

## Grandad's Island by Benji Davies (Simon and Schuster)

Syd has a very close relationship with his Grandad, whose house and garden back onto his own. On one of his regular visits, he finds Grandad in the attic. Grandad appears to be ready to make a journey and the pair set out on a voyage, entering onto the deck of a ship by passing through a large metal door that Syd has never noticed before. They spend a wonderful time together on a beautiful tropical island before Grandad reveals that he will be staying there and Syd has to make the journey home alone. A sensitive story about the loss of a loved one which is moving and uplifting at the same time. The illustrations make it unnecessary for the words to be explicit about what may be reality and what may be imagination. This is left to the reader who can infer information from such detail as the depiction of Grandad's belongings and mood from the brightness and colour of the island and the sombre shades of the rough sea which Syd must traverse to arrive home.

### Overall aims of this teaching sequence

- To explore a high quality picture book which allows children to put themselves inside the story and empathise with characters and their issues and dilemmas
- To engage with illustrations throughout a picture book 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.**

**Note to teachers:** Teachers should be aware this book and sequence address the themes of death and grief. However, this is dealt with in a sensitive way. Understanding would need to be shown when introducing the book to a class in which a child may have experienced the death of a loved one, especially a parent or grandparent; although the book and accompanying sessions can provide a context through which children can express their feelings.

#### Overview of this teaching sequence.

This teaching sequence is approximately 3 weeks long spread over 15 sessions. All of the Power of Pictures teaching sequences are aimed at developing an appreciation of art and picture books across age ranges. The sequence will have a strong emphasis on spending time exploring and responding to illustrations, drawing and illustrating as part of the writing process and will culminate in a bookmaking activity to exemplify the process of bookmaking and allow children to see themselves as authors. The

work done in the sequence could be enhanced by having an author/illustrator work alongside children at some stage of the process.

### Teaching Approaches

Responding to illustration/artefact  
 Role-Play and Re-enactment  
 Freeze-Frame and Thought Tracking  
 Shared writing  
 Storymapping  
 Bookmaking

### Writing Outcomes

Annotations to explore thinking around illustrations  
 Thought and speech bubbles  
 Story maps  
 Sketchbooks  
 Storyboards  
 Own picture book

### Links to other texts and resources.

#### Other books which also address the same themes, such as:

- *Alfie and the Birthday Surprise* by Shirley Hughes (Red Fox)
- *Badger's Parting Gifts* by Susan Varley (Andersen Press)
- *The Girl with the Parrot on her Head* by Daisy Hirst (Walker)
- *Goodbye Mog* by Judith Kerr (HarperCollins)
- *Granpa* by John Burningham (Red Fox)
- *The Memory Tree* by Britta Teckentrup (Orchard)
- *No Matter What* by Debi Gliori (Bloomsbury)
- *Rabbityness* by Jo Empson (Child's Play)
- *A Tiger Tale* by Holly Webb and Catherine Rayner (Scholastic)

#### Texts written and/or illustrated by Benji Davies which link to the themes in Grandad's Island:

- *The Storm Whale* (Simon and Schuster)
- *On Sudden Hill* by Linda Sarah (Simon and Schuster)

For a full list of all of Benji Davies' works, please see his website:

<http://www.benjidavies.com/blog/>

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, Viviane Schwarz, Alexis Deacon and Mini Grey: <http://blog.picturebookmakers.com/>

### Before beginning the sequence:

*Take care to find out about your children's home situations and whether there are any changes in circumstances or emotional need that may demand sensitivity, such as working with a Key Person, trusted adult or friend*

- Depending on the children's prior experiences you may want to make provision for the children spend time looking at, discussing and exploring picture book illustrations and artworks in preparation for exploring this book in depth.
- It is worthwhile exploring artists' and illustrators' use of colour through the children's own exploration of a range of art materials and techniques.
- Discuss how people are depicted and positioned in the artwork. Very young children can be supported in imagining and enacting scenarios and reacting to scenes as a participatory viewer or as uninvolved onlooker.
- Spend time exploring the behaviour, thoughts and feelings of people or the children's favourite characters in picture books by responding to illustration, and engaging in role-play, freeze-frame and thought tracking. By working in role and getting 'under the skin' of the characters, the children can be supported in examining facial expression, body positioning, and gaze. They gain understanding of viewpoint and developing empathy for a range of fictional characters in a variety of situations.
- Explore the inclusion of objects in portrait paintings or photographs that offer clues as to the life, career, personality or interests of the person portrayed, such as 'The Ambassadors' by Hans Holbein or 'Girl with a Hoop' by Auguste Renoir (National Gallery, London). Portraits offer endless possibilities for the children to explore and with which to hypothesise.
- Provide digital cameras with which the children can record their drama work and through which they can create their own artwork and portraits.
- You may want to plan a trip to an art gallery to support this learning:
  - The National Portrait Gallery holds an invaluable collection of portraits, both old and contemporary and in a range of media. It offers creative ways of interacting with the portraits through its family and learning programmes: <http://www.npg.org.uk/learning.php>
  - The National Gallery has a range of online resources and programmes that allow young children to investigate paintings and engage in themes and characterisation interactively: <http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/whats-on/sessions-for-under-5s/>
  - The Tate Gallery has a useful online glossary: <http://www.tate.org.uk/learn/online-resources/glossary>
  - The BBC has a range of videos which could support this learning: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/subjects/zn3rkqt>

