

A Mouse Called Julian by Joe Todd-Stanton (Flying Eye)

Julian is a mouse who is perfectly happy avoiding other animals. They seem to just get in the way, and sometimes even try to eat him! But one day, Julian has an unexpected dinner guest...

When the fox tries to sneak into Julian's burrow for a tasty bite of mouse, it finds itself stuck headfirst in Julian's front door!

At first alarmed and wary, they soon find themselves having a lovely dinner together, and it's not long before each realises that they have found a lifelong friend.

Overall learning aims of this teaching sequence:

- To explore a high quality picturebook which allows children to put themselves inside the story and empathise with characters and their issues and dilemmas
- To engage with illustrations throughout a picturebook to explore and recognise the added layers of meaning these can give to our interpretation of a text
- To explore how to use drawing as an approach to enhance thinking for writing and developing vocabulary
- To explore and follow the authentic process that an author/illustrator goes through when developing a picture book
- To create a picture book based on children's own creative story ideas

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

Overview of this teaching sequence.

This teaching sequence is 2 weeks long spread over 10 sessions. All of the Power of Pictures teaching sequences are aimed to develop an appreciation of art and picturebooks 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 exemplify the process of picturebook making, allowing children to gain an understanding of how ideas are developed and carried through for impact on the reader. The work done in the sequence will be further enhanced by the suite of video resources on the Power of Pictures website, where children can be introduced to Joe Todd-Stanton as an author/illustrator, see him read the book aloud, illustrate a character and talk about how he wrote and illustrated the text.

The sequence needs to be carried out in ways that the teacher feels best fits the age and experience of the children in their setting. Some parts might lend themselves to whole class discussions, others will need to be carried out in small focus groups. With this in mind, sessions are ordered to share the thought process but not numbered or showing a specified length of session. Teachers should use their professional knowledge to plan this to meet the needs and interest levels of their children.

Teaching Approaches

Response to illustration
Illustration

Writing Outcomes

Annotations to share children's thinking around a text

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<p>Reading aloud and revisiting texts Looking at Language Debate and discussion Close reading of picturebook spreads Modelled drawing Storymapping Sketching ideas Bookmaking</p>	<p>Children’s own illustrations of story characters and events Personal narratives in words and pictures Letter to a character or real life person Speech/Thought bubbles in role as a character Writing in role Own ideas for a picturebook spread Story predictions Sentences for a picturebook spread Storymaps Annotations Sketches of characters and scenarios Published picturebook</p>
<p>Links to other texts and resources.</p>	
<p>The Power of Pictures website: https://www.clpe.org.uk/powerofpictures Joe Todd-Stanton’s pages on the Power of Pictures website: https://clpe.org.uk/powerofpictures/todd-stanton-joe Find out more about the author Joe Todd-Stanton and see other examples of his work: – https://joetoddstanton.tumblr.com/ – https://flyingeyebbooks.com/creator/joe-todd-stanton/</p> <p>Other books written and illustrated by Joe Todd-Stanton:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Arthur and the Golden Rope</i> (Flying Eye) ▪ <i>The Secret of Black Rock</i> (Flying Eye) ▪ <i>Marcy and the Riddle of the Sphinx</i> (Flying Eye) ▪ <i>Kai and the Monkey King</i> (Flying Eye) <p>Other books illustrated by Joe Todd-Stanton:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Greta Zargo and the Death Robots from Outer Space</i>, A.F. Harrold (Bloomsbury) ▪ <i>Greta Zargo and the Amoeba Monsters from the Middle of the Earth</i>, A.F. Harrold (Bloomsbury) ▪ <i>Everest: The Remarkable Story of Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay</i>, Alexandra Stewart (Bloomsbury) <p>Other books/tales which explore issues and themes occurring in the book:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Winnie-the-Pooh</i>, A.A. Milne, illustrated by E.H. Shepard (Egmont) ▪ <i>Fantastic Mr Fox</i>, Roald Dahl, illustrated by Quentin Blake (Puffin) ▪ <i>The Lion and the Mouse</i>, Jerry Pinkney (Walker) ▪ <i>A Dog Called Rod</i>, Tim Hopgood (Macmillan) ▪ <i>Cyril, the Lonely Cloud</i>, Tim Hopgood (Oxford University Press) ▪ <i>Croc and Bird</i>, Alexis Deacon (Red Fox) ▪ <i>The Suitcase</i>, Chris Naylor-Ballesteros (Nosy Crow) ▪ <i>The Ugly Duckling</i>, Hans Christian Andersen (various versions) ▪ <i>Something Else</i>, Kathryn Cave and Chris Riddell (Puffin) 	

- *Lost and Found*, Oliver Jeffers (HarperCollins)
- *Amos & Boris*, William Steig. OP

Other high quality picturebooks on the Power of Pictures programme to support ideation:

- *Is there a dog in this book?* by Viviane Schwarz (Walker)
- *Here Comes Frankie!* by Tim Hopgood (Macmillan)
- *Bedtime for Monsters* by Ed Vere (Puffin)
- *Shh! We Have a Plan* by Chris Haughton (Walker)
- *The Story Machine* by Tom McLaughlin (Bloomsbury)
- *Grandad's Island* by Benji Davies
- *Wild* by Emily Hughes (Flying Eye)
- *Grendel* by David Lucas (Walker)
- *Traction Man Meets Turbodog* by Mini Grey (Red Fox)

