

“The Arrival” – an amazing picture book of Shaun Tan

Narrative power of the images bridging cultural and linguistic barriers

Wordless books are a genre of its own, with a privileged access to some poetic themes, its specific aesthetic and pedagogical possibilities.

What is the book about?

A man leaves his wife and child in a poor town, seeking something better in an unknown land on the other side of a large ocean. He soon finds himself in a confusing city of strange customs, remarkable animals, curious floating objects and unreadable languages. A book about the migration in the world, then, now and in the future. A story about the common problems that refugees have, whatever their nationality. It is about language, about being understood and understanding, about homesickness, poverty and separation from your family.

When we can use the book?



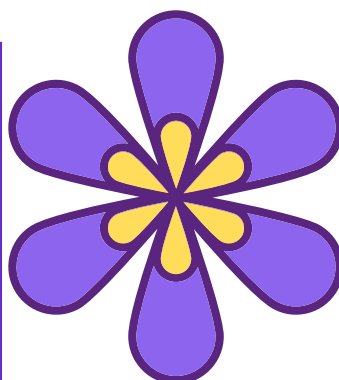
We can use the book as a an opportunity to imagine **what it might be like to live life as a stranger in a new land**. It opens up a chance to explore what it would be like to come to a new country as a foreigner. What would you do to achieve a sense of belonging? Where would you find contexts to become part of?



The Arrival asks students to explore the **power of non-verbal communication** and the body to tell stories. The Arrival also opens the door to learning through the Humanities and Social Sciences by encouraging students to question and discover more about their world, **where they come from and how this connects with the past and future, as well as with different people and places**.

Which skills we make flourish?

- empathy
- emotional intelligence
- intercultural awareness
- critical visual skills
- respect, equality and non-discrimination



Which Method we use?

- Collective reading
- Meaning making discussion and reflection
- Creative expression
- Storytelling



You will find:

Activity 1 addressing 7-11 years old children

Activity 2 addressing 12-15 years old students



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Activity - let's put it into practice!

Picture books are metaphorical gardens, windows, mirrors and mandalas where we are invited to launch, develop and experience our visual way of being in the world in an active way.

Duration: 60 min

Structure



Collective reading

Make sure that children are comfortable and relaxed. Invite all to sit in a circle. Start the workshop by presenting yourself and get to know the children.

Before sharing this book, ask your students about their previous experiences with wordless picture books. **How do they feel about 'reading' pictures rather than words?** Can they share tips and insights?



Meaning making discussion and reflection

Once you're ready to share the book, consider projecting the pages onto a big screen, so that everyone can see each image clearly. Or sit readers in small groups, each with a copy of the book, and take your time to explore the spreads. The Arrival can be shared in a slow and detailed way, or choose a single image and ask your readers to imagine they've stepped into the world it portrays. **What can they see? Smell? What do things feel like? If they're outside, how warm is it? Is it windy? What can they hear? Are the characters talking to each other? What are they saying? How do the characters feel?**



Creative expression

ACTIVITY 1: DETECTIVE (for 7-11 & 12-15)

Ask your students to become picture detectives, on the lookout for clues. Try looking for

- Images of birds, and references to them (including egg-like objects and other suggestions of flight and fertility)
- Strange, new creatures – animals and plants
- Machines (what tasks are they accomplishing?)
- Images of dining tables (where do we see them? Why?)
- Examples of the unfamiliar language (what might each notice say?)
- Radial patterns like a sunburst (used by Shaun Tan to suggest life, energy and new possibilities).



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Creative expression

Activity 2: Learning a new language (for 12-15 years old) - an activity to help all children understand the experience of new arrivals in the classroom (use the worksheet for the activity).

OBJECTIVES: To ease stress of refugee children adapting to new classrooms and improve interactions between refugee and host-country children.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Worksheets with an 'unintelligible' text

Bring the class into a group activity and begin speaking in nonsense or pretend words for 30 seconds. After that, hand every child a sheet with nonsense words or a nonsense paragraph on it (use material 1 from the worksheet). Ask them to translate or draw the words.



Bring the class into a group discussion about the exercise and ask them how they felt. Choose some words together that describe how they think a child who does not speak the language might feel the first days they come to school.

Ask the children what other things would be new to a child arriving from somewhere else and elicit more words of how they might feel.

Use material 2 from the worksheet and invite students to find translation of the text they got first in Korean language. Try to learn basic words in Korean. Implement this activity in a playful way :) enjoy!

How a child who does not speak the language might feel the first days they come to school?

What other things would be new to a child arriving from somewhere else?

What I can do? How can I do to help ease new children's experience?





Worksheet, material 1

안녕 여보세요
 좋은아침이에요
 어떻게 지내세요
 환영합니다



Worksheet, material 2

Hi: 안녕 (annyeong)
 Hello on the phone: 여보세요 (yeoboseyo)
 Good morning: 좋은아침이에요 (joeun achimieyo)
 How are you: 어떻게 지내세요?
 Take care: 잘가요 (jalgayo)
 Welcome (to a store or place): 환영합니다
 (hwanyeonghamnida)
 What's your name?: 이름이 뭐예요? (ireum-i mwoyeyo)
 My name is...: 제 이름은... (je ileum-eun)
 Nice to meet you: 반갑습니다 (bangapseubnida)
 Where are you from? 어디에서 왔어요? (eodieseo
 wasseoyo)
 I'm from...: ...에서 왔어요 (eseo wasseoyo)
 How old are you?: 몇 살이에요? (myeot sarieyo)
 I'm _ years old: 살이에요 (sarieyo)

(Basic Korean Phrases)

How much did you
like the activity?

