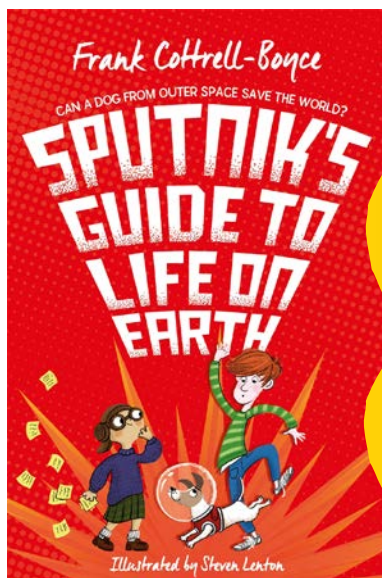


AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR MASTERCLASSES

NOTES FOR TEACHERS & LIBRARIANS

FRANK COTTRELL-BOYCE & STEVEN LENTON

CREATING CHARACTERS THROUGH WORDS & ILLUSTRATIONS



BEFORE WATCHING THE VIDEO AND READING THE EXTRACT:

GET IN THE ZONE!

In their video, Frank says that characters ‘drive the story’ and that he always starts with the ‘voice’ of the character. Steven explains when he wants to bring animals to life, he anthropomorphises them – he gives them human characteristics.

Play this improvisation game to challenge your class to explore how they can bring animals to life and give them the voice of a real character. Ask pupils to imagine that the zoo has closed for the day, and all the animals have come out to play.

Each pupil should pick an animal. They should think about how their animal would move, how their animal would talk, and what it would say. Then, they should move around the room silently, acting out their animal only using their movements. Next, they should talk as their animals. What would a tiger sound like? An elephant? What would the animals say to each other? Have a group discussion on the choices everyone made when creating their characters.

AFTER WATCHING THE VIDEO AND READING THE EXTRACT:

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When you look at the cover of *Sputnik's Guide to Life on Earth*, what information does the illustration give you? What about the writing?
2. How would you describe the personality of the narrator, Prez? How would you describe the personality of Sputnik?
3. How are Prez and Sputnik similar? How are they different?
4. Look at the picture on page 10. How does the illustration connect to the text?
5. What does Prez think of the way the family reacts to Sputnik? What do you think?
6. Some information in this story was only revealed through illustration. How do the pictures and words work together to tell the story?

FUN ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1: THE VOICE OF AN ANIMAL

Frank explains that Sputnik was based on a famous actor with a loud voice. He talks about how he likes putting an unusual voice in an unexpected character: for example, a loud booming voice in a child's body to make it more original.

- Think to yourself: "If I was an animal what would I be?" Use your imagination! What qualities do you share with a particular animal? What qualities do certain animals have that you want to have?
- Draw a picture of yourself as an animal. Below your animal, explain what animal you chose & why.
- Consider what type of voice your animal would have. Experiment with different voices before choosing the final one. Reveal your voice to the class by imitating it – whose animal has the best voice?

ACTIVITY 2: HUMAN CHARACTERISTICS

Frank and Steven talk a lot about why it is important to give animals human characteristics in order to bring them to life – including giving them human emotions.

- Turn your animal into a rounded character! Take a new blank piece of paper and fold it in half to create two boxes. Before you draw anything, ask yourself, what are some big feelings I can have?
- Next, choose two big emotions, and imagine the animal from the first activity is having those feelings. How could you draw your animal to show its feelings? How would its face change? How would its body change? How would its voice change?
- In each box on your piece of paper, draw your animal experiencing one of the big emotions you chose. Show it to a partner. Can they guess how your animal is feeling?

ACTIVITY 3: STORYBOARDING

Steven talks about why storyboarding is a great way to organise a story. He says that storyboarding

can help you trial different angles and ideas before committing to them.

- Make an original storyboard with your partner! Fold a blank paper in half, and then fold it in half again to create four boxes. In the first box begin your own storyboard by drawing your animal at the beginning of an adventure. You can only use illustration, no words, to tell your story!
- Next, swap pieces of paper with your partner. Continue their story by drawing the second scene of the story in the next box. They will do the same to your story.
- Swap papers until all your boxes are filled. Make sure to use the information your partner contributed to create a story with consistent characters, a beginning, middle and an end!

SHARE A STORY

Frank Cottrell Boyce and Steven Lenton work together to create vivid characters with both illustrations and words. Some information about their characters is revealed in the text and some is revealed in the illustrations. Can you think of another story that uses this technique? Take ten minutes to share your story with your classmates, teachers, friends or family. Who is your favourite character in the story you have chosen?

SPARK YOUR IMAGINATION

AN INSPIRING SHARE A STORY CHALLENGE FOR YOU:

Including a quick recap of the expert advice from Frank and Steven:

Create a 'dog with a job'. Choose an animal and think about how you'd bring them to life. In particular, give them a job to do and think about what they might have to wear, how they might act, and what problems they might face.

DID YOU KNOW?

There are more fascinating Masterclass films and resources featuring amazing authors and illustrators over at worldbookday.com/online-masterclasses. Don't miss out, download them today!