



I AM NOT A FROG

MAGGIE PEARSON

ILLUSTRATED BY NATALIA MOORE



BOOK BAND: LIME

BEFORE YOU START

Prepare a **group journal** to help you record group discussions and responses to the text as you work through the book.

Prepare an outline of the character Imelda, ready to complete using the **Role on the Wall** technique.

SESSION 1: CHAPTER ONE



Focus: Thinking Aloud, Predicting and Reading Aloud

Without sharing the front cover or title of the book, display the illustration from page 1 and discuss the children's early impressions of the character.

- Who could this be? What clues do you have to make you think that?
- What do you notice about the character?
- What might be inferred from her appearance, including body language and facial expressions?
- What could she be doing / thinking / feeling?
- What do you like about this illustration?
- What does it remind you of?

Note down these initial impressions in the **journal**. You can return to these as you read the book, comparing the children's initial thoughts to how the story actually unfolds.

Now, read the title of the book and share the illustration on the front cover. Ask the children to predict what the story could be about. Ask them to justify their responses, drawing out any **connections** they make to other stories or to real-life events. Children may relate the cover to the story of The Frog Prince or The Princess and the Frog (and the many variations on that story, including the popular animated film).

Read Chapter One and ask the children to share their initial responses with the help of the **four basic questions**. These questions can be used as a basis for discussion throughout the sessions.

- Tell me... was there anything you liked about this text?
- Was there anything that you particularly disliked... ?
- Was there anything that puzzled you?
- Were there any patterns... any connections that you noticed... ?

As children respond it can be useful to write down what they say under the headings 'likes', 'dislikes', 'puzzles' and 'patterns'. Record the children's responses in the **journal** and return to any queries as the sessions continue.

Ask the children to predict what they think will happen next.

- What does Princess Imelda want to do?
 - Why do you think she might want to experience life outside the palace?
 - Why isn't she allowed?
 - How would we describe Imelda? Why?
 - How did she manage to escape? Do you think she had it all planned out?
-

Discuss how and why the writer uses punctuation such as parentheses (brackets) and speech marks to show direct speech. Encourage the children to look back through the chapter and find the passages marked in brackets.

- How are they different to the rest of the text?
 - What role does the punctuation play?
 - How might you read that section of the text aloud?
 - Who is being addressed in these sections?
-

Look back at the dialogue between the two guards on page 9.

- How do you know that characters are speaking these words?
- Why do you think this conversation is included?
- How does the writer imply who is speaking even when she chooses not to use the character's names every time?

In pairs, children could read the dialogue between the two guards aloud, each taking on one of the roles. This may help them appreciate the implication and the humour of the situation more.

Vocabulary

Encourage children to share any **vocabulary** which is unfamiliar to them and support them in developing clear definitions.

- What does the phrase 'for the umpteenth time' tell us about the conversation between Imelda and the queen on page 3?



SESSION 2: CHAPTER TWO



Focus: Summarising, Questioning and Clarifying

Ask children to summarise what we know about the story and Imelda so far.

Then read the opening of Chapter 2 up to page 13, 'She'd never seen money before – she had never needed it.'

- Why doesn't Imelda know what money is?
- What else do you think she might not know about?
- What kinds of things do you think are normally done for her at the palace?
- What might Imelda be thinking and feeling at this moment in the story?

Discuss what Imelda should do about this dilemma. In pairs or small groups, ask the children to discuss the different options available to Imelda and decide on the best solution to Imelda's problems. Ask each group to feed back their chosen idea. Use **shared writing** to produce a quick **note of advice** for Imelda, drawing on all of the children's ideas.

Ask the children to predict what might happen next. Then read the rest of Chapter Two, allowing time for children to clarify their understanding and for discussion around the **four basic questions**.

Introduce the outline of Imelda to be added to using the **Role on the Wall** technique. Ask the children to come up with words or phrases to describe Imelda's feelings and personality or her outward appearance and behaviour. For example, they might comment on what her surprise about needing to pay for the meal or what her response to doing the washing up at the restaurant tells us about her.

Revisit the **Role on the Wall** outline at key points in the story as we find out more about Imelda.



SESSION 3: CHAPTER THREE



Focus: Clarifying, Thinking Aloud and Developing Fluency

Share the illustration of the newspaper on page 16.

- What do you think the newspaper article says?
- How have the king and queen responded to their daughter's presumed transformation?
- How might the other citizens of the country respond?
- Do you think that the king and queen agreed to release their story to the newspapers? Why / why not?

