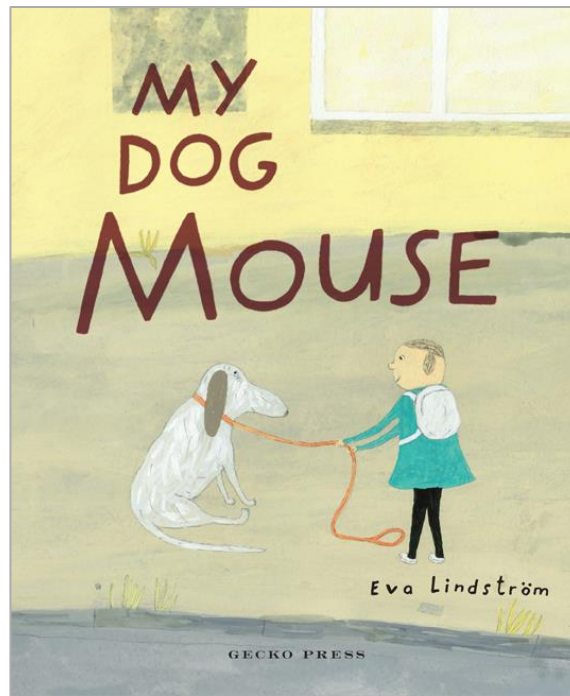


Teaching Notes

My Dog Mouse

Written and illustrated by Eva Lindström



Synopsis

My Dog Mouse offers friendship, humour and gentle heartache in one dog walk. This book is for anyone who knows what it is to love an old slow dog, with ears as thin as pancakes.

The Author/Illustrator

Eva Lindström has written and illustrated many highly acclaimed picture books. She has been nominated for the Hans Christian Andersen Award and eleven times for the August award, which she won in 2013. Lindström was born in 1952 and lives in Stockholm. She began her career as a comic artist and cartoonist, and has had a major influence on the new generation of comic book artists now emerging in Sweden.

Themes

This picture book with depth, humour and warmth has several themes.

The themes of friendship and love of animals are evident throughout the book, as is seen when the girl excitedly, and then patiently, accompanies the beloved old dog, Mouse, on a walk.

The theme of humour is illustrated through the descriptions of Mouse's appearance and actions on the walk.

Activities

1. Before reading the book, look at the cover image and title. Discuss what you think this story might be about?
2. The story is told through the little girl. Choose your favourite moment from the book to retell from the point of view of Mouse the dog.
3. Figurative language is used to convey ideas that might otherwise be difficult to express. An example of this is the use of similes. Find the similes in the book. Think of five other animals and create a simile for each inspired by those from the book.
4. Study the illustrations in the book. Do you like the style? What colours are used? What kinds of lines and textures are used? Choose your favourite illustration from the book and create your own artistic interpretation of it, for example, a painting, drawing, photograph, model, poem, etc. Or, design your own illustrations for the cover and/or one page of text. Find another book illustrated by Eva Lindström. Compare and contrast the illustrations. Are there many similarities or differences?
5. Choose two illustrations from the book. Carefully study the character or characters and their expressions. What range of emotions is evident? How has Eva Lindström achieved these feelings in the illustrations? (Think about colour, size, composition, etc). Draw your own picture that expresses another emotion, such as sadness, happiness, anger or hope.
6. In groups, adapt the book for a puppet theatre performance in your classroom. Devise a script, create scenery, choose music and make puppets to represent each character. Act out your adaptation for your class. If you have access to a video camera, tape it.



7. Imagine you are spending the day with your favourite pet and/or animal. Write, design, bind and publish an illustrated children's book of your story. Read your book to a younger class level.
8. Choose your favourite page or double page spread from the book. In pairs, either describe the scene orally to your partner or write a descriptive paragraph or poem based on what you can see.
9. In pairs, take turns to read the story aloud to one another. Discuss which is your favourite page and why? Do you agree with your partner's choice? Why/why not?
10. Review the book for your favourite magazine or website. What do you like about it? Why? What did you dislike about it? Why? Give it a rating, such as stars, or a number out of ten.