Other high quality picturebooks can be found on CLPE's Core Books online at:

<https://clpe.org.uk/corebooks>

Bookmaking and Paper Technology

- Paul Johnson - <http://www.bookart.co.uk/>
- *Get Writing 4-7* by Paul Johnson (A&C Black)

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 author illustrators, including Power of Pictures partners Benji Davies, Chris Haughton, Emily Hughes, Viviane Schwarz and Mini Grey: <https://blog.picturebookmakers.com/>
- The Art of the Picture Book website contains interviews from a range of children's illustrators: <https://www.artofthepicturebook.com/>

Cross Curricular Links:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

- The text offers rich opportunities for children to think and talk about themselves and their immediate lives, including family, home and friends.
- Sharing personal narratives alongside the text will enrich children's ability to make personal connections with the text, empathise with characters and story events and understand why characters think and behave in the way they do.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World:

- Children's understanding of story themes and events will be enriched if they explore the countryside habitat alongside this text. If possible, visit a green space, such as a park, forest or piece of countryside to explore what being in an open space feels like, and take in the sounds, sights and smells of the kind of environment the story takes place in.
- Talk with the children about different kinds of habitats and compare and contrast the environment Julian makes his home in with the place where there home is.
- Introduce a range of countryside animals as explored in the text; mice, foxes, owls, rabbits, badgers, moles, hedgehogs, birds, cats and dogs.
- Explore the similarities and differences between the animals, what they eat and what eats them in a food chain.

- Look at where these animals make their homes, investigating animals that live above and below ground.

Reading:

- Make a display of Joe Todd-Stanton books that are most directed at this age range in the book corner. Share a photograph of the author/illustrator so that children gain a sense of the creator of the book.
- Talk regularly with children about books they have read and enjoyed. Make a display of favourite picturebooks that children know of and have enjoyed at home or in school. Use the school library, schools library service or local library to broaden text selections where necessary and introduce children to a wide range of picturebooks. CLPE's Corebooks has a wealth of recommendations to explore and can also be shared with parents and carers: <https://clpe.org.uk/corebooks> This site is free to access once registered with an email.

Physical Development:

- Allow children to consolidate their understanding of language used in the text by physically enacting words and phrases that pertain to actions in the text, such as **dodge, hide, leap, crept, wriggled.**
- Use play tunnels and tents to build a connected environment like the one seen under the ground and to practise crawling and moving in different ways.
- Provide a range and breadth of mark making materials; pens and pencils of different sizes, brushes of different thicknesses and paints, crayons, coloured pencils and encourage children to respond to the story in a range of artistic ways. They may want to create their own images of characters and events, or draw and write about their own lives in relation to story themes explored.

Before beginning the sequence:

- In order for the sequence to work effectively you will need to 'keep back' the text from the children initially, including the cover of the book and the title. The story will need to unfold slowly and it is best for the children not to know the ending until you are at the culmination of the teaching sessions.
- Prepare a Working Wall in the classroom so that the children can create an ongoing display of their thinking and learning. You may also want to create a small world area with a countryside environment and models of key characters from the story or build storyboxes that show the inside of Julian's home to allow children to play out aspects of the story. These could include real mud, grass and plants so that the children get to feel and smell the elements of the natural environment where the story takes place.
- Make accessible art materials that will support children's own choices to draw and mark make in the continuous provision, indoors and out; for example: soft and oil pastels, pencils, brush-tipped felt pens, and watercolour paints and brushes where the children can explore drawing and painting of natural objects and materials, experimenting with marks, strokes, colours, shades and tones that represent the natural world. Excellent examples of this in practice can be seen at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DDZB0KoeSGE&list=PL7914115EB65911A5&index=14> (from 2min30) and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZEARBwUU4M&list=PL7914115EB65911A5&index=4> (from 3m50)
- Collect together examples of other high quality picturebooks that can be used as examples of the kinds of characters, themes, storylines, text and image presentation that will inspire the

children's own writing in this part of the sequence. Suggestions are made in the list above or can be sourced throughout the collections on CLPE's Corebooks website:

<https://clpe.org.uk/corebooks>

- Collect together different kinds of art materials, e.g. coloured pencils, watercolour paints, acrylic paints, collage materials, brush pens, pencils, tracing paper, drafting paper, publication paper and card for the children to use to plan and create their picturebooks. If you have stock, providing each child with a sketchbook would be useful, or they could hand make these themselves.
- Create a Working Wall that can become a place to share ideas, inspirations and working process as you move through the process of creating and shaping a text.

Responding to illustration

The children's books featured on the Power of Pictures 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.

- Colour photocopy or project on the smart board the first endpapers of the book featuring the setting above and below ground. Make this large enough for the children to be able to explore in close detail. Draw attention to the whole illustration; *what do the children notice immediately?* Look at the different colours that are used in the picture. *What is this showing us?* Note children's responses around a copy of this illustration on the Working Wall or in the shared journal.
- Introduce the key prepositional language **above** and **below**. *What can the children see above the ground? What can they see below the ground?* Add any new responses to those already noted.
- Starting with the picture as a whole and then zooming in on the detail, look more closely at the animals they can see **below** the ground – you may wish to use a viewfinder to support children to look in closer detail; *do they recognise any of these animals? Do they know their names? What can you see happening?*
- Now look carefully at their facial expressions and body positions; what can they tell about the relationships between the characters they see? Do any of the characters look different?
- Now, compare the animals they can see below the ground with those above the ground; *what can you notice about the way they look or behave? Why might they have been captured in this way? What might the animals below the ground think or feel about the animals above the ground? Why?*
- Focus in on the character of the mouse, in the circle labelled **HOME**. *What is different about its home than all the other homes they can see below the ground? How do you think this character is feeling? Why do you think he might feel this way?* Encourage the children to think beyond the common choice of sad, to deepen their thinking of why it might feel this way. Astute observers may note that the other animals' burrows connect to at least one other animal's burrow, as well as to the world above ground, whilst the mouse's tunnel only connects to the outside in three different paths.
- Allow time and space for the children to discuss their initial thoughts and responses to the illustration, while the adult notes these around a copy of the illustration on the working display or in the shared journal, so that the children's thinking can be clearly seen and can be referred back to in subsequent sessions.

