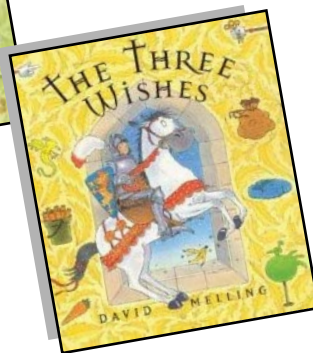
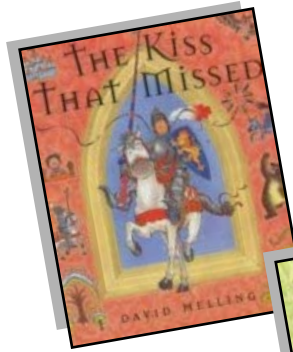


TEACHING GUIDE by KATHRYN SAEB-PARSY

The Kiss That Missed Good Knight Sleep Tight The Three Wishes

by David Melling

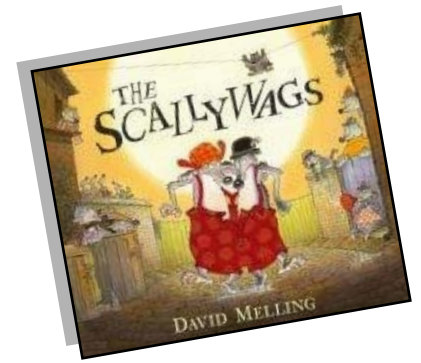


ISBN: 978-0340797181

ISBN: 978-0340860939

ISBN: 978-0340931523

The Scallywags



ISBN: 978-0340884065

THE BOOKS

The Kiss that Missed: The kiss flies out of the window, the prince is distraught and the hapless knight is sent into the deep dark forest to fetch the kiss back. What will he encounter there? This is a touching tale about the power of love.

Good Knight Sleep Tight: Another fantastic bedtime read from the highly-talented David Melling. The lovable knight from *The Kiss That Missed* is back - this time with another quest from the royal king. He has to find a soft and fluffy filling for the royal pillow and stop the little princess making that terrible noise! A wonderful story infused with love and humour about a new sibling, the problem of a crying baby and just what to do about it.

The Three Wishes: The lovable hapless duo from *The Kiss That*



David Melling was born in Oxford. His father was a sculptor and David inherited his artistic leanings. David has received much recognition for his artistic talent. His first book *Brilliant the Dinosaur* (Pavilion) was shortlisted for the 1994 Smarties Book Award and 'What's that Noise?' was longlisted for the Kate Greenaway Award. More recently, *The Kiss That Missed* was shortlisted for the Kate Greenaway Award. His recent picture book, *The Tale of Jack Frost* was animated and shown on BBC1 on Christmas Day with a voice over by Hugh Laurie. It was shortlisted for the Pulcinella Award 2005 for 'Best TV Movie' category. David Melling is married and lives with his wife and two children in Oxfordshire.



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Missed are back! This time, the knight and his horse are left in charge of the royal prince and princess. But they find babysitting so tiring that the knight makes a wish...and before he knows it, it comes true. Instead of babysitting, therefore, they encounter a night full of magic and surprises and before too long, they are wishing they were babysitting once again!

The Scallywags: The Scallywags are a bunch of rather messy noisy wolves who find it rather hard to behave properly. But as they soon discover, if it means losing your friends, then just maybe it's time to practice those manners...

CURRICULUM CONTEXT

These charming picture books are particularly suited for use with Key Stage 1 pupils. They could be incorporated into a unit of work on 'stories and poems with familiar settings' and those set in 'imaginary or fantasy worlds'. They could be read to the whole class or used as part of a group or guided reading session. The text will provide many opportunities for exploration and discussion. More confident readers, for example, will enjoy the playful text, which bounces across the pages and even, at times, falls off the edge of the page. Less confident readers will derive much pleasure from having the books read aloud and they will appreciate the humour and strong descriptive element. The illustrations are

superb – attention to detail that can easily be overlooked on first glance will provide many opportunities for discussion and developing pupils' visual literacy. Pupils can be encouraged to empathize with the characters and their situations and respond to both the text and the illustrations, voicing their own ideas and opinions.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

Lay-Out

In the Knight's Tale Series, both the text and the illustrations 'break out' of their boundaries. The Knight's lance, for example, often breaks out of the frame of his picture and the knight himself is often to be seen disappearing off the page on his trusty steed. The pictures in the book that are framed are often those that contain the most humour. There are also pictures framed within pictures and pages containing a series of pictures showing different time sequences and characters moving through different events / actions. The text at times zig-zags, swoops and flies across (and even off) the page and through the illustrations. Encourage children to notice these characteristics and discuss how they alter the pace of the story and add to its humour.

