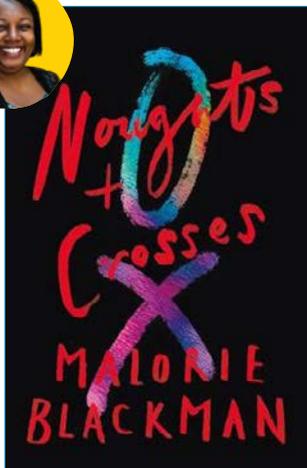


AUTHOR AND
ILLUSTRATOR
MASTERCLASSES

NOTES FOR TEACHERS & LIBRARIANS

MALORIE BLACKMAN
& PATRICE LAWRENCE:
CONNECTING TO THE READER**BEFORE WATCHING THE VIDEO AND
READING THE EXTRACT:****GET IN THE ZONE!**

In the video, Malorie and Patrice talk about the importance of connecting with the reader. They focus on why writers need to identify and empathise with readers in order to have an impact on them.

Use this task to encourage students to develop their empathy skills and to make stronger connections with each other. Tell students they are about to step into each other's shoes! Before they begin, remind them that the classroom is a safe and supportive environment. First, give each student a piece of paper; on it, they need to draw an outline of their foot or shoe (as long as it's not full of mud!). They also need to write one scenario in which they recently felt a strong emotion: upset, angry, frustrated, trapped, fearful. An example of

a scenario might be – 'I had an argument with my sibling and my mum blamed me, even though it wasn't my fault.' Once they have finished writing, tell students to scrunch up their pieces of paper and throw them into a pile in the middle of the room. Then, invite students to choose a piece of paper from the pile. Inside the outline of the foot or shoe on their new piece of paper, students need to write down which emotions they think their classmate must've felt in the scenario described. They should also attempt to write a line of advice for how to manage feelings in the scenario. Invite some students to read out from their paper (remember, it's all anonymous!). Consider: how has the task helped students to form connections with each other?

**AFTER WATCHING THE VIDEO
AND READING THE EXTRACT:****DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. In the extract from *Noughts and Crosses*, what is the effect of the changing **perspectives** (between Sephy and Callum)? Why do you think Malorie Blackman has chosen this **structure**?
2. In Callum's narrative, why are some sentences written in italics in his dialogue with the police officers?
3. Why does Callum choose not to speak to the officers? What can you **infer** about his situation from this?
4. In the extract from Patrice Lawrence's *Orangeboy*, what can you **infer** about the narrator's relationship with his mum?
5. How does the object of the knife become a focal point in the extract? What does it represent?
6. What is the effect of the four questions that the narrator asks himself? What do they show?

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1: THREE-DIMENSIONAL CHARACTERS

Malorie explains that she tries to create three-dimensional characters. These characters make stronger connections with readers because they are more human; we can see ourselves in them.

- In threes, read out the dialogue between Callum and the police officer in the extract from *Noughts and Crosses* (where one of you is the police officer, one of you is Callum, and one of you is the voice in Callum's head). How does reading it out loud help you to understand more about how Callum feels?
- Draw an outline of a human body. Around the outside of the body, write down words to describe how Callum presents himself to the police officers. How does he come across to them?
- Inside the body, write down the emotions that Callum is really feeling. Consider how Malorie Blackman has created a 3D character by presenting Callum in this way.

ACTIVITY 2: POWERFUL EMOTIONS

For *Orangeboy*, Patrice explored the idea of how far someone would go to protect a loved one. She uses this powerful emotion to bring her character to life and connect to the reader; we can all empathise with wanting to protect the people we love.

- At the start of a one-minute timer, begin listing all the powerful emotions you can think of. When the time runs out, stop; then, take turns reading from your lists, one emotion at a time.
- Draw a volcano, or triangle on a blank piece of paper. Then, using some of the emotions that you have just shared with your classmates, discuss which emotions you think are the most powerful. Write the emotions on your volcano, with the most powerful ones at the top and the less powerful ones near the base. In groups, share your volcanoes. Which emotion would you choose to write a story about?

ACTIVITY 3: MINI-BIOGRAPHIES

Malorie writes mini-biographies for each of her characters so that she can become more familiar

with them. She explains the importance of characters having things wrong with them, because all humans have flaws!

- Think of someone that you could base a character on for a piece of writing – but remember not to reveal his or her full name!
- Write a biography for your character, including their qualities and their flaws. Focus in particular on this section of the biography: how can flaws become interesting starting points for stories?

SHARE A STORY

Make connections between stories and readers. Draw a map of all of your friends or family members, or write a list of all of them on a sheet of paper. Then, use your empathy skills to think about which books you would recommend to each of them and why. What connections can you make between stories and readers; what themes or characters will resonate more with some people than others? What settings will be enjoyed by some more than others? Take ten minutes to share your map or list of recommendations with your friends and family – give them the gift of a story to read this month!

SPARK YOUR IMAGINATION...

AN INSPIRING SHARE A STORY CHALLENGE FOR YOU:

Including a quick recap of the expert advice from Malorie and Patrice:

Malorie: Imagine you're on journey and an official says you can't travel with your friend. Think about what the official says to you, what you would say to them, and what your friend would say. Try to feel it as you write it, and the reader will feel it when they read it.

Patrice: In *Orangeboy*, Marlon has a choice: to stay out of trouble or follow his brother down a path of crime to protect his family. Marlon is torn. What would you do in his situation? How far would you go to protect your loved ones? Share your ideas and thoughts with a friend.

DID YOU KNOW?

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