

## Handa's Surprise by Eileen Browne (Walker Books)

Handa sets off to visit her friend Akeyo with a wonderful array of fruit in a basket on her head. As she walks across the Kenyan plain a variety of animals steal the fruit without her knowing. However, there is a surprise in store for both girls at the journey's end. Comparable with Pat Hutchins' *Rosie's Walk* (Red Fox) and Colin McNaughton's *Suddenly!* (Andersen Press) in that the reader knows more than the central character does.

### Overall learning aims of this teaching sequence:

- To talk confidently about picture books using prediction, asking questions, expressing opinions
- To respond to illustration
- To get to know a story really well through reading aloud, play and re-enactment
- To explore character and plot through role-play and storytelling
- To explore aspects of another country and culture and consider them in respect of their own experience
- To help children begin to see themselves as authors through shared writing and bookmaking

This teaching sequence is designed for a Nursery or Reception class.

### Overview of this teaching sequence.

This teaching sequence is approximately 3 weeks long if spread out over a series of sessions. Many of the sessions will work well for small groups of children whilst other sessions might benefit from larger groups. The sessions are designed to encourage conversation, visual literacy and imaginative play as you unfold the book then revisit it. This is an amusing and memorable read and children will enjoy sharing the book and talking about the story together as much as it being read aloud to them.

### Teaching Approaches

Responding to illustration  
Book Talk  
Drawing and Annotating  
Drama and role play  
Reading Aloud  
Shared writing  
Language Play  
Storytelling  
Story boxes  
Writing in role  
Bookmaking

### Resources

Multiple copies of the book  
A selection of fruits including the seven fruits of the story - guava, pineapple, mango, banana, orange, avocado, passion fruit, and tangerines  
Maps and globes  
Relevant models and toys for small world play  
Information texts, music, materials and other artefacts from Kenya  
Information texts and materials on Kenyan wildlife

### Related Fiction Texts:

*Handa's Hen* by Eileen Browne (Walker)  
*Handa's Surprising Day* by Eileen Browne (Walker)  
*Through My Window* by Tony Bradman and Eileen Browne (Frances Lincoln)  
*Suddenly!* by Colin McNaughton (Andersen Press)  
*Rosie's Walk* by Pat Hutchins (Red Fox)  
*What the Ladybird Heard* By Julia Donaldson and Lydia Monks (Macmillan)

## Teaching Sessions

### Exploring Illustration

The children's books featured on [www.clpe.org.uk/corebooks](http://www.clpe.org.uk/corebooks) 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.

- Introduce the story to the children and look at the cover of the book.
- Ask the children what they think this book is about and what they think the surprise might be.
- Discuss this together and then feedback to the group.
- Encourage the children to consider what makes something a surprise.
- Invite the children to share their own experiences of having a surprise. Ask them to think about how it felt and why.
- Read the first page aloud.
- Cover the text so that children respond only to the picture. Allow children time to look and respond to what they can see, what they think is happening. Encourage the children to draw on their own experiences:
  - *Where is this? How can you tell?*
  - *Does it remind you of anything in stories or real life?*
  - *Do you have any questions?*
- Scribe ideas in the shared journal around a copy of the picture.
- Return to their questions at the end of the sequence to review if any have been answered.

### Circle/group time activity

- Re-read the first page and continue reading up to the point where Handa sets out on her journey
- Collect together the eight fruits of the story and place them in a wide wicker basket like the one shown in the story.
- Sit the children in a circle and pass the fruits round for children to feel and smell, encouraging them to talk about which ones they eat at home, what they are called (in as many languages as are spoken in the classroom), and what they taste like (if they have eaten them before).
- Allow the children to chop the fruits and taste them in turn.
- Ask: What do they taste like? Which is your favourite and why?
- Take photographs of this session and display them along with speech bubbles of what the children say, thinking about the taste, the texture, the smell and the feel of the fruits.
- Return to the story and ask the children which fruit they think Handa's friend will like best and why.
- **As a further activity in small groups:** Make a fruit salad, again taking photographs. Ask the children to sequence the photographs to show how to make fruit salad.
- Encourage children to write their own captions for themselves or write alongside the children and scribe what the children tell you.
- **Additionally:** Have a pictograph ready to complete and ask each child to stick their picture or name above their favourite fruit.

