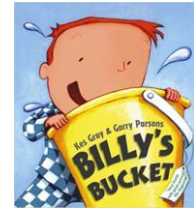


Take 5: Ideas for Independent/Home Learning

Billy's Bucket by Kes Gray, illustrated by Garry Parsons (Red Fox)



1. Explore it

Read the spread from the text below and look carefully at the illustration:



Talk together about what is happening here. Whose birthday is it? Think about the character of Billy. What do you know about him from the text and illustrations? Who does he live with? What is their home like? What objects in the room do you think belong to Billy? What is similar about Billy's life and your own? What is different?

Now think about the present Billy asks for. Is this what you would expect a child like you to ask for as a birthday present? Why do you think he might want a bucket? What might he want to do with it? Have you got a bucket in your home? What do you use it for?

Look at and think about Billy's mum and dad. How do they react to his request? Look at the way the illustrator has drawn their faces. What does this tell you about how they are feeling? Can you make this expression yourself? What do you think they might have been expecting him to ask for? Do you think they will get him the bucket he wants? Why or why not?

2. Illustrate it

Imagine it is Billy's Birthday. Think about the moment he opens his birthday present from his mum and dad. What do you think will be inside? Close your eyes and try to picture this moment in your head. Where is

Billy opening the present? Are his mum and dad there? What are they doing? Is it in the lounge where they are sitting now, or somewhere else? What is the wrapping paper like? What is underneath the paper as he tears it off? How does he react to what he sees?

When you have a really clear picture in your mind, take a pencil and some paper and draw what you see. If you have coloured pencils, felt tips or crayons, you could use these to add colour to the illustrations as you can see in the book. You could ask someone else at home to draw alongside you. Did they have the same idea as you or a different one? Remember, everyone has their own ideas, and that this is a good thing, and there is no right or wrong answer.

3. Talk about it

- What do you think Billy was doing just before he asked for the bucket? Look at where he is standing and the way his body is facing. What might have given him the idea of asking for a bucket?
- Why do you think Billy's mum tells him that ***"buckets are far too bucketty to be a birthday present."*** What does she mean? What do you think she is really thinking here?
- What else do you think might happen on Billy's birthday?
- What is your most memorable birthday present? Who gave it to you and why was it so special?

4. Imagine it

What do you think Billy would do with a bucket if he actually got one? Have you ever used a bucket before? What did you do with it? Perhaps you've been to the seaside and used one to build a sandcastle or collect water from the sea, crabs or shrimps or rocks and shells in. Perhaps you've used a bucket to wash a car with.

Think about all the different things that Billy could possibly do with a bucket and write these down in a list. Now look at the list you have made. Which thing do you most think Billy wants the bucket for? Draw a picture of Billy with his bucket in this situation.

5. Create it

Imagine that it is nearly your birthday. Do you think you'd like to get a bucket like Billy? Why or why not? What do you think you would like to ask for as a present? Why would you like this particular thing? What would you use it for, or what would you do with it? If you asked someone at home for this as a present, how would they react? Would they be surprised, like Billy's mum and dad were, or would it be something they would expect you to ask for?

Make a picturebook page, like the one you have just seen to show you asking for this present. Who will you ask? How will you ask them? Where will you be when you ask? What will their reaction be? Draw the scene that you imagine, then use words to explain what is happening. Think about how the illustrator showed you that Billy's mum and dad were feeling, by the way he drew their eyes and mouths. Can you show how people react by the way you draw their faces? You could add speech bubbles or thought bubbles to show what people in the scene are saying or thinking.