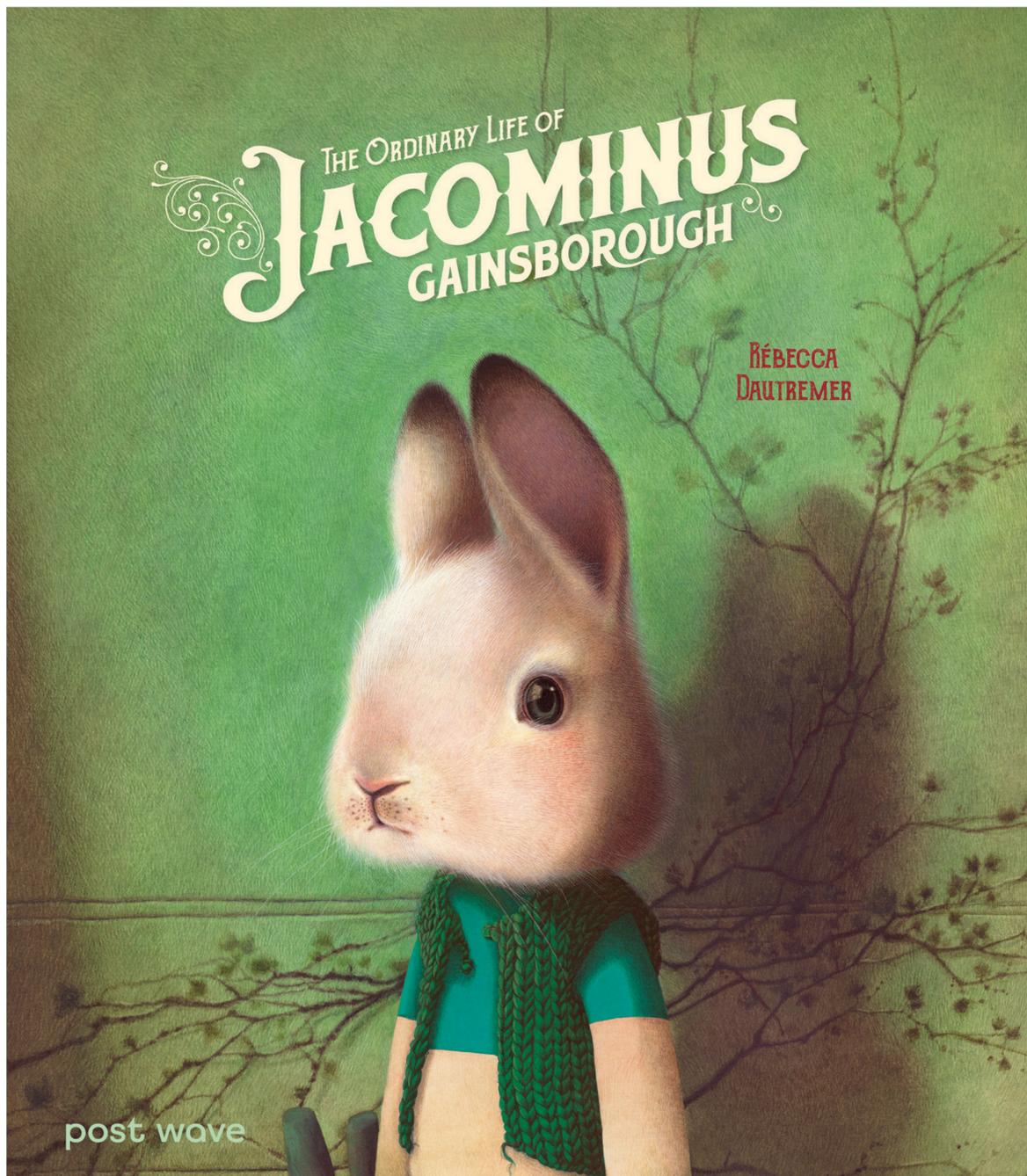


The Carnegies



The Carnegie Longlist 2026 Shadowing Resources



The Ordinary Life of Jacominus Gainsborough

Carnegie Medal for Illustration

Illustrator: Rébecca Dautremer

Age range: 7+

Description:

Readers follow the story of the rabbit, Jacominus Gainsborough, who isn't as large or as speedy as some of his peers and who has his own distinct interests and enjoyments. Filled with depth and detail, the illustrations have a photolike quality inviting readers to look again and again. White space is used to create moments of pause and focus. There are some clever high-art references in compositions which add additional layered meaning and show how the seemingly ordinary can in fact be extraordinary.

Themes:

- Art
- Family
- Life
- Emotion
- Friendship

Shadowing Ideas:

1. Jacominus shares his surname with a very famous 18th century painter, Thomas Gainsborough. Explore the life and paintings of Thomas Gainsborough and write a short factfile. Can you see any similarities between his paintings and the illustrations of Rébecca Dautremer in her picture book? Discuss with your shadowing group.
2. Jacominus has many adventures and travels to different lands during his ordinary life. He meets all kinds of people and learns different languages. Think of a place you'd like to visit, or a language you'd like to learn. Use them as inspiration for a collage, sculpture or diorama.
3. The very last page of *The Ordinary Life of Jacominus Gainsborough* is a "recipe" of Jacominus's ordinary life, detailing all the different ingredients that made him who he was. What would a recipe of your life (so far) look like? Think about your family and friends, pets, your home, the activities you enjoy, places you've travelled and any important events.