## Book Talk

*Discussion about books forms the foundations for working with books. The more experience children have of talking together like this the better they get at making explicit the meaning that a text holds for them: a child quoted in Aidan Chambers' book Tell Me: Children, Reading & Talk with The Reading Environment (Thimble Press 2011) says 'we don't know what we think about a book until we've talked about it'.*

- Re-read the first part of the story and take time to look carefully at the illustrations with the children.
- Talk with the children about why they think Handa was taking Akeyo a surprise. What does this tell us about her personality?
- Ask them if they think Akeyo will like the surprise. Ask the children to predict and justify which fruit they think she will like best.
- Ask the children to consider what their favourite fruit is.
- Discuss with the children how the things we like are not always the things other people like; that people have different tastes.
- Ask the children what they would take a special friend as a surprise.
- Children can work with an adult to write this or complete writing this in a shared writing activity.

## Reading aloud and Book Talk

*Reading aloud helps children to broaden their repertoire as readers, becoming familiar with a wider range of genres and the work and voice of particular authors. Conversations about books help children to explore and reflect on texts in ways that are made meaningful, personal and pleasurable.*

- Read aloud the next part of the book in which Handa travels to her friend's village. As she walks along the path with her gift, the fruits are stolen one by one by a succession of animals.
- Each time you read another page, encourage the children to make predictions, based on the pattern of the text on what could happen next.
- Ask the children to predict what animal might come along next and steal the fruit; can they justify their answer based on prior knowledge of the animals?
- Stop at the page where the parrot takes the last piece of fruit in the basket.
- Ask the children to consider what will happen now all the fruit has gone! Ask the children to think about how Handa will feel once she discovers the fruit has been stolen.
- Can they make suggestions on how she can still surprise her friend?
- Record the children's responses in a shared journal and continue to add to this as the sequence goes on.

## Shared writing

*Shared writing is one of the most important ways a teacher can show children how writing works and what it's like to be a writer. Acting as scribe, the teacher works with a small or large group of children to create a text together, enabling them to concentrate on their ideas and composition.*

- Re-read the book to the children, again stopping at the point at which all the fruits are stolen from Handa's basket.
- Bring the focus back to the language of the text which describes the different fruits e.g. sweet-smelling guava.
- Have the text displayed in a list for the children to see:
  - soft yellow banana
  - sweet-smelling guava
  - round juicy orange
  - ripe red mango
  - spiky-leaved pineapple
  - creamy green avocado
  - tangy purple passion-fruit
- Depending on the maturity and ability of the children you could discuss the use of adjectives used to describe the fruits and/or bring attention to the way in which the author has drawn on the senses to describe the fruit (sight, smell, taste and feeling).

- Show the children the real fruits again, including some other fruits such as grapes or plums, and ask the children to consider how they would describe the fruits using their senses. Model an example; you could focus on alliteration such as gorgeous green grapes.
- While the children are talking, ask adults in the setting to scribe their comments and suggestions.
- After this, working as a group use the children's suggestions to compose a free verse poem about fruit in a shared writing activity.
- Following this, the children could also go on to draw or paint the fruits or to make them using clay. They could then label their artwork or compose their own poems independently.