- Come back to the relationships you can see in the animals below ground. *Do any of the groups of animals remind you of anyone you know?* This is a great springboard for children to be able to talk about themselves and their own lives in the context of a supportive story. This gives them a voice to talk about themselves and the stories in their own lives and validates the fact that their own personal narratives are an important part of storytelling and writing.
- They may want to go on to draw and write about the people they live with and the places where they live. Leave appropriate art materials and a copy of the illustration from the endpapers in the creative area for them to explore and display any drawings made by the children prominently with recorded narratives alongside.

Deepening understanding of characters through close reading of illustrations

Children should be given time and space to look deeper at the illustrations in a picturebook to take them a step beyond what pictures literally represent to having an idea of how pictures are able to express and metaphorically display what cannot be pictured directly; ideas, moods, abstract notions and qualities.

- Look now at the inside title page, read the title to the children and look at the illustration of the mouse on this page. *What more do we find out about the mouse from this page? Where do you think he is? What is he doing? How does he look on this page, compared to when we saw him in the endpapers?*
- Now read the first spread of the text and look carefully at the accompanying illustration. *What more can we tell about Julian from this page?* Again, you may wish to provide the children with viewfinders to focus in on the details in the spread, they may notice the plants on the shelf by the window, the map from the endpapers stuck to the wall, the pencils on the ground, the fact he only has one chair at the table and use these to infer things about his character. They may also observe him as being portrayed as quite a small creature in a big space, with lots of empty space in certain parts of the illustration.
- Now focus in on the fact that he lives on his own. Why do you think this might be *'the way he likes it'*? *What might he like about living on his own?* Come back to the endpapers that you looked at in the previous session. *Do they think he really does like living on his own? If he can't remember living with anyone else, does he know what might be nice about living with other people?* Encourage the children to share their own experiences of where they live and who they live with. They might want to talk about their own bedrooms, flats or houses as they have had the opportunity to take a peek inside Julian's house, they may want to share their experiences of living with a large family, or of being an only child and what they like or find challenging about living with other people.
- Now move on to empathising with the character of Julian. *Can they imagine what it might be like to live alone? What would he have to do by himself that other people help them with? What might he not be able to do without other people? What might be nice about being alone?*
- Look at the colours used in the illustration. *How do these make us feel about his home?* They may connect the palette of browns, oranges and yellows with warmth and the brighter colours used for the plants and flowers with brightness and cheerfulness.
- Allow the children time, space and appropriate materials to continue to explore and talk about the stories in their own lives. You could build storyboxes of Julian's house and also of the children's own houses or favourite rooms, or they could continue to draw, paint or construct representations of themselves and their lives, including their friends and families.
- You may want to set up a shrine box project as part of home learning. A Shrine Box can be immensely supportive for a child to talk about themselves, their family – past and present - and

their lives. It might include: family photographs, notes and cards, a favourite poem or book, travel memorabilia or tickets, special items of clothing from babyhood, and a special toy. It provides opportunity for rich talk amongst family members whilst collecting and decorating the box. These can then be displayed in the classroom environment for children to talk about and share with others.

Illustrating Characters

Illustrating characters alongside an illustrator or enabling adult gives children a starting point into the process of how to bring characters to life through illustration. Children who are less confident to begin this process can see where starting points are, the shapes that are used to build up characters and how detail such as proportion, facial expression, clothing and props can add layers of understanding about character and emotion.

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.

- Prepare for this session by providing cartridge paper, HB pencils and softer pencils, thick colouring pencils, or crayons.
- Ask the children where they think the words and pictures in a book like this come from. *Do they know what an author and illustrator are? Do they know what these people do?* Look back at the inside title page and share Joe Todd-Stanton's name at the top of the page and explain that in

this book, Joe Todd-Stanton is the person who wrote the words and drew the pictures to tell this story. *What do they think it would be like to be an author or an illustrator? What would they need to be able to do? What would they need to help them?*