In *The Scallywags*, the text and illustrations go beyond the story – even before the bibliographic information and publishers details. Ask pupils whether they

have seen this before and why they think that Melling has done this i.e. to focus their thoughts on a particular point of interest before the story begins. The text in this story is also animated and this brings the story alive. Of particular interest in this book is the vertically split double page spread that represents the point in the story where the other animals are isolating the wolves because of their bad behaviour. Discuss with pupils whether this would have been as effective if it had been in the traditional horizontal page spread format. Share ideas about why they think the illustrator chose this particular layout?

Exploring the text

In all of Melling's books, the rhythmic quality of the text and the many onomatopoeic words that he employs, such as, 'squawked', 'swooping', 'twitched' and 'prickly' combine to make the text a very enjoyable one to read aloud or to dramatise. With some of these words, Melling tries to mould the shape of the text to reflect the word itself, almost like a shape poem. In *The Scallywags*, for example, words such as 'squashed' and 'popped' look as if they indeed have been squashed and popped! Pupils could be given various words and asked to create their own effects for them – either on the computer or using pen and paper.

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Word Play: – draw pupils’ attention to the creation of new e.g. ‘swoopy’, ‘growly’. Why meanings are conveyed by this invented vocabulary? Pupils will enjoy experimenting with creating new forms of other words themselves. The concept of alliteration (‘rattle around the room’ ‘slinky shadows’ ‘pink puff’) can also be explored with pupils – they could identify alliteration from the text and create some examples of their own. Rhyme is also a device that Melling employs at certain points e.g. ‘Bear hair lay everywhere’, ‘the fat royal cat squashed it flat’. Invite pupils to share their responses to the rhyming elements of the story and consider what rhyme adds to the text at these points. Pupils could be asked to rewrite one of these stories or parts of the stories in rhyme.

It is important to discuss with pupils what devices the author uses to tell the reader how the story should be read. His text, for example, often increases or decreases in size, some parts are emboldened or in a different style of font, some sentences are enclosed in brackets – How does the way in which the text is presented affect their reading of the story (particularly when they are reading aloud)?

Exploring the Illustrations

Use of light – In *The Kiss that Missed* and *Good Knight, Sleep Tight*, the illustrations are sunny,

bright and colourful. However, when the Knight enters the wood, the illustrations change to shades of blue and grey. Even in the young Prince’s bedroom, the pictures of the wood that hang on the wall contrast in colour to their surroundings. Discuss this with pupils. What effect does it have?

Hidden Gems – In *The Kiss that Missed* series, The Knight carries a shield that has a lion on it. Melling has cleverly uses this lion to reflect the mood of the story and to help readers to respond to the story – e.g. when they are in the wood, the lion is covering his eyes suggesting that something scary is about to happen. Draw pupils’ attention to this and discuss the lion’s reactions with them. Pupils could rewrite the story from the lion’s point of view. The patterns on the inside of the book covers of *The Kiss that Missed* and *The Three Wishes* provide some hidden surprises – although this is separate to the story, it is very interesting for pupils to see what images/characters are woven into the patterns. Ask pupils to look at all of the illustrations very carefully to see if they can spot something that they did not see at first glance e.g. the knight ripping his trousers as he mounts his horse, the pig hiding on top of the prince’s four poster bed, all of the animals camouflaged in the wood etc.

Use of Humour – Discuss with pupils how Melling conveys humour through his illustrations

and how this humour makes potentially scary moments / creatures seem less threatening e.g. when the bears hair is ripped out and their underpants are showing! In *The Scallywags*, there is much humour to explore, particularly relating to the wolves and their actions. In the double page spread where the wolves are spying on the other animals, for example, discuss how Melling creates humour by showing how the wolves are trying to hide their presence. The sight of one of the wolves thinking that he cannot be seen because he is standing behind a very thin post is sure to make pupils giggle!

