

## AUTHOR-ILLUSTRATOR VIDEOS

Mary Murphy is making prerecorded videos to replace live visits to schools and libraries. In her videos, she reads a book, and does an art activity. The activity could be a draw-along (as in 'Panda Foo' and Say Hello Like This') or something more complex (as in 'Only a Tree').

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### HOW TO USE THE VIDEOS

Ideally, read the book with your group some days before the event. This builds interest and engagement. Some discussion and exploration can happen now, depending on whether you have a class group, or a random group in a library.

**You have a dual role: you're me (the visiting author/illustrator), and you're you (the teacher/librarian). This Super-Bookperson prompts motivation and enthusiasm in the children, and brings them on a meaningful book journey.**

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Let's take the model that you're introducing the book/s in the week before the video:

1. Read the books in class.
  2. Check on understanding/engagement: pause during readings to ask children about the story. Here are some examples:
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## PANDA FOO AND THE NEW FRIEND



*Panda Foo is about a new friend joining your group. I included it as a book that might have some elements to discuss if children are a little uncertain being in school, and meeting new people. It's also a gentle way of looking at exclusion - Jigger or Boodle might have excluded Curly, given the chance!*

- Do you think they'll be friends?
  - Who here goes on picnics? (Where, what did you eat, etc.)
  - How do you think Jigger and Boodle feel when Panda Foo says she's bringing someone else on the picnic?
  - Make up a tune or dance to go with the song.
  - Do a project on Chinese culture or nature. Or explore how everywhere has special animals, plants and food, and how every place is interesting and special.
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## SAY HELLO LIKE THIS



*Say Hello Like This is for kids who don't like the standard ways of kissing and saying hello. I like to think of them trying out and making up new ways of saying hello - especially useful at the moment when we can't get too close.*

- Hands Up who has a dog?
  - Are you all ready to say hello like dogs?
  - Find new ways of greeting without touching. (A dance, a postcard, sign language - actual or made up - etc. Fun!)
  - This is a noisy book - lots of joining in, please!
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## ONLY A TREE KNOWS HOW TO BE A TREE



*Only a Tree is about ecology, care and respect for our world and everything in it. It's about recognising our own and others' rights and autonomy. It's also a book of mindfulness, with attention and detail on a range of subjects. Lots to discuss, I hope!*

- Pick something not in the book (say a paintbrush, if the children have paintbrushes) and write points on the board as though you're writing a page from the book: A paintbrush can be soft or bristly. It can be any colour, but the colour it paints is the one you dip it in. It can be fat or thin, and the marks it makes are whatever you decide. Only a paintbrush knows how to be a paintbrush.
  - You could pause at e.g. water and ask 'What is your favourite kind of water? Who else swims in water? How can we help protect the ocean?' or anything that might tie into other parts of the curricula.
  - There's a lot to discuss in the book re acceptance, knowing yourself, the wonder of our world. There are children with special needs (note the child doing a handstand has a hearing aid). This can be explored simply as difference, and knowing how to be them.
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## VIDEO

1. Watch the full video yourself before you show it to the children, so you know when you will want to pause.
  2. Pause the video to check in with the children on practicalities: e.g. to check that each child e.g. has paper and paint. Then continue the video.
  3. You can also pause to check they're on board with a thought: do you know what that word means? Who else can fly besides birds? - but if you've discussed in class, you might not need/want to do that now.
  4. There are specific 'flags' to suggest a pause, especially the orange slides saying, for example, 'do you want to do some art?' or 'Now flip your paper over!' Letting the full story run without pause can work well, and has the advantage of allowing the group to sense the rhythm of the book through the reading. But do pause when you feel best - you know the children you're working with.
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## ART ACTIVITIES

For 'Panda Foo' and 'Say Hello' you might want to use thick, strong black pens or crayons (not wax crayons, they're quite unsatisfying for achieving strong line) rather than ink or paint, depending on age of children.

- The 'Only A Tree' art activity might need to be done in class, since there are slow bits (paint drying, cutting out.) It can be done in stages on different days.
- Alternatively, you could use a big sheet of coloured paper with a pod/group, and then they only need to use bright oil pastels on the paper. This would mean they don't need to wait for it to dry.
- Children can also do smaller sheets of paper, and use coloured paper from magazines etc. Depending on current restrictions, they might not be able to work in a group.
- Hanging the leaves as bunting around the class or library could be lovely for Autumn.

(Incidentally, there are free activities also on my website, including colouring pages and cards to make/colour in/finish off. Look under the 'Try This' section on <http://www.marymurphy.ie>)

Mary Murphy