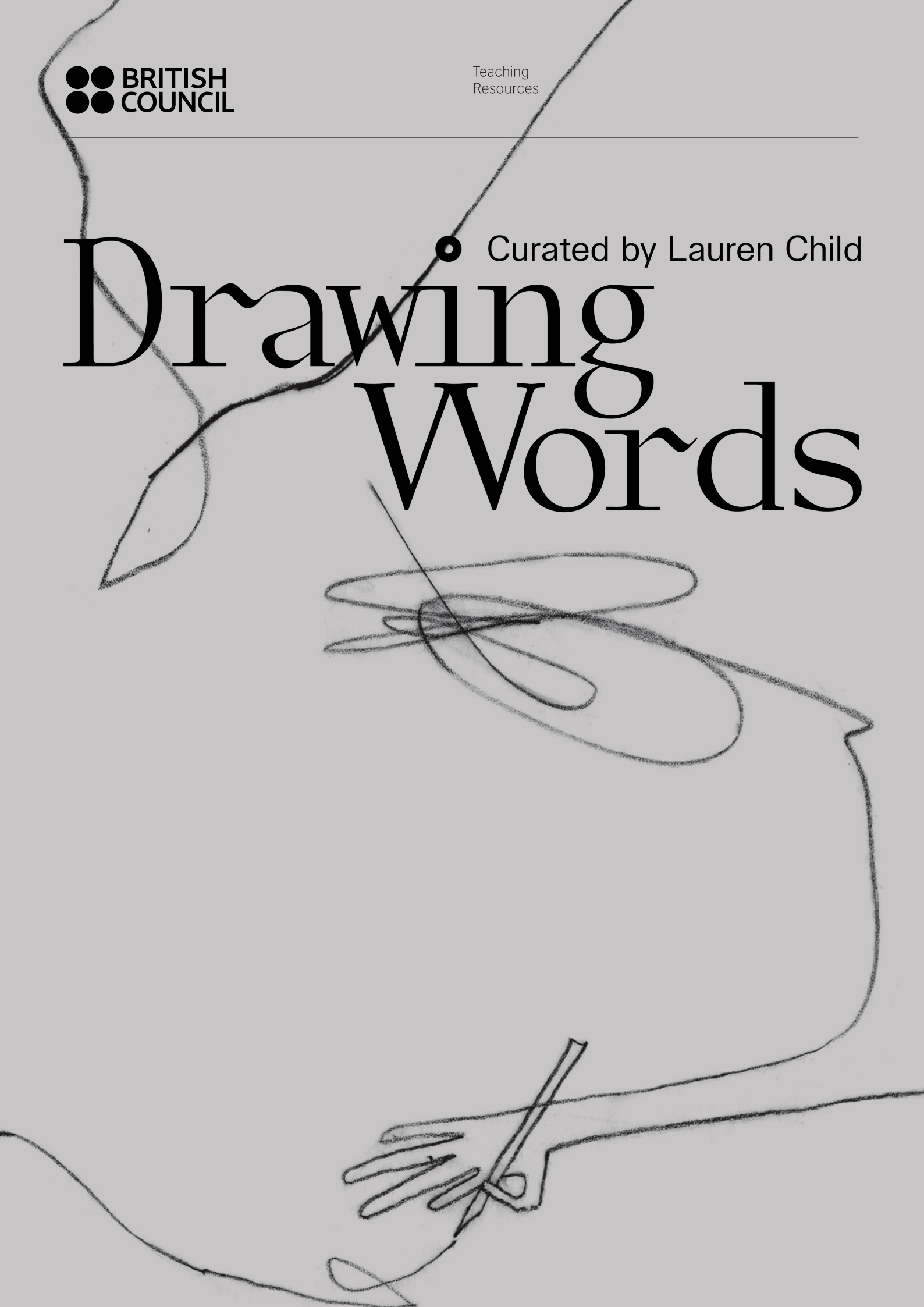


● Curated by Lauren Child

Drawing Words



Introduction

"Illustrators invent worlds. They can invite you to step into the detail of painted woodland, woodland so decorative that you might lose yourself in the page. Or they might encourage you to notice how extraordinary the ordinary can be once drawn in black and white and bricks, pavements and tiles have been translated into pattern. An illustrator may find and adapt anything: a comb, a stone, a peg, a piece of old cardboard can be employed to construct a three-dimensional collaged city, created to challenge the way you think about your own world." Lauren Child