Use **shared writing** to draft the opening few paragraphs of the newspaper article, summarising the story so far from the king and queen's point of view.

Read Chapter Three, stopping at different points to clarify the children's understanding and allow for discussion.

- Why do you think some people tried kissing the frog?
- Do you trust the 'The Great Ravioli'? Why / why not?
- Do you think that he can help the king and queen?
- Do you think that Ravioli knows that the frog is not really the princess?
- Do you agree with Ravioli's instruction that 'If she wants to be a frog, you must let her'? Why / why not?

Most of the text on pages 18-20 is made up of direct speech. Ask the children to clarify who is speaking each piece of text. (If children have access to copies of the pages, they could **text mark** the different speakers in different colours to differentiate them more clearly.)

Discuss the different strategies the writer uses to show the reader:

- how the character is speaking
- the expression and intonation that should be used when reading aloud
- what the character's speech (and way of speaking) reveals about their personality.

Vocabulary

The writer uses a mixture of speech verbs (*muttered, whispered, exclaimed*), descriptions of body language and facial expressions (*smiling, leaning close, nodded wisely*) and punctuation. Ask the children to rehearse a reading of the direct speech on these pages, drawing on all of these clues to inform their reading.

Children could complete a **Role on the Wall** for the Great Ravioli as well to compare his character with Imelda's.



SESSION 4: CHAPTER FOUR



Focus: Questioning and Empathising

Read the opening pages of Chapter Four until page 24, 'claim my throne'.

You could ask children to quickly rehearse a reading of the dialogue between Imelda and Ravioli to aid their comprehension and to help them build fluency and expression.

Discuss what we learn about the two characters from their conversation.

- What do Ravioli's strong responses to Imelda's appearance tell us about his viewpoint and prejudices?

Reflect on Imelda's dilemma: "Either that frog goes or I do... Maybe I will go."

- What do you think Imelda should do?
- Should she stay and try to persuade someone at the palace to believe her or should she 'travel the world'?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of both options?
- Can you think of any other options available to Imelda?

Discuss and draw up a list of reasons why Imelda should stay at the palace and reasons for her to leave. Draw a line on the board or in the **reading journal** with 'Imelda should stay' written at one end and 'Imelda should go' at the other. Ask each child to write their name on a sticky note and add it somewhere on the line to reflect their opinion of what she should do. A definite opinion that she should stay would be at one end of the line, a determined view that she should go would be at the other, and then every degree in between.

Give children a short time to jot down a quick **note of advice** for Imelda, drawing on the list of ideas that have been shared as well as the **shared writing** of the **note of advice** from Session 2. Afterwards, ask for volunteers to share their writing and then consider how Imelda might respond to their advice.

Read the rest of Chapter Four, allowing for discussion around the **four basic questions**.

Discuss what we know so far about the gang of 'outlaws': Ted, Ned and Fred. Depending on children's prior experiences, they may make **intertextual links** with the legends of Robin Hood and his Merry Men or with highwaymen.

Discuss the developments in the story.

- Have any of you changed your minds about what Imelda should do?
- What do you think might happen next for Imelda if she joins the outlaws at their camp?

Return to the **Role on the Wall** and discuss what further information has been gained about Imelda.



SESSION 5: CHAPTERS FIVE AND SIX



Focus: Re-reading, Predicting and Summarising

Read pages 32-33.

- Why do you think the king and queen are following Ravioli's advice?
 - What does their behaviour tell you about how they feel about Imelda?
 - What do you think Ravioli's plan could be? What do you think he wants?
 - How do you think the frog feels about what has happened to it?
 - How would you read aloud the king's dialogue on page 33? Do you think he is being genuine or ironic? Why do you think that?
-

Read to the end of the chapter, stopping at different points to clarify the children's understanding and allow for discussion around the **four basic questions**.

Ask the children to summarise and clarify Ravioli's plan now that the outlaws have figured it out, and compare it to their previous predictions.

- How might the story end?
 - What would you like the outcome to be for the various characters: Imelda, her parents, Ravioli and the outlaws?
-

Read Chapter Six. Draw on previous discussions around the use of brackets and dialogue to tell the story. The children could also discuss how the use of ellipses, dashes and exclamation marks influences their reading aloud and their comprehension.

Through modelling, ask the children to describe their favourite part of the story. Provide the children with an oral scaffold, for example: *the most memorable part of the story was... because... ; my top moment in the story was... because...* and in pairs ask them to identify their favourite part of the narrative. Encourage children to give reasons for their choices and invite some children to share these.