### 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.*

- 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 half-title page. 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.
- Begin by looking at the full title page of the book in which grandad stands with Syd in a blue room filled with paintings, art materials and other interesting objects. Omit the title of the book as this will be discussed later in the session.

- Allow the children to explore the enlarged illustration, supporting with prompts, such as:
  - *Tell me...*
  - *Who do you think this is? What can you say about them? How do they know each other? How do they feel? Why do you think that?*
  - *Is there anything you like / dislike about what you see? Why? Why not?*
  - *What do you notice in the picture? Have you spotted the same things as your friends?*
- Draw attention to the objects in the room, such as: the box of paints, the book of birds, the plant, the lighthouse, the painting on the easel, the paint brushes in the jar and his hand, the sketches on the wall and anything else that the children have observed:
  - *Where is this? Who lives here? What makes you think that?*
  - *What clues do they give about the owner of the room? What does he like to do? What is he interested in? Why do you think that?*
  - *Does anything puzzle you? Do you have any questions?*
  - *Does it remind you of anything in real life or stories?*
  - *What do you think has just happened? What makes you think that?*
  - *What do you think might happen next? What might the story be about?*
- Share the title of the book with the children and ask the children whether this changes or confirms their initial thoughts.
- Display the children's ideas and responses to the illustration on a working wall so that you and the children can refer back to this in following sessions.

### Session 2: Role on the Wall

*Role on the wall is a technique that uses a displayed outline of the character to record feelings (inside the outline) and outward appearances (outside the outline) at various stopping points across the story. Using a different colour at each of the stopping points allows you to track changes in the character's emotional journey.*

- Prior to this session, it would be helpful if teachers have read the author's blog on his process which will support an understanding of how Benji Davies developed this picture book and, notably, the characterisation of Grandad and the relationship between him and Syd: <http://blog.picturebookmakers.com/post/123446450231/benji-davies>
- Create large pictures of Grandad and Syd and display on flipcharts or on the wall (the following images work well because they have particular signifiers which can be explored)



- Begin by looking at the image of Syd. What do the children already know about the boy from the previous illustration? What more can the children say about him from this image? What clues does it give us? Where is Syd now? Where is he looking? Why?
- Following discussion, scribe what the children know about Syd's outward appearance and behaviour on the outside of the picture and what they think his personality could be like or what he might be feeling or thinking on the inside.
- Move on to looking at the image of Grandad. Ask the children to look very closely at the clues they have been given about him, such as what he is wearing and holding as well as his surroundings.
- Discuss what the children have observed about Grandad's appearance. How do we know he is old? How is he sitting? How might he move? How do they know?
- Ask the children if anything puzzles them about his clothing? Would they like to ask him about anything? What do they think of his choice of outfit being pyjama bottoms and slippers on the bottom half and daytime clothing (i.e. tank top, shirt, tie and hat) on the top half?
- Ask children to predict where he might be this time, based on the objects and clues around him Does it remind them of anything they have seen before or know about? *What makes you think that?*
- Incorporate the discussion that the children had yesterday looking at the title page, what were they able to discern about his character from this response to illustration? *What are his hobbies or interests? What kind of person is he? How do you know? Would you like to meet him? Why? Why not?*
- Again, following discussion, scribe what the children know about Grandad's outward appearance or information learned about him on the outside of the picture and what they think his personality could be like or what he might be feeling or thinking on the inside.
- Display these on the working wall to refer back to and revisit later as the events of the story unfold.

### Drawing Grandad

*Opportunities to draw, both before and during writing, increase children's motivation to write, and can help them to think. Drawing can help all writers to plan their writing, develop their ideas and use vivid description.*

- Model how to draw the character of Grandad, talking through the shapes, sizes and types of lines you are using on a flipchart, or ideally, under a visualiser.
- Give the children another piece of paper and, drawing alongside you, have a few goes at drawing the character until they find a version they are comfortable with.
- Use appropriate art materials to colour this illustration.
- Once the children have completed their pictures they could write either a speech bubble to accompany the image, suggesting what Grandad might say, or a thought bubble suggesting what he might be thinking, or the children could write a short piece of text imaging what the first lines of the book may be.
- Display the illustrations of Grandad so that the children can talk about him and the way they drew him. How did looking closely and drawing him help them to learn more about him? How do they feel about Syd's Grandad?

