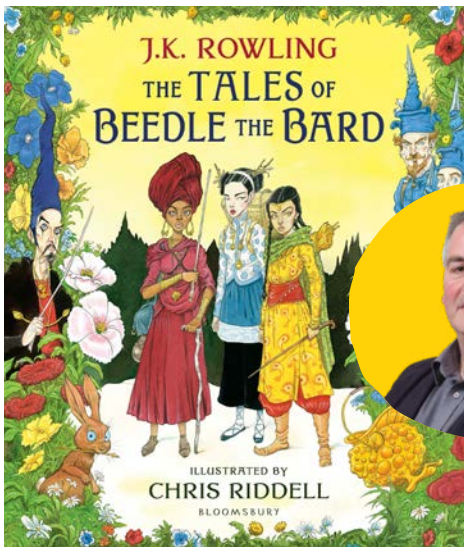


# AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR MASTERCLASSES

## NOTES FOR TEACHERS & LIBRARIANS

## CHRIS RIDDELL: FINDING YOUR STYLE



### BEFORE WATCHING THE VIDEO AND READING THE EXTRACT:

#### GET IN THE ZONE!

In his video, Chris explains that he often draws characters without knowing anything about them. He describes how he doesn't like to give himself too many rules or restrictions – it's almost as though the pencil comes alive on the page, and he sees where his imagination takes him!

Encourage creativity in your students by allowing them to work quietly without any rules and restrictions. Invite them into the classroom, perhaps with chairs and tables arranged in a new, interesting way, and ask them to get comfortable. They can even take their shoes and socks off if they want. Assure students: this is a private creative task and no one is going to analyse or judge their work. It's time to relax and see where their imaginations take them...

To remove the fear of making mistakes by committing pencil to paper – give students lengths of different coloured string or yarn. Ask them to start by creating shapes on a white piece of A3 paper, simply by moving their length of string or yarn in different ways. Then, ask them to think about creating a character – how can they manipulate the shapes to show facial features, bodies, or even emotions? When students have finished – ask them to take a photograph of their work, and then to sketch around the shapes that they have made in order to make a vague outline of their new character. They can develop their outlines into sketches over time.

### AFTER WATCHING THE VIDEO AND READING THE EXTRACT:

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does Chris Riddell create a sense of **movement** in his illustration of the Wizard and the Hopping Pot in *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*?
2. What can you **infer** about the Wizard's personality and how he **feels** from the illustration?
3. How does Chris Riddell create **intensity** in his illustration of the rabbit? Why do you think he does this?
4. What do you **predict** the rabbit has done from how the character is illustrated? What features of the illustration make you come to your conclusions?
5. How does Chris Riddell create **contrast** in his illustration of the Grim Reaper?
6. What would you say is the overall **mood** of the illustration of the Grim Reaper? Does it surprise you?

## FUN ACTIVITIES

### ACTIVITY 1: A SKETCH A DAY

Chris explains in the video that he recently went on a trip to Venice and his aim was to fill an entire sketchbook in a week. His drawings were completely random – for example, he sketched Venice, but he also sketched dragons, people, himself, and any other magical creatures he could think of!

- Using Chris's example, aim to create one sketch a day for one week in your own sketchbook.
- First of all, find the right sketchbook! Choose a notebook, an exercise book – or you can even bind some paper together with some string. Create a cover for your sketchbook; it can be based on one of Chris's illustrations, or it can be something entirely from your own imagination.
- Bring your new illustrations to class every day for one week and share them with your classmates. Discuss the things that inspired you – it doesn't matter how random they are!

### ACTIVITY 2: DRAWING AROUND WORDS

Chris likes to draw illustrations around words and sentences, using them as his inspiration. In the video, he shows us an example of this technique using the book *Poems To Live Your Life By*.

- Create a grid of 12 boxes on an A3 sheet of paper. At the top of each box, write one of the following words: heavy, scarecrow, darkness, embarrassment, diamond, bedazzled, magic, drop, cello, stranger, obscure, beauty.
- In each box, underneath the word that you have written, draw something that you think represents what the word means. It can be a **literal** representation of the word or something more **abstract**, like a feeling or a reaction.
- Use colours and experiment with different mediums to create your drawings, e.g. pencil, charcoal, crayons, pastels etc.

### ACTIVITY 3: FINDING MY STYLE

Chris's challenge is about finding your own **style** as an illustrator – because everyone is unique!

- Following on from your work in Activity 2, consider what your preferred style might be. Is it to create literal or abstract representations? To use colour or to stay in black and white? To use pencils, charcoal, crayons or pastels? To create fine lines or strong, bold images?
- Choose your favourite words from the 12 boxes in Activity 2. Put them together in a single sentence and create one illustration to represent that sentence, in your own style!

### SHARE A STORY

Who are your favourite illustrators? Why? Make a list of your top three and write some notes explaining why you chose them and what you enjoy about their individual styles. Which style would you most like to emulate? Take ten minutes to share your favourite three illustrators, your reasons for choosing them and some examples of their work with your classmates, teachers, friends or family members. Write a statement explaining how you will use them as inspiration in creating your own style of illustration.

### SPARK YOUR IMAGINATION...

#### AN INSPIRING SHARE A STORY CHALLENGE FOR YOU:

Including a quick recap of the expert advice from Chris:

Take your sketchbook, open the first page, draw a character and then answer these questions...

1. **Who is the character?**
2. **Where do they come from?**
3. **What are they?**
4. **What happens next?**

#### DID YOU KNOW?

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