see the illustrator's interpretation of the panorama of the landscape the boat imagines as the duck speaks. What similarities and differences are there in their own work?

Read the text accompanying the illustration and on to the next page, up to, *“What a grump!” thought the paper boat, and he went on his way.* What more can we tell about the boat's character now? Add this to the role on the wall.

## Session 2:

Read on to *‘The paper boat pulled alongside the tugboat and tried to huff and puff just like him.’* What can we tell about the character of the boat as he progresses on his journey? Look at how the scale of the boat on the page compared to the first spread in the pond that he thought *‘seemed very big and deep’*. How does this compare to the ocean and how does the illustrator show this? Look at how these vast double page spreads are used to show the scale of the larger boats and the vastness of the ocean compared to the now tiny boat. The water reaches end to end in each picture and touches the skyline where this is seen, looking like it is never-ending, the people on the deck tower over the tiny boat in the background, peering through glasses, binoculars and telescopes to see it, the barge lurches forward in the picture, exaggerating its length, the sand piled up high and billows of smoke coming from its funnel spread its presence across the entire spread. Even the relatively small tugboat huffs and puffs so much that its presence dominates



the two pages through the huge depiction of the onomatopoeic words that are written in such huge lettering. How does this make us feel about the boat? What might this tell us about its feelings? Add this to the role on the wall. Continue to look at the colours, textures and patterns that have been created by the illustrator and the effect this has on your reading of the images and the feelings evoked.

Provide the children with another A3 piece of cartridge paper and the same range of art materials and allow them time to create their own depictions of the boat on its journey. How will they show how big the ocean and all it contains is compared to the boat? Will they include any wording? How will they incorporate this?

### Session 3:

Read on to *'Toot, too-oo-oot, I'll be back soo-oo-oon,' whistled the huge liner in parting, and soon he was gone.'* Looking back on the pictures, what do the children feel about the ocean in this section of the book? Explore how the colours turn brighter and paler in the yacht spread, how the blues and whites are brighter, how the boats look like miniature towns, how new, colourful animals are seen in the harbour, a mass of bright cars emerge from the ferry, the stunning depiction of the lights on the passenger liner and their reflection on the water, all the silhouetted action that can be seen in the porthole spread and the sparkling reflections of the sun on the water as the liner leaves the next morning.

Colour copy each of the double spreads in this section and place them on different tables around the room, allow children to walk round the room, re-looking at each in turn before sitting by the one that most appeals to them. Allow the children time to imagine they are the boat; what do they think on seeing this sight for the first time? Allow time for the groups of children by each spread to annotate the illustration with words and phrases that describe what the boat sees, hears, feels or questions the boat might have. Now give time and space for the children to write in role as the paper boat describing all the new sights he sees. Once they have drafted, had a response to and edited their ideas they could write them up onto plain paper and folded into a paper boat, to be displayed alongside the illustration and which can then be unfolded and read. Instructions for folding a paper boat can be found at: <https://www.persil.com/uk/dirt-is-good/arts-crafts/how-to-make-a-paper-boat-step-by-step.html>

### Session 4:

Read up to *'The destroyer disappeared back into the fog, as though he had never been there at all.'* Explore how the illustrator has used colour, tone, scale and texture to depict the drama in this section of the story. Focus on the imposing scale and colour of the Supertanker, with its huge mechanical parts; how even the ocean seems to shrink in comparison; how the fishing trawler looks a ghostly-white against the side of the trawler; how the tiny boat is alone in the centre of the dark blue ocean as the storm begins to strike; the effect of the wordless spread depicting the storm, with all the different dark tones and shades of blue and bright white of the crashing waves and spray; the textures and patterns in the clouds which look as though they have been cut out and stuck on; the imposing dominance of the destroyer, with the choice to place all of the weapons pointing out towards the reader. What effect do all these things have on us and also on our feelings towards the paper boat?



Give the children another A3 sheet of paper and access to a full range of art materials and get them to create their own dramatic scene either depicting the storm or a particularly imposing boat. You may wish to provide photos of large boats such as supertrawlers or destroyers as frames of reference. You may also wish to play some music to create atmosphere, such as Britten's Storm from Peter Grimes:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2X7JDvTarqQ&list=RD2X7JDvTarqQ&index=1>

### Session 5:

Read on to the end of the story. Reflect back on the colourful undersea spreads. How did you react to these spreads as a reader? What did you like or dislike about them? What questions did you have about them? Why do you think the paper boat felt so sad and out of place there? Think now about his final home on the captain's shelf. Why would he feel more at home there? Explore how the illustrator has used collage to build the illustration of the captain, how the different colours, shapes and textures in his head, body and hands have been put together.

Allow the children to explore how to use different art materials to create undersea illustrations or of figures holding a paper boat. They could depict the captain, other sailors or visitors on the ship or depict each other holding the paper boats they created in session 3. Focus on how they will use scale, colour, shape and texture to add interest for the reader as they have seen in Victoria Semykina's illustrations.

Finish by discussing the book as a whole. Allow lots of time for the children to explore the book independently following these sessions. They may want to re-read, or they may continue to be inspired to create their own illustrations; allow time and space and access to art materials and reference photographs or videos to allow children to do this. You may want to get extra copies of the book to explore in group reading sessions or for interested children to borrow from the reading area or school library and read together.

This sequence of activities was designed by CLPE for the Klaus Flugge shortlist. To access more resources to support your literacy teaching, visit: [www.clpe.org.uk/freeresources](http://www.clpe.org.uk/freeresources)

Further teaching sequences and resources to support children's understanding of picturebooks for all ages and research on the importance of using picturebooks across the primary years can be found at:

<https://www.clpe.org.uk/powerofpictures>

If you have enjoyed this teaching sequence you might want to look at our Power of Reading resource. This contains in depth teaching sequences for more than 200 other high quality texts helping you to plan and deliver a rich literacy curriculum with quality children's literature at its heart.

[www.clpe.org.uk/powerofreading](http://www.clpe.org.uk/powerofreading)