### Drawing on Personal Experiences and Family Learning

- Look again at the images of Grandad that the children have responded to and talk about all the clues they found in the pictures that told us something about his life, what he likes to do, how he behaves and how he feels.
- Show the children examples of portraits that depict a person's life through the clothes they have chosen to wear, where they are and the objects that surround them. Have the children respond to them by looking for the clues they have been given by the artist. 'The Ambassadors' by Holbein is a famous example of this but this is a common device used by portrait artists throughout time.
- Ask the children to think about what they would include if they were to create a portrait about themselves. Support the children to plan their portrait:
  - *Who would they have in the picture? Why?*
  - *Which objects are important to them?*
  - *How could they show what they like to do or what their interests are?*
  - *What would they wear? Why? What would it tell the viewer?*
- Refer to the kinds of things that Grandad is surrounded by in the title page illustration to which they responded initially, e.g. favourite books, artefacts or ornaments, art materials, artwork and an easel, plants, Syd and the cat.
- Elicit the support of the children's families so that they are able to plan their portrait collaboratively. Ask children to collect the special objects that they think should be included in the portrait and talk about their choices.
- On large pieces of paper, children can be helped to draw, paint or take copies or photographs of their special objects and create a painting or collage which includes all of their special things around them. It would be hugely beneficial if family members were to collaborate to create these artworks, taking advantage of school space, art materials and resources and sharing the experience together.
- Ask the children to think about where they want their portrait to be. Do they have a favourite place that they feel happiest?
- When the artwork is complete, label and display it carefully and have the children and families conduct a gallery walk. Encourage them to discuss what they find interesting about the pieces and the clues they offer into each of their lives.

### Reading Aloud and Visualisation

*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. Asking children to picture a place from a story is a powerful way of encouraging them to move into a fictional world.*

- Read aloud the first spread of the book to the children but do not show them the accompanying image yet.
- Discuss the text and ask the children to consider what it adds to their understanding of the characters and their relationship. You may want to add to the Roles on the Wall at this point
- Re-read the text again but this time ask the children to close their eyes and invite them to try to visualise the scene.
- Give the children pieces of paper and available colour art materials, such as chalk pastels, and then ask the children to sketch the scene they picture. You could read the text again several times while the children draw their pictures.

- After they have completed their drawings, the children could be invited to annotate (or have an adult scribe) their artwork with ideas about the garden, the house, the tree, details such as the flowerpot, who might be in the image, etc.
- Give the children time to share their work with one another and to compare and contrast their images and ideas. Invite children to comment on what is similar and what is different about the way they have illustrated the opening of the book. Does it remind them of anything they know about already in stories or real life? Why do we imagine things differently? Why are some things the same?
- Ask the children to consider how the way in which they have drawn the pictures express the atmosphere of the scene they had in mind.
- Show the children Benji Davies' illustration, asking them to compare it to their own interpretation.
- Now ask the children to look really closely at the image drawing out what else they notice, ask them to consider what other clues are in the image which tell the reader about how Grandad lives his life and what he used to enjoy or still does, e.g. the seaside or sailor references, the old bicycle and football, the white paint tin beside an unpainted, worn out wall, the carefully tended raised vegetable plot by the door but overgrown grass at the back of his garden.
- Young children often notice hidden gems in illustrations like the toucan hidden in the shadows of the tree. *What is this doing here? Where does it belong?* Children could find out more about toucans and their usual habitat.
- Ask the children to also consider if anything puzzles them about the scene? Do the children have any questions about the book so far? What do they think might happen in the story?

### Read Aloud, Response to Illustration and Visualising

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

- Without showing the illustrations, read aloud the next spread of the book in which Syd calls round to see Grandad but can't find him. Ask the children to discuss the text and to predict where Grandad is calling from and what it might be that he wants to share with Syd. You could have the children draw a picture of what it is that they think Grandad wants Syd to see.
- Encourage the children to talk about and compare their predictions with each other. Scribe their suggestions so that they can compare these with what Grandad does show him later in the book.
- Give the children copies of the images that accompany the text. Ask the children to respond to the illustrations, asking what they notice in each of them.
- How is Syd feeling in each scene? How do they know? What might he be thinking? Invite children to enact the scene and have them freeze, drawing out what they are thinking in role as Syd. Scribe ideas on thought bubbles to display around the illustrations.
- How do the children feel about the final image? Does it surprise them in any way or confirm what they first imagined? Where is Grandad going? Does this change what they think Grandad is going to show Syd now?
- Ask the children to focus in on what they can observe in the pictures and what else this tells us about Grandad's character, hobbies and interests.
- Return to both Syd's and Grandad's Roles on the Wall and add more information that the children have gathered from these illustrations.