Drawing Words is a new exhibition of children's book illustration commissioned by the British Council and curated by the Children's Laureate, Lauren Child. The exhibition features ten amazing illustrators from across the UK whose work makes an important and original contribution to contemporary British picture book illustration.

Some of the illustrators in *Drawing Words* are established artists developing their practice while others are at the beginning of their careers, pushing the boundaries of the art form in new and exciting ways. Each illustrator uses different techniques to tell stories that show new perspectives on the world around us.

This education resource is designed to inspire teachers to use illustrations and picture books in their classrooms to promote knowledge and transferable skills including critical thinking, inference, creativity, and visual and emotional literacy. It celebrates illustration as an art form and includes background information, discussion points and activities to promote learning across the curriculum. There are general activities and others that are linked to specific books and illustrations from the exhibition. The resources can be used at the exhibition, in individual lessons or as elements of a joint cross-curricular project in your classrooms or with a partner school in your country or overseas.

In his book *Matilda*, Roald Dahl describes how books transformed his heroine's life. They 'transported her into new worlds and introduced her to amazing people who lived exciting lives...She travelled all over the world while sitting in her little room in an English village'.

This pack aims to help you take a journey with your pupils and explore some vibrant new worlds created by contemporary artists today and inspire the artists and writers of tomorrow.

Curriculum links: English, Art and Design, Design Technology, Personal, Social and Health Education, Geography, Drama.

Core and transferable skills: Creativity and imagination, collaboration and communication, critical thinking and digital literacy.

Learning objectives: To develop an appreciation of different types of illustration and explore a variety of techniques used by illustrators and artists. To prompt learners to ask questions and create their own imaginative and creative responses to the artwork. To gain visual storytelling skills and increase understanding of narrative structure.

Resources: If you are working in the classroom you will need access to the internet. Have some magnifiers, art materials and paper, cardboard and scissors available.

First impressions

If you are visiting the exhibition in person, encourage your pupils to take a good look around at the illustrations when they arrive and examine the artwork carefully.

If you are working in the classroom use the following link to share the illustrations with your pupils: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/arts/drawing-words>

How many different ways of drawing people and animals can they see? Which images are they immediately drawn to? Play a quick game of buy or regift. In this game pupils choose one illustration that they would love to own more than any other if money was no object, and another that they would rather give away to someone else! Encourage them to explain the reasons behind their choices.

Looking deeper

Invite your pupils to choose one of the illustrations to investigate more closely with a partner. Ask them to look really carefully at the detail, and discuss and jot down on sticky notes everything they can see in the image. How would they describe the picture to someone else? The following questions may help:

Does the illustrator use a single-or double-page spread or a combination of the two?

How would you describe the mood of the picture?

Is any text visible? If so, how are the words arranged on the page and how do they fit with the picture?

Do you want to read on to find out what happens in the story?

Can you describe how you think the artist created the picture?

Do you think they used paint, pencils, collage or other techniques?
Why do you think the illustrator made these choices?

Ask your pupils to use the sentence stem 'I wonder...' to pose five questions about the picture. Ask each pair to feed back their ideas and responses to the illustrations and then discuss some more general questions about illustrated books in groups.

Let's talk about books...

Bring in a favourite picture book and discuss why it is special to you. Divide your class into groups, choosing one member to act as scribe, and ask them to discuss and record their thoughts about their own favourite illustrated books and reading choices. You could use the following questions and guidelines from the British Council resource on developing oracy at https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/resource/downloads/oracy_lessons_resource.pdf to help you structure the group discussion.

