

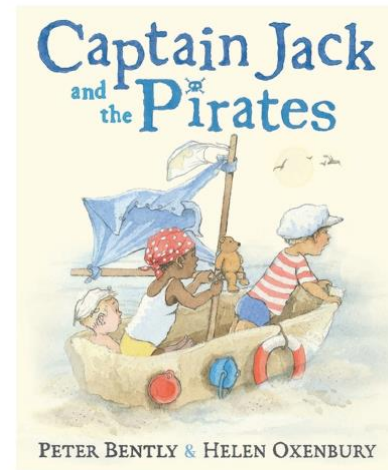
## 2016 Kate Greenaway Medal shortlist: Visual Literacy notes

Title: **Captain Jack and the Pirates**

Illustrator: **Helen Oxenbury**

Author: Peter Bently

Publisher: Puffin



### First look

Try to ensure that each member of the shadowing group has a chance to look through *Captain Jack and the Pirates* before working on the book.

The quality of the artwork reflects the fact that this is a book for very young children. Share the book with the whole group by reading it aloud. Make it an uninterrupted read without making comments and holding it up so everyone can see the pictures as they listen.

High quality drawing is what stands out in this book. On every page you can see Helen Oxenbury's beautifully crafted line drawings with gentle watery colours enhancing most pages.

### Look again

When the group have discussed their first responses, return to the book; look, think and talk more about the artwork.

- Notice how the written and visual texts are both presented from the children's perspective. It is normal during free-flowing, imaginative play that reality and imagination work simultaneously. Children are often totally absorbed in their imagined worlds.
- High quality drawing, such as the work of Helen Oxenbury, starts with close observation of the subject. Look at how accurately Oxenbury, in a few pencil lines, depicts the little children's expressions, bearing and attitudes.
- Find a double page spread where imagination completely takes over the space. (It has only one 'word' on it: 'Aaarrhrrhh!') After this page, the playing gradually changes with the change in the weather and the incoming tide. The two bigger boys rescue Caspar and set off to climb the rocks to escape the dangers of a stormy sea.
- The written text implies that the pirates are still around as the children return to their beach hut but what is happening in the pictures?

Talk about all the other visual aspects of the book (for example, endpapers, font choices, title page and layout). How do these 'extras' contribute to the overall impact of the book?



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Look at the endpapers at the beginning and end of the book. These depict how the boys' adventure started and finished. Spot the differences:

*Beginning*

Who will be first on to the beach?  
What are the boys carrying?  
What are mum and dad doing  
apart from carrying the bags?

*End*

Who will get back up to the car first?  
What are the boys carrying?

**Interpreting the texts**

It is always beneficial, when studying a book, to use tasks which require imaginative response to encourage students to engage fully with the text. The following suggestions may help the group of young readers to become engaged in the book.

*Art*

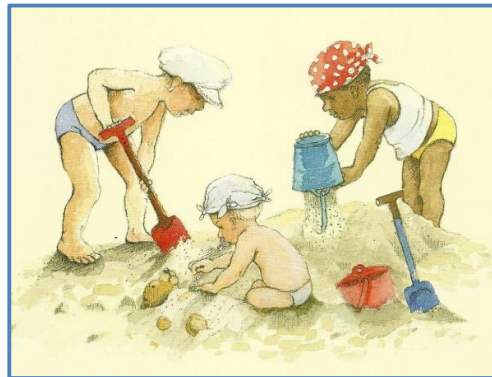
Drawing with a pencil or piece of charcoal, you could try to capture the whole spirit of a child at play.

*Interactive activity*

Captain Jack and his friends are obviously pre-school children; a lot younger than members of a Greenaway shadowing group. Rather than doing activities based on the book, the shadowers may like to plan how they might share the book with a nursery class. Planning could include how they would:

- Share the book with children by reading aloud and showing the pictures
- Get the children to talk about the story
- Lead some 'drama' (imaginative play) which includes pretending to be sailing a boat in a storm
- Introduce some pirate sayings (Shiver me timbers, YoHoHo etc.) using 'pirate voices' to say them
- Help the little children make a picture of a pirate ship.

If possible, find a nursery setting that would let the shadowers try out their plans.



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