*The children could then explore other poems about food:*

- I'm An Apple by Clive Riche
- Jam on Toast by Gareth Owen
- Soggy Greens by John Cunliffe
- Sugarcake Bubble by Grace Nichols
- Ice Cream Cone by Heidi E. Y. Stemple
- Sounds Good by Judith Nicholls
- Dinner Time Rhyme by June Crebbin
- Spaghetti Spaghetti by Jack Prelutsky

*The children can go on to think about how they might perform their poems. The CLPE's Poetryline website has some examples of poets performing poems around the theme of food which the children can watch and join in with:*

- <http://www.poetryline.org.uk/poems/little-bit-of-food-1333> [Accessed 23.06.15]
- <http://www.poetryline.org.uk/poems/halloweens-crumble-1331> [Accessed 23.06.15]
- <http://www.poetryline.org.uk/poets/tony-mitton-1074> [Accessed 23.06.15]

#### Fact-Files

- Re-read the book to the children, again stopping at the point at which all the fruits are stolen from Handa's basket.
- This time bring attention to the different animals in the text. The different animals featured are listed in the final pages of the book.
- Ask the children if they can name the different animals.
- Spend time finding out about the different animals featured and ensure there are opportunities for the children to explore this aspect of the text in the continuous provision.
- For example;
  - Allow the children to listen to the different sounds these animals make and respond to them: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/schoolradio/subjects/earlylearning/stimulusoundslibrary> [Accessed 23.06.15]
  - Watch videos about the different animals and discuss, ask adults to scribe the children's comments after watching and get those children able to, to make short notes after watching:
    - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/zsqnfg8> [Accessed 23.06.15]
    - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/clips/zm7bwmn> [Accessed 23.06.15]
    - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/clips/zg8f9j6> [Accessed 23.06.15]
    - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/collections/p011x1yq> [Accessed 23.06.15]
    - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/clips/z4j3d2p> [Accessed 23.06.15]
    - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/clips/zgnhfg8> [Accessed 23.06.15]
    - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/clips/zfg634j> [Accessed 23.06.15]
  - If possible visit a zoo or safari park so the children can see some of the animals featured such as Whipsnade <https://www.zsl.org/zsl-whipsnade-zoo/schools/animal-story-time-africa> [Accessed 23.06.15]
- After the children have found out about the animals, allow the children to work in small groups with an adult to make small books or fact-files about the different animals featured in the text.

### Hot-Seating

*In hot-seating, one member of the class role-plays a central character from a poem or story and is interviewed by the other children. This activity involves children closely examining a character's motivation and responses. Before the hot-seating, they need to discuss what it is they want to know and identify questions they want answering.*

- Read the rest of the text to the children, revealing the real 'surprise' at the end.
- Explain to the children that they are going to take it in turns to play Handa and Akeyo, talking about what happened in the story.
- Ask the children to think about the following questions together:
  - Why is Handa surprised?
  - How do you think she feels?
  - How does Akeyo feel?
  - Was she surprised too?
- Ask one of the children, or you could model this if doing this for the first time, to hot-seat in role as Handa or Akeyo.
- Give the other children time to discuss some questions they might ask beforehand.
- The children playing the part of the girls will also need time to prepare their story and inhabit the character.
- Simple props can be useful to support this process, such as the fruit basket.
- You could record these sessions so that the children can refer to them again.
- You could also take photographs of the children in the role of the girls and ask the children to annotate the pictures following the hot seating or an adult can scribe their responses around the picture.

### Revisiting and retelling

*Reading and re-reading known texts is important for all readers, but particularly so for less experienced readers or those for whom English is an additional language. Re-reading helps to make the text more familiar and enables children to read it more confidently, fluently and with greater attention to the meaning.*

- Read the story again on several occasions, encouraging the children to chime in as they become more confident with key phrases in the story.
- With the children make a set of magnetic or stick story-props to use for your retelling of the story and to support children's own independent retelling.
- Provide extra copies of the book, alongside the props to support the children's retelling and early attempts at reading.
- The familiarity of the story will be extremely enabling as the children begin to focus on the print.

