

Ned Needs to Build Teaching Notes

Author: Rhonda Ooi

Illustrator: Mario Kristjansdottir



Synopsis:

When there is no room left in Ned's brain he HAS to build. *Ned Needs To Build* is picture book written in prose for 3-7 year olds. It celebrates a sibling relationship by exploring the different ways they express their creativity. It speaks to gifted children, to children on the autism spectrum and to any child who is passionate about their interests.

Ned's brain is filled with roads, buildings, rivers, mountains and trees. It is so full it overflows, from his brain, down his arms into his hands. His house fills with cities, suburbs and towns. Ned's little brother, Sam, demolishes and builds sculptures with the remains. Ned can't stop Sam's destruction... until after a trip to the city, Ned has a brilliant idea and realises that cities need art too and with teamwork they build something amazing.

Inspiration

Ned Needs to Build was inspired by a boy Rhonda taught when he was in grade 3. He could manipulate maps in his mind. He drew maps and built cities. *Ned Needs to Build* celebrates his unique ability. Neurodivergent children benefit when they see themselves in stories like *Ned Needs to Build*. Likewise, neurotypical children benefit when they develop respect and understanding through inclusive literature and education.

Themes

- creativity
- sibling relationships
- neurodivergence
- giftedness

V9 Australian Curriculum F-2 Ages 4-8		Foundation	Year 1	Year 2
English	Language	AC9EFLA04 AC9EFLA08	AC9E1LA08	AC9E2LA03
	Literature	AC9EFLE02	AC9E1LE02	AC9E2LE02
	Literacy	AC9EFLY01	AC9E1LY01	AC9E2LY01
Maths	Number			
	Algebra			
	Measurement	AC9MFM02 AC9MFM01	AC9M1M03 AC9M1M02	AC9M2M01
	Space	AC9MFSP02	AC9M1SP02	AC9M2SP02
	Statistics	AC9MFST01	AC9M1ST01 AC9M1ST02	AC9M2ST01 AC9M2ST02
HASS	Knowledge and Understanding	AC9HSFK03	AC9HS1K03	AC9HS2K03
	Skills	AC9HSFS02	AC9HS1S02	AC9HS2S02
Science: Physical Sciences	Science Understanding	AC9SFU02	AC9S1U03	AC9SFU02
	Science as Human Endeavour			
	Science Inquiry	AC9SFI03 AC9SFI05	AC9S1I03 AC9S1I06	AC9S2I06
Design and Technologies	Knowledge and Understanding	AC9TDEFK01	AC9TDE2K01	AC9TDE2K01
	Processes and Production Skills	AC9TDEFP01	AC9TDE2P01 AC9TDE2P02 AC9TDE2P03	AC9TDE2P01 AC9TDE2P02 AC9TDE2P03
Dance Drama Media Arts Music Visual Arts	Developing Practices and Skills	AC9ADAFD01 AC9AMAFD01	AC9ADA2D01 AC9AMA2D01	AC9ADA2D01 AC9AMA2D01
	Creating and Making	AC9AD AFC01 AC9ADR FC01 AC9AMA FC01 AC9AMU FC01	AC9ADA2C01 AC9ADR2C01 AC9AMA2C01 AC9AMU2C01	AC9ADA2C01 AC9ADR2C01 AC9AMA2C01 AC9AMU2C01
	Presenting and Performing	AC9ADAFP01 AC9ADRFP01 AC9AMAFP01 AC9AMUFP01	AC9ADA2P01 AC9ADR2P01 AC9AMA2P01 AC9AMU2P01	AC9ADA2P01 AC9ADR2P01 AC9AMA2P01 AC9AMU2P01

		AC9AVAFD01	AC9AVA2D01	AC9AVA2D01
		AC9AVAFP01	AC9AVA2P01	AC9AVA2P01

*Not exhaustive list of key content descriptions identified from the Australian Curriculum V9.

<https://v9.australiancurriculum.edu.au>

Before Reading

Look at the cover and read the title. Students find: title, author, illustrator, publisher, blurb.

Q: What do you think the story might be about from looking at the title?

Look at the front cover, read the blurb and use prior knowledge. Students predict what might happen in the story.

Q: Based on the cover, what do you think the story might be about?

Q: How do you think the story will begin/end?

(After reading the story check to see if your predictions were correct.)

Q: Do you think *Ned Needs to Build* is a good title? Why or why not?

Q: What different title would you choose for the book? (A good title grabs attention and gives clues to the audience about what the book is about.)

During Reading

Text

Q: Is the book an imaginative, informative or persuasive text? How do you know?

