

ON A SMALL ISLAND

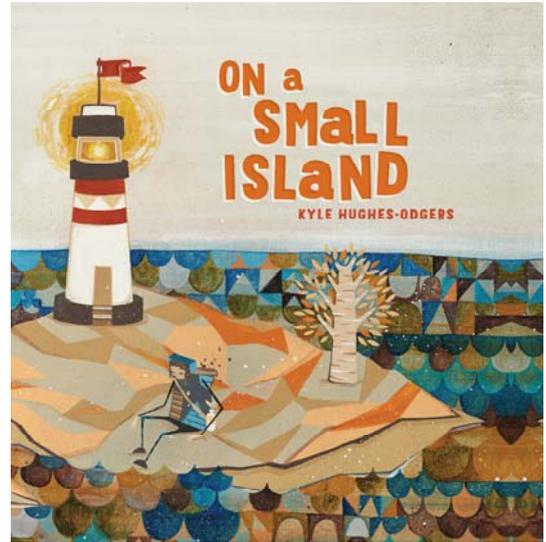
Kyle Hughes-Odgers

ISBN (PB): 9781925161168

Themes: isolation, loneliness, friendship, imagination, creativity, recycling

Year level: Kindergarten to Y4

Cross-curriculum priority: Sustainability



ABOUT THE BOOK

On a small island, in a gigantic sea, lives Ari.

Ari longs for the large ships to stop at his island, he longs to see remarkable things and to have interesting friends.

On a small island, in a gigantic sea, Ari has an idea. A dazzling idea. An irresistible idea ...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR

Kyle Hughes-Odgers is an Australian artist. He has held exhibitions and created public art extensively throughout Australia and internationally in New York, Los Angeles, Singapore and Berlin. His work is based on narrative and observing the everyday. He finds inspiration in walking daily – to the studio, through new cities and to get more coffee.



STUDY NOTES

LITERACY: COMPREHENDING TEXTS THROUGH LISTENING, READING AND VIEWING

(A) Before Reading

Author/illustrator background – Kyle Hughes-Odgers

1. Ask students to share their understanding of the term 'artist'.
2. Create a list of different kinds of artists (e.g. painters, sculptors, graffiti artists, photographers, mixed-media artists, print artists, illustrators etc.).
3. Do any children in the class have a favourite artist? Why do they admire this individual's work?
4. Visit Kyle Hughes-Odgers website: <http://kylehughesodgers.com/about>
 - a. What type of artist does Kyle Hughes-Odgers identify as? (visual artist)
 - b. List three cities in which his work has been exhibited (e.g. Perth, New York, Berlin). Locate these on the world map.
 - c. Discuss the meaning of the terms 'street art' and 'public art'. Examine the poster at the end of these notes (page 8) of street art by Kyle in his hometown of Perth. What is the value of having art displayed in prominent public places like an airport or over a busy freeway? Can you describe any public artworks you have seen recently in your area?
 - d. Before working full-time as an artist, Kyle designed and illustrated textile patterns. What are textile patterns? View some examples as a class. Can students find any influence of textile design in the front cover illustration and/or throughout the book?

Predicting

5. Explain the different parts of a book: title, author name, front cover, back cover, blurb, spine. Ask children to point to each part of the book.

6. Have students read the blurb aloud to a partner, or read this together as a class. Does the blurb make them want to read the story? Why/why not?
7. Create a class prediction chart detailing what students think may happen in the story. (Note: It is often interesting to keep this chart to look over at the end – amusing false predictions inevitably arise!)
8. Short story – have students write and illustrate their own short story titled ‘On a Small Island’ using the cover illustration as inspiration. After reading the book, children can then compare and contrast their own story to the text. What was similar/different?
9. Picture walk (visual literacy) – photocopy two pages from the book, showing the illustrations with the text omitted. Have students interpret the images to brainstorm a list of ideas about what is happening on each page. Afterwards, invite them to predict what may happen in the story based on the images alone.

Expanding vocabulary: clarifying unfamiliar terms

Younger readers may be unfamiliar with some of the words used in the story. Before commencing reading, go through the following list with your students and explain each term. Alternatively, have students work in pairs to use the dictionary or an appropriate internet dictionary to locate definitions.

