WORLD BOOK DAY

AGES 9-11

AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR MASTERCLASSES

NOTES FOR TEACHERS & LIBRARIANS

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SHAPES for schools

SIBÉAL POUNDER: WORLD-BUILDING

BEFORE WATCHING THE VIDEO AND READING THE EXTRACT:

GET IN THE ZONE!

In her video, Sibéal talks about how to build worlds in stories. She says that one of her favourite things to do when writing is world-building, and that world-building is especially important in fantasy writing because the world isn't real.

To get your ideas flowing and to start building worlds of your own, play a game of word association. This will help to give you some inspiration for the activities later on.

The game will start with the word 'underwater', and then one at a time, each player must come up with a word connecting to the previous one.

The second round will start with the word 'jungle' and the third game with 'outer space', each time starting with a different person. To keep it moving, you only have five seconds to think of an idea!

AFTER WATCHING THE VIDEO AND READING THE EXTRACT:

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How have mermaids remained hidden from humans for so long, according to the Prologue of *Bad Mermaids*?

2. What do you think the Hidden Lagoon looks like? Who or what else do you think may be down there as well as mermaids?

3. What are your first impressions of the 'excitable lady' in Chapter 1? Why do you think she is so excited?

4. How would you feel being trapped in a tank like Arabella? What might she be worried about?

5. Who do you think Arabella has written her note to? What do you think the note might say?

6. Imagine you are a member of Arabella's family, what could you do to try and help her?

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FUN ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1: SWIRLYSHELL, LOBSTERTOWN AND HAMMERHEAD HEIGHTS

Sibéal speaks in detail about the three main areas of her mermaid world: Swirlyshell, Lobstertown and Hammerhead Heights.

- In pairs, pick out the key words that you can see within the three names: Swirlyshell, Lobstertown and Hammerhead Heights. After your warm-up 'Get in the Zone' activity, you should be ready to make associations to the key words that you can see. On a big A3 sheet of paper, create a list of the connotations for each of the key words included in the three different areas.

- Choose the area that you find most intriguing. Using your list of connotations, create a collage or draw a map of what you imagine the world might look like, including who could live there!

ACTIVITY 2: IT'S ALL IN THE DETAIL

Sibéal says that it is important to 'build everything up' when creating new worlds, focusing on the 'tiny details', right down to the currency and who runs the country.

- Look back at the collage or picture of Swirlyshell, Lobstertown or Hammerhead Heights that you created in Activity 1. Start to think about how you might build everything up. Consider the following things: currency, who runs the area, important everyday objects, food, routines, hobbies and dangers.

- Imagine you have to create a travel brochure encouraging people to visit your chosen area. How can you persuade people to come? What is particularly unique or special about it?

ACTIVITY 3: MERMAID DIARIES

Sibéal explains how she writes down everything she does in a week, and she challenges you to do the same! Use your imagination to think about how your own mermaid character would do the same things that you do in their daily lives.

- Keep a notebook or diary for a week writing down all the things you do and create a mermaid equivalent for them. For example, when you're eating breakfast, write down what you think a mermaid might have for breakfast. When you go to school, imagine what a mermaid school might be like. What might a mermaid's favourite book be? What shows might they watch on television? How might they brush their teeth, and with what object?

- At the end of the week, use these ideas to write a diary entry as your mermaid alter-ego.

- Design a front cover for your mermaid notebook or diary.

SHARE A STORY

Think about a story where you've truly been transported to another world. Take ten minutes to share your story with your classmates, teachers, friends or family. Tell them what sort of world your story is set in by describing its features and characters. How is it similar to the real world? How is it different? Consider how the author pulls you into the world that they have created and makes you feel like you never want to leave.

SPARK YOUR IMAGINATION...

AN INSPIRING SHARE A STORY CHALLENGE FOR YOU:

Including a quick recap of the expert advice from Sibeal:

Create a new mermaid city using three main steps:

1. **Give your city a name – use 'Swirlyshell', 'Lobstertown' and 'Hammerhead Heights' as inspiration.**
2. **Create your own underwater pet – think about how the pet relates to the world you've created.**
3. **Create rules for your world – what can or can't the characters do?**

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!

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