

2016 Kate Greenaway Medal shortlist: Visual Literacy notes

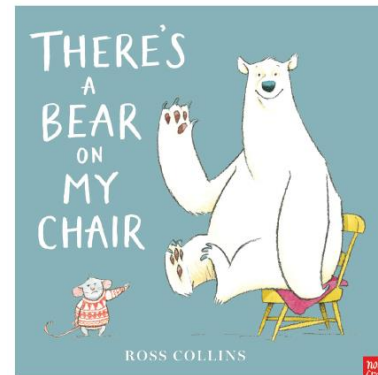
Title: **There's A Bear On My Chair**

Illustrator/author: **Ross Collins**

Publisher: Nosy Crow

First look

Try to ensure that each shadower has a chance to look through *There's a Bear on my Chair* before working on the book with the group.



No matter what age they are, read this book aloud to the group, sharing the pictures as you go. Ask them to comment on the style of the artwork.

Chat in pairs or as a group about whether they enjoyed *There's a Bear on my Chair*. What did they like or dislike and why? How suitable is it for the intended age of its audience?

Look again

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

- The story is told in words and pictures across each double-page spread. The background is plain. Is it always the same colour?
- The drawing of the bear is created with free, flowing lines with a few of extra lines and colours to add features and shading.
- Look at the mouse. What effect does the red patterned jumper have on the way he looks? Is red a significant colour in this book? When is red used as a background colour?
- On the third double-page, the mouse has a ladder and the bear has a newspaper. How did those things get there? What other items appear in pictures. Could they be things that the mouse or bear has imagined rather than real objects?
- On the front cover, and at other points through the book, the mouse and the bear look directly out of the book at the reader. It is as though they are expecting a response from us as we read. Whose side are you on? Do you support the bear or the mouse?



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- Talk about all the visual aspects of the book including endpapers, font choices, title page and layout. How do these 'extras' to the story contribute to the overall impact of the book?

For example, what appears on the endpapers at the beginning and end of the book?

Lettering

Look at the different choices of lettering used through the book. How many colours are used in the lettering? Is there a reason for some of the words being printed in red?

Interpreting the texts

It is always beneficial, when studying a book, to find ways to get youngsters to fully engage with the whole text. This can be achieved through exploratory tasks and creative responses such as drama and art. The following suggestions may help young readers to become absorbed in the book.

Drawing

Use a pencil, charcoal or black pen, to draw a bear; it can be either one you make up yourself or copy one already illustrated in the book.

Compare and contrast

There are many books for very young readers that feature bears as the main 'characters'. Have a look at another book - for example *Something about a Bear* by Jackie Morris – and note any differences or similarities, particularly about the pictures. For example, are the bears realistic in both books? Do both books tell a story or give information? Which book is serious and which lighthearted?

Read aloud

If you get a chance, a group of shadowers could read this book aloud to some very young children. Practise your reading first and plan some activities using drama or art for the children to follow up your reading.

Words

Look at all the pictures of the mouse. Each picture shows his face with a different expression. Can you find a picture of the mouse that makes him appear:

Fed up

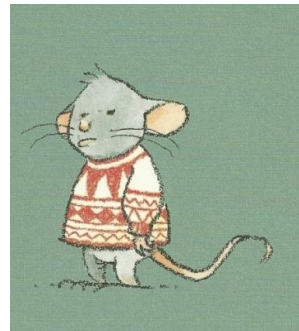
Angry

Frustrated

Upset

Frightening

Furious



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