

## Traction Man Meets TurboDog written and illustrated by Mini Grey (Red Fox)

In this second outing for Traction Man Mini Grey continues to extend and develop the use of comic book conventions, in terms of theme as well as page layout and use of speech balloons. In this superhero story, played out at ground level in house and garden, Traction Man's loyal pet Scrubbing Brush goes missing. Where can he be? And will new companion TurboDog be a hindrance or a help?

### Overall aims of this teaching sequence

- To explore, interpret and respond to a picture book
- To explore characters and draw inferences to aid our understanding of them
- To explore narrative plots and characters through role-play and play
- To broaden understanding and use of appropriate vocabulary
- To write character descriptions
- To write a short narrative episode

This teaching sequence is designed for a Year 1 or a Year 2 class.

Overview of this teaching sequence.	
All of the Power of Pictures teaching sequences are aimed to develop an appreciation of art and picture books across age ranges. The sequence will have a strong emphasis on spending time exploring and responding to illustrations, drawing and illustrating as part of the writing process and will culminate in a bookmaking activity to exemplify the process of bookmaking and allow children to see themselves as authors. The work done in the sequence could be enhanced by having an author/illustrator work alongside children at some stage of the process.	
<b>Teaching Approaches</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reading Aloud</li> <li>▪ Response to illustration</li> <li>▪ Drawing and annotating characters</li> <li>▪ Developing ideas through play and role play</li> <li>▪ Illustrating characters and settings</li> <li>▪ Writing in role</li> <li>▪ Gallery walk</li> <li>▪ Booktalk</li> <li>▪ Sketching ideas</li> <li>▪ Storyboarding</li> <li>▪ Response to writing</li> </ul>	<b>Writing Outcomes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Annotated Drawings</li> <li>▪ Drawings of characters and scenes</li> <li>▪ Narrative Sentences</li> <li>▪ Speech and Thought Bubble dialogue</li> <li>▪ Character Descriptions</li> <li>▪ Narrative in role</li> <li>▪ Book review</li> <li>▪ Own story ideas</li> <li>▪ Storyboard</li> <li>▪ Own published book</li> </ul>

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▪ Bookmaking

▪ Review quotes

### Cross Curricular Links:

#### Other ideas to use across the curriculum:

##### Science:

- Use the sequence as an opportunity to explore different materials, comparing and contrasting the different materials the characters are made from.
- Explore the properties of objects and materials, why doesn't TurboDog run well in the sand? This could also be a good opportunity to explore friction, and which surfaces a wheeled toy like Turbodog might run better on. Why does he 'de-activate' in water? Discuss the danger of placing electronic toys or devices into water.
- Look at bio-degradable materials; if possible set up a compost heap and explore what happens in the composting process, encourage the children to compost waste from fruit snacks. Explore the impact of rubbish and why it is important to compost and recycle as much waste as possible.

##### Computing:

- Consider the working of TurboDog and other remote control toys, allow the children to explore remote control toys, learning how they work.
- Use programmable toys like Bee-Bots or Roamers and simple coding programs like Scratch to explore programming in relation to TurboDog. How can we make him follow Traction Man's plans?

##### Expressive Arts and Design:

- Use a variety of media and techniques to represent and make own characters.
- Make props and settings to re-enact the story.
- You may want to look at artists who incorporate the comic style into their art, such as Pop Artist Roy Lichtenstein:
- <http://kids1.tate.org.uk/blog/who-is-roy-lichtenstein/>
- <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/roy-lichtenstein-1508/>
- <http://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/video/tate-kids-presents-pop-art/>
- You might want to use the Tate's online collection to show how Lichtenstein builds up his drawings for his pieces looking at the preparatory sketches for 'Whaam!'
- <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/lichtenstein-drawing-for-whaam-t01131> and comparing them to the finished piece <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/lichtenstein-whaam-t00897>. Talk about how he plans his use of colour on his sketches and why he might have picked those colours.

##### Websites to support responses to art:

- The National Gallery has a range of online resources and programmes that allow young children to investigate paintings and engage in themes and characterisation interactively:  
<http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/whats-on/sessions-for-under-5s/>
- The Tate Gallery has a useful online glossary: <http://www.tate.org.uk/learn/online-resources/glossary>
- <http://kids.tate.org.uk/create/>
- The BBC has a range of videos which could support this learning:  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/subjects/zn3rkqt>

### Geography:

- Look at the immediate local environment in terms of the school setting. Explore, investigate the features and make maps of the environment and use these to decide where Traction Man's adventure might take place. A map of the outside could include a green area 'jungle' a sandpit 'desert' or a pond 'lagoon' an inside map could include a sink where a battle with the evil forks might take place or a shiny floor which might be treacherous to cross.

### Personal, Social and Emotional Learning:

- Explore the idea of friendship, loyalty and helping others raised by the book.
- Talk about and explore feelings, using the feelings of the characters in the book as a starting point for talking about the children's own experiences and different feelings they have experienced.
- Talk about special toys or objects the children may have and how to look after and care for these.
- Consider how it feels to lose something special, if appropriate consider losing a pet and how to cope with the feelings this may cause the children to experience.

### Physical Development:

- Use large and small equipment to explore adventures, journeys and travelling.
- Look at prepositions like, over, under, across, above, below, around and work out ways of travelling on equipment or around a space.
- Experiment with climbing, rolling, walking running to give ideas and inspiration for how Traction Man might move as part of his adventures.