What are your favourite illustrated books? How would you describe the illustrations?

How often do you read for pleasure?

What types of materials do you mostly read?

Non-fiction, illustrated books including graphic novels, digital books or messages, adventure stories, novels, poetry or comics or none of these?

Where do you do most of your reading?

What do you think are more important in an illustrated book: the words or pictures?

Discuss the following viewpoints, giving examples to back up your opinions:

'Illustrated books are only for younger children.'

'Words are more important than illustrations.'

If you are working with a partner school, share your responses to the illustrations and exchange examples of your favourite picturebooks and illustrators from both countries.

'The very best picturebooks become timeless mini art galleries for the home – a coming together of concept, artwork, design, and production that gives pleasure to, and stimulates the imagination of both children and adults.'

Martin Salisbury and Morag Styles: Children's Picturebooks, The Art of Visual Storytelling

Laura Carlin *A World of Your Own*

In *A World of Your Own*, award-winning illustrator Laura Carlin shares her own thoughts and drawing techniques and inspires children to look, draw and use their imagination to create their own worlds.

Illustration 1



In the first double-page spread the reader meets Laura, and discovers that she hates standing in lines and creates her own worlds in her imagination to make things more interesting by looking and then changing what already exists.

Look at the first illustration from the book and discuss the difference between the styles of the two images of the real world and the world in Laura's imagination. Why do your pupils think she has chosen these techniques and colours? What effect does this have?

Laura says she hates standing in lines. Discuss with your students what chores they dislike doing. What do they daydream about when they have a boring task to do? Look at the three alternative queues or lines that Laura Carlin has created in the picture of the imaginary world and discuss which idea they like the best – the tree top tightrope, the snake slide or crocodile stepping-stones? Invite them to invent and draw or paint a weird and wonderful line of their own that will take them directly from home to school. Display these around the classroom.

In the book Laura plays with the idea that in your imagination, things may not always be what they seem. If you were creating an imaginary world, what would it look like? Would your house be made out of brick – or out of chocolate? Would it be on the ground on the moon?

Illustration 2

shoes for superheroes!



This illustration shows the inside of a shop, which looks ordinary from the outside, but when you go inside you discover it sells shoes for superheroes! Another illustration shows a scary-looking house on the outside, which turns out to be full of kittens!

Take your pupils for a walk around your local shopping area to sketch and photograph the shops, buildings and any market stalls that they see. Ask them to note down the sights and sounds and smells of the local area. Back at school ask them to use their notes, sketches and photographs to draw one of these buildings from the outside and add a sentence to describe its appearance. Then create another showing the amazing things you might find inside it in an imaginary world. They could use the template on Activity Sheet 1 or a piece of folded standing cardboard with the door cut out like the one in the illustration, with the outside of the shop painted on one side and the amazing inside on the other.

Illustration 3

In the real world, we all look different from each other.
Everyone looks different in My World, too.



In this illustration we see how Laura Carlin makes characters and worlds from everyday objects. Encourage your pupils to come up with names and a short description of three of the characters on this page, and then use pens or pencils or images cut out from magazines to turn the everyday objects on Activity Sheet 3 into their own imaginary characters and animals.

