

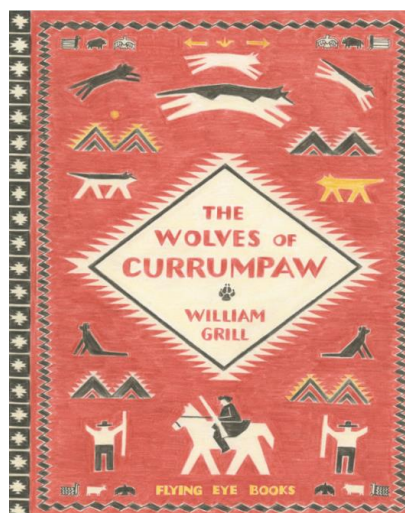
VISUAL LITERACY NOTES

2017 Kate Greenaway Medal shortlist

Title: **The Wolves of Currumpaw**
Illustrator and author: **William Grill**
Publisher: **Flying Eye Books**

First look

Ensure that all the shadowers have had a chance to look through *The Wolves of Currumpaw* before you discuss the book with them.



Remember the Greenaway is about 'outstanding artistic quality' so it is the images, decorations and other graphic details that are being judged – not the written text. Much of the tale is only told in images so readers need to follow them carefully. The tale of Old Lobo, the wolf king, is famous and it is this adventurous tale that Grill sets out to tell. Unfortunately, much of the content of the story (and, therefore, the illustration) is disturbing as it involves the slaughter of both human beings and animals.

Ask the shadowers to point out anything that strikes them as interesting about the artwork. Chat in pairs or as a group about whether they enjoyed *The Wolves of Currumpaw*. What did they like or dislike and why?

Look again

Grill uses pencil crayons to produce his work. Look at the limited range of colours that have been used in the illustrations. Why do you think he uses those particular colours?

At the beginning of the book, Grill uses just red and black but this changes on pages 9 & 10 when other colours – of the earth and of the sky – are introduced. It is at this point that we first meet Old Lobo. The colours remain muted throughout the book.

How does Grill achieve the sense of vast emptiness of the plains of SW America in his illustrations?



The CILIP Carnegie
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Children's Book
Awards

Grill also uses a technique that helps to tell a story. It is similar to a comic strip but has no borders or speech bubbles. Can you write words to tell parts of the story on pages 30 & 34?



Talk about all the visual aspects of the book i.e. end papers, font choices, title page and layout. How do these 'extras' contribute to the overall impact of the book?

Interpreting the texts

The following suggestions may help the group of shadowers to become engaged in the book. Encourage discussion and welcome diverse opinions.

Artwork

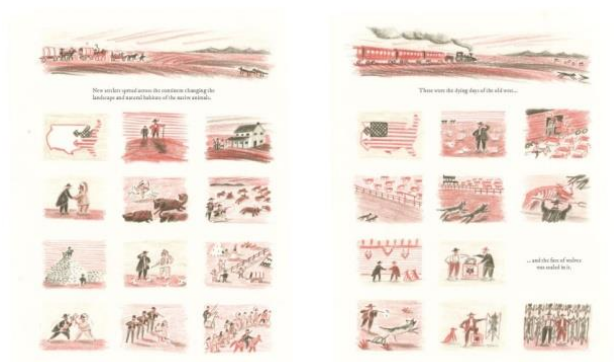
- Use pencil crayons or pastels with a limited range of colours to create your own pictures. Try doing a whole page that gives the sense of wide open space and big skies.
- Draw a sequence of about six small drawings to tell a story.

Research

Does it matter? A discussion for older students

At the beginning of the book, on pages 5 & 6, a sequence of twenty-four small scenes tells a devastating story of ethnic cleansing when the European settlers abused and drove out the Navajo communities (native Americans) from New Mexico. The reality of what happened at that time does not reflect well on the European settlers.