Q: Who do you think the audience for this book is? Why?

Q: Literary devices help writers to convey a deeper meaning. What devices can you find in *Ned Needs to Build*? 'Roads and bridges flow through his fingers. Skyscrapers burst through his hands.' What device is used in this quote?

Illustrations

Q: What do the illustrations add to the story? Cover the text and write your own story.

Choose one of the double spreads and discuss the illustrations:

Q: How are the characters feeling? What clues are there in the illustrations?

Q: How does the colour make you feel?

Q: Why might the illustrator have chosen those colours? What is the main colour of other spreads?

After Reading

Literal Questions

Q: Where does Ned build his cities?

Q: What does Sam do to Ned's cities?

Q: Where does Mum take Ned and Sam?

Q: What does Ned see in the city?

Inferential Questions

Q: How does Ned feel about Sam?

Q: Why does Ned **need** to build?

Q: Why doesn't Ned understand what Sam is building?

Q: What helps Ned understand Sam?

Q: What do you think Ned and Sam will build after the last page?

Evaluative Questions

Q: How would you feel if your brother/sister/friend knocked down your buildings?

Q: What would you do if your brother/sister/friend knocked down your buildings?

Q: Are you more like Ned or Sam? Explain.

Q: Have you seen any abstract sculptures? Do you think they look like anything?

Cross Curriculum Ideas:

English Language:

- As a class write vocabulary lists based on *Ned Needs to Build*.
- Q: What do the Illustrations add to the story? Read without the illustrations. Students illustrate, then compare with what Maria brings.
- Q: What is the purpose of the text? Q: What is the problem and solution?

English Literature:

- Q: Do you like building? Q: Do you have a brother/sister who ruins your games? Students use a graphic organiser like a Venn Diagram to compare their experiences to Ned and Sam's.
- Students draw their response to the story.
- Students write questions about the story/character/s.
- Students write a review of *Ned Needs to Build*.
- Students use face emojis to record Ned, Sam and Mum's feelings throughout the story.

English Literacy:

- As a class, group *Ned Needs to Build* with other similar stories. For example: *The Imagineer* by Christopher Cheng, illustrated by Lucia Masciullo and *Mila and Ivy* by Katrina McKelvey, illustrated by Jasmine Berry.
- Look at the purpose of the book and group with similar text types. Read picture books written in prose like *Ned Needs to Build* and picture books written in rhyme.

Maths Measurement:

- Students sequence/sort the events from *Ned Needs to Build*.
- Students create a picture diary of Ned's routine.
- Students create buildings using blocks and sort from shortest to tallest. Measure the buildings with informal units. Use blocks to measure things in the room.

Maths Space:

- Students describe Ned's position/the position of different blocks in the illustrations using position language (i.e. under, inside, beside etc.).
- Students follow directional language to find buildings around the school.

- Students create a map on grid paper of one of Ned's cities. Students create a map of their local area.

Maths Statistics:

- Students survey the class to find who enjoys building. They collect data about their favourite toys.
- Students create a pictograph of their favourite toys.
- Students create a column graph of their favourite toys.

HASS:

- Using an aerial photograph of the school students build using blocks.
- Students create maps of their local area.
- Students create maps of what Ned's local area might look like.

Science

Physical Sciences Science Understanding/Science Inquiry:

- Students investigate the way blocks of different shapes roll down a slope.
- Students investigate the forces (push and pull) required to move blocks in a building they create.

Design and Technologies:

Knowledge and Understanding:

- Look at some structures around the school (e.g. a rotunda, covered play area) and students build a model using recycled materials/blocks like Ned.

Processes and Production:

- Students identify a problem in the school (e.g. the playground needs shade) then design a solution and build a model. Students reflect on the effectiveness of their design.

The Arts:

- Students role play/retell the story.
- Students make a sound scape for the story.
- Students use a camera to create images or video to retell the story.
- Students make and use puppets to retell the story.
- Students illustrate the story from the text.

About the Author

Rhonda Ooi is an author and primary school teacher with a Master of Gifted Education. She lives in Victoria, Australia, by the bay with her husband, son, cat, bird, and hundreds of

children's books. When she is not working out how to fit more picture books on her enormous bookshelf, she is imagining stories, inspired by the children in her life.

About the Illustrator

Maria Kristjansdottir is an illustrator born and raised in Reykjavik, Iceland. She has a BA in architecture from Iceland University of the Arts, but her passion for creating children's stories led her to change directions. In 2018, she graduated from Cambridge School of Art with an MA in Children's Book Illustration. She currently resides in Iceland with her partner and their daughter.