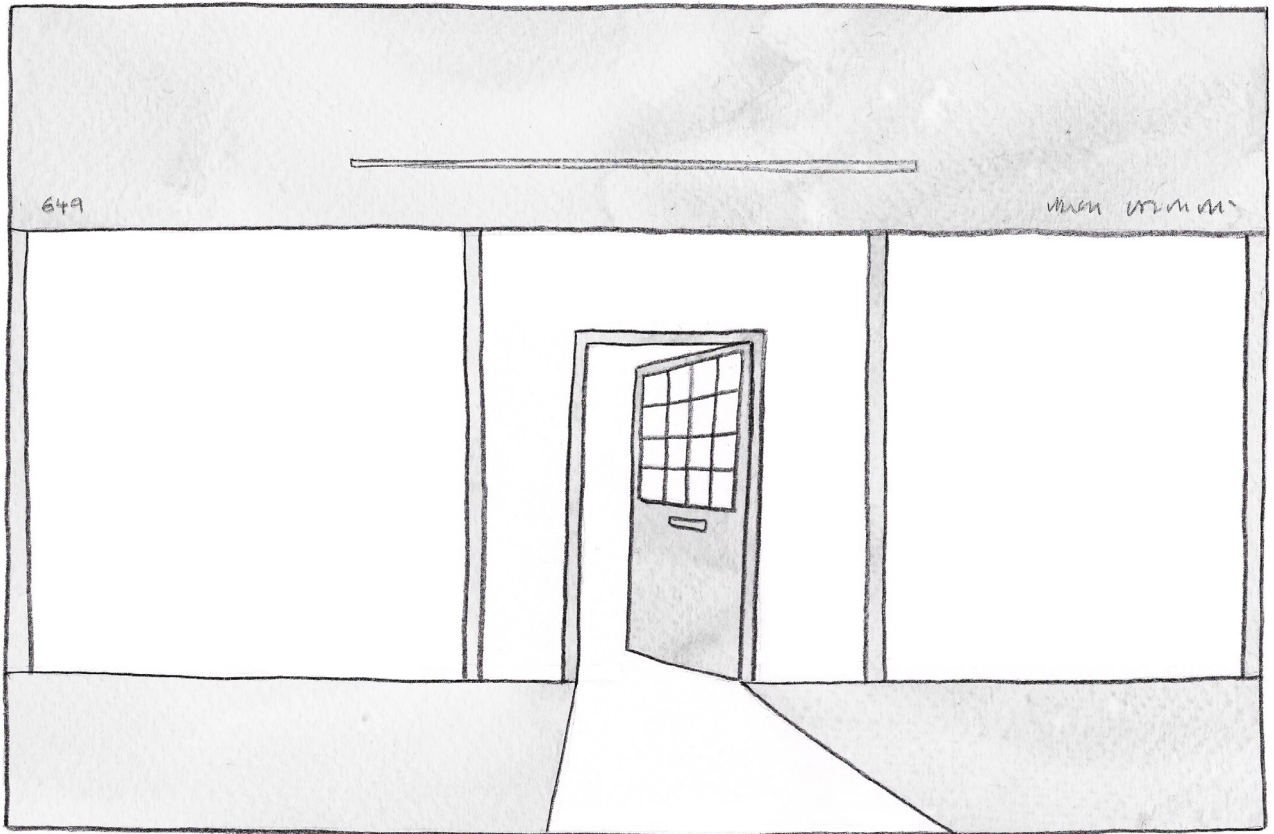
Partner school activities:

If you are working with a partner school you could:

Upload photographs and drawings of shops and buildings in your local area onto a shared space or Padlet. Discuss the things that are the same and different about you see. Exchange your imaginative ideas about what you might find inside these buildings!

Activity Sheet 1

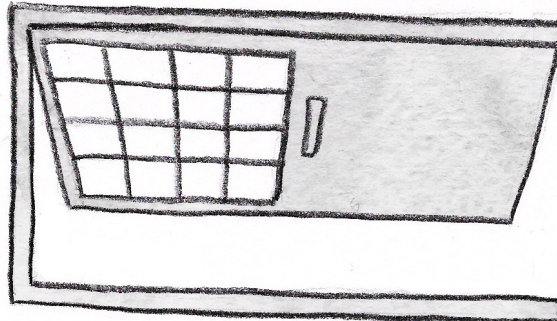
Draw what might be sold in this shop in an imaginary world.



