

The Carnegies



The Carnegie Shortlist 2025 Shadowing Resources



Teaching Ideas for the Carnegie Medal for Illustration Shortlist 2025

Title: I Hate Love Books

Illustrator: Mariajo Ilustrajo

Publisher: Frances Lincoln Children's Books

These notes have been written by the teachers at the CLPE to provide schools and settings with ideas to develop comprehension and extended provision around Carnegie-shortlisted picturebooks and illustrated texts for children of all ages. They build on our work supporting teachers to use high-quality texts to enhance critical thinking and develop creative approaches in art and writing. We hope you find them useful.

These notes have been written with children aged 5–11 in mind. However, this is a sophisticated picture book which has scope for it to be interpreted in different ways with pupils of different ages.

Reading the book and close reading of illustration:

- *I Hate Love Books* is the charmingly told story of one reader's journey from hating reading to loving it. Partly inspired by Mariajo Ilustrajo's own experience (see this blog she wrote for CLPE), the book demonstrates there is no more zealous advocate than a convert! As both author and illustrator, Mariajo uses both words and pictures to tell her story, and extended time can be given for children to explore the interplay between the text and illustrations.
- Begin by initially covering the title to focus on the front cover illustration. *Who do you think this character might be? What can you tell about her from her facial expression and body language, and what she appears to be doing? What do you think she might be thinking or feeling?* Now read the title, "*I HATE LOVE BOOKS*". *What do you think this title means, and how might it relate to the character you have just met? Why might the word "HATE" be crossed out, replaced by "LOVE"?* Children may connect to their own experiences or feelings; or observe the stars and wisps – perhaps suggestive of magic? — emanating from the discarded books; the sparing but perhaps significant use of the popping pink-orange for her socks and the title. *What might all this suggest about the book you are about to read?*
- Turn to the front endpapers (after reading, don't forget to revisit and compare these with the back endpapers): *what do you notice about the girl in these vignettes, what is she doing and how might she be feeling?* Children might observe that she seems to be quite content doing anything **but** reading; but may also wonder why she is monochrome but for her luminous socks: *what might this suggest?*
- Go on to share the publisher and title pages: *how do these images build on your predictions about the story from the cover and front endpapers?* Then share the opening spread of the classroom on the last day of school, inviting them to pore over

the details like a detective looking for clues: every mark is intentional. Then turn to the next spread, zooming in from the whole classroom view to the girl's face: *how does the page-turn make you feel, how does it convey the girl's reaction to the teacher's reminder?*

- Turn to read the next five strips: *what do you learn from these two pages, how does Mariajo use the strips to move the story on, and how are different perspectives used to focus on the girl's feelings?*
- Now share the spread at the library: *what do you notice? What might each character be thinking or feeling, and how does the illustration convey this?* The children might observe that we share the pair's uninspiring view; the girl isolated in headphones; mum's attention caught by something on the right-hand page beyond the gutter. *How does the spread make you think the story might develop?*
- Consider the next two pages. Children might notice the introduction of colour into the otherwise muted palette: *why do you think Mariajo uses colour for the mermaid tail, the socks, the cover and curling wisp from the book mum recommends: what significance might it have?* Go on to share the next two pages as the girl starts to read: *what do you notice happening as the girl begins to engage with the book mum has recommended? How do the text and illustrations combine to convey the change?*
- Turn the page to share the next spread (a great example of the "drama of the page turn!"): *what has happened, and what do you notice? How does the sudden introduction of colour make you feel? What — or who — else do you notice?*
- Read on to the end of the book, allowing time and space for the children to pore over the illustrations. *How do you feel to join the girl in The Big Adventure? What do you think the book wants to tell you about reading, imagination, how "colourful" book life is compared with real life, "the spell of a story"?*
- After reading, encourage the children to share their thoughts. *What did they like and/or dislike? What did it make them think about? How did it make them feel? What made them feel this way?*

Engaging in illustration:

- Support the children to consider how, as both author and illustrator, Mariajo tells the story partly through words but predominantly through pictures. Revisit a range of different spreads to see how the illustrations perform different functions. They might identify how she captures a scene, e.g., the double-page spread showing the classroom on the last day of school; the girl and her mum in the library; or arriving in the jungle as she starts to read. Or brief economical scenes shown in the vignettes where the girl and her masked friend "battle naughty pirates"; or she eats, bathes and brushes her teeth. Or the strips that advance the story, as where she tells mum about the reading task; or collects ingredients for the spell. Or the flights of fancy, such as the map; the spell being cast; or crossing the "short-cut bridge". *What do you think each type of illustration is doing in the storytelling?*
- It would be interesting for the children to research Mariajo's process on her website, where she shares her portfolio and sketchbooks. They could also look at her other books, including her Klaus Flugge Prize 2023-winning debut *Flooded* and Carnegie

Medal 2024-shortlisted *Lost*, for which CLPE also wrote teaching notes, as part of a wider author study.

