

Is There a Dog in This Book by Viviane Schwarz (Walker)

Key Stage 2

The playful cats Viviane Schwarz introduced in two earlier books reappear for further face to face interaction with us, their readers. They suspect that there may be a dog close by and they implore us to hide them from him. Do they really need to be afraid? And who is really the scaredy cat?

Overall aims of this teaching sequence

- To explore, interpret and respond to a picture book
- To explore characters through reading and drawing and draw inferences to aid our understanding of them
- To empathise with characters and events, exploring possible reasons for actions and considering decisions
- To explore narrative plot, settings, characters and draw inferences to aid understanding
- To write texts based on fictional experiences
- To write factual texts, based on research
- To write in a chosen form for a selected audience
- To debate relevant issues

This teaching sequence is designed for a Year 3,4,5 or 6 class.

Overview of this teaching sequence.

This teaching sequence is approximately 4 weeks long if spread out over 20 sessions.

The book supports teachers to teach about the craft of picturebook making. The narrative is highly interactive and characters and settings are beautifully illustrated, lending exploration of the interplay between words and pictures in picturebooks. Children can also explore the use of paper technology in making stories interactive for the reader. This text offers readers a good stimulus for writing in a range of narrative and non-fiction forms.

National Curriculum 2014 Links

Reading: (Word reading / Comprehension)

- Read and discuss a wide range of fiction
- Read books that are structured in different ways
- Identify and discuss themes and conventions
- Discuss understanding and explore meaning of words in context
- Ask questions to improve understanding

Writing: (Transcription / Composition)

- Plan writing by identifying the audience for and purpose of the writing, selecting the appropriate form
- Note and develop initial ideas, drawing on reading
- Draft and write by selecting appropriate grammar and vocabulary
- In narratives, describe settings,

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Draw inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions and justifying inferences with evidence ▪ Identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning ▪ Discuss and evaluate how authors use language ▪ Participate in discussions about books, building on their own and others' ideas and challenging views ▪ Explain and discuss their understanding of what they have read. 	<p>characters and atmosphere, integrate dialogue to convey character and advance action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use a range of devices to build cohesion within and across paragraphs ▪ Evaluate and edit by proposing changes to vocabulary, grammar and punctuation ▪ Proof-read for spelling and punctuation errors ▪ Perform their own compositions, using appropriate intonation, volume, movement so that meaning is clear
<p>Spoken Language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, responding to comments ▪ Ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and build vocabulary and knowledge ▪ Listen and respond appropriately to adults and peers ▪ Articulate and justify answers and opinions ▪ Use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, imagining and exploring ideas ▪ Participate in discussions, presentations, performances and debates ▪ Consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to the contributions of others ▪ Select and use appropriate registers for effective communication ▪ Use spoken language to develop understanding through imagining and exploring ideas in discussion, role-play and drama 	
<p>Cross Curricular Links</p> <p>Art and design</p> <p>KS2 subject content: to improve their mastery of art and design techniques, including drawing, painting and sculpture with a range of materials (e.g. pencil, charcoal, paint, clay); about great artists, architects and designers in history.</p> <p>Science</p> <p>Pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognise that living things can be grouped in a variety of ways • explore and use classification keys to help group, identify and name a variety of living things in their local and wider environment • recognise that environments can change and that this can sometimes pose dangers to living things. <p>Design Technology:</p> <p>Through a variety of creative and practical activities, pupils should be taught the knowledge, understanding</p>	

and skills needed to engage in an iterative process of designing and making.	
Teaching Approaches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reading ▪ Responding to illustration ▪ Book talk ▪ Story mapping ▪ Drama and role-play ▪ Writing in role ▪ Shared writing 	Writing Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Character descriptions ▪ Rewriting parts of the narrative from different viewpoints ▪ Playscripts ▪ Writing in role (choice of form and audience) ▪ Own Narrative ▪ Persuasive Argument
Links to other texts and resources. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>There are Cats in This Book</i> by Viviane Schwarz • <i>There Are No Cats in This Book</i> by Viviane Schwarz • <i>Welcome to Your Awesome Robot</i> by Viviane Schwarz • <i>Sleepwalkers</i> by Viviane Schwarz • <i>Cheese Belongs to You!</i> By Alexis Deacon & Viviane Schwarz • <i>Varjak Paw / The Outlaw Varjak Paw</i> by SF Said <p>Watch author/illustrator Viviane Schwarz reading the text at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O8aICIS2Kg4</p> <p>See all her books read on her YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZax7sptvCxi4M_KRDXQWDA</p>	

Teaching Sessions:

Session 1: Drawing and annotating characters – Visualisation

Drawing characters focuses attention on them: how they look; what they say; how they behave. To build their ideas of what a character is like, children have to refer to the text. They can also be encouraged to draw on the language of the text in making annotations around the drawings.

