

Reading Roundup

The Patchwork Bike

Written by Maxine Beneba Clarke

Illustrated by Van T. Rudd

Reading Roundup
Partners



Introduction

Gather the students around you so that they are able to see the illustrations of the book. Most classrooms will have an area rug defining this space. Introduce yourself and tell the students that you are excited to share The Patchwork Bike, written by Maxine Beneba Clarke and illustrated by Van Thanh Rudd.

Before Reading

Note – The Patchwork Bike deals with social and societal issues that are very real to even young children. Some groups of children will be experienced enough to have strong opinions about the content and the characters.

Due to the brief text, consider reading the entire book without stopping to ask questions or engage in discourse. After reading the entire book, go back to the beginning.

Now that we've listened carefully to the words, let's read the story again paying attention to the illustrations. As you look closely at the pictures, ask yourself what the pictures are telling us about the patchwork bike and the characters.

During Reading

- Begin reading the book by starting on the title page. Hold the book so that students are able to see the illustrations. Give plenty of time for students to “read” and think about the pictures. Continue to read through page 3.
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- **Page 3 T/T** - *What might the author be telling us about the characters when she writes, “mud-for-walls home?” Turn and talk to your partner. (The characters probably don't have a lot. They live in a house they and their family might have built using dirt and sand from the village.)* Continue reading through page 5.
- **Page 5** - *The girl calls her brothers “crazy.” I'm wondering why the illustrator might decide to paint a picture of the brothers jumping on a police car. (It's not always necessary, or even effective, to ask for children to share their thoughts with the group. Accept responses from the children, recognizing that sometimes it's okay to simply ponder ideas about important topics.)* Continue reading through page 7.
- **Page 7 T/T** - *Look at the illustration of the mum, or mother. Notice her hand on her hip, the expression on her face. Using the illustration to help you, what might fed-up mean in this text? Why might she be fed-up with her children? Turn and talk to your partner. (She worries about her children and is scared about what they do when they're not with her. She wishes they were making better choices and gets frustrated with them.)* Continue reading through page 17.
- **Pages 16-17 P** - *I'm noticing how the author chooses to use words that aren't real, like “shicketty” and “winketty.” Think about how a bike might feel if it went “shicketty shake” and “winketty wonk.” Who can show what a bike rider might feel like and what might be happening on the bike? (Student(s) will portray a person riding a bike that is hard to control.)* Continue reading through page 19.
- **Page 19 T/T** - *Whose hand do you think this might be in the window? Do you think Mum gave permission for the milk pot to be taken? What evidence can you use from the words and/or illustration to make you think that? Turn and talk to your partner.* Continue reading through page 21.
- **Page 21** - Allow students plenty of time to notice the BLM (Black Lives Matter) license plate and welcome personal responses and ideas. Continue reading through page 23.
- **Page 23 T/T** - *Look at the illustration of the bike going through the house. Can you even see the bike zooming along? Turn and talk to your partner about why the illustrator painted a blur from the village and through the house? Based on what we know about Mum, how do you think she felt about the bike speeding right through the house? Turn and talk to your partner. (The brothers and sister were riding the bike so fast that they were just a blur going by. Mum is really mad about lots of things – jumping on police cars, stealing her milk pot, racing right through the house on the bike.... She is “fed-up” with their behavior.)* Continue reading through page 29.
- **Page 29** - *I'm noticing that, other than the title page, this is the only illustration showing the children smiling and laughing. As a matter of fact, the children's faces are not shown at all. I wonder why that is. (Allow students to ponder and be willing to close the book without an answer.)*

After Reading

P - *After reading the words and noticing the illustrations, what do you think you know about the children in this book? What part of the book makes you think that? (The children are living in poverty and are sometimes happy, resourceful, creative, angry, disrespectful, fun-loving, risk-takers, irresponsible....Allow students to identify words/pictures to support their responses.)*

Remember, there are times in our lives when we become angry and aren't sure how to show our angry feelings. We will make mistakes and bad choices along the way, but the important thing is to use what we have and be creative enough to make something useful and beautiful out of being “fed-up.”

Vocabulary

Patchwork – put together with pieces of things you already have (in title only)

Whooping – yelling p. 8

Shrieking – yelling p. 9

Bashed – dented p.16

Bark – piece of wood from outside of a tree p.20

**WORD
WAGON**