### Links to other texts and resources.

The Power of Pictures website: <https://www.clpe.org.uk/powerofpictures/about-power-pictures/>

Mini Grey's Website: <http://minigrey.com/>

### Other books by Mini Grey:

*Traction Man is Here* by Mini Grey (Red Fox)

*Traction Man and the Beach Odyssey* by Mini Grey (Red Fox)

*The Adventures of the Dish and the Spoon* (Red Fox)

*Toys in Space* (Red Fox)

*Egg Drop* (Red Fox)

*The Pea and the Princess* (Red Fox)

*Biscuit Bear* (Red Fox)

*Three by the Sea* (Red Fox)

*Hermelin: The Detective Mouse* (Red Fox)

### Other books with similar themes, such as:

*Dogger* by Shirley Hughes (Red Fox)

*Knuffle Bunny* by Mo Willems (Walker)

*That Rabbit Belongs to Emily Brown* by Cressida Cowell and Neal Layton (Hodder)

*I Love You, Blue Kangaroo* by Emma Chichester Clark (HarperCollins)

*Red Ted and the Lost Things*, by Michael Rosen and Joel Stewart (Walker)

### Websites to support understanding around picturebook creation:

The Picturebook Makers blog gives lots of useful insights into the creative processes of a great number of

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author illustrators, including Power of Pictures partner Mini Grey:  
<http://blog.picturebookmakers.com/post/120513251181/mini-grey>

**Books to support the introduction of graphic novels to young children:**

*There's a Shark in the Bath* by Sarah McIntyre (Scholastic)  
*Superkid* by Claire Freedman and Sarah McIntyre  
*Supertato* by Sue Hendra (Simon & Schuster)  
*Eliot, Midnight Superhero* by Anne Cottringer and Alex T Smith (Scholastic)  
*Super Daisy* by Kes Gray and Nick Sharratt (Red Fox)  
*There are cats in this book* by Viviane Schwarz (Walker)  
*There are no cats in this book* by Viviane Schwarz (Walker)  
*Is there a dog in this book?* by Viviane Schwarz (Walker)  
*The Astonishing Secret of Awesome Man* - Michael Chabon and Jake Parker (HarperCollins)  
*Father Christmas* by Raymond Briggs (Puffin)  
*Hoot Owl* by Sean Taylor and Jean Jullien (Walker)  
*A Place to Call Home* by Alexis Deacon and Viviane Schwarz (Walker)  
*Banana!* by Ed Vere (Puffin)  
*The Getaway* by Ed Vere (Puffin)  
*Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!* by Mo Willems (Walker)  
*Don't Let the Pigeon Stay up Late!* by Mo Willems (Walker)

See <https://www.clpe.org.uk/library-and-resources/booklists> for CLPE's list of Superhero picture books.

**Websites to support the introduction of graphic novels to young children and teacher subject knowledge:**

- <http://www.booktrust.org.uk/programmes/primary/the-write-book/sarah-mcintyre-video/>
- <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/g/graphicnovels/intro.asp/>

Animations such as Paw Patrol, Octonauts, Captain Mack, Dangermouse, Bananaman and Super Ted will support the learning in this sequence. The animations would allow you to consider the voice over and narration of the story.

- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/cbeebies/episode/b06srvg4/octonauts-octonauts-special-operation-deep-freeze/>
- <http://www.channel5.com/show/paw-patrol/>

<http://www.captainmack.co.uk/>

**Teaching Sessions:**

**Before beginning this sequence:**

- Spend time exploring with the children the 'superhero' genre. Make available a range of related stories, information, comics, artefacts and appropriate websites. (See resources above)
- Consider with the children what makes a superhero special, what they do that makes them different to other people? How do they help people? What do they use their special powers for?

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- Depending on the children's prior experiences you may want to make provision for the children to spend time looking at, discussing and exploring graphic texts in preparation for exploring this book in depth.
- If the children have not already read and enjoyed *Traction Man is Here*, read this aloud to the children and spend time enjoying the book. If you are a Power of Reading school there is also a sequence of work for Years 1 and 2 to accompany this book.
- Discuss and share Action Figures. Encourage the children to bring their own toys in from home including costumes and accessories. Consider how this can change the way the toy is presented and perceived.
- Provide prompts and writing materials to encourage independent and imaginative responses for example: drawing materials to make sketches of favourite superheroes or superhero adventures; pads to make lists of equipment needed by Traction Man and Scrubbing Brush; labels to create incredible names for ordinary items; blank comic strips. This area could include digital sound recorders for children to create their own narratives, record observations and respond to characters and events in the story.
- Create small world play opportunities in the classroom; provide everyday objects with stick on googly eyes to become villains, victims and heroes in imaginary Traction Man adventures and props for each of Traction Man's adventures to encourage oral story making and retelling.
- Set up the outdoor area to mirror the garden in the book, if possible including a compost bin, work shed, sandpit and water tray with an old boot placed in the water. This will enable the children to re-enact key events in the story and to have an understanding and experience of the wider story setting.

### Session 1: Response to Illustration

*Discussions about illustrations can include all children and help to make a written text more accessible. Time spent focusing on illustration can contribute to children's ability to read for meaning, express their ideas and respond to the texts they encounter.*

- Show the children the image on page 1, of the little boy playing in the compost heap **covering up the accompanying text.**
- Ask the children what they notice about the image and note down or scribe their responses around the picture or on post-it notes. Who is in the picture? Where are they? What are they doing? Ask the children to consider the way in which the characters have been drawn, the positioning of the characters, body language, facial expression and gesture. Ask the children: What can we tell from the image about the characters?
- Focus on the adult male character – although we can't see his face, do we know how he is feeling? How do we know?
- Through discussion, draw attention to the boy's facial expression and gestures, and the way in which he is looking at the other character. Could the man be saying something to him? What could it be?
- Encourage the children to notice the different areas in the garden. What is the woman doing? What does the sign say? Who do you think the sign is meant for? Why?
- Slowly reveal the speech bubble text and read aloud. What can you tell about the relationships in

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- the picture? What might we be able to tell about the character of the boy? The man? The woman?
- Why do you think the boy is in the garden? What do you think he will do next?
- Allow the children time to respond to this image noting their likes, dislike, questions and connections. These can be as annotations in pairs or groups around a copy of the image or recorded as a display on the working wall or within a whole class journal.

