

JIM
Written by Hillaire Belloc and Illustrated by Mini Grey
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Use the double page spread depicting Jim on his tricycle and the map of the zoo.

Working in pairs, encourage children to explore the picture discussing their responses and working together to make meaning of what they see. Ask them to jot down words and phrases, which reflect their responses to looking.

The aims of this activity are:

- to increase the interaction with and enjoyment of picture books for children of all ages
- to develop children's confidence and vocabulary to respond to what they see – to observe and describe
- to encourage them to build on their previous experience, imagination and understanding to make sense of visual information – to interpret
- to consider a variety of graphic forms and their interaction with a text in order to convey layers of meaning – to appreciate
- to recognise different styles and techniques used and developed by a variety of illustrators – to analyse
- to begin to recognise and appreciate visual metaphor, irony, puns and jokes etc. – to participate

The following questions have been designed to help children to look more closely at the illustrative work of Mini Grey moving from the whole picture to the smallest part and to search for and use all available clues given by the artist to make meaning. Please select and adapt the questions to make them appropriate for your setting.

TELL ME ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATION...

How would you describe this page?

How do your eyes travel across the page?

How has Mini Grey helped to create your understanding of Jim's character through the composition of this page?

Look at the photograph of Jim on his tricycle. What is the effect of him bouncing into the frame and the insects flying out – what more does this tell you about his behaviour/character?

There is a sense of speed and movement on this page, how is this created?

What is Jim's response to the stories he is read?

Who do you think is telling him these stories?

How do you think this man is telling the stories? – look at the posture of the man.

Why has the illustrator drawn lines around the man's face?

What do you notice about where Jim is positioned in the storybook pictures and what do you notice about his body language?

Take a close look at all the different sweets. Why do you think they've got Jim's name written on them? What might these names suggest about what is going to happen to him?

What do you notice about Jim's clothes?

What clues help you to decide the historical period that this story might be set in?

This is a novelty book – how do its features involve the reader?

What do you notice about the perspective of the story book on the page?

How does this affect your desire to turn over its pages?

What do you notice about the quality of the paper used for the map-feel its texture in contrast to the pages of the book. Look at its colouration? Why has it been distressed in this way?

There are many signs on the map. Which one is of particular importance to the story?

What is Jim's attitude to being taken to the zoo by his nurse?

Is it a welcoming place for children to visit? What do you notice about the signs?

Why do you think there are no other visitors portrayed?

How does the lack of people affect the mood of the picture?

The café is closed-what effect might this have on Jim's enjoyment?

Do you think this is a fun place to be?

How would you feel about visiting this zoo yourself?

How would you describe Jim and his nurse's journey through the zoo? What clues does the illustrator give you about the speed with which the nurse is dragging Jim around?

Why do you think there is an emphasis given to rules on the back of the map?

What is the effect of the rules being written in columns?

Look at the font used-how does it make you feel?

What do you notice about the layout of certain lines –what is their impact?

How does this reflect the cautionary nature of this story?

Look at the illustrator's use of fonts. How are they used to define the different objects?

What do you notice about the illustrator's use of colour?

This is an old cautionary tale by Hilaire Belloc, how do you know that this is a contemporary adaptation?

How would you describe the varied illustrative styles used to create this page?

WRITE IT DOWN

Harvest children's responses and record their descriptions and comments on a flip chart. Are there any aspects of the picture that they find particularly interesting or puzzling? How do these pictures interact and work with the rest of the book?