Work with the children to consider the potential impact of the story's events on Imelda and the other characters.

- Do you think life will change for Imelda now that she is back at the palace?
 - Do you think she will tell her parents about the frog not being her?
 - What do you think Ned, Ted and Fred will do next?
-

Discuss how the children felt about the book compared to their original expectations.

- When you first saw this book, what kind of book did you think it was going to be?
 - What made you think this?
 - Now you've read it, is it as you expected?
 - Have you read other books like it? How is this one the same? How is it different?
 - Would you recommend this book to a friend?
-

Children could write a follow-up adventure for Imelda and her friends or rewrite the story from the point of view of the frog, one of Imelda's parents, one of the outlaws or Ravioli. They could draw on their exploration of direct speech in this story by rewriting their favourite scene as a short play script, which could then be performed by their peers.



IDEAS TO SUPPORT THE SESSIONS



These are areas you could further develop depending on your professional judgement of the children's learning needs and their interests.

Developing wider reading experiences

Read and explore other books with **intertextual links** to *I Am Not A Frog*, e.g.:

- *Rapunzel* by Bethan Woollvin – Two Hoots
- *The Frog Prince* by Jess Stockham – Child's Play
- *The Adventures of Robin Hood* by Marcia Williams – Walker Books

Supporting reading fluency

- While reading with the group, model skills and strategies such as predicting, sampling, confirming, self-monitoring, self-correcting, 'thinking aloud', interpreting things which are only implied, and the full range of cueing systems (semantic, syntactic and graphophonic).
- Occasionally, you could hide some words with a post-it note, asking the children to refer to the illustration for ideas. You could give another clue by revealing the first syllable or letter.
- You could make a pairs game to develop visual memory and book language, creating cards using laminated images from the book. Make pairs of cards, one card for an illustrated location or character and one for matching words from the story. Spread these out face down. Children take turns to turn over two cards. If they match, they can keep them. If not, they have to turn them back over again. The game proceeds until all the pairs have been found.
- You could create a simple jigsaw by writing questions with corresponding answers directly underneath on one side of a piece of paper, then printing an illustration on the reverse and cutting the sheet of paper up to separate the questions and answers. The children lay out the questions and answers in order. They can check their layout by turning them over to see if they have created the illustration correctly.
- You can explore different ways of representing the /i/ (long vowel 'ee') phoneme, such as in *umpteenth, queen, very, green, tea, each, screamed, been, she, people, hungry*, etc. as well as explicitly drawing attention to words when the same grapheme might represent a different phoneme (e.g. /ea/ in *wearing*).

Vocabulary building

- Children could make **word collections** which describe a particular character and their feelings or a place, event or situation.
- The text could also be used to investigate the structure, impact and placement of prefixes and suffixes. For example, children could look at regular and irregular past tense verbs (*planned, hopped, turned, wandered, looked, washed, finished, curled, brought, ate, wore, sat, left*).

Opportunities to revisit the text independently

- With the children, make a set of magnetic or stick story props to use in a retelling of the story and to support children in their own independent retellings. If possible, provide extra copies of the book to support this.
- If the children have a good memory of the text through repeated readings, they can be given copies of the story to read to partners. This helps children to see themselves as readers.
- Allow the children to re-enact the story through play. Revisiting stories through a range of play-based experiences helps children to step into the world of the book and to explore it more completely.
- Create **freeze frames** of key events or scenes in the book. When presenting the **freeze frame**, one of the group could act as a commentator to talk through what is happening, or individual characters could speak their thoughts out loud.
- Use **hot-seating** to explore the main character further. One member of the group **role-plays** a character and is interviewed by the other children. This activity involves children closely examining a character's motivation and responses.
- Make a **story map** as a way of retelling the story. This breaks the story down into episodes and sequences its events. This kind of graphic representation helps children to hold on to the shape of the story more confidently.
- Encourage the children to take the book home to read alongside a parent or carer and suggest that they use the 'Tips for grown-ups' pages to support their discussions.



Experiences linked to the text

- Children could plan and prepare an outdoor camp inspired by the one that Ted, Ned and Fred take Imelda to, either in the playground or in a wooded area if the school has access to one.
- What do you need to survive outdoors?
- How would you create a shelter?
- What would you eat?
- What games would you play?

These resources were created by Bloomsbury and The Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE). For more teaching resources, visit:

www.bloomsburyguidedreading.com

www.clpe.org.uk