### Session 2: Drawing and Annotating Characters

*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.*

- Show the children the next page, featuring the close up of Traction Man and Scrubbing Brush scaling the compost heap and read aloud the caption, again using the appropriate intonation and the voice over effect, indicated by the text. With yesterday's illustration still available, ask the children: *Where have we seen these characters before? Who are they?*
- Talk about the transition between the first and second pages. *Is Traction Man really climbing?* The jump from log shot to close up also signals a change from reality to fantasy in the boy's imaginative play. You could also point out the jagged 'pop action' border that signals this if the children don't notice. With very astute children, you may discuss in relationship to the first image, why the boy might like fantasy play.
- Explain to the children that in this session they are going to learn to draw two of the central characters in the book; Traction Man and Scrubbing Brush, in the style of Mini Grey.
- Model how to draw Traction Man, talking through the shapes, sizes and types of lines you are using on a flipchart, or ideally, under a visualiser.
- Give the children another piece of paper and, drawing alongside you, let them have a few goes at drawing the character until they find a version they are comfortable with.
- Use appropriate art materials to colour this illustration.
- Move on to drawing Scrubbing Brush repeating the same process as before.
- Once the children have completed their pictures they could write speech bubbles to accompany the image, suggesting what Traction Man or Scrubbing Brush might say, or a thought bubble suggesting what they might be thinking.
- Display the illustrations of the characters, so that the children can talk about them and the way they drew them.
- After drawing, discuss the two characters. What do they notice about Traction Man and Scrubbing Brush? How are they similar? How are they different? What do we think they are like? Why?
- Encourage the children to annotate their drawings with their thoughts and display these prominently in the classroom. Allow time for children to view and respond to each other's work.

### Sessions 3 and 4: Response to Reading and playing out ideas

*Opportunities for small world play that are based on a known story promote talk about the shape of the story. They encourage children to discuss key elements such as character and plot and to make decisions about how they create the setting. As they play, whether as individual or in cooperation with others, they*

*practise their narrative skills and 'try on' the different characters using different voices to bring them to life.*

### Session 3:

- Re-read the book so far and on until the next page 'Traction Man and Scrubbing Brush are on the North-West Slope of the Compost Heap.' **covering the second half of the spread** 'They have to pass through the ring of Mystic Shrooms.'
- Look at the way the text is laid out on the page. How is it different from other books we've read? How do we decide which order to read the text in?
- You may also wish to look at Mini Grey's use of capitalisation and discuss the proper nouns in the text. What does making Compost Heap into a proper noun tell us about the setting?
- Talk about the difference between the narration and the action in the speech bubbles and the illustrations. You may wish to link this to children's experiences of television shows and cartoons which also use this effect, like Captain Mack. An example episode can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LJmN2DYNxkE>
- Look at the character of the Ancient Potato. What does ancient mean? What might this mean about his character? Read the accompanying speech bubble. Some children may pick up on the link between the Ancient Potato and Yoda from Star Wars.
- In groups provide the children with action figures and scrubbing brushes or nail brushes with googly eyes.
- If possible, give each group soil to represent the compost heap or use brown fabric and replicate the props that can be seen in the illustrations (the potato, mushrooms, apple cores, leaves, eggshells, carrot, broccoli) with either real objects or using plasticine or modelling clay and giving the children googly eyes to decide which ones they would like to bring alive.
- Allow the children time to re-enact the book so far using the props and settings, but also to explore what could happen next and their own imagined scenarios.

### Session 4:

- Read the next page looking at the next two frames that show how this mini-adventure develops.
- Break down the events that occur in the three 'scenes'; setting the scene, meeting a new character and completing their 'mission'.
- Ask the children to return to their role-play and compose a 3 part mini-adventure of their own, following this structure.
- Provide each group with access to a camera that can take pictures of the three scenes they want to capture. Provide pieces of squared paper on which they can think about and draft the voice over and narration they may include and to draw their own speech and thought bubbles to add to the printed photos later.
- Invite the children to read any narration to each other. Do they capture the tone of the voice over as in the text and the video example they saw from Captain Mack? Allow time to revisit and edit if necessary.
- Allow time for the children to publish their scenes by printing their photos and layering over the narration and any dialogue in speech or thought bubbles.



### Session 5: Recognising and creating emotion in illustration

*Discussions about illustrations can include all children and help to make a written text more accessible. Time spent focusing on illustration can contribute to children's ability to read for meaning, express their ideas and respond to the texts they encounter.*