### Story Mapping

*Making a story map is a way of retelling the story. It is a graphic means of breaking a story down into episodes and sequencing its events. This kind of graphic representation helps children to hold on to the shape of the story more confidently so they can re-tell it orally or in writing.*

- Explain to the children that you would like them to help you map out the story as it will help to retell the story.
- Ask them to orally retell the story to a partner, establishing the main events as the story unfolds. Provide children with the story props if required.
- Ask the children to consider where the story took place and ask the children to recall the places Handa passed along the way and swiftly demonstrate drawing these places on a large piece of paper.
- Use the map to retell the story orally as a class, adding in key phrases from the book as the children recall them.
- Provide large rolls of paper, drawing and writing equipment and with the children's help create a table sized map of Handa's journey.
- Use the illustrations from the book for inspiration and detail; make models of the villages, trees etc.
- Support the children's oral retelling using key phrases that help move the story on.

### Small World 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.*

- As a group activity create small world scenes of Handa's village, the path between the villages on which she travels and Akeyo's village.
- Include all the animals that steal Handa's fruit as she travels, the different fruits and all the different people in the story.
- Encourage the children to revisit the story and to re-tell the story to one another using their small world scenes.
- Ensure these are readily accessible after the group sessions so that the children can continue to revisit the story and can choose to use the small world scenes independently.

### 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.*

- As a shared writing activity write and draw the sort of thank you card that Akeyo might write back to Handa after she returns home to her village.
- Children can then go on to design and write their own thank you cards independently or with adult support.

### Drama and Role-Play

*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.*

- Use the outside area to act out the story with everybody taking the roles of all the characters while you read the story aloud.
- Work with the children to remodel the classroom role-play area as a rural Kenyan house as depicted in the story and map out the path to Akeyo's house outside.
- Enlist the children's help in writing signs and directions for the journey, writing alongside the children as part of the play.
- The children could also make their own costumes for the parts of the characters and the different animals.
- You could also encourage the children to dance in role as the animals, using traditional Kenyan music as background music.

### Class Bookmaking

*Publishing their work for an audience helps children to write more purposefully.*

- Using a flip chart or IWB and with you acting as scribe for the children's ideas, rewrite the story together.
- Once it is finished divide the story up and ask individual or pairs of children to paint a picture for each section.
- When they are finished the story can be displayed as a wall story that can be read together in shared reading time, or published as a class Big Book.

### Individual Bookmaking

*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.*

- After making a book as a whole class allow children the opportunity to make individual home-made books for children to use for writing their own independent versions of the story.
- Using a digital camera, photographs could be taken of the places used and created for the role play; these could then be printed and used as the background setting in the books for the journey Handa takes in the story.
- You could also use colour photographs of the children as the characters, and props such as the fruit could be



incorporated alongside children's own illustrations, recreating the story.

- These books can be kept in the writing or reading area or placed alongside any of the story making activities such as the story box.
- Once the books are finished these should be read to the rest of the group and put with the display.

### Tell Me

*Conversations about books help children to explore and reflect on texts in ways that are made meaningful, personal and pleasurable.*

- Look back at the end of the story and re-read the final part of the book.
- Discuss children's responses to this ending.
- Ask the children to consider the story as a whole.
- Ask the children to consider what they liked or disliked, anything that puzzled them or any connections they can make.
- The children's responses could be scribed by an adult and placed in the class journal.

### Other ideas for continuous provision:

#### Reading Area:

- Make an Eileen Browne display, introducing her and her books.
- Display other books with similar themes or patterns, such as *Rosie's Walk* by Pat Hutchins (Red Fox), *Suddenly!* by Colin McNaughton (Andersen Press) and *The Shopping Basket* by John Burningham (Red Fox).

#### Knowledge of the World:

- Make an area dedicated to Kenya.
- Use video clips to support the children's understanding:
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/clips/zhp34wx> [Accessed 23.06.15]
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/clips/zgfr87h>
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/clips/zpvmmyrd>

#### Small world play:

- Collect together all the characters from the story and display them alongside their own names. This will help children check that they have returned them all after playing with them, and also help them to begin to recognise and read the names for themselves.
- Recreate the Kenyan savannah in a builder's tray using materials such as dried grass, water and sand and place the models into it for children to use to make up their own stories.

#### Singing:

- Kenyan music and instruments used in traditional Kenyan music.
- African music: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/topics/zy87pv4>

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