(c) House of Illustration

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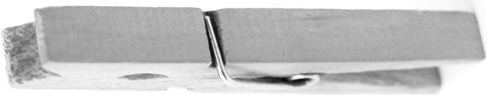
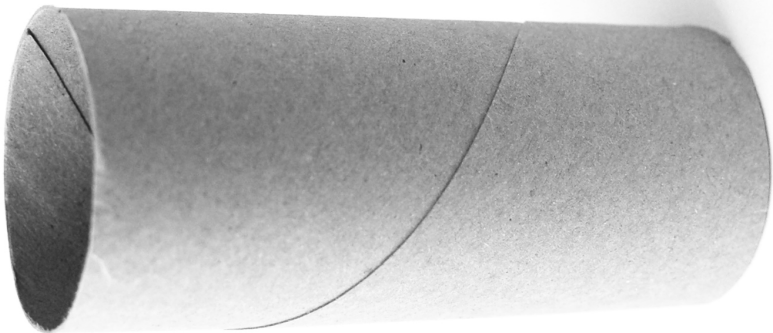
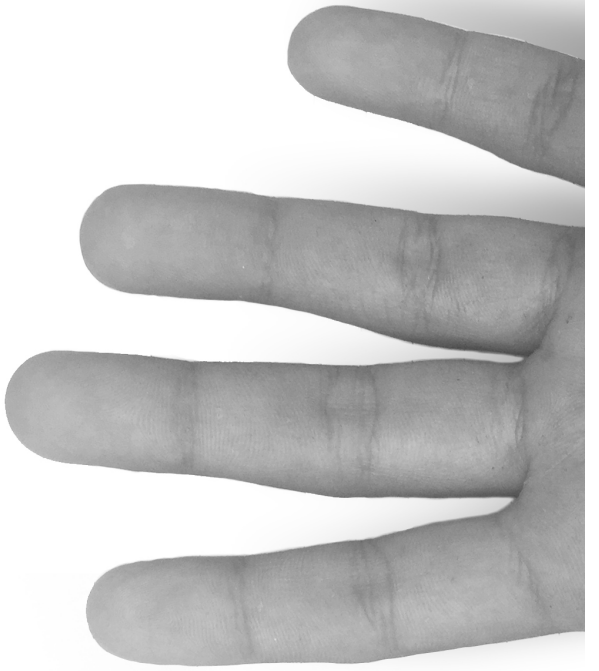
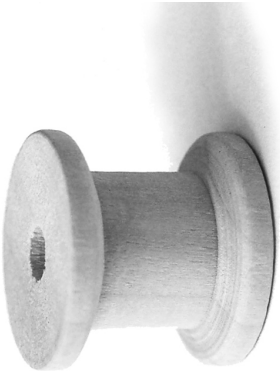


Activity Sheet 2

Use pens and photographs cut from magazines to turn these ordinary objects into extraordinary characters, animals or objects.



Credit: House of Illustration



Neal Layton

Emily Brown and the Thing

In this picture book Emily Brown and her toy rabbit Stanley find 'a Thing' crying outside their window, and set out on a series of adventures to try and help him to get to sleep.

Illustration 1

Share the sentence that accompanies the first illustration from *Emily Brown and the Thing* with your pupils: 'There was a Thing sitting on the windowsill.' Ask them to draw what they think the Thing might look like and then compare their results with Neal Layton's illustration. Did they expect the Thing to be wearing pyjamas and shedding tears? Why do they think he is upset?

There was a Thing sitting on the windowsill.
Large tears were dripping onto his pyjamas.