Visit www.nlm.nih.gov/nativevoices/ for information on the 'long walk' of the Navajo peoples in 1864. Use the library, both print texts and technology to find out more about the mythology of the Wild West. Was it like the movies?

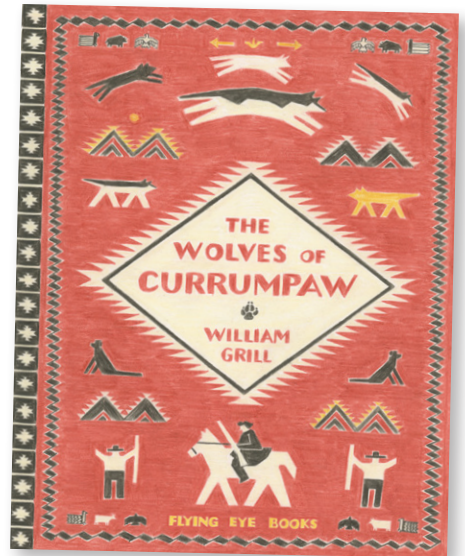


THE WOLVES OF CURRUMPAW

by William Grill
Flying Eye Books

Shortlisted for the 2017 Kate Greenaway Medal and the Amnesty CILIP Honour

'A great visual experience echoing the vast plains. The colour palette is chosen with utmost care and the technique of sweeping pencil strokes easily allow the scale of the desert to show the insignificance of man and wolf. This book works on many levels' – Judging panel



UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Article 29: We have a duty to other people, and we should protect their rights and freedoms.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

William Grill retells the real-life adventures of a wolf and British hunter and naturalist Ernest Thompson Seton.

Set on the plains of New Mexico, 1892, Seton is enlisted to hunt and capture Lobo, king of the wolves, after local ranchmen fail to put a stop to his reign. But after Lobo's death, Seton, overcome with shame, devotes the rest of his life to protecting wolves and conservation.

Grill's combination of pocketed images and panoramic views vividly tell this story about change, recognising when we have done something wrong and changing our ways. What emerges is an essential reminder that we have a responsibility to those who come after us to protect their heritage. This includes conserving the natural world.

At the end of the book, William Grill touches on the devastation inflicted upon Native Americans by the European settlers. We also have a duty to defend people whose heritage and communities have been harmed or are at risk because human rights belong to us all. Both European settlers and subsequent governments have violated the human rights of Native Americans through their

treatment of people and lands. Many activists are calling on the American and Canadian governments to change their policies to protect the rights of indigenous communities.

HUMAN RIGHTS THEMES IN THIS STORY

Heritage and legacy; environmental rights; land rights; rights of indigenous people; loyalty; community organising; activism.

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE HUMAN RIGHTS

- What do you think about the hunting of Lobo?
- In lots of the drawings, the sky is enormous and man is little (see page 37 as an example). Why?
- What is your favourite picture? Why?
- How is the pack like a family?
- Why might Seton describe wolves as 'precious heritage'?

ACTIVITY

Think about a time when you regretted something and decided to rectify it. Tell your story using pictures like William Grill.

RESEARCH

Find out about campaigns to protect the people affected by the Site C dam in Peace River Valley, Canada, and the Dakota Access Pipeline in the USA.



William Grill drew wolves at the Wild Spirit Wolf Sanctuary in New Mexico and visited Old Lobo's roaming ground over the Corrupma to research this book.

'Ever since Lobo, my sincerest wish has been to impress upon people that each of our native wild creatures is in itself a precious heritage that we have no right to destroy or put beyond the reach of our children.'

Ernest Thompson Seton.

He went on to found the Boy Scouts of America

We are all born free and equal

The atrocities of World War II sparked a determination to protect the rights of all human beings, everywhere. On 10 December 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The preamble says it must be shared, learned by children and be a part of all our lives.

For a simplified version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights go to www.amnesty.org.uk/udhr

For more free educational resources from Amnesty International go to www.amnesty.org.uk/education



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