### Response to Illustration

*For those children who have not had experience of an attic you may want to spend some time considering their purpose and what kinds of objects people normally keep there. You may also want to make reference to other books or to films the children may have experienced in which an attic or unused room features and consider the function of the room in the narrative.*

- Share the next page (just the image of Syd peeping into the attic) with the children but without the accompanying text. Spend time focused on this initial image of the attic, investigating this for further clues about Grandad.
- Ask the children to talk about what they notice in the attic. Ask them if they have any questions or if anything puzzles them? What do you think Syd would like to ask Grandad about what he can see? What about the things that they can't see? What is under the sheets and inside the boxes and chests? What does it remind them of? What other treasures might Grandad have?
- During this discussion you may want to return to the Roles on the Wall and add any additional details.
- Are there any objects that the children don't recognise? Why do they think this might be? How can they find out about them? What would they like to know? Where would they look to find answers? Who could they ask?
- Provide plenty of opportunity for the children to explore, talk about and draw a range of old or interesting artefacts first hand through connections with museums, or inviting members of the school community to bring things in for the children to investigate.
- Once the children have explored this illustration read the accompanying text. Reflect on the further understanding they gain about Grandad's attic and the treasures it holds. What do they think Grandad wants to show Syd now? Scribe these new ideas and compare to their original drawings and suggestions. Have they changed their ideas? Why? Why not?

### Visualisation

*Asking children to picture or visualise their ideas is a powerful way of encouraging them to move into a fictional world. Children can be asked to picture the scene in their mind's eye or walk round it in their imaginations. Finally they can bring it to life recreating it in drawing or painting.*

- Read the children the next part of the book in which it is revealed that Grandad has a secret door in the attic. Let the children look closely at the accompanying image and elicit their responses:
  - *What does the old photograph tell us about Grandad and what he used to do? What does he have in the bag and the suitcase?*
  - *What kind of door is this? Have we seen a door like this before anywhere?*
  - *What could be behind the heavy metal door? Why do you think that?*
- Scribe the children's different ideas around a copy of the illustrated door.
- Explain that the children are going to visualise and draw what they think is behind the door, drawing on the clues that they have gathered from the illustrations about Grandad.
- Give groups of children ample time to collaborate to draw what they imagine is behind the door using appropriate art materials and large scale paper.
- Once the children have finished, display their images around the room and again conduct a gallery walk, inviting children to comment on what they like or find interesting in the different artistic depictions.



- The children might draw on their experiences of secret doorways into other worlds, such as CBeebies' Tree Fu Tom entering his tree or Andy being transported into a Prehistoric Adventure through the Natural History Museum clock.
- Gather open ended role play resources (fabric, hats, bags, accessories - perhaps storing them in a large chest and various cases) and create a 'doorway' nearby through which the children could role-play passing through and entering imagined worlds. They could create these imaginary worlds using open-ended construction materials, artwork and drapes.

### Response to Illustration and Role-Play

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

- Share with the children the following spread in which it is revealed that what was behind the door leads onto a ship's deck and an ocean of rooftops.
- Ask the children to consider if this is what they expected and if it was really a surprise. Consider what clues the reader was given before this point which hinted at a ship. Help the children to go back at this point and find this breadcrumb trail in all the previous details and illustrations they have already explored.
- Read aloud the accompanying text and ask the children to consider what might be happening in the story and where the characters might be going. Whilst reading, emphasise the rolling of the waves and the 'mile upon mile' of 'sea and sky, sky and sea' through rolling intonation and undulating prosody.
- Ask the children to revisit the other images (Grandad's artwork) for clues of where they might be heading. *Where would Grandad like to go most of all? Why do you think that? What do you think will happen next?*
- Look at the following spread and accompanying text. *Where have they come to? What do they notice about the island? Has Grandad been here before? What makes us think that?* Refer to the previous illustrations to look for clues and draw the children's attention to the toucan that has reappeared in a different tree, alongside a blue parrot.
- Ask the children to imagine what they might hear, smell and how it might feel to be in the thick jungle of the island. *Would they like to be there? How do Syd and Grandad each feel to be there? What do you think they might see as they walk further into the jungle to find shelter?*
- You might play the sounds of the sea lapping on the shore followed by a jungle sound clip to evoke the shift in atmosphere and allow the children time to visualise the scenes.
- Have pairs of children role-play the sea journey and the arrival on the island in role as Syd and Grandad. Freeze-frame the scene after 'Syd' asks 'Grandad' if he wants his walking stick and tap the children on the shoulder to have them voice their thoughts or feelings in role before 'Grandad' says, "We must find a good spot for shelter."
- Have the children write or scribe their voiced thoughts on thought bubbles to display around a copy of the illustration which can be added to the working wall.
- The children might even continue to role-play the next scene as they imagine it, adding to the conversation between them.
- What do you like about the island? Is there anything you don't like? Some of the children might air concerns about jungles and meeting wild animals or being too hot. Consider how Syd feels as he looks around the edge of the jungle.