- Look at the first illustration spread in the book. Study the characters of the cats carefully. What can you tell about the cats and their characters? Give pairs of children a copy of the illustration from this page and have them annotate the drawing with ideas of words, phrases, sentences and questions that they have about the cats and their characters.
- Through demonstrated illustration, show the children how to create their own cat. You could use, felt tips, watercolours or inks to create the cats. Give time for the children to sketch out a number of cats of their own, exploring and experimenting with shapes, forms, expressions and movement to create and shape characters. Draw a final picture which you feel best exemplifies the character of your cat. Annotate the drawing with words, phrases and sentences to describe the cat's character, questions

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you have about your character and ideas for what the character may be doing or its story.

Session 2: Responding to Illustration - Expanding ideas about characters:

The children's books featured on Power of Pictures have been chosen because of the quality of the illustrations they contain and the ways in which the illustrations work with the text to create meaning for the reader. Children will need time and opportunities to enjoy and respond to the pictures, and to talk together about what the illustrations contribute to their understanding of the text. Children can develop their responses to the book by drawing or painting in a similar style to the illustrations.

- Look at the second spread in the book. How has the illustrator conveyed the emotion of the characters in her drawings? How do you think they feel? Why?
- Explore the dialogue the cats may be engaging in on this page. What might they be saying? Write speech bubbles to paste around the illustration.
- Work further on your character. Expand your picture to place your own cat character in a scene. Where are they? What are they doing? How are they feeling? Are other characters involved? You could introduce the technique of collage, as the illustrator users in the original text. Give plenty of time for children to explore and experiment with different scenarios in their drawing.
- Create a finished scene, including speech bubbles to explore the characters' dialogue, ready for display.

Sessions 3 & 4: Role Play and Drama - Developing dialogue

Freeze-frames are still images or tableaux. They can be used to enable groups of children to examine a key event or situation from a story and decide in detail how it could be represented. When presenting the freeze-frame, one of the group could act as a commentator to talk through what is happening in their version of the scene, or individual characters can be asked to speak their thoughts out loud.

- Re-read on to 'It must be here somewhere...' (but don't lift Andre's flap to discover the dog!)
- Look carefully at the illustrations of the cats. Come up with words, phrases and sentences to describe how the cats are feeling and jot these around a copy of the illustration in the shared journal.
- In groups of three, with each child taking on the role of one of the cats, freeze frame the scene. How does your character feel at this point the story? What might they be thinking or saying? Use thought tracking to unlock the dialogue.
- Move on to the groups of three creating an improvisation of this scene. What is the wider scene around this story? How will the cats interact? How will the conversations continue? How will the action continue?
- Look at a model of a play script. What do play scripts look like? What features do they have? How are they set out on the page?
- After reading through your improvisation again, write a play script for the scene you have created. How will you use stage directions and adverbs to show how the action and dialogue are reflected in the scene?
- Draft your piece before giving it to a response partner to respond to as a reader. **Think about:**
 - What makes it good to read?
 - Were any parts interesting, effective, or made you think?
 - Does it make sense?
 - Has anything been missed out?

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- *Is there anything that you don't understand?*
- *Is it written in the right sort of style?*
- Spend the next session re-drafting and then share with an editing partner. Underline any bits you are still not sure about from a response point. Then read the writing aloud together, and help each other to put in any:
 - Spellings that you can correct together (you might need a dictionary).
 - Punctuation including capital letters.
- Publish the pieces for a class anthology, displayed alongside the original illustration from the text.

Sessions 4 & 5: Story boxes

Story boxes create special opportunities to revisit themes and storylines of a particular story. Typically, they consist of a shoebox or diorama containing a range of small characters and objects. The box itself can be turned into a setting for the story using a variety of collage materials and with sides cut to fold down. However, the box is at its most effective when something intriguing or unexpected is added. Children can use the box to story tell the next episode of a story or create another story with similar setting or characters.