- Re-read the story from the start, before introducing the next two pages, from 'The only way back is through the swampy marshes of the pond.' until 'Scrubbing brush is very muddy'
- Focus on the character of scrubbing brush over these two pages. What happens to him? How does he feel at each point? How do we know?
- Look at the way Mini Grey uses facial expression and body language in her illustrations of scrubbing brush to convey different emotions. Focus in on him as they look over the pond, how do you think he feels about the journey? Look at the motion lines by his tail – what does this remind you of? What does it tell you? What does the straight line of his mouth and wide eyes say about how he feels? Again in the middle of the journey, how does he feel on the boot? Does Traction Man feel the same? How can you tell? Trace scrubbing brush's emotional journey through the rest of the scenes in this double page spread in the same way.
- Focus particularly on the last image 'Scrubbing Brush is VERY muddy.' How would you describe this emotion? Allow time for the children to share their personal connections with the text at this point. Has there ever been a time you have felt this way? What made you feel better? What might make scrubbing brush feel better now?
- Look again at the last three frames. We can't see Traction Man here, but how do you think he is feeling now? Focus in on the first frame where Scrubbing Brush is alone, sinking into the mud. How would Traction Man feel at this point? How would his face and body show this? Allow time for the children to freeze-frame Traction Man's possible reactions.
- Recall with the children the steps that went into drawing Traction Man and talk about the way that changing eyes, eyebrows and mouth shapes could all show us a change in emotion. Start with looking at basic shapes and emotions, such as happy and sad, then look at how you might show the surprise, shock or horror he might be feeling here. Show the children how to sketch out rough ideas to choose a final one.
- Provide the children with a copy of the picture of Scrubbing Brush slipping into the Sinking Mud' stuck onto the corner of a piece of A4 paper and a piece of plain sketching paper. Have them sketch different ways of showing Traction Man and his reaction, thinking about the facial expressions and gestures that were played out in the freeze-frame activity.
- Choose a final sketch to develop into a finished drawing and display these prominently so that the children can compare and contrast the similarities and differences between their work.
- Return to the book and re-read from the start to this point. What do you think will happen now? Revisit the man's speech on the first page of the text if children don't connect to this.

### Session 6: Response to illustration

*In the best picture books illustration and text work closely together to create meanings. Children are naturally drawn to the illustrations in a picture book and are frequently far more observant than an adult reader. Children's interest in images and their ability to read them can be developed through carefully*

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*planned interventions with an emphasis on talk.*

- Read aloud from the beginning and on to ‘*Everyone is warm and sleepy.*’ What atmosphere is created here? Look again at the warm colours, the glow from the fire and the contented facial expression and relaxed body posture of scrubbing brush.
- Now reveal the next page and allow time for the children to observe what is happening. This might be an unnerving concept for those who may have attachment issues with toys – be aware of this and know if extra discussion time is needed.
- Talk what the dad is doing. Why might he be doing this? What else can we tell about his character from the clothes he is wearing, the other props in the room and what he says?
- Look at where the characters are positioned. You might want to talk about the impact of the parents being in another room and this happening while the boy is asleep; what does this suggest?
- Invite the children to share questions that they have about this scene and make predictions about what will happen next in the story. Note these predictions and display alongside the annotated illustrations on the working wall.
- Look closely at the package that is on the sofa next to the boy. What is this? Do you think this will make up for what dad has done?
- Look carefully at the words on the box: *TURBO DOG, GENERIC ROBOTIC HOUND, \*BLEEPS\* \*SPEAKS\* \*SQUEAKS\*, TRACTION MAN’S NEW COMPANION*. Talk about this language, clarify what is meant by generic and companion. Do you think Scrubbing Brush is generic? Do you think he is a good companion? Do you think TurboDog will be? Look at the colours of the package. How do these compare with the rest of the text?
- Invite the children to draw what they think will happen when the boy wakes up. Revisit the earlier work on facial expression; how will you draw his and Traction Man’s faces to show the reader how the characters feel? Give the children more squared paper to allow them to add narration or speech if they think this is appropriate.
- Display these predictions on the working wall. Allow time for the children to explore each other’s perspectives and talk about different reactions.

### Session 7: Improvisation

*Children being free to improvise ideas through drama is another key tool for exploring how characters behave in imagined scenes and situations.*

- Read aloud the next four pages, from ‘*What’s that bleeping noise?*’ until ‘*Where IS Scrubbing Brush?*’ ensuring that you are using a robotic mechanical voice for Turbodog.
- What type of character is he? Refer back to your earlier conversations about superheroes – you might want to consider sidekicks as a character type here using examples such as R2D2 and C3PO in Star Wars, Robin in Batman and K-9 in Dr Who, who Mini based the character on. What character traits do these characters have? Why might a dog have been picked to represent a sidekick? Is the sidekick a new role in this story or is there one already?
- Talk about the way that TurboDog’s speech is represented; look at the spiky speech bubbles, capitalised digital text and some of the language used to describe TurboDog – you could explore this

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as a SPaG activity on using adjectives for effect: *In Indestructible Purple Plastic with Flashing Eyes, Electronic Bark and three AA batteries*. What does this make you think about his character?

- How do the other characters react to him? Look at the contrast between Tiddles and the Handbag Dwellers.
- In pairs, invite the children to play a game where one is Traction Man and one is TurboDog. Traction Man can make suggestions of adventures they can go on and TurboDog responds with only “*Stop Intruder!*” Or “*I will be your pet!*” Give the children several minutes being each character.
- Following this, come back together and ask the children how it felt to be Traction Man. Scribe the children’s responses onto a flipchart. In comparison, what did it feel like to play TurboDog? Again scribe their responses.
- Have a pre-prepared illustration of Traction Man, add a speech bubble and ask the children to give suggestions of what he may be saying at this point in the story, drawing on their improvisations to support.
- Then add a thought bubble and ask the children to suggest what he may be thinking at this point, drawing on ideas in the text and also their own feelings after the improvisations.
- Ask the children to consider the difference between what he is thinking and what he says. Lead this onto a wider discussion about how sometimes what we say and what we think can be different.
- Consider how Traction Man’s feelings are shown in the illustrations and in the text. What can the children tell from his body language and facial expressions and what can they tell through hearing his thoughts read aloud?
- Consider with the children the static facial expression of TurboDog and compare this to the previous images of Scrubbing Brush, what do the children notice? What are we being encouraged to think about TurboDog? Do we know what he is feeling? What makes it difficult?