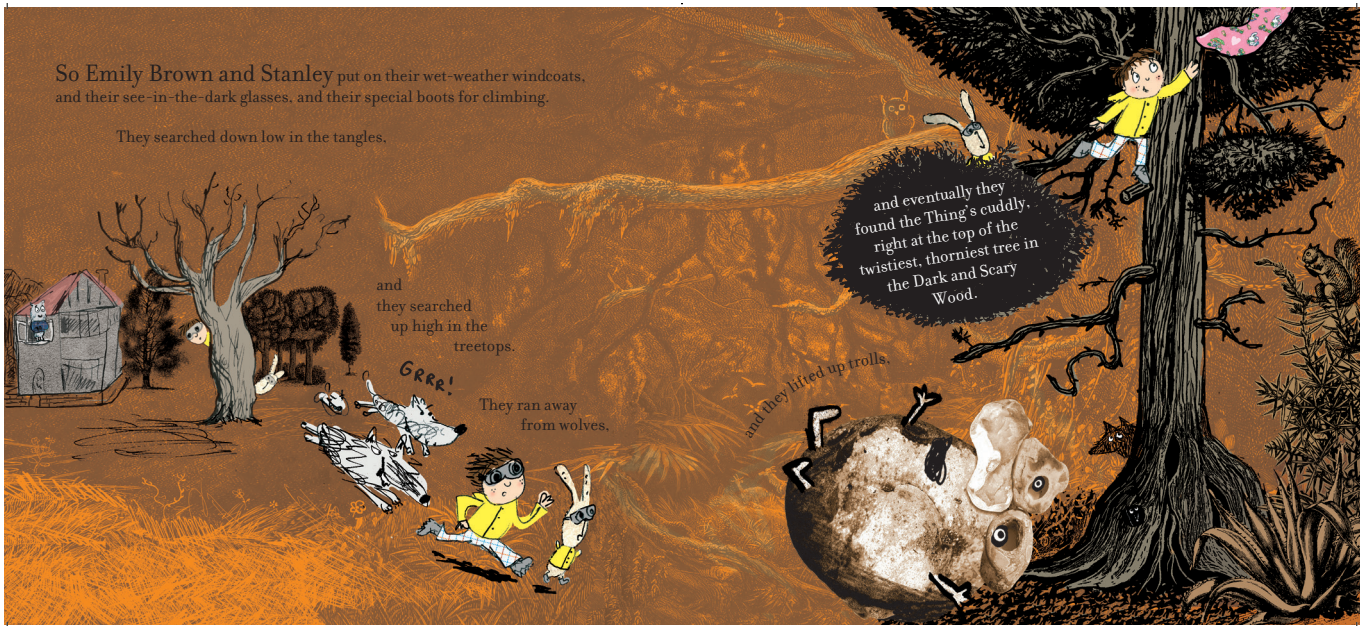
Illustration 2

"Oh, Emily Brown, Emily Brown!" wept the Thing. "I can't find my cuddly HOWEVER hard I look. It's not in the Dark and Scary Wood and it's not under my pillow... You and Stanley must come and find it for me, because I just can't sleep without my *cuddly*."



The Thing is sad because he has lost his cuddly and can't sleep without it. Ask your pupils to draw and describe to a partner a special toy that they had when they were younger. What did it look like? Did it have a name like Cuddly? How would they have felt if it got lost?

Illustration 3



Lots of things happen to Emily, Stanley and Thing in this double-page illustration in their quest to find the lost cuddly. Ask your pupils to look closely at the detail and list their adventures and where they take place. In groups of three encourage them to create freeze-frames of the action in the tangles and treetops, running away from wolves, lifting up trolls and climbing a tree in the Dark and Scary Wood. At a given signal bring these characters to life by tapping them on the shoulder and asking them to say what the character is thinking at that moment in time. Invite your pupils to build on their drama work and write out the story of their quest to find the lost toy. How might the story end?

Print copies of Activity Sheet 3, which has scribbles, splashes and parts of faces on it. Ask your students to use pens and pencils to turn these into pictures of weird and wonderful monsters. They could go on to give their monsters descriptive names and write a character profile of one of them. Decide where he or she would live. What is his/her favourite food? How does he or she spend his/her time? Who are his/her friends? What is he/she afraid of?

Display the collection of monsters and character profiles in your classroom. Ask your pupils to write a descriptive poem about their monsters or create stories in which two or more monsters meet and interact with each other at a monster party or another setting.

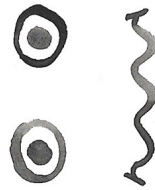
Partner school activities:

Monsters and scary creatures feature in myths and legends and adventure stories in countries all around the world. If you are working with a partner school, exchange information about some of your class's favourite monster stories in children's literature in each country and create an online gallery of your monster profiles. Ask your pupils to decide which they think is the funniest, scariest or friendliest monster created by their partner school.