### Making Predictions, Illustration and Artwork - Creating Grandad's Island

- Look again at the illustration spread of Grandad and Syd arriving on the island. Ask the children to talk about what they notice in the island so far, such as the sunny sandy beach, the soil, the rich variety of jungle foliage, flora and plant life, the deep and dappled shade and the colourful birds in the treetops; all surrounded by sea.
- Ask the children if they have seen anywhere like this before in stories, on television or film, or in real life. Perhaps they have visited a place like this whilst on holiday. Collect their ideas and make available books and film clips that will help them develop a sense of this place and what might lie beyond the illustration. David McKee's illustrations in his Elmer picture books are a good source of reference for the jungle backdrop as well as displaying pirate books like *The Night Pirates* by Peter Harris and Deborah Allwright (Egmont).
- As Benji Davies took his inspiration from visiting an idyllic island in Thailand, photographs and non-fiction texts would provide further reference materials from which they could draw influence. The children could even begin some research around Thailand and other countries in South-East Asia. You could have families from this area of the world visit the children to talk about what it is like to live there.
- Read aloud from 'In the thick jungle...' to '...good spot for a shelter," said Grandad' and ask the children to imagine what the pair will see and experience as they walk through and around the island. *Will they always be this hot? Would Grandad like to be this hot? Where might he cool down and be more comfortable on the island?*
- Ask the children to talk with each other about what Grandad's island might look like beyond what they can see in the illustration. *What kind of things would make this a special island for Grandad?* Collect and note down the children's ideas.
- Provide the children with a range of colourful materials, such as: oil pastels, paint, tissue, crepe and sugar paper, fabric, string, pegs, tape and glue so that they can begin creating large scale, collaborative artworks of the rest of the island as they imagine it.
- They might choose to create one particular place within the island or they may wish to create a large scale piece depicting the whole island from a bird's eye view. The children could create small world versions of special places on the Island.
- Support the children to annotate their artwork with descriptive words and phrases, asking them why they think Grandad would like it so much.
- Children could be supported in transforming part or all of the classroom and outdoor area into a tropical island for Grandad which would support and enrich their later role play and re-enactment.
- An adult (and then the children) could take on the role of Grandad visiting the scenes and reacting favourably to what he sees and how he would enjoy different aspects the children have represented. You might want to make available stripy pyjama bottoms, or a hat with a feather, or paintbrushes so they can be used as signifiers for working in role as Grandad.

### Illustration

*Drawing story settings prompts children to imagine what a scene looks like, or visualise it from a particular viewpoint. Like drama, it enables children to enter the world of the story and provides support for writing.*

- Re-read aloud Grandad's suggestion they find a 'good spot for a shelter.' *What would a good spot for shelter look like? Why do you think that?* Collect ideas and provide the children with a range of images that would support their ideas about a suitable jungle shelter or home, such as houses on stilts, treetop houses, leaf-



lined rooftops, etc.

- Spend some time exploring different kinds of shelters and homes with the children and comparing them to other houses and homes. Discuss features of these homes that make them special and different to the homes that we live in, e.g. *Why are they raised off the ground? How do they shelter people from the sun? How are they comfortable to sleep in?*
- Show the children the illustration on the next page in which Grandad and Syd discover an old shack. What do the children think of this shack? *Would you like to stay here? Why? Why not?* Note ideas and responses around a copy of the illustration for the working wall.
- Read aloud the first sentence of accompanying text but do not reveal the next sentence of the transformation on the following page: *'At the top of the island, where a cool breeze blew through the trees, they found an old shack.'* How do the children feel about the shack now? Talk about where on the island the old shack has been found, referring back to the information in this sentence. Even though the shack is old, a cool breeze blows through the trees making it a good place for Grandad and Syd to shelter from the heat of the jungle.
- In pairs, have the children freeze-frame Grandad and Syd looking through the doorway of the old shack. Tap them on the shoulder to have them voice their thoughts in role as their chosen character. Continue to support the children to role play a conversation between the two of them. *What are you going to do now? What needs to happen next?*
- Re-read the first sentence and continue to read aloud to '...shipshape' (again not revealing the next illustration). Discuss what is meant by shipshape, relating it to the children's suggestions that they need to tidy up and mend the old shack so that it is good enough for Grandad and Syd to stay in. *How can we help them make it safe and comfortable?*
- Ask the children to transform the shack into a place for Syd and Grandad to stay by giving them a range of open ended, large-scale construction blocks and den-making resources and equipment such as tarpaulin, pegs, rope, tape, etc. Provide the children with large leaves and other natural resources that would enable the children to create an authentic shelter. You could take the children to nearby woods in order to make use of the natural materials there and from which to draw on some of the atmosphere of being in a clearing amongst the trees.
- Once they have created a structure, ask the children to compare the island home with Grandad's actual home. *What do you need to make somewhere feel homely?* Make available copies of the illustrations depicting Grandad in his home or refer to those explored on the working wall. *Which objects does Grandad like to have around him? What does he do around his house all day?*

Encourage the children to add special or useful objects to Grandad's island home like those from his house.

