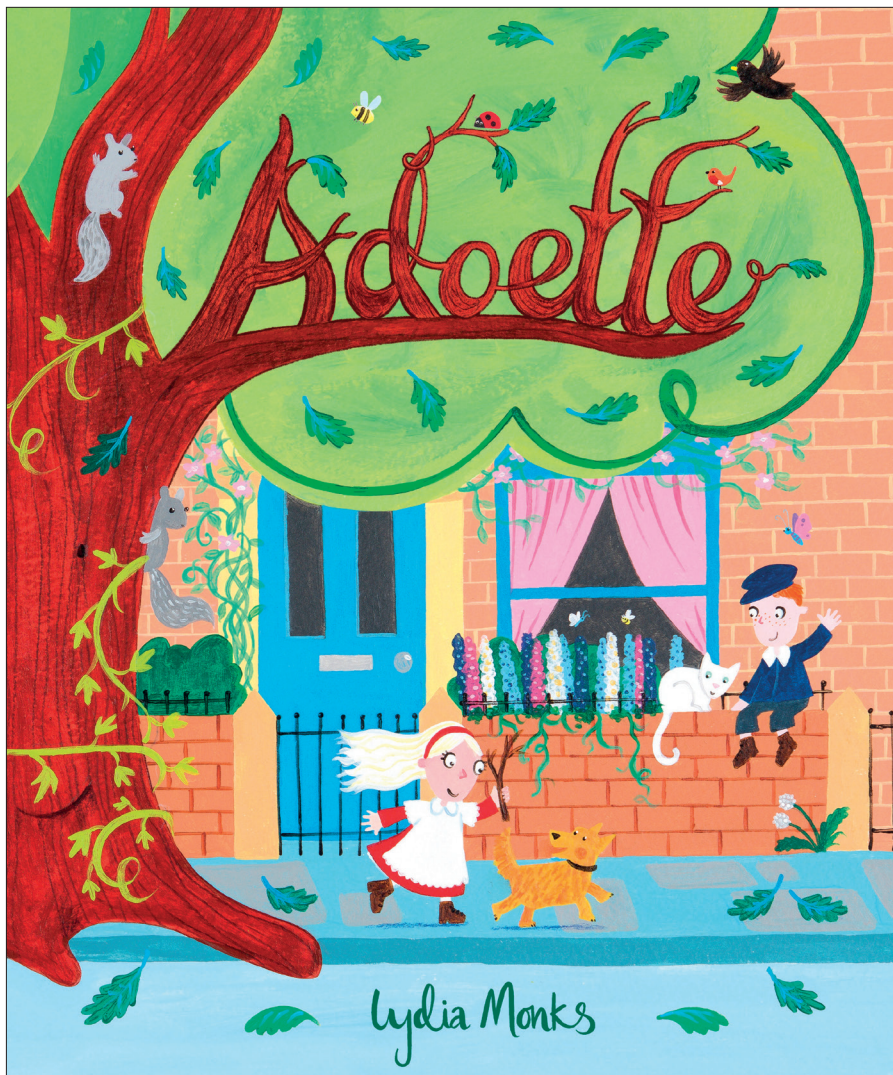


# TEACHING NOTES FOR

# Adoette



Written and illustrated by Lydia Monks  
Published by Andersen Press



These notes have been written by the teachers at the CLPE to provide schools with ideas to develop comprehension and cross-curricular activities around this text. They build on our work supporting teachers to use quality texts throughout the reading curriculum. They encourage a deep reading of and reflection on the text, which may happen over a series of reading sessions, rather than in just one sitting. We hope you find them useful.



These teaching notes have been written with children in Key Stage One in mind but you will need to differentiate them as appropriate to the needs and experience of your own children.