Activity Sheet 3



(c) House of Illustration



William Grill *The Wolves of Currumpaw*

This illustrated non-fiction book is for older children and is a modern retelling of a story by Ernest Thompson Seton originally published in 1898. It tells the true story of how wolves were hunted in the United States and describes a moving conflict between the hunter and hunted.

Illustration 1



Show your pupils the double-page illustration of New York City and ask them to describe everything they can see. Discuss the style of the pencil illustration and the limited colour palette. Who do they think the wolf hunter might be? Ask your pupils to think about what they might see and hear if they were in the middle of this city in 1893, and jot down all the words and phrases they can think of to describe the scene around the illustration. Encourage them to use words, phrases and sentences, and consider including similes and metaphors. Then each write a descriptive phrase or sentence to describe the city on a sticky note. Collect these and work together to arrange them to create a group poem of verses each starting with the line: The city is...

Illustration 2

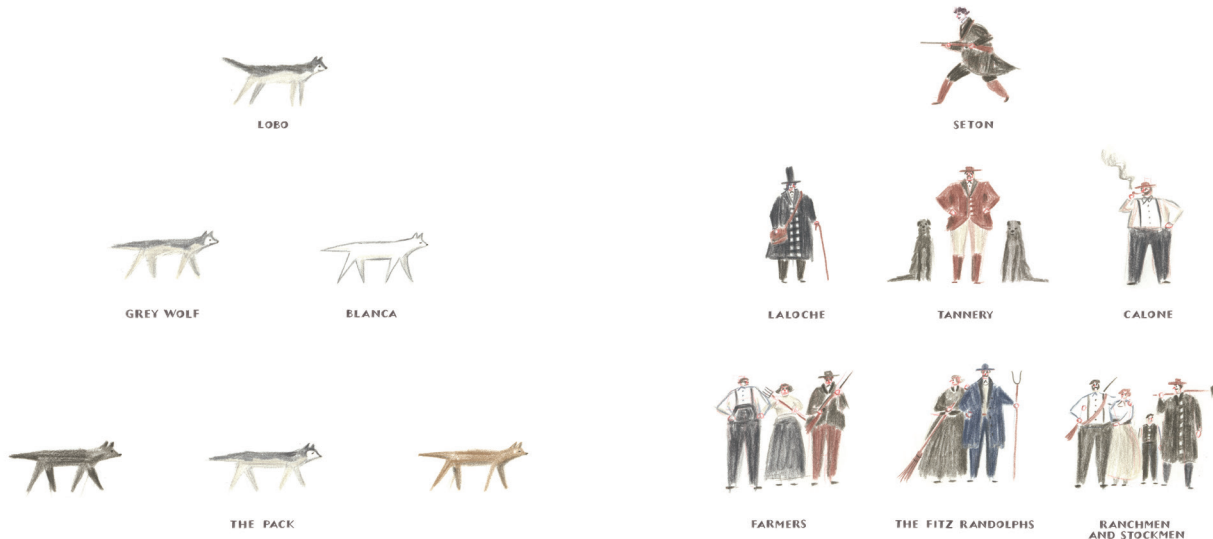


Compare this busy crowded scene with the panoramic second illustration of the enormous empty sky and a lone rider. Discuss who the rider might be, where they might be going and why the word Blanca and the date are there. Carry out the same free verse activity using this picture as the stimulus, with verses starting: The plains were... and display them alongside each other with copies of the illustrations.

Look at a map or Google Earth view of your local area. If you are working with a partner school, compare with a map of their locality. If you can get hold of historical maps you could also compare the area with what it looked like in the 19th century and discuss the changes that have taken place. Allocate each pupil a square of the map and a piece of paper to draw an enlarged version of their square using coloured pencils like William Grill and then mount them together to create a large class collage of the map.