- To honour the book's message, invite children to create a bookshelf recalling her library visit and the book's final illustration (Mary Poppins, Pippi Longstocking, Aladdin's lamp, shipwrecks, Dorothy's house from *The Wizard of Oz* are spotted). Invite the children to share, reflect on, then illustrate stories that they know and love. *What might be their breakthrough text, as The Big Adventure was for the girl and her mum?* Share your own gateway stories, drawing alongside the children as they work.
- When their drawings are complete, allow the children to use watercolour pencils or a watercolour wash to add texture, and bring their drawings to life, concentrating on the shades and tones seen in the book. Against the muted palette of bookshelves of spine-out books, display the children's drawings, allowing them to look at the similarities and differences in their work and to talk about what is effective in their own work and that of others.

This sequence of activities was designed in partnership with CLPE, a UK-based children's literacy charity working with primary schools to raise the achievement of children's reading and writing by helping schools to teach literacy creatively and effectively, putting quality children's books at the heart of all learning. Find out more about their work, and access further resources and training at www.clpe.org.uk.

Carnegies Shadowing Resources 2025

These resources have been created by the following YLG librarian representatives: Alison Brumwell, Maura Farrelly, Kelly Greenwood, Mary-Rose Grieve, Margaret Griffin, Cassie Hands, Tanja Jennings, Jenny Jones, Ellen Krajewski, Ruth Keys, Alison King and Lizzie Ryder.

General Ideas for all books

1. Take some time to look at the judge's criteria for the Carnegie Medal for Writing and for Illustration. Pick out one or two points and discuss them with one of this year's shortlisted books in mind. Remember, not every criteria will be relevant for every book!
2. Document your journey through the 2025 Shadowing period either on paper or in a shared digital space. You can record the books discussed and activities undertaken in each session, as well as offer a creative platform for reviews, reflection, artwork and anything else you might like to add.
3. Choose a character from one of the shortlisted books and reinvent them in the art style of your choosing. You could create your character digitally, draw them by hand, paint them or even make a sculpture. You could try creating the same character in a variety of styles - Manga, Pop Art, Disney - using different materials.
4. Create your own book trailer for one of the books, or work together to make a trailer for the entire shortlist. This could be a BookTok style pitch to sell the book to a viewer, or a more traditional thematic video.
5. Redesign the front cover or endpapers of one of the shortlisted titles. Compare yours to the original. What makes it different? Why did you make these changes?
6. Choose one of the books and reflect on the themes it presents. Could any of these themes be considered an issue of social justice? Which resonates with you most strongly? Create a leaflet or flyer highlighting one of the issues and the ways people can help, as individuals and collectively.
7. Celebrate the shortlisted books with themed food. You could bring in snacks that are inspired by the locations or cultures featured in the books, or choose foods that link to themes, illustrations or a particular character or event.
8. Recommend one of the shortlisted books using just three words. You could write these on sticky notes to put inside the book's jacket for others to find, or create a display for other readers to add to on a noticeboard, clothing line or bunting.
9. Use a jar or shoebox to create a 'book in a box' or diorama. Your box or jar should include key items which reflect the themes, plot, characters and mood of the book.
10. Host your own judging meeting where you decide which book your Shadowing group thinks is the best. Think about why you are voting for the book, link back to the judging criteria where you can and make sure the process is democratic.

I Hate/Love Books by Marijo Illustrajo

1. How is colour used in this book to tell the story? Look at how the colours change when the character reads her first book and what happens to the pages afterwards. What do you think colour represents?
2. Find where a spell is cast on the double page spread. Create your own drawing using different colours and using different words to cast your own spell. Think about when you first fell under the spell of the story and share it with the group.
3. Which famous book character can you spot on the final page where the girl is in the library? Which stories do you think she is exploring?
4. Look at where the girl first enters the map and all the place names. Create your own imaginary world inspired by this map. It could be entirely of your own creation or you could create a map based on another story you like.
5. Take some time to talk about books you've enjoyed recently as a group. Maybe you could create a display for anyone like the character in this book who doesn't think they like reading.
6. Create a book tree as a group featuring different books that mean something to each member to display everyone's book journeys together. You could include your family's favourite books, your current favourite book, your favourite author.
7. If you could only read one book over the next school holidays, what would you pick? Why did you pick this book? Think of someone else you know in the group, at school or at home who may like this book too.
8. What was the first book you remember loving? Is it still a favourite now?
9. The back end papers of the book show the character reading in lots of different ways. Have a go at reading in different places and take 'extreme reading' photos to share on social media using the hashtag #Carnegies2025.
10. Why do you think some people don't like reading? Have you always liked reading? Do you know someone who doesn't like reading? What reasons might people have not to read?