- Re-read the story up to 'It must be here somewhere...' (but still don't lift Andre's flap to discover the dog!)
- Where have they looked for the dog? Could they try somewhere else? Another room or place?
- What other places could they look for the dog in?
- Use storyboxes, diorama, drawing or collage to create a scene where the cats are looking somewhere else for the dog.
- Add speech bubbles to the cat characters to show what they are saying while they look. Cat characters can be made or printed onto card and inserted into scenes – download at: http://www.walker.co.uk/UserFiles/file/There%20are%20cats/Cats_Cutout_Sheet_One_A3.pdf
- Encourage children to collaborate on other scenes in groups of 3 and insert speech bubbles for the cats.
- You could also build in time for a further improvisation exercise, for children to explore their new scene in greater detail.

Sessions 6 & 7: Drafting Writing

When children have explored a fictional situation through talk or role-play, they may be ready to write in role as a character in the story. Taking the role of a particular character enables young writers to see events from a different view point and involves them writing in a different voice.

- Draft a piece of writing to exemplify this scene created yesterday. You could give the children a choice of outcome; they could write in role as one of the cats in first person, as the third person narrative, a diary entry as one of the cats or as the dog hiding and looking in on the scene. By Key Stage Two, children should be confident in the features of these types of writing and should be able to draft without going through these first. You may want to model one of the outcomes as a piece of shared writing.
- Give the children time to draft their own piece of writing and read it aloud to themselves, to hear how their writing sounds as a reader.
- After doing this, give your writing to a response partner to respond to as a reader. **Think about:**
 - *What makes it good to read?*
 - *Were any parts interesting, effective, or made you think?*
 - *Does it make sense?*
 - *Has anything been missed out?*
 - *Is there anything that you don't understand?*
 - *Is it written in the right sort of style?*
- Spend the next session re-drafting and then share with an editing partner. Underline any bits you are still not sure about from a response point. Then read the writing aloud together, and help each other to put in any:
 - Spellings that you can correct together (you might need a dictionary).
 - Punctuation including capital letters.
- Publish the pieces alongside the dioramas, for display in a communal area.

Session 8: Booktalk - Responding to reading

Discussion about books forms the foundations for working with books. Children need frequent, regular and sustained opportunities to talk together about the books that they are reading as a whole class. The more experience they have of talking together like this the better they get at making explicit the meaning that a text holds for them. This booktalk is supportive to all readers and writers, but it is especially empowering for children who find literacy difficult. It helps the class as a whole to reach shared understandings and move towards a more dispassionate and informed debate of ideas and issues.

- Read the whole book, beginning to end.
- Talk with children about what they like or don't like about the story, about any questions that they have or anything that the story makes them think about.
- Ask them to say which part of the book stays in their minds most vividly.
- Do they have any other questions about the book?
- You could also ask the children what they think about picture books more widely.
- It would be good to have the other cat books by Viviane Schwarz (see above) available on display for the children to browse and select independently.
- Present the next writing outcome for the children; that they are going to make their own picturebook about the cat character they created in the first session. Have they had any more ideas about the story behind their character? Make notes of any initial ideas

Sessions 9 and 10: Drafting writing and illustration

Opportunities to illustrate a story during an activity such as bookmaking give children the chance to build on ideas that they have gained from talk, story making, role-play and drawing. They enable them to engage in creative re-interpretations of the texts.

- Explain to the children that they will spend the next two sessions drafting their writing and illustrations for their own picture book.
- Talk about what drafting means, both in terms of illustration and writing. Ensure that they know that the draft of the illustrations will be sketches rather than finished pieces and their writing will be a first attempt which can later be improved upon.
- Present the children with the first character scene that they created from the display, then talk about where this scene might sit in the story. Is it the first thing that happened or did things happen before or after this event?
- Talk about common narrative structures that the children may wish to draw upon, such as the characters facing a problem which needs to be resolved.
- Look at different formats for planning the illustrations and writing, such as using a storymap for storyboard to plan the picture spreads.
- Model writing as appropriate, investigating different ways that the text could be presented for the reader e.g. with speech bubbles and text boxes as in a graphic novel, with extended writing and pictures as in an illustrated novel, or paragraphs mixed with speech bubbles and illustrations, as in a wide selection of picture books. Have examples of these different kinds of text available for children to reference.
- Give plenty of time for the children to draft their illustrations and text. Encourage the children to

think about how their work looks visually, as well as shaping the writing. Work with a response partner to talk through your story ideas and look at how to shape them for the reader.