- Explain that in this session, they will be seeing the author on a video and learning how to draw the character of Julian. Watch the video 'Illustrating a character from *A Mouse Called Julian*' on the Power of Pictures website: <https://clpe.org.uk/powerofpictures/todd-stanton-joe> *Have they seen someone drawing like this before? Does it look like an easy thing to do? What do they think they would need to think about to do a drawing like this themselves?*
- Now give each child a clipboard, with a piece of paper and an appropriate drawing implement to match their fine motor development. Ferby or other triangular pencils are ideal for this. Cheap but quality cartridge paper for drawing can be sourced from Budget paper supplies: <http://www.budget-paper.co.uk/>
- Watch the video for a second time, pausing at appropriate points, and model to the children how to draw the character of Julian. Start in the same way Joe does, by using a triangle and a circle to draw the body and head. Encourage the children to work alongside you – it will therefore be important to work on a large scale on a flip chart or under a visualiser, so that the children can clearly see what you are doing at each step and follow the process.
- Talk carefully about shapes, and patterns as you work and what you are focusing on to allow the children to see the process of creating this character live. *Where will you start? What body part will you move to next?* Think about some of the key vocabulary he uses and how to communicate this to the children; **overlapping, side view, point out, raggedy hair, ear fluff**. *How will you add expression? What does Joe mean when he describes him as **anxious** and **careful** and how does he show this in his drawing?* Think about the techniques Joe introduces, like **shading**. *What does this mean and what effect does it give?* Think about the props he adds to the picture. *What is the **big haul of blueberries** for?* Then think about the scenery and what Joe says about the size of things in the scenery, like the pebbles and grass, in relation to Julian. Allow the children to be free in their choices of scenery items that fit the world of the story. They may choose to include a flower or a tree trunk, for example, but will need to think about how large these are in scale compared to a tiny mouse.
- Now encourage the children to pin their own drawings of Julian up on display and to step back and take a look at them. *What did doing the drawing make them think about the character of Julian and his behaviour as well as his appearance?* Collect key words on cards and display these around the children's work.
- Display the artwork prominently in the classroom environment and allow the children to revisit and talk about their work.
- Provide art materials and more drawing paper in the creative area for the children to continue to practise their drawings of Julian or to create characters of their own.

Reading Aloud and Revisiting

Reading aloud is one of the most important ways that children are motivated and supported to become readers; it is essential that children experience hearing texts read aloud in the classroom as a regular part of each school day.

Reading aloud slows down written language so that children can hear and absorb the words, tunes and patterns. It enables children to experience and enjoy stories they might otherwise not meet, enlarging their reading interests and providing access to texts beyond their level of independence as readers.

- Return to the inside title page, read the title again and read the story aloud, up until, ‘*So he made sure to avoid everyone.*’
- Encourage the children to revisit the images and text they have seen and think about why Julian likes being on his own. Look first at the first frame where Julian is confronted by the cat and unpick the relationship between the cat and Julian. *Here, we can’t see his face, so how do we think he looks and is feeling? Are there any clues in the illustration?* Look at the tiny bead of sweat running down from the back of his head. Now encourage the children to imagine what his facial expression looks like from the front. *Can they create this expression on their own faces? How do they think he feels?*
- Compare this with the expression on the next panel. Allow the children to stand up and physically copy this pose. *How do they think he feels here?*
- Now look at the next page and explore the relationships between the characters in the underground burrows and tunnels. Allow the children time to explore the connections between the burrows; *which burrows lead where? Which animals are connected to other animals? Why might the animals in the top two burrows only be connected to each other?*
- Now look more reflectively at the importance of being connected to others. *Why is being connected to other people important? What kinds of things might the animals do together? How might they be helpful to each other? Who is helpful to you and your family?* Here, children might talk about neighbours, babysitters or childminders and episodes where they have been helpful to others or others have been helpful to them.
- Now, come back to the words on this spread and re-read them; ‘*So he made sure to avoid everyone.*’ Allow the children some time and space to think about whether this is a good idea. *What are the advantages and disadvantages of avoiding all the other animals?* Look again at the picture, providing an opportunity for children to look closely above and below ground, perhaps with a magnifying glass or a viewfinder to support them. Pay close attention to the relative calm in the scene above ground. *Is everything as peaceful as it seems?*
- Now, encourage the children to think more about Julian’s situation, *do they think he is really happy living on his own or do they think he should try and connect with any of the other animals below the ground?* Bring the children back to their own personal experiences of having time alone and having time with others to support their thinking. *What do they like about being on their own? What is good about having time with friends? Why is it good to be able to have both of these things?*
- Leave drawing paper and mark making equipment out in the setting to give the children opportunities to reflect on their own experiences. They may want to go and write something personal, alone and away from distractions or intrusions, they may want to write or draw in pairs or a group to create a shared piece together. They may want to draw or write to reflect on their different experiences of friendship, or to remind them of an experience they have had together. Model this using incidents in your own life and talk about what you might like to draw and write about.

Looking at Language

Making word collections is a way of focussing on the language of a text. Children can make collections of words that describe a particular character, their feelings, a place, and event or a situation.

Collecting words in this way helps children to have a more focussed awareness of the ways language affects our perceptions and understandings and the ways in which the author creates the readers' response.

- Re-read the story so far and on to '*...and get home safe.*' Look at the four panels on this double page spread again with the children.
- Carefully draw the children's attention to the verbs in the sentences that accompany these images; **dodge, hide, leap, escape** and the last phrase **...and get home safe**. Ensure children know the meanings of these words in context. They are all active words and phrases so you might wish to provide an opportunity for the children to physically enact the words in a larger space. *What do these words tell us about how Julian might really feel in his day to day life?*
- Now focus back in on the illustrations in more detail, giving time and space for the children to observe these more closely together. *What do we see in the illustrations that might give us more information about this?* Use magnifying glasses or viewfinders if necessary to allow children to focus in on specific details in the illustrations, such as the facial expressions, gaze and body position of Julian, some of the dangers he faces in the outside world like the farmer's gun and the predatory owl in the shadows.
- Ask the children the question; '*Do you think Julian should always avoid everyone?*' Support them in thinking about the reasons why this might or might not always be a good idea.
- Talk about these reasons together and then share writing a letter to Julian, empathising with his decision to live alone and/or offering any suggestions as to why he might want to make connections with some of the other animals. Read this back to the children, checking that it is a supportive letter for Julian and that it makes sense and is helpful, making any amendments necessary. Now display the letter on the Working Wall or in the shared journal as a record of the children's thinking.
- Leave drawing paper, notecards, writing paper and a range of mark making materials in the writing area, for children to use to write their own letters to Julian or to friends and family. They may want to thank a friend or family member for something, to tell them why they are a good friend. You could also set up a message centre in the setting, using shoe storage pouches with a photograph of each child on the front for the children to use to post messages and drawings to their friends. As an enabling adult, you will also want to monitor this to make sure all children are receiving messages, writing to children yourself if they are not.