#### Session 8: Response to illustration and writing in role

***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.***

- Share the next page with the children, the one in which the little boy and his father are watching TurboDog on TV. Read aloud the accompanying text. Stop at ‘*Where can Scrubbing Brush be?*’
- Ask the children to respond to the illustration, noting down their observations. The children may notice the mirrored action of characters; TurboDog on television and Scrubbing Brush, Traction Man and the Boy, Dad and TurboDog on the sofa. They may notice the contradiction with the text, as it describes Traction Man as “watching TV”, when we know that he is worried about Scrubbing Brush.
- Look closely at the expression on the little boy’s face and how this is the same as the expression on Traction Man’s face. Ask the children what this tells us about their feelings and what could happen next.
- Encourage the children to draw on personal experiences where they might have lost a toy or even a pet, what they did and how it made them feel.
- Give the children an opportunity to recreate the scene on the sofa as a freeze-frame. You could then

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use thought tracking to elicit what each character is feeling. Add these thoughts to the annotated illustration and display it on the working wall.

- Consider what we know about Traction Man's feelings at this point in the text. Also ask the children to imagine what Scrubbing Brush is feeling at this point too; even though he has not featured in the book for several spreads. Where might he be now?
- Allow the children to choose one of the characters, the boy, Traction Man or Scrubbing Brush to write in role as. How are they each feeling now? What are they thinking? How will they communicate this? Demonstrate as one character through Shared Writing then allow the children the chance to free write as their chosen character.

### Session 9: Illustrating Characters and Settings

*Giving children the time to illustrate their own characters as part of their idea development focuses attention on them: how they look; what they say; how they behave. When first creating a character, children will need lots of time to explore and experiment, trying out different ideas in a range of media. They can then talk about which ideas work best for them and which characters they feel speak their story.*

*To build their ideas of what a character is like, children may have to create and re-create them in different ways. It is important to give children time to experiment with proportion, facial expression, clothing and props to give their intended reader further clues about the characters they create.*

*Throughout this process children's thoughts will be focused intently on the character, enabling descriptive language and narrative ideas to develop, readying them for the writing process.*

- Read aloud and read on to 'But no sign'
- Look closely at each scene in turn. What do they notice?
  - Whose perspective is the picture seen from – Traction Man himself? One of the other characters? An outside observer?
  - How does the use of colour change the mood?
  - What has changed in the voice over? What does this suggest?
  - What about the way the characters are speaking? What impact does it have to have the writing in that font? How does Traction Man sound when he is speaking?
- Invite the groups to feed back to each other.
- Provide the children in groups with either real action figures or use cut outs from here <http://minigrey-blog.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Dress-Up-TM.jpg> and invite the children to create their own scenes of Traction Man hunting for Scrubbing Brush in the school environment. Invite the children to consider light and dark, which part of the scene they want to capture and from whose eyes they want to show it. Reflect on the Toy Cupboard being from Traction Man's perspective, whilst in the under the bed scene, we are looking at him but on the same level and the sofa scene is shown at a slightly wider angle. You could also make this as a diorama that the children can then display. See the Teaching Approaches sections of the Power of Pictures website for information about this technique.
- Invite the children to photograph their scenes from their preferred point and view and add voice

over and speech bubbles to them either on the computer or using squared paper to mirror the technique from the text.

- Display these scenes on the working wall.

### Session 10: Gallery Walk, Role-Play and Writing in Role

*A gallery walk allows children to walk the story of a picture book. The illustration spreads without text are displayed in sequence around the classroom or larger hall space and the children walk individually or in groups around the room building their own picture of the narrative through the illustration. Children can discuss their different interpretations of the story by discussing the images, working out what is happening and possible motivations of the characters. They can also empathise with different characters and situations by drawing on personal experiences.*

*Role-play and drama provide immediate routes into the world of a story and allow children to explore texts actively. Through role-play and drama, children are encouraged to experiment with the 'what if?' of plot and make it their own. Role-play is a particularly effective way for children to inhabit a fictional world, imagining what the world of the story would be like, and illuminating it with their own experience. It enables children to put themselves into particular characters' shoes and imagine how things would look from that point of view. Through drama and role-play children can imagine characters' body language, behaviour and tones of voice in ways that they can draw on later when they write.*

- Before the session, prepare copies of the next spreads of the story from 'Never run out of hope!' until 'Phew! Good work Scrubbing Brush.' and stick them around the room at spaced intervals, to allow time for children to reflect between each image. If there is not space to do this in the classroom, it would be a good idea to use a larger space, such as the school hall.
- Read the identified pages aloud to the children, then encourage the children to walk around each image, spending time looking carefully at the detail in each spread. You may wish to do this by placing the children in small groups of 5 and staggering the times they start their walk. Once the first group move on to the second image, the second group begins, and so on. Explain that they need to wait for the group in front to move on before they do too.
- Once they have finished, encourage them to reflect on the next part of the story in their groups, while they wait for other groups to finish. Give time for the last group to have some discussion time too. Track Traction Man's emotional journey throughout the scenes, looking again at the impact that facial expression and body language give to our understanding of this as a reader. *How does he look sitting on the step? How does this change as he springs into action on hearing Scrubbing Brush's calls for help? Look closely at the contrast in the faces of the Bin-Things with the words they say – do you think they really mean it? What would happen to Scrubbing Brush if he stayed there? Also look at the way the action sequence where Traction Man squirts the Bin-Things is broken down into three frames on one page. Why is this a good technique? What does this tell us about the battle?*
- Come back together as a whole group to share responses to these questions and note these down on the working wall or in the shared journal.
- Invite the children to freeze-frame the scene where the 'Evil Creatures are gathered round a shivering bunch of potato peelings.' Mark out a circle, perhaps on the ground in the outdoor area, as the bin. Have most of the children take on a role as one of the evil creatures, crammed into the bin

space, one child in role as Scrubbing Brush cowering away from them and another child in a separate space further away as Traction Man, sitting on the step. Whilst 'frozen' have the children think about how they would bring their characters to life in this scene. What are they saying? Doing? Bring Traction Man to life first, voicing his thoughts as he sits on the step, then bring to life the bin scene. Re-enact the part where Traction Man comes to rescue Scrubbing Brush, withering the bin creatures and leads Scrubbing Brush to safety out of the bin. Provide the 'voiceover' for the narration to help to cue changes in the action.

