

Take 5: Ideas for Independent/Home Learning

Winter Sleep by Sean Taylor and Alex Morss, illustrated by Cinyee Chiu (Words and Pictures)



1. Explore it

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



Talk together about what is happening here. Who can you see? How can you describe them? What are they doing? Where do you think they are? From what perspective are we seeing this scene? How do you think they are feeling? What do you think makes them feel this way? Now look at the animals you can see in the spread. Do you know what they are? Do you know anything about these animals already? How would you describe them?

Think about when this might be happening. What time of year do you think this is? What makes you think this? What is it like at this time of year?

Now read the text again and think about the words you hear. Was there anything that you learnt from the text? Did anything you heard surprise you? What do you think it would be like for the animals sleeping in the water under a layer of ice?

2. Illustrate it

Re-read the spread again. Think about what Granny says to the child '***But when the water warms in the spring we'll hear them croaking again.***' Think about how this place might change in the spring. What

would be different? Why is this? How would the animals in the pond look? What would the child and their Granny be doing? What would the plants, trees and landscape look like? How might they be dressed?

Take a pencil and paper and draw your own version of this scene in the spring. You might choose to take the same perspective as the illustrator, looking up from under the water, or you might want to take a different perspective so that we can see the scene from a wider perspective. If you have coloured pencils, crayons, felt pens or paints, you might want to bring the scene to life with colour. What colours would you see in the spring? How would these be different from the colours in the winter scene in the book?

You might want to listen to and watch the video for the CBeebies Spring Song to give you some ideas:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZCgTUaa40o>

3. Talk about it

- Look at what the child in the spread is wearing. What might this tell us about what the place is like? What words in the text give us more information about this?
- How do you feel about winter? What do you like or dislike about it? What kinds of things do you do in winter? How is winter different from other seasons? Which is your favourite season and why?
- What other animals do you think might have a '*Winter Sleep*'?
- Why do you think some animals go to sleep in the winter months?

4. Imagine it

Re-read the spread again. What do you think it might be like to be in this place? What do you think you might hear or see? How might it feel to be there?

Have you ever been outside when it has been really cold? What was it like for you? What did you see around you? What do people wear when the weather is like this? What do the trees and plants look like? What kinds of other wildlife might you see? Picture a moment in your mind where you've been outside in the cold and tell someone else about this moment in as much detail as you can.

5. Create it

Go outside in your own local area with a grown up, like the child does here with their granny. You might just want to stand on your balcony or in your garden, or you might want to take a longer walk to a local park, pond or green space.

Take pictures or draw what it looks like in this place and talk together about all the things you see. What is the weather like? Are there any trees, plants or flowers? What do they look like? Do you see any local wildlife? What kinds of animals do you see? What are they doing? Do you or the person you are with know any facts about these creatures that you can share together? How do you feel in this space?

When you come back home, draw your memory of this place and write about it to describe it to someone else so that they can feel what it is like to be there. Think about the things that were mentioned in the text, like *ice, frogs, water*; the descriptive words to show what things were like, like *slimy, still, slowly*; the verbs that show what was happening, like *waits, dived, froze, breathing, warms, croaking* – can you use words like this to describe the place in detail? You could get the grown up you went with to write their own description too and see what is similar and what is different in the way you have chosen to describe it. Did one of you notice something the other didn't? Or you could read your writing and share your picture with them and see if they think you described the place as they remember.