Exploring the relationship between words and images

Authors of picturebooks make deliberate choices about what they will show in the words and what will be viewed in the illustrations. In the best picturebooks, the illustrations will not merely complement the text on the page, they may also elaborate and extend it, contradict the text or be used to show feelings that the words may only imply. Children should be given experiences that allow them to tune into the function of both the text and illustrations and how they work together to bring the story to the reader.

- Re-read the text so far, and on to '*But Julian didn't know that he was being watched.*' **Be careful not to reveal the next spread showing the fox.** Explore the scale of the eye compared to the rest of the image. *Who do they think is watching Julian? Why do they think this?* Look back through the text so far and see if there are any clues as to who it might be.

- Now reveal the front cover of the text. *Does this give them any more clues? Why might a fox be watching Julian?*
- Now, read the next pages of the book up to ‘...and howled and growled...’ (again, be careful not to reveal the next page yet). Explore the impact of the page turn here, the changing scale of the fox from outside the house to inside, Julian’s reaction and look carefully into the darker parts of the illustration as to the impact of the fox’s entrance on Julian’s home. *What might Julian be thinking or saying at this moment?*
- If the children can do this independently, allow them an opportunity to write their ideas down onto paper then decide if this will be something Julian says to himself in his head as a thought or says out loud. They can then either draw a thought or speech bubble around their words to reflect this decision. Alternatively support the children by scribing their ideas for them.
- Come back together to think about what they think might happen next, based on their knowledge of the events so far. Make a note of children’s predictions around a copy of the text, encouraging them to expand on the reasons for their opinions as far as they are able.
- Now reveal the next spread and read the text aloud, up until ‘*The fox was well and truly stuck!*’ *Was this what they expected to happen? Does it remind them of anything else they have ever seen in a story before?* If children have read or had read to them or seen the film adaptation of *Winnie-the-Pooh*, they may make parallels with the scene where Pooh gets stuck in Rabbit’s hole:



- Look at how the fox is portrayed in this illustration. Look at the change in scale, so we can now see the whole fox, the change in the fox’s facial expression. How would they describe the fox now, compared to the last page?
- Encourage the children to think about how this event might change the direction of the story. *What do they think will happen now? Would it help the fox to eat Julian now? What could Julian do in this situation? Is there anyone else that could help? How?* Collect together the range of ideas in a list and use one of these to share writing a plan to help Julian to get the fox out of his home in a list of instructional steps. Support the children in thinking their idea through to a successful conclusion by talking this through prior to writing, introducing and modelling instructional language for Julian.
- Then write this up to support him in thinking calmly through a series of steps to get his home back and be rid of the fox and display on the Working Wall.
- You could also enlarge and print copies of this page, and stick them around the environment and encourage the children to write or draw their own plans and stick these around the illustration.

Exploring the relationship between words and images, looking at visual links

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on the page, they may also elaborate and extend it, contradict the text or be used to show feelings that the words may only imply. Children should be given experiences that allow them to tune into the function of both the text and illustrations and how they work together to bring the story to the reader.

- Re-read the book so far and on to ‘Julian didn’t want a fox in his house so he went to help.’ Do they think Julian should believe the fox’s promise? Go back through the book so far and recap on what the children have learnt about the character of the fox from the story so far. *What can they see in the illustrations?* In the early spreads they will have to look carefully for the fox before he is introduced more directly; hidden behind the trees in the front endpapers, his tail poking out from the tree in the first underground doublespread. *What do the words tell them?* Look for words and phrases that describe his character, such as **crept, skill, cunning, smashed, bared his teeth, howled and growled, lied**. *Do the things they have noticed make them think he is a character that should be trusted?* Note the children’s responses around a copy of this spread.
- Now read the next spread. What can we tell about the character of Julian from the words and pictures in this spread? Look at how the change from day to night from the first to the last frame shows his perseverance, look at the change in his facial expression from the first to the last image, *how do his feelings change throughout the spread?*
- Now turn the page again and read the next spread. Compare this spread directly with the spread that begins ‘Pardon me, but would you be so kind as to help me out?’ *What do the children notice about the two spreads together?* They may see the shift from dark to light, from a palette of cool and dark to light and warm. The change in the facial expressions of the two characters and the way they are positioned in relation to each other. *What might this suggest about the story?* They might also talk about the clearing up Julian has done, suggested by the broom and the debris collected in the tub under the fox’s chin. Re-read the words on the page. *How can we see the change in their relationship?* The adjectives to describe the fox are **sad** and **hungry**, Julian, who has always been alone, **shared what he had**. *What does the fact that they **talked and ate long into the night** tell us about how they are getting along?*
- Now turn to the next spread and read the text aloud, up to; ‘And Julian realised that having a guest wasn’t so terrible – *how has this incident affected both characters? How have their characters changed as a result of their encounter?* Now compare this spread with the earlier spread that shares a similar scene, and re-read the accompanying text. Encourage the children to reflect on how Julian’s life has changed in between these two spreads. *What might he have learned about himself?*
- Imagine you are Julian or the fox, write in role to describe how your feelings towards the other character have changed after your time together. Depending on their experience they could do this themselves as a speech or thought bubble that could be added near to their chosen character or using a talk button or voice recorder to add to an interactive version of the illustration using an iPad or similar device.