Characterisation – Throughout all of Melling’s books, pupils can use the pictures to consider and track the thoughts and feelings of the characters. In *The Scallywags*, for example, although there are many different wolves that are all similar in looks, Melling manages to give all of them their own distinct character. Discuss with pupils how he manages to achieve this. It would be interesting to follow a couple of the wolves and look carefully at how they look / what they are doing in each page of the book. Pupils could compose thought bubbles to represent what they think the wolves are thinking at various points within the story. Ask them which one of the wolves they like best and why. It is interesting to discuss with pupils the fact that Melling doesn’t name any of his characters in

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The Kiss that Missed series – why do pupils think he has done this? Discuss whether the illustrations are relied on almost exclusively to show the personalities of the characters.

Exploring Issues

The Scallywags: Being a good friend – there are two sides to being a good friend portrayed in this book. On the one hand, the wolves have to try to make an effort to change their manners in order to keep their friends, on the other hand, the other animals come to realize that they really loved the wolves just the way they were. These are interesting issues to discuss with pupils, one that they will all be able to relate to and will enable them to draw on their own experiences.

The Kiss that Missed: Busy parents – the Prince’s father is always busy and in a hurry. Many pupils will be able to relate to this – discuss why the King is such a busy man and this might open up discussion amongst them about their own parents’ jobs and responsibilities.

Good Knight Sleep Tight: Relationships between siblings – Pupils can discuss the emotions that they feel when a sibling is born and what qualities they think it takes to be a good brother / sister.

Links with other texts

The Kiss that Missed:

The prince told the queen. The queen told the king and the king had a quick word with his loyal knight. “FOLLOW THAT KISS!” he squawked.

This text is reminiscent of the poem, *The King’s Breakfast* by A.A.Milne. This poem is a search for some butter for the royal slice of bread whereas Melling’s book is a search for the royal kiss. Pupils could read both texts and look for the similarities and differences between them. More advanced pupils could rewrite *The Kiss that Missed* in poetry form in a similar style to *The King’s Breakfast*. The wild wood and how it and the creatures in it are described and illustrated could be compared to Maurice Sendak’s book, *Where the Wild Things Are*. Other texts involving knights and dragons could also be explored e.g. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* retold by Michael Morpurgo.

The Scallywags:

‘... and the Big Bad Wolf huffed and puffed all the way home.’ It’s the same old story. Wolves are crusty, lazy and mean. They howl, they chase and they make a mess. We know all about big bad wolves and their nasty ways...Don’t we?

Brainstorm with pupils what they know about wolves from other

stories e.g. *The Three Little Pigs*, *Little Red Riding Hood* etc. Discuss with them how wolves are portrayed – are they portrayed as being crusty, lazy and mean? Can they think of any stories where the wolves are portrayed as being ‘the good guys’? Do they think that wolves get a bad press?

The Three Wishes:

If you help me catch them I shall grant you three wishes.

There is a Grimms’ fairytale about a Woodcutter and his wife also called *The Three Wishes* that pupils could compare with the Melling’s story. Invite them to share stories about other characters who are granted wishes. They could also compare what the knight and his horse do with their wishes compared to other characters who are also granted wishes, such as Aladdin. Do many characters use their wishes wisely? Pupils could write their own story called, *The Three Wishes* or could write about three things that they think they would wish for if they had been granted three wishes.

Story Structure

In *The Kiss that Missed* series, the books use the same story structure. Each book opens with a member of the Royal household encountering some problem (a missing kiss, a princess that won’t stop crying) that the knight and his steed then embark on a quest to



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solve the problem. Each quest involves some mishaps, a forage into the wild wood at some point and a happy resolution. Pupils could use this structure to write another book in the series that everyone contributes to create their own illustrated story which could be published and displayed in the classroom.

Other Ideas

- Dramatise and perform *The Scallwags*.
- Explore with pupils how different animals are portrayed in literature e.g. foxes, hares. Aesop's fables, traditional fairy tales and more modern stories could all be used to explore this theme.
- Represent one of the stories through music. They would need to consider which instruments they might use to represent different characters. Also how to create mood changes e.g. when the wild wood is entered how would the music change?
- Pupils could make puppets in Art / DT to represent the characters from these books, which they could then use to retell the stories or make up new stories involving these characters. They could also create scenery and props. This could also be combined with composing music as suggested above.

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