- Afterwards, hot seat the children who played Traction Man and Scrubbing Brush, asking questions to draw out the emotional journey Traction Man and Scrubbing Brush face in this mini-adventure.
- Discuss this segment of the story in the context of the whole story they have read so far. *How do you think Traction Man feels now? What about Scrubbing Brush? Who is missing from this part of the story? Do you think this is the end of the story? Why? Why not? If this isn't the end, what might happen next?*

### Session 11: Reading Aloud and Booktalk

*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 all the way through.
- Discuss the ending of the book. Why do you think Mini Grey chose to 'de-activate' TurboDog at the end of the story? Look at the front cover illustration and title of the story 'Traction Man Meets TurboDog'. Who might you think the main characters are if you just looked at the cover? Who do you think the main characters are after reading the story? Where are the important relationships? Who are the background characters that might appear in other Traction Man stories but aren't main characters? Who are the incidental characters that might only appear in this story? Who was your favourite character? Why? Were they a main character, a background character or an incidental character?
- Talk with the children about their responses to the story as a whole and to the illustrations. What did they like and/or dislike? Would they recommend the book to someone else? Why? Why not?
- Ask the children: what will you tell your friends about this book? What won't you tell them because it might spoil the book for them? Or might mislead them about what it is like?
- You could finish the session by writing a book review. You could look at an example of one someone else has written first, like this one on the Books for Keeps website:
- <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/173/childrens-books/reviews/traction-man-meets-turbo-dog>
- This website uses a star rating. Have the children decide how many stars they think they would give this book and then what they would write about it. In this review, the reviewer states that '*this is even better than Traction Man is Here.*' Do the children agree or disagree? Why or why not?

- Display these prominently in the class reading area or school library for others to read or publish on a class blog.

### Session 12: Creating own picture books – Sketching ideas

*When planning and developing ideas for picture book narratives, children may wish to approach the process in different ways and should be supported to do so. Some children, like some authors, may think of the words in writing first and then the images that will accompany them. Others may think of the pictures first before composing accompanying text and others will work with a combination of the two.*

*Throughout the writing process it is therefore important for children to be given materials and space to allow them to plan and compose ideas in different ways. You may wish to give each child a personal sketchbook to develop ideas in and out of taught sessions.*

- Before the session, collect together common school, household or outdoor objects and googly eyes and invite the children to bring in toys and action figures from home.
- Explain to the class that they are going to write another mini-adventure for the characters. This will eventually be published in the form of an illustrated origami book.
- Look back over the mini adventures in *Traction Man meets TurboDog*. Explore how these are structured - a setting is introduced to Traction Man and Scrubbing Brush along with characters that fit the setting; some action takes place in the setting (meeting the Mystic Shrooms on the compost heap, TurboDog breaking down in the wastes of the Sandpit, squirting the Bin-Things to save Scrubbing Brush); the mission is complete – sometimes signified by Traction Man’s signature ‘*All in a day’s work.*’
- Share <http://eyebombing.com> Invite the children to discuss what kind of characters the objects make. Can they predict what their personalities might be? You might want to give the children an image to work on in pairs and develop a character profile for them.
- Provide the children with household objects/food etc. and googly eyes and invite them to create characters with different personalities – try moving the eyes together/further apart, using repositionable black stickers to create eyebrows – what makes them look friendly? Sinister? What objects or features of objects make successful characters? You might also want to share some of Mini Grey’s other books that explore inanimate objects being brought to life, such as *Egg Drop* and *The Adventures of the Dish and the Spoon*.
- Lay out the characters the children have created alongside the toys. Invite the children to sketch ones they find particularly interesting, trying to cover a range of character types. Some children might prefer to try out a range of facial expressions first before choosing their characters.
- Explain that the children aren’t making choices at this point, they are just trying out ideas. In her work, Mini Grey creates lots of material around a particular subject before choosing her characters and plot.

### Sessions 13-14: Composing and structuring ideas through play

*Opportunities for small world play that are based on a known story promote talk about the shape of the story. They encourage children to discuss key elements such as character and plot and to make decisions about how they create the setting. As they play, whether as individual or in cooperation with others, they*



*practise their narrative skills and 'try on' the different characters using different voices to bring them to life.*

*Giving children the time to illustrate their own characters as part of their idea development focuses attention on them: how they look; what they say; how they behave. When first creating a character, children will need lots of time to explore and experiment, trying out different ideas in a range of media. They can then talk about which ideas work best for them and which characters they feel speak their story.*

*To build their ideas of what a character is like, children may have to create and re-create them in different ways. It is important to give children time to experiment with proportion, facial expression, clothing and props to give their intended reader further clues about the characters they create.*

*Throughout this process children's thoughts will be focused intently on the character, enabling descriptive language and narrative ideas to develop, readying them for the writing process.*

### Session 13:

- In groups, invite the children to each choose a character they have brought in or made. Explain that they are going to begin to create scenes that might form a story in their groups.
- Mini Grey has a background in creating props and scenery and creates real life props and characters for the characters in her stories.
- Invite the children to create three scenes in the school environment using their characters, one to introduce the environment, one to show the action that takes place there and one to complete the adventure. Encourage them to choose the other details they want in the scene. Give time for the children to play out ideas, encouraging them to test out what narration or dialogue might be included to play out each scene.
- Revisit the illustration showing Traction Man hunting for Scrubbing Brush outside of the shed, and Traction Man climbing out of the bin with Scrubbing Brush. Revisit the idea of perspective and discuss what position and where the photographer would have been if these were pictures – what does using a different perspective show us? Why could it be useful when we look at our own scenes?
- Once the children have chosen their three scenes, provide them with a camera to photograph them considering: Do they want all of their scenes to be from the toys' or made characters' perspective or are they going to create a scene to give context even including themselves or other human characters? Where do they need to be to take the best photograph?

