

## **Sharing Stories with Helen Docherty**

### **Ideas for using *The Snatchabook* in the Early Years Classroom**

#### **Introducing the Book:**

Show the children **pictures A and B** (see other page) in turn. How does this picture make you **feel**?

Brainstorm words, e.g. cosy / safe / warm vs. lonely / sad / cold.

What has the rabbit family got that the Snatchabook hasn't got? (A bedtime story book)

What does 'snatch' mean? Can you **guess** what might happen in this story?

**Read the story**, and talk about what happened, and why. What was your favourite part? Why?

Show the children the second spread in the book ('In every house, in every bed...').

**Imagine** you're the Snatchabook sitting on the branch. What can you **see**? **Hear**? How do you **feel**?

Why? Elicit as much language as you can, e.g. I can hear the wind whistling in the trees.

Now show the children the page where 'Eliza saw a shadow loom / Enormous, right across her room.'

**Imagine** you're Eliza. What can you **see**? **Hear**? How do you **feel**? Why?

Show them **picture C** of the Snatchabook.

**What** has the Snatchabook got? What does he **use** this for?

e.g. Big eyes for seeing in the dark; large ears for hearing stories from a long way off; a long pointy nose for sniffing out books; wings for flying; a tail for balancing; claws for grabbing books.

Now have a go at **drawing** your own Snatchabook! You can use Tom's *How to Draw the Snatchabook* as a guide, using simple shapes. **Colour** it in using any colours you like. (N.B. Older children can label the body parts, and say what he uses them for.)

**Make** a Snatchabook **puppet** to sit on your shoulder at story time, using the instructions that can be downloaded from the **Resources** page on my website (original design by Dana Sheridan).

**Act out** the story! Clear a space and let the children act the story out while you read it (or use the **sound recording** of me reading it on the **Resources** page on my website, with original **music** by Gerry Smith). First, let them all practise being dragons, witches, pirates, and princesses trying to sleep on peas. You could assign parts; divide the class into different animal families, with one 'parent' to each group, and pick one child (or more) to be Eliza and one (or more) to be The Snatchabook. Help them to learn the lines spoken by Eliza and the Snatchabook (if they want to), and devise actions to go with the different parts of the story. You could even perform this in assembly!

**Which books** in your classroom / school library would the Snatchabook like to steal? Which books would YOU steal, if you were the Snatchabook? Encourage the children to bring in a favourite book to share, or choose one from the school library or your local library (you could plan a Snatchabook themed visit). **Vote** for your favourite books as a class and make a poster or chart.

**Create** a cosy **Book Den** in your classroom using a large piece of brown material draped over a frame with a fluffy rug inside, and decorate with the children's pictures of autumn leaves. Stick a cut out of the Snatchabook inside (or a puppet), and model reading him a story in the Book Den.

### **Put Yourself in the Story**

Take digital photos of all the children in your class, print them out and laminate them. Now draw out and laminate the characters in the story and some features of the backgrounds. (If you like, you can attach a Velcro strip to the back of the laminates and provide a felt board for the children to stick the characters onto.) The children can now play at putting themselves in the story, either as Eliza or the Snatchabook, and retelling it in their own words.

(Adapted from an idea by Lisa Pepper and Sam Randall, early years practitioners, and featured in an article in *Nursery World* by Michael Jones: *Our World, Our Story*, 18 November 2010.

<http://www.talk4meaning.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/1651.pdf>)

**Picture A**



**Picture B**



**Picture C**



These pictures can be downloaded and printed out from the **Resources** page on my website:

<http://www.helendocherty.com/resources/>