Devising own ideas for a picturebook spread

Through studying how picturebook spreads are constructed to offer additional layers of meaning beyond the text on the page and being aware of the techniques that authors and illustrators use to communicate meaning, children are able to see how to build spreads for themselves. They may consider elements such as perspective, scale, positioning of characters on the page, the journey of the lines on the page, colour,

facial expressions and body positions. Alongside this, they will want to explore potential text to go alongside illustrations and its placement on the page. Children should be aware of the way illustrators sketch plans out in rough to investigate effects and explore the best ways of communicating their ideas for a reader.

- Re-read the text so far and on until ‘*Just the way he’d always liked it.*’ Look carefully at the illustration that accompanies these words. *Is it telling the same story as the words? Do you think Julian really does like being on his own again? What makes you think this?* Note the children’s ideas around a copy of this page.
- Now read on to ‘*He hid from the farmer and her dog.*’ Have they seen this routine before? Compare this spread with the earlier spread that shows similar scenes. Looking at the words and the pictures, discuss the similarities and differences. In the first frame, look at how Julian casually carries the match over his shoulder instead of out in front of him, how his eyes are closed instead of wide and looking around – *what might this tell us about him?* In the second frame, notice how the dog is unaware of Julian, his attention is instead captured by the duck. Look at how the farmer now holds an umbrella, rather than a gun - *how might this make him feel differently about his journey?*
- In the first set of frames, this spread is part of a double page spread. Look at how the next two frames relate to escaping **the hungry barn owl** and getting home safely. What might be different about the spreads this time? Collect children’s predictions and then turn the page and read on to, ‘*It looked like Julian wasn’t going to get home safe this time.*’ *How does the way these frames are presented this time make you feel? What has the illustrator done to make you feel this way?* Children may talk about the decision to show these two images as full page spreads, rather than frames, the darkness of the palette, the facial expression, scale and positioning of the owl, the fact that Julian fell from the tree and could be injured and helpless, the glint on the claws, the removal of the majority of the scenery in the last spread, putting the focus squarely on the owl and Julian, held in a spotlight by the moonlight.
- Re-read the final line on the page, ‘*It looked like Julian wasn’t going to get home safe this time.*’ Ask the children if they think this is the case; *what do they think will happen next? Do they think Julian is really alone?* By this point of the story, the children may have tuned into the visual and story patterns between the start and end of the book and may want to look back in the book to help them think about what might lie ahead. Allow them to do this if they ask.
- Ask the children to close their eyes and try to visualise what they think might happen next in the story. Encourage them to tune into the images they can see in their mind’s eye that describe the story events. Take some of the children’s ideas and show them how to create these as a spread on the page.
- Ask them questions to encourage them to express their thoughts more clearly, such as:
 - Is this a whole page spread, a large spread over two pages or is it broken down into frames?
 - How large/small should that be on the page?
 - Where on the page should it be placed?
 - Is there any other scenery?
 - What should the facial expression or body position look like?
- Encourage the children to freeze frame or act out the scene if this helps to show and shape ideas as part of the process.

- Look at some of Joe Todd-Stanton's preparatory drawings that helped him to plan what each spread might look like, e.g.



- Look at how these drawings are much simpler and rougher than those in the finished book and help to just share how the finished page might look. Model a similar sketch, on a flipchart or, ideally, under a visualiser, that translates the children's ideas onto paper.
- Leave drawing paper and implements out in the creative area for children to continue to explore their ideas if they wish to. Display children's ideas in and around the setting.

Contributing story ideas – predicting events

When children become familiar with story shapes, patterns and events and can link these to real world experiences of events they have seen in other texts, they are able to grasp story shapes and structures and offer plausible guesses as to what might happen next. This is an important skill for developing readers.

- Re-read the book so far, and on to, 'The fox waited and then...'. How did the children feel about the page turn? Were they surprised by what happened? How did it compare to their own ideas?
- Now talk about what the fox did. Why do you think he gobbled him up? What do they think has happened to Julian now? What made them think this? Children may refer to other books they have read where one animal or character has been gobbled up or swallowed by another, such as in Alexis Deacon and Viviane Schwarz's *I Am Henry Finch* (Walker), Pam Adams' *There was an Old Lady who Swallowed a Fly* (Child's Play), Sarah Roberts' and Hannah Peck's *Somebody Swallowed Stanley* (Scholastic) or traditional tales such as *Jonah and the Whale* or *Anansi the Spider* and may predict that he will be spat out again.
- Read on to the next spread, up until '...but changed his mind.' Which character now has the power in the story? How do we know this? Why might the owl be intimidated by the fox?
- Now read the final sentence on this page and look at the way it ends with an ellipsis: 'The fox waited and then...' What might this tell us about what is to come? What do they think will happen when the owl leaves?
- Allow the children to think about how that sentence might be completed. Gather the children into a circle and pass this sentence starter around the circle, allowing the children to finish the sentence if they have an idea of what might follow. Scribe the children's ideas onto sentence strips and display these around a copy of the illustration.