First Mention	Word	Meaning
Spread 3	gigantic	
Spread 4	flotsam	
Spread 4	jetsam	
Spread 5	horizon	
Spread 5	intriguing	
Spread 6	marvellous	
Spread 7	inspiring	
Spread 7	exceptional	
Spread 7	artefacts	
Spread 8	remarkable	
Spread 10	irresistible	

(B) During Reading

On a Small Island can be used for several different reading sessions including:

- Modelled reading as a whole class
- Guided reading in small groups

Comprehension strategies to practise (Kindergarten to Y4)

- Sounding out words aloud (not only in your head)
- Phonics (blending and segmenting)
- Slowing reading rate for comprehension
- Self-monitoring for understanding
- Using illustrations to help predict unknown words
- Predicting words by recognising familiar letter patterns
- Re-reading to crosscheck graphophonic information

Depending on the needs of your class, the story can be used to practise finding initial and final sounds (e.g. point to a word on the page that starts with ‘s’) to develop letter/sound awareness. Or they can be used to practise fluency and expression for more advanced readers, who may likely still be challenged, however, by some of the sophisticated vocabulary highlighted in the table above (e.g. exceptional, intriguing, artefacts).

Visual literacy

10. Explain that in picture books, illustrations are equally as important as the written word in communicating the story.
 - a. Compare and contrast *On a Small Island* with a novel. What do the children notice? What makes a picture book different to the novel?
 - b. List some conventions of the picture book genre.

11. In groups of four, have students examine the illustrations in detail.
 - a. What style has the illustrator used to draw the characters – realistic, cartoon, abstract, fantasy?
 - b. What medium has he used – collage, black and white, watercolour etc.? What effect does this create?
 - c. What colours have been used? Why do you think the artist had chosen this colour palate?
 - d. What 2D and 3D shapes can students see? (e.g. semicircles, circles, triangles, squares, rectangles, diamonds, cubes)
 - e. Where has the illustrator positioned objects on the page and what effect does this create?
 - f. Can students identify any patterns? (e.g. textile patterns, tiling, repetition of colour sequences)

Comprehension questions

12. Look carefully at the illustrations. What different kinds of 'flotsam and jetsam' can you see floating in the sea for Ari to collect?
13. Look carefully at the character Ari. What materials do his clothes appear to be made of? Why do you think this might be?
14. What materials do the clothes of the captain and the other visitors from the large ships appear to be made of?
15. *Ari longs to travel to the great land on the horizon.* (Spread 5)
 - a. What places do you long to travel to? Why do you want to go there?
 - b. Where have you already travelled?
 - c. What 'strange buildings, unusual visitors or exceptional artefacts' did you encounter?
 - d. What things were similar/different to your home?
16. *On a small island, in a gigantic sea, Ari feels alone.* (Spread 9)
 - a. Turn to a partner and tell them about a time that you felt lonely. Why did you feel this way?
 - b. What made you feel better?
17. ... *Ari has an idea. A dazzling idea. An irresistible idea.* (Spread 10) What do you think this irresistible idea might be?
18. Take a class excursion to your local beach.
 - a. What kinds of flotsam and jetsam can you observe washed up on the shore?
 - b. After cleaning the items, what kind of imaginative things will you create with them? (e.g. an artwork with found objects)
19. *On a small island, in a gigantic sea, Ari feels lucky.* (Spread 17) What things do you feel lucky to have in your life?

LITERACY: COMPOSING TEXTS THROUGH SPEAKING, WRITING AND CREATING

(A) After Reading

Spelling and vocabulary

20. Have children practise the correct spelling of common sight words included in the book, e.g. *one, day, stop, at, of, on, its, and, he, they, by, to, such, so, have, such, many, friends, but, no, more, small, then, up, is, like, has, an, all, for, day, night, sleep, there, good, see, you, my, done, much, work, what, most, will, we*
21. Use the books as a resource for teaching the correct spellings of long vowel sounds and diphthongs present in the story. For example:
 - a. long vowel sounds – ee, ea, e-e, y, ay, o-e, ow
 - b. diphthongs – ou, aw, au, oy

22. Have students keep a personal dictionary (adding new words they encounter under the letter of the alphabet with which they start). Students can then refer back to this resource to spell the word correctly in their own writing. Have students add the following words to their personal dictionaries as they read in small groups:

- afternoon
- beach
- captain
- collect
- flotsam
- horizon
- idea
- island
- jetsam
- lucky
- morning
- sea
- ships

Adjectives

23. Create a class definition for the term 'adjective'.
24. Why are adjectives important in story writing? What do they do? (e.g. describe a noun, help to enhance imagery)
25. Read the book as a class and collect adjectives (e.g. inspiring, gigantic, intriguing, marvellous, remarkable, irresistible, exceptional). Have students use each of these words in a sentence.