- Once the children have created their own island shelter, reveal the illustration on the opposite page and compare the transformation that Syd and Grandad are overseeing. How have they made it homely? What do they notice about this shelter and the objects in it? Would they like to live there? Would Grandad? Would Syd? Why? Why not? Explore the objects, where they have come from and whom they belong to. What else do they think might Grandad have packed inside his trunk, suitcase and rucksack? What kinds of things might Grandad do here all day? What does Syd have to do? Where are Syd's things?
- The children may notice that the orang-utan and tortoise in the attic have come to life, the reappearance of the toucan and blue parrot that are helping alongside the other birds. Allow them to discuss why they think this is and how it makes it an even more magical place for Grandad.

### 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.*

- Read aloud the next page to the children and show them the accompanying image of Grandad painting the waterfall.
- Allow the children time to explore the image and discuss it, noting their observations. Compare the colours in this image to the other spreads and why this image feels different from the others they have seen so far. Have available the illustrations so far so that they can compare them as a group, allowing this one to stand out.
- Re-read the text and focus the children on the sentence: 'At every turn they saw new wonders'. Ask the children to look back at their collaborative artwork that offered predictions as to what they might find on the island, based on their growing knowledge of features of Thailand's islands as well as their understanding of story settings.
- Tell the children that we are going to create a class book so that at each turn of the page, the reader can see new wonders. Invite children to work individually now to choose which wonder they would like to show on their spread. Allow them to depict these as illustrations using a range of different media.
- Bind and publish the book, 'New Wonders', so that it can be enjoyed and revisited by the children as well as inviting others to view and respond to the island wonders that the children have created.

### Interrogating Illustration and Text

*In the best picture books illustration and text work closely together to create meanings.*

- Display enlarged copies of the next three illustrated spreads without revealing the accompanying text. Ask the children to respond to what they notice in each of the pictures. *What is happening in each scene? What makes us think that?* Draw the children's attention to Grandad's facial expressions as the events unfold.
- Have prepared the accompanying text typed onto four separate sections and jumble them up. Read each aloud in turn and ask the children to decide to which of the illustrations the text works best. *Why do you think that?* Look again at what messages the illustrator is giving us through the

paintings as well as re-reading the text aloud to check that the children are happy with their decisions.

- Ask the children to talk about the clues that they used to match the text to the illustration or the way the two are positioned to show a conversation is taking place, eg that Grandad is telling Syd something, putting his hand up in explanation; ‘...Grandad smiling...’; ‘Syd hugged Grandad one last time.’

### Interrogating Illustration and Poetry

- Look at the double page spread illustration of the jungle clearing where Grandad is reassuring Syd that he doesn’t think he will be lonely. *What information is in the illustration that tells us Grandad won’t be lonely? What makes us think that Grandad will be happy here; that this is his favourite place in the world?*
- Elicit and record responses from the children and present the illustration alongside the attic illustration. How do the two illustrations compare? What do they notice about each of these illustrations? *What is the same about each of the scenes? What is different?* Draw attention to his lack of walking stick; that he doesn’t need it in his new island home. Invite children to enact how they think Grandad moves now, looking again at the waterfall jumping illustration. *Did this surprise you? How does Grandad feel about being able to walk and jump without his stick?*
- Encourage the children to look carefully at the objects that surround Grandad, the colour palette Benji Davies has used and what impact this has on the mood. *How do they make you feel? Where would you rather be - the attic or the island? Why?*
- Children could create a soundscape, using voice, body percussion or instruments, for the island illustration to denote the contented mood and capture the movement or energy of the animals and the breeze blowing through the trees. *What music do you think the gramophone might play?*
- You might note down everything that the children notice in the scene on separate strips of paper, arranging them together to create a class free verse poem about Grandad’s new home, e.g.:

*Grandad is happy  
Parrots are gliding  
Butterflies are fluttering  
animals are smiling  
Green all around  
Bright flowers  
Music playing  
Book waiting  
Grandad’s new home*

- Children could be supported to prepare a performance reading of their poem, using vocal expression, music, actions and body percussion to enhance their reading.
- They could illustrate their poem or create their own poems in small groups or individually to be illustrated in a class anthology.

### Tracking a Character’s Emotional Journey

*A graph of emotion is a simple graph comparing a range of happiness to sadness against different points (time) in a story or film. This technique of graphing the emotional ups and down within a story really helps children to visualise the whole story in a different way. Once the graphs are complete they can be discussed in reference to the different peaks and troughs of emotion.*

- Re-read the story until ‘*Everyone came to wave goodbye.*’ and talk about the events and the journey taken by the characters so far.
- Pin each of the illustrations in sequence along the bottom of a display board. Ask the children to focus on Grandad and think about how he feels as the events unfold. Ask the children to look really closely at his facial expressions and what he is doing with his body to find clues as to how he is feeling.
- Have children choose a scene to re-enact through role play, asking them to freeze-frame the scene and voice his thoughts. Record these on thought bubbles to display around the illustrations.
- Ask children to present what they think about how Grandad is feeling in their scene and make comparisons with other scenes depicted. Record the children’s descriptions of his emotional state above each illustration, supporting them with language to describe his emotional journey beyond ‘happy’ and ‘sad’; perhaps ‘excited’, ‘pleased’, ‘worried’, ‘relaxed’, etc.
- If the children are more inclined to discuss Syd’s feeling throughout the book, he could be the focus of the same tracking activity. Some children may want to compare each of the character’s emotional journeys.