### Before you start:

- As you read through the book it would be helpful to use a group journal to organise and store discussions and responses to the text. The journal can be a place to capture reflections on the plot, characters and themes, as well as, how the writer uses language for effect.
- As you read and discuss the text and illustrations, you may also want to encourage the group to pause to consider words and phrases that may or may not be familiar to them and discuss and clarify their meanings and origins. These might include but will not be limited to; past, present, history, protest, war, loneliness, community, and conservation.
- Add these to a glossary, following up on new and unfamiliar vocabulary by using photographs and video sources to bring these words to life and support the pupils in understanding them in the context of the story.
- Throughout these reading aloud discussions the children will be sharing their own ideas and talking from personal experience about their own lives. The story reflects on ideas around war, destruction, decay and loss, thus it is important to ensure that all adults delivering the read aloud sessions are aware and sensitive to children's current and past family situations and any recent or upcoming changes in their home lives or to the community around them. For some children, some images or parts of the narrative will need mediating so it is important to consider the needs of each child in your group before proceeding with the read aloud and the discussions.
- In order for the story and the title of the book to be revealed slowly, it is important to hide the front cover of the book. This can be achieved by wrapping the outside of the book loosely with wrapping or sugar paper.



### Reading aloud and key talking points:

- Without revealing the front cover, turn to the front endpapers of the book showing the historical scene of the houses being built. Invite the children to share their initial responses to the illustration. *What do you notice? What are the people doing in the picture?*
- Draw the children's attention to the smaller details within the image and allow them to respond in more depth. Ask; *Where might this be? Do you think this is a village, a town, a city or the countryside? What makes you think this? Have you ever seen a picture like this before? How does this street and its homes differ from where you live? Is there anything that puzzles you about this illustration?*
- Look at the peoples' clothes. What might this tell us about the characters? Point out the penny-farthing in the background. *Have they ever seen a bike like that before? You may wish to show them real photographs or early videos of people riding penny-farthings to bring this to life for the children. How does it compare to your own experiences of riding bicycles?*

- Wonder with the children; *What might this illustration tell us about the story we are about to read? What might this story be about?*
- You can scribe the children's initial responses and predictions around a copy of the illustration in your shared journal.
- Turn to the title page, but keep the title and all other text on this page covered. Draw the children's attention to the little girl. *What do you notice? What might she be doing?* Depending on the children's current levels of understanding the world, you may wish to have some acorns available for them to hold and talk about. *What do you know about acorns? Where does it come from? What does it grow into?*
- Next turn to the first spread of the book, again without reading any of the text, allow the children to respond to the illustration. *What do you notice? Where might this be? Look closely at the two characters. What are they doing? Who might they be? What could the relationship be between these two characters? What makes you think that?*
- Again without reading any text, turn to the next illustration of the street 100 years ago and allow the children to respond to the illustration in the same way as the previous page. Record their responses in your shared reading journal.
- Spend time comparing the two images of the street. Scribe or have the children write down what they notice as similarities and differences between the two illustrations of the street. Draw particular attention to what the people are wearing, the baby's pram, the horse and cart, the skyscraper and the smoke coming out of the chimneys.
- The children may begin to speculate that the first image is in the present day and that the second spread shows the street at some point in the past. *What clues in the illustrations tell you this?* At this point read the story from the beginning up to **There was no electricity and no cars. Lots of families moved in, and the street was full of children.**
- Have the children try to imagine and visualise their own life without electricity. To support this, you could make a shared list of all the technology they can see in their classroom that uses electricity, then to think about the electricity they use in their homes. Lists might include things such as, computers, lights, televisions, mobile phones, electric ovens, heaters. Encourage the children to imagine what life would have been like 100 years ago for the people on this street by asking them specific questions based on their responses, for example; *if you didn't have a television what would you do for fun instead? If you did not have a telephone how would you tell your friend to meet you at the park on Saturday?*
- Turn to the next spread. *What do you notice? What might be happening on the street?* Draw the children's attention to the bunting and the cake on the table, *have you ever been to a celebration like this?* Next look at the couple to the right of the page, *what are they wearing? What might this tell you about the celebration? Do they notice anything special about the tree? Why might the tree be in colour whilst most of the illustration is in black and white?*
- Now re-read from the beginning of the story and read through to **And the bad.** on the next spread. Being sensitive to the children's family situations, past experiences and current understanding of war, allow the children to discuss this illustration. Draw their attention to the symbol on the truck, *does this look familiar to any symbols we see on vehicles today? How is it different?* Draw the children's attention to the broken and boarded up windows and ask them why this might have been important. Look at the aeroplanes in the sky, *how are these similar or different to the aeroplanes you have seen?* With older children, depending on their response and current knowledge you may wish to link this illustration to any learning they have done about war, in particular how this image might be depicting the street during the Blitz of World War Two.