### Session 14:

- Before this session print out the children's photographs and ensure their characters are still available.
- Model how you might use the characters and photographs to sketch one of these scenes. Talk about the choices you make in where and how to make things more simplistic and where to add more detail. Consider which characters are showing emotion and which might not be. Refer to how Scrubbing Brush takes the lead in the emotional journey in *Traction Man meets TurboDog*.
- Give the children time with their characters and photographs to sketch their scenes. Explain again that they are trying out ideas here, so starting several or practising pieces of detail before they start



is appropriate.

- Give children squared paper for if they want to explore and experiment with adding narration and dialogue to their scenes.

### Sessions 15 and 16: Building Story Structure: Storyboarding

*When planning a picture book, it is important to work out how the story will develop over the given number of pages. The simplest way in which to do this is by the use of a storyboard.*

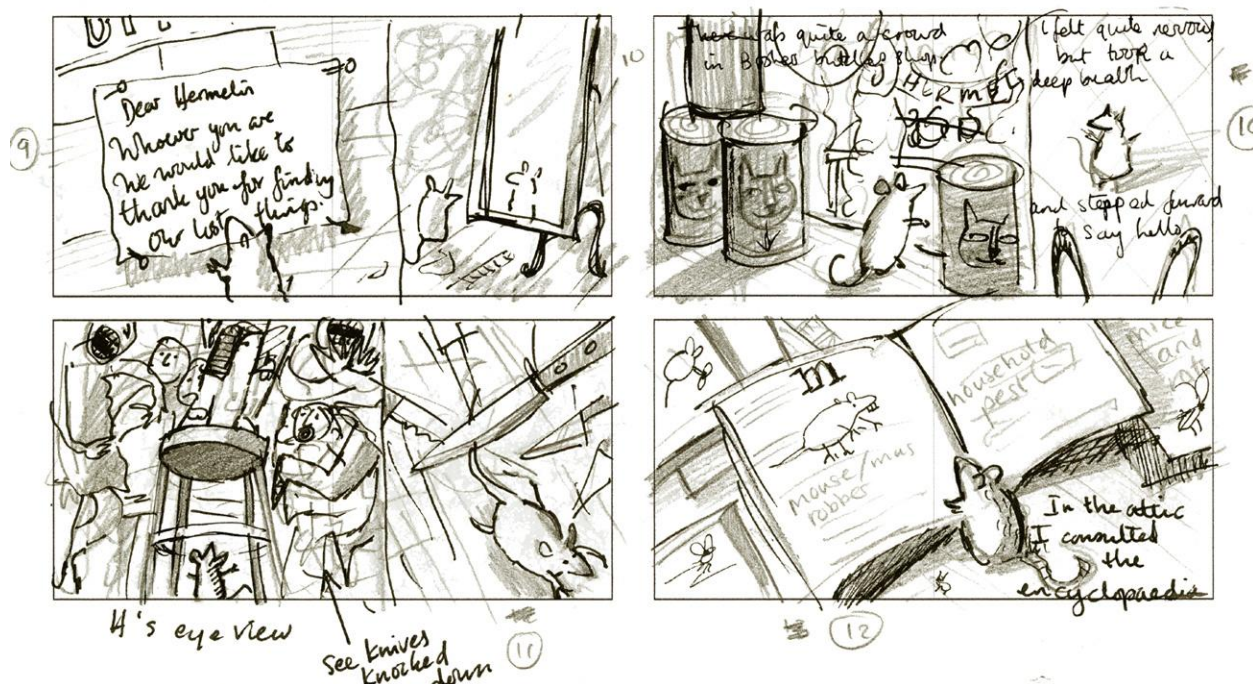
*Used by author/illustrators as part of their planning process, it is particularly useful for marking out the key spreads in a story within a given number of pages, usually 32 pages or 16 spreads. Less experienced writers might want to work with fewer spreads to help begin to structure their story.*

*Working on small 'thumbnails' allows children to experiment with and work out ideas for how to develop a visual sequence, how spreads will look in a finished book, whether spreads will be single or double paged and how words and images will work together on the page. Children can also plan ideas for book covers, front and endpapers, title pages and dedications, allowing them to use understand the language of picture book publication in an authentic process.*

- The children may have already started to develop a narrative in their scene building and sketching time or these might just have been starting points for new ideas.
- Model for the children a review of your own sketches. What do you like about them? Is the structure clear? Do you need to add any additional sketches to expand on any of the story? Look back at the bin adventure as a reference point. How does Mini Grey add extra sketches to build up or expand on the scenes that are happening? Look especially at the way she often adds in a sketch of a character or characters in isolation like Traction Man in his Astro-Suit and the SuperStrong Germo and Traction Man and Scrubbing Brush, reunited and together at the end. Why are these important? Revisit the way the spreads are laid out in this adventure:
  - the large one page image of Traction Man on the step, making him seem small in his world as well as his feelings
  - the whole page to introduce the setting
  - the whole page of Traction Man, in which he now takes up the whole page, his bravery and optimism restored
  - a double page spread to show the epic nature of the Bin scene
  - the three frame action sequence to show that the battle took time and wasn't easy
  - the low perspective shot to show how hard it was for them to escape the bin coupled with the large layover of Traction Man and Scrubbing Brush in isolation to centre our attention on the importance of their relationship.