### Response to Illustration

*Children’s interest in images and their ability to read them can be developed through carefully planned interventions with an emphasis on talk. Time spent focusing on illustration can contribute to children’s ability to read for meaning, express their ideas and respond to the texts they encounter.*

**Teacher note: In this session the children may explore why Grandad and Syd have to be separated, perhaps forever. Teachers will need to deal with this sensitively and consider the needs of their children before delivering this session.**

- Return to the images of Grandad and Syd hugging and waving goodbye. *Why doesn’t Syd stay? Why does he know he needs to go home?* Elicit the children’s ideas about his own home and who is waiting for him there.
- Reveal the next image of the boat making the return journey and read aloud the text. Ask the children to consider the depiction of the storm, the sea and the sky, the colours and the image of the whales. If the children have read *The Storm Whale* they will be able to identify the whales and begin to draw comparisons between Syd saying goodbye to Grandad and Noi returning the baby whale to the sea.
- Following this, show the children the image of Syd steering the boat alone. Compare and contrast this image to the previous image of Syd on the ship with Grandad steering. They may notice the slanting nature of the picture, Syd wearing his Grandad’s hat, his facial expression and gaze, the expression of the cat, etc.
  - *How does this long journey feel for Syd? What or who do you think he is thinking about?*
  - *How is it making you feel? How would you feel to be steering the ship alone through the stormy seas?*
  - *How do you think Syd feels to be home?*
- You might want to ask the children to consider how they would feel if they had to say goodbye to someone special to them, for example if a friend or family has moved away.

- It is unlikely that very young children will infer Grandad's death from the story; rather a farewell, albeit a sad one. Some will just accept the separation pragmatically. However, some children with experience of death, parental separation and grief may bring this experience to their reading of the text and this will need to be carefully supported.

### Response to Illustration

*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.*

**Teacher Note: Again, teachers should consider the particular needs and experiences of their own class before shaping this session to fit the children best.**

- Revisit the whole story and read the next part of the text to the children stopping at '*it was as if it had never been there at all.*' Explore the next two images with the children but ensure the text '*Then Syd heard something tapping at the window...*' is covered up.
- Ask the children to discuss and respond to both the text and images.
- You may want to display the early attic illustration alongside this one and ask the children questions to support their understanding, for example:
  - What is the same/different about the images?*
  - What is missing from the loft now Grandad has gone?*
  - Where are they now? Why doesn't he need the other things?*
  - Why has the door gone?*
  - How is Syd feeling?*
  - Which objects does Syd have to remind him of his Grandad?*
  - What memories will he treasure?*
- Record the children's ideas around the illustration.

### Remembering and Drawing Grandad

*Opportunities to draw, both before and during writing, increase children's motivation to write, and can help them to think. Drawing can help all writers to plan their writing, develop their ideas and use vivid description.*

- Ask the children to reflect on their favourite part of the story so far. How do they remember Grandad in the story? Which part is most enjoyable, memorable or interesting to them? *Why is that?*
  - Is there something you particularly like or dislike about this part of the story? Why?*
  - How does it make you feel?*
  - Does anything puzzle you about this part of the story?*
  - Does it remind you of anything?*
- Have the children revisit the illustrations depicting Grandad throughout the book. Ask the children to consider the way in which he has been drawn, considering the positioning of the character in relation to Syd, body language, facial expression and gesture.
- Spend plenty of time considering how the face of the character has been changed using apparently simple changes to the character's eyes and mouth to suggest changes in mood and emotion.

- Once again, remind the children how to draw the character of Grandad, talking through the shapes, sizes and types of lines you are using on a flipchart or, ideally, under a visualiser.
- Give the children another piece of paper and, drawing alongside you, have a few goes at drawing Grandad in their favourite scene.
- After the children have completed their images, ask them to conduct a gallery walk where the children respond to each other's works discussing the different memories that the children have represented.
- Ask the children to reflect on this activity afterwards, considering what further understanding they have of the character now that they have spent time studying and drawing him.