- Read on to the next two pages through to **Some of them moved away and forgot about Adoette**. Pause at the illustration of the woman looking out of the window. *How might the lady be feeling? What clues from the illustration and the story so far tell you this?* You can add the emotions the children say to your class glossary or around an enlarged picture of the lady, and add any others such as; lonely, distraught, regretful, forgotten, disappointed, worried, unhappy, miserable, gloomy, heartbroken.
- Allow the children to imagine what that face of the lady looks like, *what expression might be on her face?* Have the children stand up and pretend to look out of a window with that expression. You could put the children in pairs and create a freeze frame, having one child pretend to be the lady and the other child verbalising all her possible thoughts such as; 'I feel heartbroken because my friends have all left the street. I feel worried because I don't know what will happen to my street in the future.'
- Now turn to the next spread and before reading the text allow children to respond to the illustration. Encourage the children discuss all the differences on the street. You may wish to turn back to previous spreads showing the street throughout history, or to use enlarged copies of the street side by side to support their comparisons. *How has the street changed from 100 years ago to the present day?*
- Next, go back to the beginning of the book and re-read the text through to the next two pages pausing at; **She was old and becoming a problem. She didn't belong on a street like this anymore**. At this point the children may have realised Adoette might be the tree and not a person. It is fine if the children still think it is a person at this time. Allow the children to predict; *What might happen to Adoette?*
- Turn to the next page spread and ask the children *what do you notice? Is there anything which puzzles you about this image?* Draw the children's attention to the changes in the tree and the peoples' placards. *Have you ever seen or been a part of a protest?*
- Turn to the next spread and look at the child and the old lady looking at the tree stump. *What happened to Adoette? What has the little girl found?*
- Read aloud to **Something we could all share to heal the wounds, and make the street a happy place once more**. Allow the children to make story predictions, *what could the community do to remember Adoette? What would make the street a happy place again?*
- Read on to the end of the story. Look at the final illustration, look at the characters faces and body language; *how do they feel now?* Look back at the previous illustrations of the street. *How has the street changed? How have the people changed? How have their emotions changed? What do you notice about the things the people brought back from its history; the tree, the children playing, the bunting, the celebrating, the cats, the birds in the trees and other wildlife? What might this tell us? How did the end of the story make you feel?*
- Now unwrap the wrapping paper around the book to reveal the front page illustration. Read aloud the book title and introduce the author and illustrator, Lydia Monks.



- Come back to the book again and re-read the entire story as a whole. Allow the children to begin to explore their responses to it through book talk with the help of what Aidan Chambers calls ‘the four basic questions’. These questions give children accessible starting points for discussion:
  - *Tell me ... was there anything you liked about this story?*
  - *Was there anything that you particularly disliked?*
  - *Was there anything that puzzled you?*
  - *Were there any patterns ... any connections that you noticed? Did it remind you of anything else you’ve read or seen?*
- The openness of these questions unlike the more interrogative ‘Why?’ question encourages every child to feel that they have something to say. It allows everyone to take part in arriving at a shared view without the fear of the ‘wrong’ answer. Record the children’s book talk in your group journal.
- Extend the children’s thinking through more evaluative question, such as – *Why do you think Lydia Monks chose to write this book? Was there a lesson we can learn from the story? Who do you think would like this book? Why?* At this point depending on the age and experiences of the children you may wish to share the ‘Author’s Note’ at the end of the book.
- Leave multiple copies of the book in the book corner, along with your group journal, for the children to revisit and re-read in independent learning time, by themselves or socially in a group. You could add people/ persona puppets, small world family figurines, or handmade puppets of the characters to encourage the children to take on different roles from the story. You can leave pictures of the street during different points in history for the children to use as backgrounds to their own story telling and small construction materials for children to build the street and make adaptations to it.