- Provide extra sentence strips in the writing area and encourage children to continue to add to the bank of ideas on display.

Summarising and mapping the story

Mapping a story and its setting helps to develop a sense of the story world. 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.

- Read the whole book all the way through.
- Did the story end as you thought it would? What did it make you think about? How did it make you feel?
- Now ask the children to reflect on the main characters in the book. *Who were they? Did you like or dislike them? Why do you think he chose a mouse and a fox as characters for this story?*
- Look at the body language and facial expressions of the characters. *What does this say about their relationship at the end of the story?*
- Together, work on how to summarise the big shapes of the story in no more than 5 or 6 parts. Really encourage the children not to think about tiny details, like where they went or what they said, but the main structural features of the story, e.g.
 - We meet Julian, we learn he likes to be alone.
 - A fox tries to eat him, but gets his head stuck in the entrance to Julian's home.
 - They enjoy being together.
 - Julian frees the fox and they go back to their separate lives.
 - Julian gets trapped by an owl on his way home.
 - The fox rescues Julian, they become friends.
- Support the children in mapping the story in words and pictures so that they can use the map to retell the story to another person or in groups as a story circle.

Reviewing the text as a whole

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.

- Listen to the author, Joe Todd-Stanton, read the text all the way through. *How did it feel to hear the story read by the author?*
- Come back to the physical text and look at the additional details; firstly 'The End' page with the drawing of the fox sticking out of the ground. *Why do you think this is a good image to finish the story with?*
- Now look at the final endpapers and compare these to the first endpapers. *What are the similarities and differences? How do the differences tell you more about the changes that have taken place in the story? Look in particular at the fox and at Julian, how have they changed? Why do you think that the author has chosen to place them separately in these endpapers?*

- Talk with the children about their responses to the story and to the illustrations. *What did they like and/or dislike? How did the style of the illustrations support the telling of the story? What questions might they like to ask the author after reading? What connections do they make with other picturebooks or other texts they have read?*
- Allow the children to respond to the text as a reader – *what would they want to tell other people about this book? What might they not choose to share as it might spoil the story for them?* Allow children to write or record digitally their responses to the story and display these around a copy of the text in the book corner. Have copies of the text available for children to re-read and explore at their leisure; individually and in social groups.
- Open up a conversation about picturebooks more generally. *What other picturebooks do they know? Do they have favourites from at home or in school?* Collect together examples of the children’s favourite texts in the class reading corner, making use of the school library, schools library service or local library to broaden the range of choices.
- Collect photographs of the children reading picturebooks they enjoy and scribe their thoughts about these to make a display in the reading area.

Ideation - Building inspiration from known picturebooks

The children's books featured on the Power of Pictures 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 and how the words and pictures work together to tell the story. When creating a picturebook, the author must consider the relationship between words and images. The roles of the text and the pictures need to be carefully considered, rather than one being a duplication of the other. As Perry Nodelman (1990) states, 'The words tell us what the pictures do not show, and the pictures show us what the words do not tell us.'

- Re-read *A Mouse Called Julian*. Provide opportunities for children to replay the story in various ways:
 - Making story maps to share the big shapes of the story;
 - Orally retelling the story in groups;
 - Playing out the story in small world play;
 - Using role-play with character signifiers, such as masks, tails, costumes or props;
 - Making puppets to retell the story.
- Ask the children to reflect on the main characters in the book. Who were they? How did they make you feel? Which characters did they like best? Why?
- Now ask the children to describe their reactions to the book in their own words. Have enabling adults on hand to capture these responses. Did they have any personal connections with the book – did it make them think of experiences or feelings they’ve had, other books they have read or films or TV programmes they’ve seen?
- In large or small groups, during regular read aloud sessions, spend some time reading aloud other high quality picturebooks, or returning to favourite picturebooks you’ve shared as a class previously. Ensure these showcase a range of characters, themes and types of story. You might choose books that are funny and immediately engage the reader like *Is there a dog in this book?* or *Bedtime for Monsters*, books that have a deeper message and make us think like *Wild, Shh! We Have a Plan*, *Grandad’s Island* or *Croc and Bird*, books that are based on known experiences

like *Here Comes Frankie*, *Traction Man Meets Turbodog* or *The Story Machine*, or books that are drawn from other known stories like *Grendel*.

- Allow time for the children to discuss the stories, drawing attention to characters, themes and summarising the big shapes of the story in order to retell the main events. Ensure all children have ample opportunities to hear a range of picturebooks read aloud, especially those children who may not be read to as often as others

Thinking about own story ideas

When planning and developing ideas for picturebook 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.

