



Little Seed

Gav Barbey

Teachers' Notes

Introduction

Gav Barbey is an artist who works in many disciplines including theatre design, film and visual art. He created the artwork in *Little Seed* using a pourable polymer paint, which he co-invented. Gav wrote the first draft of *Little Seed* for his daughter on a plane after an agonising separation, soon after her birth.

Little Seed is the story of belonging and love. It celebrates the importance and beauty of trees as little seed travels around the world looking for more. She somersaults, blows and dances around the globe searching for her home.



Curriculum Links

English: Reading, Writing, Presenting

Creative and Performing Arts: Drawing, Painting, Drama

Science and Technology: The Earth and its surroundings

Mathematics: Graphing, Mapping

PDHPE: Communicating, Interacting

Learning Outcomes

Students will have the opportunity to:

- read and listen to texts in groups
- respond to themes and issues in a text
- draw on a range of skills and strategies to comprehend a text
- analyse techniques used by authors to create certain effects and use language creatively.

Before you read

Look at the title and front cover picture of the book. Work in pairs and suggest what the story may be about. Share your group's ideas with the rest of the class.

Read the book

Read *Little Seed* as directed by your teacher in one of the following ways:

- as a whole class
- in small reading groups

Stop every now and then to re-evaluate where you think the story may be heading. Discuss your ideas with a friend as well as the parts of the story you like and why.





After You Read

Use the following questions to promote discussion of the book.

1. What do you think little seed was looking for?
2. Did little seed find what she was looking for? Explain.
3. Who did little seed rest with on Thursday, and what did she look for?
[The old olive tree. She was looking for her own moon.]
4. Where are some places you know with lots of trees?
5. What types of trees do you have in your garden? Find out if you don't know.
6. What are the four seasons? What months belong to each season?
7. Are the seasons different in Australia compared to Europe or America? How?
8. Which is your favourite tree in the book and why?
9. Do trees have predators or enemies? Who or what are they?
10. What is an evergreen tree?
11. What is a deciduous tree?
12. What can you eat that grows on trees?

Activities

Days of the Week

Practise saying the days of the week. Make a poster listing the days of the week and draw what you do on each day. Put a star near your favourite day. Find out which day of the week you and your classmates were born and make a graph displaying this information. What was the most common and least common day?

Around the world

Use the map and information given at the back of the book to discuss where the different trees in the story are located. Talk about how the seeds on the different trees are scattered. Write or draw different ways that seeds are scattered or spread.

There's no place like home

On her journey little seed is trying to find the place she belongs – her home. Tell the class what you love about your home and what it means to belong in your family. Act out or mime some things you like to do at home. Ask the class to guess what you are doing.



Paint a Picture

Draw, and then paint a picture of a garden. Use thick wax crayons to draw and colour the seeds, plants, flowers, trees, birds and insects. Paint over the top of the crayon with a thin paint or food-colour dye.

Tree Sculpture

Make a tree sculpture using recyclable materials. Create a trunk, branches, seeds, fruits or flowers. Display the trees in a class 'garden'.

Class tree

Help your teacher to paint a large tree (choose one from the book) to cover a large section of your classroom wall. Make birds, butterflies, insects and flowers from bits of paper, egg cartons, cotton wool and paddle-pop sticks. Attach them to the tree.

Save the trees

Plan and present a short speech titled 'Save the trees'. Mention a few points about why you think trees are important and why we need them.

Tree house

Imagine you have a tree house in your garden (you may actually have one). Describe what you can see from up in the tree. What things can you only see from the tree house?

Mapping fun

Your teacher will provide you with a stencil outlining your school playground. Walk around the school looking at the trees and plants. Mark on your map any types of trees and plants you see.

Seed Planting Procedure

Write a simple procedure outlining how to plant seeds. Include everything you will need as well as simple instructions. Follow your procedure and plant some seeds – you can use margarine containers as pots.



Poet's Corner

Write down the word SEEDS. Use this word to write an acrostic poem about seeds and plants.

Choose your favourite flower or tree and draw its shape. Use descriptive words to describe your chosen flower or tree and write the words into the shape of the picture.

A treeless world

Imagine your school or suburb with no trees. Draw what the world would look like if there were no trees.

Write a short story with the title 'If there were no trees.' Describe what it would look like, smell like, sound like and feel like.

Polymer paint

Your teacher will give you some paint similar to that used in the illustrations in *Little Seed*. Paint your own favourite tree using this paint. Experiment with pouring the paint into shapes and pictures.

Book Review

Write a short book review for *Little Seed*. Include the following:

- Title
- Author
- Favourite characters
- Brief plot summary
- Favourite part of the novel
- Recommendation (who you would recommend the book to and why)
- An illustration