### After reading, you could also:

- Create labelled plans for a community garden in your neighbourhood or school. If possible seek permission, gather funding and work with your local community to plant and create the garden. You can follow up by having the children write ‘thank you’ letters to the community members who helped.
- Plant a tree near your school or setting and name it. Spend time researching with the children the kind of tree they would like to plant and why, think about the trees possible life span and the changes it might see during its lifetime. What will the future look like for the tree?
- Go on a nature walk around your school or at a local garden and gather natural materials such as acorns, sticks, leaves and stones to bring back into the classroom to create a nature display.
- Create observation drawings and paintings of the trees around your school. These could be in a range of media and materials. Go back to these trees over the course of the year and repeat this activity to record the changing seasons.



- Just as the characters in the story named the tree 'Adoette', name the trees around your school. You could create surveys and vote for your favourite name for each tree. Make labels for the tree and imagine all the things they may have seen over the possible years they have been in your school or neighbourhood. You can write these imagined stories about each tree in the style of the story Adoette. Spend time writing and illustrating these stories.
- Create a display of books illustrated by Lydia Monks to inspire children's illustrations and artwork.
- Research your local area and try to find pictures of it in the past. Use these to compare how your local area has changed over the years to the present day. Think about the changes in the modes of transport, the styles of the houses or the fashions of the people in the pictures and compare these to the modern day and the children's current lives. You could use these to make a display showing the history of your local area.

### Other titles written or illustrated by Lydia Monks:

- What the Ladybird Heard, Julia Donaldson, illustrated by Lydia Monks (Macmillan)
- Sharing A Shell, Julia Donaldson, illustrated by Lydia Monks (Macmillan)
- Princess Mirror-Belle, Julia Donaldson, illustrated by Lydia Monks (Macmillan)
- Aaaarrgghh Spider! Lydia Monks (Egmont)
- My Cat's Weird Lydia Monks (Egmont)
- Lily Goes to Nursery, Lydia Monks (Campbell)
- Harry Goes to Bed, Lydia Monks (Campbell)
- Tess Plays Games, Lydia Monks (Campbell)
- Stan Has a Party, Lydia Monks (Campbell)
- Ooo Ooo Ooo Gorilla! Lydia Monks (Egmont)
- The Skipping Rope Snake, Carol Ann Duffy, illustrated by Lydia Monks (Macmillan)
- No More Eee-Orrh! Lydia Monks (Egmont)
- Come Back to Me My Boomerang, John Agard, illustrated by Lydia Monks (Orchard)
- The Puffin Book of Utterly Brilliant Poetry, illustrated by Lydia Monks (Puffin)
- The Puffin Book of Nursery Rhymes illustrated by Raymond Briggs (Puffin)

### Books to support exploration of themes from the book:

- Errol's Garden, Gillian Hibbs (Child's Play)
- Secret Sky Garden, Linda Sarah (Simon and Schuster)
- The Extraordinary Gardener, Sam Boughton (Tate)
- Clem and Crab, Fiona Lumbers (Andersen Press)
- The Promise, Nicola Davies (Walker)
- Who Makes a Forest? Sally Nicholls, illustrated by Carolina Rabei (Andersen Press)
- Tree: Seasons Come, Seasons Go, Britta Teckentrup (Little Tiger)



These resources were created in partnership with CLPE.

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