- Think back to what made the original book effective; high levels of interactivity in the dialogue and the Paper Technology (flaps). How might you build this in to your final book?
- Finally, look at the work with an editing partner to check for spelling and punctuation and a final read aloud to check for sense and meaning.

Sessions 11 & 12: Redrafting

- Reread the original text, looking again at the features that make this exciting for the reader.
- Show the children how to make an origami book to use as a mock up to explore how their final book will look.
- Redraft the writing and illustrations in the mock up book (often called the dummy by authors) and use extra pieces of paper to cut and stick to explore the use of flap technology.
- Present your dummy book to your response partner. Do they think it is effective? Can they suggest anything to improve it?

Sessions 13-15: Bookmaking - Developing the final product

Bookmaking provides a motivating context within which children can bring together their developing understanding of what written language is like; making written language meaningful as they construct their own texts.

- Explore how to make a simple hardback bound book. Instructions for these can be found in Paul Johnson's books Making Books and Get Writing 7-11 (A&C Black).
- Produce the final illustrations and text for your book, spending time in perfecting the illustrations with inks and watercolours and creating presentation handwriting.
- Intersperse shared writing throughout the sessions and writing conferences with children to explore ways of making storylines more effective for the reader.
- When the books are finished, display prominently in the reading corner, school library for a communal space for the school reading community to read.
- You may wish to allow for time for children to share their books with other classes in the school.

Sessions 16 & 17: Debate and Argument

Debating ideas calls for a more formal and objective response to the story and helps children begin to analyse how the writer has made us feel this way. Teachers can structure debates inviting 'for' and 'against' arguments around particular statements arising from a book.

- Investigate current debates that are running around the subject of cats and/or dogs. The website www.debate.org has many have debates currently running, such as:
 - Are dogs better than cats?
 - Should people have dogs for pets?
 - Should people be allowed to keep pit bull dogs?
 - Should it be mandatory for people to microchip their dogs?
 Or you may wish to decide on a topic of your own to debate, such as:
 - Should dog licences be reinstated?

- Should keeping dangerous dogs as pets be banned?
- Should all dogs be made to wear a muzzle in public?
- Look at some of the related news stories showing why these topics are being debated and research the content through looking at newspapers and Internet articles related to the topic.
- Ensure the children can keep a sense of balance by looking at both sides of the argument first. It can be useful to fold a piece of A4 paper in half, finding views for and against the topic before deciding which side they agree with most and why.
- Model how to text mark on articles to highlight important information and how to take notes effectively.
- This could be followed by a debate across the room, one person starting the argument for or against and another person responding with an alternative viewpoint in response and so on.

Session 18: Conscience alley

Conscience Alley is useful technique for exploring any kind of dilemma faced by a character, providing an opportunity to analyse a decisive moment in greater detail. The class forms two lines facing each other. One person (the teacher or a participant) takes the role of the protagonist and walks between the lines as each member of the group speaks their advice. It can be organised so that those on one side give opposing advice to those on the other. When the protagonist reaches the end of the alley, they make their decision. This is also a useful technique for exploring any decision making context.

- When the children have decided whether they are for or against the argument, have them line up in two lines in a conscience alley; one side arguing for the topic, the other against.
- Have at least one 'undecided' child to walk down the conscience alley, listening to opinions for and against said to them in turn. When they reach the end of the alley, they must decide which arguments stuck in their minds the most and which were the most persuasive.
- Have them give examples of particular words and phrases which they found particularly persuasive. Collect these on sentence strips to add to the working wall for children to refer to in their writing.
- On a piece of notepaper, write down your decided opinion on the debate, giving reasons for your choice. Scrunch this up into a ball and complete a snowballing exercise; throwing the ball to someone else in the room who picks it up, reads it and responds on the other side either in agreement with other reasons or disagreeing with alternative viewpoints. Once again, scrunch the note up, throw it to another person again, who reads the whole note and picks out effective persuasive and argumentative language.

Session 19: Drafting writing

- Following the research and drama activities, write an argument for or against the debate in question. Look at how to use persuasive language as explored in the activities and how to ensure your argument is clear and well reasoned for the reader.
- Show your writing with a response partner, who may suggest improvements to the writing.

Session 20: Publishing

- You could publish final responses on the debate.org website or on a class blog for others to read and respond to.