Recount and sequencing activities

26. Sequence pictures from *On a Small Island* in the correct order and write a sentence below each to describe what is happening.
27. Write a recount of the events in *On a Small Island*. Pay careful attention to simple punctuation (full stops and capital letters).

Creative writing: practising simple punctuation, planning, editing and redrafting

28. ... *Ari has an idea. A dazzling idea. An irresistible idea.* (Spread 10). Write a short story titled 'The Best Idea I Ever Had'. This may be fictional or autobiographical. How did this idea change your life?
29. Write and illustrate a picture book titled *The Captain's Next Adventure*.
 - a. What kind of island will the captain sail to after Ari's?
 - b. What strange buildings, unusual visitors and exceptional artefacts will he find on this new island?
30. Write an alternative blurb for the book.

Grammatical elements to explore during short story writing

- past tense
- descriptive language to create imagery – adjectives
- connectives

Punctuation skills to model, practise and assess

- capital letters
- full stops
- question marks
- speech marks (for more advanced writers)

Writing and editing

The writing sequence below can be adapted for any of the creative writing activities previously listed.

- *Modelled writing* (teacher only) – the teacher 'thinks aloud' as he/she writes a story on the whiteboard while the class watch.
- *Shared writing* – the teacher has the pen and continues to 'think aloud', but also asks for children's input and ideas. Children are invited to come and help write/make corrections on the whiteboard.
- *Guided Writing* – children can plan their writing in pairs using a narrative planning sheet with the following subheadings: character description, setting, conflict, climax, resolution.
- *Independent writing* – children write their own piece and engage in editing and redrafting.
- *Presentation to audience* – children create an illustration to accompany their story and share with one another in small groups.
- *Editing: you be the teacher!* – have students swap their draft with a partner. Partners to correct spelling/punctuation in a red.

Parallelism in the text

31. Create a definition for 'parallelism' (the use of similar phrases that have the same grammatical structure).
32. Consider the following sections of the story:
On a small island, in a gigantic sea, Ari feels alone. (Spread 9)
On a small island, in a gigantic sea, Ari feels lucky. (Spread 17)
 - a. Is this an example of a parallel structure? How can you tell? Which words are the same?
 - b. Why do you think the author chose to use this structure? What effect is created?
 - c. Look carefully at the illustrations on this page, and throughout the book. Can you see examples of parallelism in the illustrations too?

Speaking and listening

33. Have children take a trip to the beach with their family, or take a class excursion to your local beach to look for flotsam and jetsam. Students can then make a short presentation to the class instead of 'show and tell' on the topic: 'The most interesting thing I found at the beach.'
Note: children may like to bring in the object as part of their presentation.

CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS

Art

34. Following the events in the story, have students create an artwork depicting Ari's latest construction. They should attempt the artistic techniques modelled in *On a Small Island* (i.e. incorporating repetition of shapes to create collage, use of similar primary and secondary colours, use of surreal/abstract human characters drawn in the style of Ari). Hold a class exhibition and invite other classes and parents.
35. View one of the short time-lapse clips on the author's website (accelerated depictions of the artistic process for various works) at <http://kylehughesodgers.com/video> (e.g. 'The Giants View' or 'A Thousand Lights from a Hundred Skies').
 - a. What stages can you identify in the process?
 - b. Is this how you imagined the artwork was created? Or did you imagine it would have been produced differently? In what way/s?
36. Undertake a class excursion to one of the following:
 - a. A site of street art in your area
 - b. An exhibition at your state gallery
 - c. An exhibition at a gallery of contemporary art in your region
37. Plan and illustrate a class and/or school mural inspired by the artistic techniques modelled in *On a Small Island*.
38. Read the following excerpt from an interview with Kyle Hughes-Odgers (published by *East Editions*), which describes the artistic process involved in illustrating his books (<http://easteditions.com/edition-002-kyle-hughes-odgers-interview>).

EE: You recently won an award for the Children's book you illustrated. Tell us about the book, did you enjoy the process of illustrating a publication? How long did it take? Would you do it again?

KHO: The book is called Ten Tiny Things and was written by Meg McKinlay. I was approached by Fremantle Press to see if I would be interested in working on a children's book ... I hand-painted every page of the book – I wanted it look like a person made it and not a computer. It took a month to paint, which was really exhausting! I was painting one page a day, 30 paintings in total.