They could also make some landscape drawings of the view from your classroom window, taking care to convey the mood and weather factors such as sunlight, shadows and clouds as the artist has done in the second illustration. Display these with a short written description of what they can see.

Illustration 3



Old Lobo was a giant among wolves who commanded a sleek and well-conditioned pack: each of them was a wolf of renown. Lobo's band was a small one, but fiercely loyal to their leader. At night his deep howl struck fear through the hearts of the ranchmen and farmers, as they knew it meant yet another raid on their cattle.

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Every cattle baron and cowboy in the land wanted Lobo dead. The ranchmen believed that he and his pack possessed charmed lives and couldn't be caught. And so, a bounty of \$1000 was placed on Lobo's head: a sum unheard of at the time.

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Contrast the style of these pages with Illustrations 1 and 2. Ask pupils to discuss what they notice about the framing, the amount of white page visible, the style of drawing and the text. Why might the illustrator have made these decisions? Does it make them want to find out more about these characters and their connections with each other?

Ask your pupils to choose one of the wolves from the pack and one of the characters, and draw them in the same style, adding a brief character description of each imagining what they are like.

What can your pupils find out about the life and legacy of Ernest Thompson Seton? If you are working with a partner school, exchange your poems, window views and drawings with each other.

Additional activities

Research has shown the importance of young people identifying with and seeing themselves and their families represented in the books that they read; yet a recent report showed that only one per cent of books published in the UK in 2017 had a main character of black or minority ethnic heritage. Ask your pupils to invent a lead character for an illustrated story that they would identify with. Ask them to give the character a name and identify three outside and three inside characteristics. For example, are they tall or short? Serious or funny? Human or animal or alien? Where would their story be set?

Writer and illustrator Anthony Browne has said that making a picture book is not like writing a story then painting some pictures—it is more like planning a film where each page is a scene that includes words and images inextricably linked. Encourage your pupils to experiment making a simple narrative storyboard showing the development of an adventure about their lead character. Remind them of the importance of giving the story structure and a story arc and time to experiment with drawing styles and choices.

- Start by creating your character. This could be using found images, scribbles or collage. The character should be named and drawn in active and passive positions in rough.
- Think of a dramatic event, chance meeting or crisis that can befall the character. Sketch this.
- Work out what must happen for the event to be resolved. Sketch this.
- Now draw the beginning, middle and end of the story on individual squares of paper.
- Lay these out and decide what must happen between scenes to make the story flow. Draw these scenes on additional individual squares of paper, using as many as required.
- Last, lay out all the squares of paper in order and when happy that the images tell a great story, stick them down onto a larger sheet.

Encourage your pupils to use their storyboard to create their own illustrated books in a style of their choice, using what they have learned from the exhibition. When your books are complete, share them with parents and others across the school and your partner school if you have one.

Find out more

Books for children:

A World of Your Own Laura Carlin

Emily Brown and the Thing written by Cressida Cowell and illustrated by Neal Layton

The Wolves of Currumpaw William Grill

Books for teachers:

Cremin, T (2009) *Teaching English Creatively*

Bearne, E and Reedy, D (2018) *Teaching Primary English*

Arizpe, E and Styles, E (2016) *Children Reading Picture Books*

Gamble, N and Yates, S (2002) *Exploring Children's Literature*

Links:

The House of Illustration in London is a home for the art of illustration in all its forms with a year-round programme of exhibitions, events and more. You can find out more at: www.houseofillustration.org.uk/

CLPE Reflecting Realities report:

<https://clpe.org.uk/sites/default/files/CLPE%20Reflecting%20Realities%20Report%20July%202018.pdf>

Information on making picture books can be found at:

<https://clpe.org.uk/powerofpictures/creative-approaches/bookmaking>

This education resource is written by Alison Willmott with illustrated material from The House of Illustration.

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The British Council believes that all children have potential and that every child matters – everywhere in the world. The British Council affirms the position that all children have the right to be protected from all forms of abuse as set out in article 19, UNCRC 1989.vv