- Talk with the children about where they think picturebooks come from. *Who makes them?* Encourage them to get to know Joe Todd-Stanton by sharing a photograph of him on a display, next to the book cover and watch him reading *A Mouse Named Julian* aloud: <https://clpe.org.uk/powerofpictures/todd-stanton-joe>
- Talk together to think about and discuss all the jobs an author/illustrator might have to do to make a finished book. Think about how to explain this process clearly so that young children can understand, e.g.
 - Have an idea for a story
 - Share your ideas with other people
 - Write it down and draw the pictures to see the story on the page
- Explain to the children that they are going to create their own picturebooks. Talk about the things they might want to write about. Focus first on characters and think together of the kinds of characters they may want to create. These may revolve around:
 - Animals, as inspired by *A Mouse Named Julian*
 - Favourite characters they already have from books or popular culture
 - Characters related to particular current interests such as dinosaurs, robots, fairies
 - Themselves – to retell a personal narratives or a fantasy story involving themselves
 - People around them, family, people who help us etc.
- Share how an illustrator like Joe explores and experiments with characters to come up with and develop their ideas, drawing lots of different versions of characters.
- Ask the children if they have any ideas for their own potential characters, inspired by their own lives, as Julian was for Joe, or from other things they have read, seen or experienced.
- Allow time and space for the children to use drawing and writing to come up with some initial ideas for their own characters, making their thought processes visible on the page. You can reference specific examples from Joe's own work, as seen in the video, e.g.



- Give children access to rough drawing materials, such as quality coloured pencils, soft drawing pencils 4b-6b, pastels or charcoal and time and space to try out ideas for different characters. Allow them to draw characters they connect with over and over again so that children can see their characters in lots of different ways, as Joe talks about in his video. You might also want to have some tracing paper on hand for children to trace characters they are particularly pleased with so they can replicate them. Model how to do this using characters you have created that you are particularly happy with.
- Create alongside the children, so they can see your process as you work. Explore and experiment with adding props, or drawing different facial expressions and body positions. As they work, encourage the children to talk about the character in more detail, to gain a picture of what they are like and their ideas of a story that might involve this character. You may wish to record this by helping to scribe some of these ideas down for them. Depending on their age and experience, you could invite them to start giving them a voice by recording possible pieces of speech in speech bubbles to put on your drawing, or to place them in a setting or scenario that suggests a story event.

Creation - Building the big shapes of your story

In order to plan their picturebook writing coherently, children will need to be supported to break their story down into episodes and sequence its events. Working on the broadest structures first will enable them to see if the story outline as a whole works, before they invest too much time in the finer details and then work out that their ending isn't right or something doesn't fit in the structure or their characters or subject matter as a whole do not appeal to their intended audience.

- Once children have had time to explore and experiment with different characters and scenarios, support them in thinking about how their character's story might unfold. Come back again to A Mouse Named Julian, and summarise the main parts of the story. What happened at the beginning? What happened next? What happened at the end of the story?
- Now get the children to think about the characters they have worked on. Can they think of how to tell their story simply to someone else? Clearly model this using your own character, sharing how to use simple sentences to orally share the big shapes of the story. You could show how to

do this in no more than 5 sentences by holding up a hand and counting down your way through the story from the start to the end.

- Now allow the children to work in pairs and do the same with a talking partner, orally sharing the stages of the story their character will go on.

Creation & Reflection – Mapping story ideas in more detail, and responding to each other’s work.

Children can make story maps as a form of planning, to prepare for their own writing. Making a story map is a graphic means of breaking a story down into episodes and sequencing its events, mapping out key scenes in the story through drawing and annotation. This kind of graphic representation helps children to hold on to the shape of the story more confidently.

- Come back again to the children’s characters and story ideas and have your own ideas ready to use as a model.
- Now think about how you will work through each stage of the story to get from one big shape to the next. The stages should broadly:
 - Introduce the character
 - Talk about the world of the story
 - Share a problem faced by a character
 - Resolve the problem
- First hone an oral retelling, showing again how to make the narrative steps as simple as possible so that the children can internalise and hold these in their memory.
- Now, show how to share this in words and pictures on a storymap. As with all the other stages, the children should be allowed to work flexibly in words and/or pictures at this stage. Share how to simply map the main story events in no more than five parts to get their story from beginning to end.
- When the maps are complete, allow the children to use these to remember and retell their story to someone else.
- Allow time to talk about what they liked about each other’s stories and whether they have any questions to ask the writer.

Publication – Bookmaking

Publishing their work for an audience helps children to write more purposefully. 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. The decisions that all writers have to take and the processes of redrafting, editing and punctuation can be demonstrated and discussed as teachers and children write together in shared writing.

- Demonstrate to the children how to make a simple origami book or handmade stapled books. In time, this is something the children should be able to make for themselves, but in the initial stages, you may wish to pre-make these for them or support them in making these themselves, using a long armed stapler to place the staple(s) in the centre of the text and using card for the front cover to provide durability and a quality finish.
- Think with the children about how to move the story from their map into their finished book. Think with the children about what would be on the front cover – what will they call their story? Where will they write their name so that others know who wrote it? What will they draw on the cover so that we have an idea about what the story is about?

- Now think about how to transfer the story on the story map to the handmade book. Model this with your own story, sharing how to make decisions about where the text and illustrations will go, what the text will say and how to get the words from your head onto the page.
- Give plenty of time for the children to complete the publication of the inside of their books. Allow them to choose from and use a variety of materials, exploring and experimenting with these first to test and explore their effects. If the children want to make watercolour illustrations, model how to sketch, paint, dry, then add pen detail on each spread before moving on.
- Go back to the original book to explore and work on adding features of published texts on the front and back covers. This is a fantastic opportunity to demonstrate more complex book language in action, such as publisher logo/name (this could be agreed as a school or class name publishing house), dedication, publication details, blurb, bar code and price.
- 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. You may wish to arrange reading partner sessions where children can share their books with children in other classes in the school.
- 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.