

Mudlarking Teaching Notes

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Synopsis:

Hugo and his sister Poppy enjoy taking walks round the lake, but Hugo is always stopping to look for rubbish. When it starts to rain, Poppy wants him to hurry up — and she can't see the importance of picking up rubbish. With pockets bulging, Hugo eventually sorts his "treasure", puts it to good use, and convinces his sister of the importance of looking for litter. A beautifully illustrated, timely, and engaging story about the significance of looking after your environment and the small steps we can all take to achieve this.



Mudlarking - Teaching Notes

Responding to the text

Discussion

Is Hugo collecting treasures or rubbish? Why do you think this? Provide evidence for your answer.

Suggestions

There is no right or wrong answer – it is someone else’s rubbish, but what does Hugo believe it to be? Why? Does this make it treasure or rubbish?

Responding to the text: Year Level Ideas

Foundation:

Respond verbally to each question.

Year 1 – 2:

Respond verbally with a complex sentence using ‘because’ to quantify the answer. Students can also write these down.

Year 3 – 4:

Respond by writing a persuasive paragraph. Start with an opening statement, give two evidence statements and finish with a closing statement.

Year 5 – 6:

Write a piece that highlights arguments for both sides of the question. 1 paragraph arguing that Hugo is collecting rubbish. 1 paragraph arguing that he collects treasure. Provide evidence.

Improvising on text

Discussion

Consider this story from Poppy’s perspective. What frustrates her and why? How does she feel in the end and why does she take Hugo to the beach? What is she trying to achieve in the end?

Suggestions

Think about how many times Poppy has asked Hugo to hurry up, and why she wants him to walk more quickly. Discuss how Poppy contributes to the greater good in the end and how she too is an environmentally friendly character.

Improvising to text: Year Level Ideas

Foundation:

Discuss as a class. Teacher to write ideas on the board. Individual students to contribute.

Year 1 – 2:

Students to rewrite a page from Poppy’s perspective, or draw how she is feeling.

Year 3 – 4:

Work in small groups and rewrite a section of the story from Poppy’s perspective. How does she feel? What makes her change her mind and how does she intend to help?

Year 5 – 6:

Rewrite the story from Poppy’s perspective. Change the setting and come up with a different ending.

Questioning

Foundation – Year 6:

Suggested questions you might like to pose as you read the text. These questions are designed to promote thought and discussion and have multiple answers.

Before Reading	During Reading	After Reading
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Look at the front cover, what do you think the story is about?• What do you know about the word ‘Mudlarking’?• Research the word ‘Mudlark’ on Wikipedia and read about Mudlarks in the 18th & 19th centuries as well as the modern times.• Have you ever been mudlarking? If so, what did you find? If you were to go mudlarking in the future, what would you like to find and why?	<p>Literal questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where are Poppy and Hugo walking?• What does ‘meandering’ mean?• What is Hugo doing?• What is Poppy doing?• How many objects does Hugo collect? What are they?• What does Hugo do with the objects in the end? <p>Inferential questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How is Poppy feeling at the start of this story? Why?• What happens when it rains?• Where do you think these children live? Why?• Why do you think Hugo collects things when he walks?• How do you think Poppy feels when Hugo gives her the necklace? Why?• Why does Poppy walk to the beach at the end of the story? <p>By myself questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do you think these characters are friends or siblings? Why?• How old are Poppy & Hugo?• How would you feel if you were Poppy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do you like / dislike about this book?• Do you think Poppy is valid in her frustration with Hugo?• Do you think collecting rubbish is important?• Have you ever collected rubbish to help the environment?• Are there any ways we can help stop people from littering?• Have you ever ‘upcycled’? What did you use and what did you make?

Extension activities

Discussion

- When mudlarking, or cleaning up our environment, what must we be careful of? What are the safety concerns? Students to contribute to a class discussion.

Creative Writing

- Write a creative story about mudlarking and finding a special treasure – what was it? Where did it come from? Who used to own it?

Group work

- '*Clean Up Australia Day*' is the first Sunday in March. Register your school in the 'School Clean Up Day' (on cleanup.org.au) and get a clean-up kit – a set of lesson plans, as well as class sets of gloves, bags, supervisor vests and safety instructions for cleaning up your school or bushland near your school. Get the class to be in charge of promoting and organising this worthy cause.
- Students to research 'upcycling' and 'repurposing'. Understand the difference between the two. What did Hugo do with his items – was he 'upcycling' or 'repurposing'? Students contribute something used and discarded from home. In small groups, students to spend time either 'upcycling' or 'repurposing' these items. Then they are required to write up their project, including:
 - What was the original item?
 - What did they need to do to the item to 'upcycle' or 'repurpose' it?
 - Has the student 'upcycled' it into or 'repurposed' it? How can it be used now?
- Head out of the classroom or kindergarten and go mudlarking! Make this an incursion, look around the school grounds. Or, make this an excursion, search the local bushland, beaches, riverbanks or fields. See what treasures the students can find.
- In small groups, students to select one of the following:
 - Plastic straws
 - Fishing line
 - Plastic shopping bags
 - Cutlery
 - Balloons
 - Lids and bottles
 - Take away containers
 - Cups, plates

Research how this item grossly effects our oceans and sea-life. Are there alternatives to these products? What can we do to minimise this waste?

Author Biography:

Kate Lindquist lives with her husband and young family in a small coastal town in regional Australia. She spends each day with her three little muses, who love exploring local rivers and beaches, fossicking in rockpools, and mudlarking in the mangroves. In the evenings, with salty hair and sand between their toes, Kate and her children relive their adventures through storytelling. Kate draws inspiration for her writing by looking at the world through the lens of children, making observations of everyday happenings and celebrating life's simple moments.

Illustrator Biography:

Albertina Neri is from a small town near Milan, Italy. A freelance illustrator and graphic designer, Albertina also holds creative workshops for children in schools and loves everything about childhood and imagination. As a child, Albertina understood the importance of literature, and she believes that books are treasures made to help children.