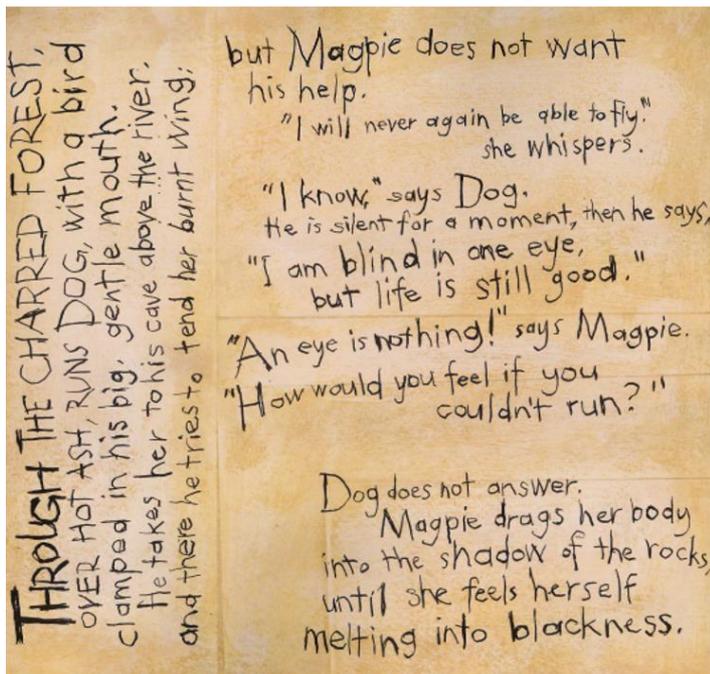


Take 5: Ideas for Independent/Home Learning

Fox by Margaret Wild and Ron Brooks (Allen & Unwin)

1. Explore it

Read the opening of the book below, thinking about what is happening and the characters you meet:



- What do you think is happening here? Who are the central characters? Can you summarise what you've read in a couple of sentences?
- Think about Dog and Magpie, and their conversation. What do you think you know about them? What can you tell How would you describe each creature? What words in the text influence your descriptions? Did your opinion of Dog change from the start to the end of the extract? Why?
- Where do you think the story is set? What clues are there to this?
- What do you think might have happened before this point? What makes you think this?

Now, re-read the extract and think about how it is written. Do any parts really stick in your mind? Which words and phrases do you like best? What do you like about them? Do they look or sound interesting? Do they help you make a picture in your mind? Think about how this extract makes you feel and what you like or dislike about it. Does it remind you of anything you know in stories or real life? How?

2. Illustrate it

Re-read the passage, or ask someone to read it to you, or maybe record it for you so you can play it over again. After you have read the extract a few times, take a pen or pencil and a bit of scrap paper. You can use the back of an old envelope or cereal packet; whatever is to hand. Draw what you see in your imagination. It can be shapes or shading — anything that captures what you hear. It might be interesting to share the passage with a friend or family member and see what they draw, then compare it with what you have drawn. Remember, everyone has their own ideas and imagines things their own way. This is a good thing!

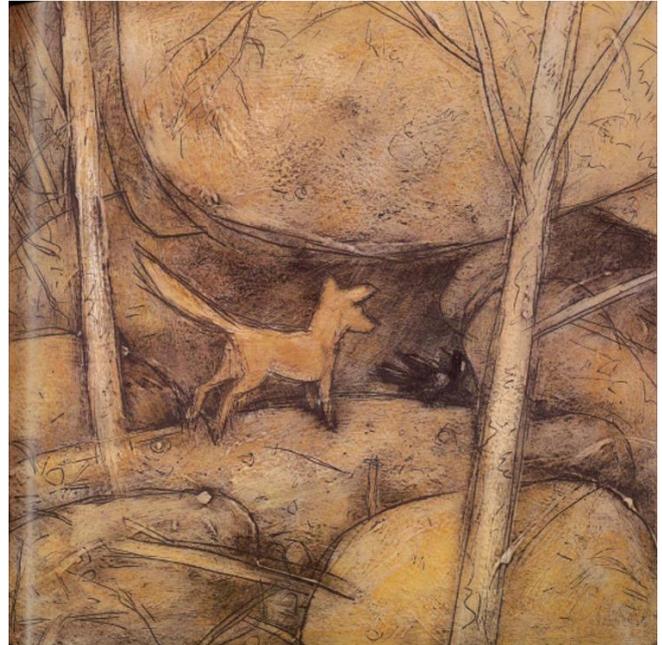
Add any words and phrases around your illustration that have helped you make your picture: these could come from the passage or from your own imagination. Did you draw Dog and Magpie, separately or together? Is Magpie in Dog's mouth, or are they talking? Did you draw Dog's **'cave above the river'**, Magpie **'melting into blackness'**?

Now look at how the illustrator Ron Brooks chose to capture the scene. What is similar and different about his illustration?

3. Talk about it

Re-read the text and look at the illustration. Try to search like a detective in the illustration to see what clues it gives you to the story:

- How does Ron Brooks' illustration reinforce, refine or alter the way you understood or responded to the story when you read only the text? For example, does the way he shows this scene tell you something more that the words do not?
- Why do you think Dog has taken Magpie to the cave?
- Why do you think she rejects his help? What do you think she expects to happen to her? What do you think might happen next as the page turns? Why do you think this?
- Do you think it is worse for a bird to be earthbound than for a dog to be blind? Why?
- Why do you think the author and illustrator have set the text out as they have, with some on its side? What do you think this layout and the font convey? How is this different from using a standard typeface?



4. Imagine it

In their talk Dog suggests to Magpie that physical impairment doesn't stop life from being good. Magpie argues that this depends on the impairment: for a dog, being blind in one eye is not as bad as not being able to run; for a bird, not being able to fly is the worst thing there is. Do you agree with Magpie that the quality of your life depends on your ability to enjoy it? Why do you think it is as important for a bird to be able to fly as for a dog to be able to run? Do you think a bird is essentially a flying creature, a dog a running creature, rather than a seeing creature?

Think of a variety of different creatures — mammals, birds, fish, insects — and for each one consider its defining ability: swimming, seeing, jumping, running? What do you think is the 'prime' ability of humans without which you would not be human, just as Magpie doesn't think she is herself without flight? Do you think you would want to be without this ability?

5. Create it

In this part of the text, Dog shows great compassion in helping Magpie, even though he is blind in one eye, overcoming his own adversity to help others. Can you think of a person you know who puts the needs of others before their own? This could be someone you know in real life, a friend, family member or someone in your school or local community Or, you could think about someone who has overcome adversity to achieve great things, perhaps a Paralympian such as those featured here:

<https://paralymphics.org.uk/athletes> Write a biography of this person, telling others about them and what makes them a good role model or an inspiration to others.