- Lots of author/illustrators will work using a storyboard on a single sheet of paper, representing the whole book in small thumbnail sized squares. Within the squares, they can plan the basic design of each page, plan how the story unfolds over the pages, see how the words and illustrations work together, and consider how the illustrations work together.


- Show the children how to work with the spread diagram to develop one of the stories on your own storyboard. Look at how to swiftly mark out the rough illustrations like in this example by Mini Grey, which can be found at: <http://blog.picturebookmakers.com/post/120513251181/mini-grey>



- Model and demonstrate carefully how to transform your story ideas onto the spreads, talking through each step of the thinking involved – what the pictures will look like on the page, what words will accompany the pictures and where the best place for the words will be.
- Give children a large frame and plenty of time for having a go at planning out their story. Ask them to give careful consideration to the reader – at each moment what do they want the focus to be on? How will they show what characters are feeling? How will they show when something happens over time? How will they show when something is important, epic or when events and settings change?
- At this point the drawings only need to be rough sketches, but the children should think carefully about the words they will use, how they will be written and where they will appear on the page.
- Encourage the children to practise their text out loud; if they are including a voice over narrative does it sound right? Refer back to the voice over narrative in the original text and demonstrate the use of short statement based sentences.
- Revisiting their planning through play, what dialogue might they include? Where will they place this on the page?

### Session 17: Responding to writing

Just as an author would work with an editor, children should be given opportunities to help each other by reading their writing aloud and responding as readers. This allows them to support each other as they compose and structure their ideas. Writers can tell response partners what they are pleased with in their writing, particular concepts or parts of the story they may be struggling with and gaining a picture from the reader of how their writing impacts on them. Response partners should be encouraged to reflect on the impact of the narrative and illustrations on them as a reader. Children can then re-draft sections of their work, based on these conversations.

At the **final stage** of the writing process, it is important that children are given time to support each other with transcription proofreading, looking at spelling, punctuation and grammar and consider the quality of

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*their illustrations before publication.*

- Re-read the original book to remember the story and patterns of the text.
- Use your own writing or negotiate with a child to share their writing, under a visualiser if you have one, to model a process for responding to writing. Look at what we were aiming to do – create our own picture book sequel to *Traction Man Meets TurboDog*. Read the storyboard plan aloud and have the children respond to what has been read. You might use key questions to target their thinking, such as: Does it follow on from the first book? What is similar? What is different? Do the comedic moments make you laugh?
- Consider revisions that could be made and why. You may ask questions like: What might develop the story? Are there any other words, phrases or types of sentence you can use or anything you could add to the illustrations that would help the person reading or make them more engaged?
- Give children time to look at and review their draft ideas. Share these with a response partner to evaluate the effectiveness of their writing for another reader. Allow time to make changes or enhancements. By looking back at Mini Grey's process work, children can see how she makes changes and additions with a different colour over her storyboard.
- When the children have had a chance to respond to the composition of the story and the effect on the reader, work with the children on proof reading and editing their work. Children could work with editing partners or with small focus groups with an adult, to read their text aloud, checking for missing words, spelling, punctuation and grammar errors and correcting before the text is transferred to the finished book. It is really important that everything is correct before going into the finished book.

### Sessions 18 and 19: Bookmaking

*Many authors will make a dummy book as part of their writing process. This is a small sized or full scale version, which gives the author a truer sense of the physical reality and experience of the finished book. Illustrations will often be roughs; sketches of spreads without huge detail or colour. Text boxes might appear instead of the full text. Making a dummy book is an essential part of the re-drafting process, after storyboarding ideas, as it allows the children a much greater idea of what the finished text will look like and how it works for the reader. There are many ways of making dummy and finished books to draft and publish children's own picture books.*

- Explain to the children that once Mini has mapped out her ideas in a storyboard she experiments with creating them into a book, investigating how the page centrefolds and page turns have an impact on the story. She explains that books aren't flat pieces of paper and instead are 'living things' because they move.
- Revisit the three spreads which show the rescue from the bin, starting from "Never run out of hope!" and finishing with Scrubbing Brush coming out of the bin. Investigate how the reader is encouraged to turn the page and what happens when they do – consider the speech bubble "Aaaaarf" which goes over the edge of the page with the voice over text in the bottom right hand corner, the impact of the double page spread after "No one has ever returned alive from the Bin before." and the shift to close up to show the rescue.

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- Show the children different ways to transfer their storyboards into a dummy book:
  - Folding paper to create each spread
  - Creating mini books – Mini Grey makes 6cm x 4cm books to save time and to check that the story works across the book
  - Creating simple zig zag books (you can find instructions for these here <https://www.clpe.org.uk/powerofpictures/creative-approaches/bookmaking>)
- Again, the children aren't creating a finished product here, but refining their ideas and exploring the ways which books work. They are able to correct these as they go by crossing things out or leaving themselves notes.

### Session 20: Publishing and Responding to Writing

- Re-read the whole of Traction Man Meets Turbodog.
- Look at the back cover and read the quote from The Guardian. Have the children think about something they would like to say in response to the book. These are all positive quotes with people responding to things they liked about the text, so even if there were parts they disliked, have them try to think of one thing they liked that they could tell someone else.
- Encourage the children to share their own made books with a different response partner. They can swap books, read each other's stories and share their opinions on them. This should be a positive experience, so you may want to model this with another adult responding to your book with what they liked about the story and illustrations first.
- Give lots of time for them to swap with a number of different people. The children could then pick their favourite comment that they got from someone else to write as a quote on the back of the book, as Mini Grey has with her book.
- Display the books prominently in the class reading area, library or an appropriate communal space so that they can be shared with and enjoyed by a wider audience.