### Response to Illustration and Writing/Illustrating in Role

- Read the final part of the book in which Syd hears tapping at the window and the toucan brings him a letter. Pause and ask the children to predict who the letter might be from and what it may contain.
- Reveal the letter and elicit the children's responses. You may wish to make a copy of the letter and pop it in a pale blue envelope for a child to open in role as Syd (perhaps wearing Grandad's hat as he does so). How does the letter make Syd feel? How does it make the children feel?
- The children may want to consider how Syd could respond to Grandad. You could share writing a response or ask the children to respond in illustration to show Grandad what he is up to in his own life.
- The children might wish to write letters to people that live far away, such as a grandparent or friend. Make provision in the writing and workshop area for a range of interesting stationery with which children can write notes and letters. You may wish to create a messaging area for the children to write to each other.

### Book Talk

*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.*

- Re-read the whole story from start to finish and engage the children in the 'Tell Me' approach to book talk.
- Once they have heard the book read aloud again, the class can begin to explore their responses to it with the help of what Aidan Chambers calls 'the four basic questions'. These questions give children accessible starting points for discussion:
  - *Tell me...was there anything you liked about this book?*
  - *Was there anything that you particularly disliked...?*
  - *Was there anything that puzzled you?*
  - *Were there any patterns...any connections that you noticed...?*
- The openness of these questions unlike the more interrogative 'Why?' question encourages every child to feel that they have something to say. It allows everyone to take part in arriving at a shared view without the fear of the 'wrong' answer.
- As children reply it can be useful to write down what they say under the headings: 'likes', 'dislikes', 'puzzles', 'patterns'. This written record helps to map out the class's understanding and is a way of holding on to ideas for later. Asking these questions will lead children inevitably



into a fuller discussion using more general questions as they become more experienced in interpreting texts.

### Revisiting and retelling

- Read the whole story on several occasions, enabling the children to become familiar with the sequence of events as they unfold in the story.
- Prepare magnetic story props of the two characters, the animals and settings to enable oral storytelling and revisiting.
- Provide extra copies of the book, alongside the props to support the children's retelling and early attempts at reading. The children will be able to draw on key words and phrases to help sequence the story and on the illustrations to add detail to their retelling of the story.

### Making a Story Map

- 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 retell the story orally 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, i.e. in Grandad's garden, various rooms of his house, over the sea, throughout the island and (for Syd) back home again.
- Ask the children to recall the and swiftly demonstrate drawing these places on a large piece of paper. You may choose to represent these places akin to a geographical map to represent the (return) journey and change in settings. You could create a small world story map in a tuff tray upon which to re-enact and sequence the events.
- Use the map to retell the story orally, adding in key phrases from the book as the children recall them.
- Provide large rolls of paper, and drawing and writing equipment so that the children can collaborate to map out the story for themselves in small groups. Support their oral retelling using key phrases that help move the story on.

### Role-Play

- Provide open ended resources and props, and make use of the scenery and settings that the children have already created, so that the story can be acted out using an indoor or outdoor role-play area.
- Record the children during role-play, scribing their storymaking and unfolding narratives. Take photographs of the children for them to talk about and sequence afterwards, reinforcing the narrative language in the re-enactment.

### Making a Picture Book

*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.*

- Children can retell the story of Grandad, illustrating and sequencing key scenes in a simple, handmade book, using the storymap for support.
- Have the children use a range of art materials with which to capture the mood of each scene and ensure that they think carefully about their choice of facial expression for Grandad as the events unfold.
- Following shared writing to demonstrate, children can be supported in adding text to the illustrations, drawing on some of the memorable words and phrases in the book and on their understanding following their extensive response and interpretation of Benji Davies' illustrations.
- You may wish for the children to collaborate to create a big book or have them work to create an individual zig-zag book, supporting them with shared and modelled writing experiences.
- Once the books have been published, they can be displayed in the reading area so that the children can continue to share, enjoy, re-read and revisit them.

### Other ideas to use across the curriculum:

#### Understanding of the World:

- Children can learn about their own homes and compare them to those of others, referring to basic features of exterior and interior. They can explore the similarities and differences between their own or Grandad's home and those in jungle settings, giving reasons and listening to the ideas of others.
- Children can explore the flora, fauna and wildlife of a jungle setting, comparing it to that in their own locality.

#### Technology:

- Children can explore photography as a portrait medium and the techniques used by photographers in representing the lives of their sitters.
- They can use and manipulate digital photographs of themselves or members of their family or friends to create collages.
- Children might create text using word processing.
- Children might research Thailand by being shown how to navigate appropriate websites.

#### Expressive Arts and Design:

- Children will have ample opportunity to explore the way in which people and characters are portrayed in artworks and picture books. They can examine details in facial expression and emulate

these in their own drawings and artwork, particularly in drawing themselves and in getting to know Grandad.

- Children can be given opportunity to investigate a range of art materials, such as chalk and oil pastels, watercolour or gouache paints and watercolour pencils and the way in which they can mix and blend colours on paper.
- Children can create scenery and backdrops of imagined scenes from Grandad's island in which to role play and re-enact events.
- Children can use a range of natural and manmade materials and techniques to create a safe, comfortable shelter for Grandad.

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