39. *If I were the illustrator ...*
 - a. Ask students to share their ideas about what they would do if they were the illustrator for this story.
 - b. Discuss the positive and negative features of the illustrations from their point of view, and talk about what they might do differently in their newly assigned job as 'illustrator'.

- c. Ask them to create their own 'Ari' and 'Captain' paper puppets, which they can use to retell the story. Show them several different mediums they can use (such as pastels, watercolours, water pencils or cut-outs of geometric shapes such as triangles and rectangles similar to the style used in the book).

Science

Coastal environments

40. What kinds of animals live in a marine or coastal environments? Using the following website research and write a report on a species of your choice under the following subheadings: habitat, diet, physical characteristics, life cycle, conservation status.

Australian Museum: <http://australianmuseum.net.au/Wild-Kids-Animals-of-coastal-habitats>

Buoyancy

41. Ari becomes friends with the captain of a large ship.
 - a. Create a class definition for the term 'buoyancy'. How are ships designed to exploit this scientific principle?
 - b. Conduct a test of everyday classroom objects to see which are buoyant and which are not. Predict the outcome for each before placing it in an ice-cream container filled with water and giving it 10 seconds to float or sink.
 - c. Design a boat out of materials you think will be buoyant. Hold a class competition to see whose boat can float for the longest time period.

Sustainability

42. In the text, Ari recycles flotsam and jetsam to create the 'strange buildings' for which the captain returns to visit his small island.

- a. Create a class definition for the term 'recycling'.
- b. Create a list of common items in your classroom and your home that can be recycled.
- c. What are some of the environmental benefits of recycling?

43. Research other ways in which students can contribute to sustainable living. Visit this address for 'change the way you live' links: www.wwf.org.au/what_you_can_do/change_the_way_you_live

44. Create a poster or pamphlet advertising information on recycling to your school community.

Suggested topics:

- Sustainable shopping
- Transport – cycling, car and air travel and offsetting
- Saving water
- Reducing energy consumption
- Green building design
- Ethical and responsible investment

45. If your school is not already a member, consider registering for the Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative! Visit www.environment.gov.au/topics/sustainable-communities/sustainability-education/aussi

Mathematics

46. Kyle Hughes-Odgers utilises the repetition of many common 2D and 3D shapes in his illustrations in *On a Small Island* including squares, triangles, semicircles, circles, rectangles, cubes etc. The book can therefore be used as a stimulus for exploring the differences between 2D and 3D shapes, as well as learning the names and properties of common shapes.

47. The book is ideal for use in conjunction with the study of patterns, symmetry and tessellation.

History

48. Create a list of different kinds of artists, e.g. painters, sculptors, graffiti artists, photographers, mixed media artists, print artists, illustrators etc. Research the history of each of these mediums in Australia.
49. Research a famous Australian artist of your choice and write a report using the following subheadings: biography, early career, career highlights, artistic mediums explored, techniques used, artistic themes.

50. *So many strange buildings ... we will stop every time we pass by.* (Spread 15)

- a. Research the world's arguably most innovative and unusual architectural constructions (e.g. the Pyramids or the Leaning Tower of Pisa). Why do you think people go to visit such structures?
- b. Choose a building and write a report using the following subheadings: name of building, year opened, architect/s, location, length of time taken to complete it, materials used, purpose of the building, number of visitors per year.

Geography

51. Create a class definition for the term 'island'.
52. Create a class definition for the term 'continent'.
53. Why is Australia called the 'island continent'?
54. What islands are found off the coast of Australia? Have you ever visited any?
55. What do you anticipate would be some of the challenges of living on an island, as opposed to the mainland?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The author's website: <http://kylehughesodgers.com>

The author's blog: <http://kylehughesodgers.com/blog>

ABC Arts: www.abc.net.au/arts

East Editions interview with Kyle Hughes-Odgers: <http://easteditions.com/edition-002-kyle-hughes-odgers-interview>



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10 Places in Perth to see Street Art by Kyle Hughes-Odgers



50 Oxford Place
West Leederville



Wilson Street
Outdoor Carpark,
Murray Street, Perth



Cogen Building between
Terminal 1 & 2 at the Airport



Lock Lane next to the
State Library of WA



1008 Hay Street, Perth

PERTH



140 William Street



Jamie's Italian



Somerset House Reception,
185 St Georges Tce, Perth



Behind the Claremont
Post Office opposite the
train station



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