

## **Footpath Flowers**

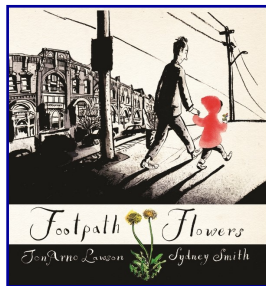
By JonArno Lawson & Illustrated by Sydney Smith

Publisher: Walker Books

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\$24.95

In this wordless, beautifully illustrated picture book from award-winning poet JonArno Lawson, a little girl collects wild flowers while her distracted father pays her - and their surroundings - little attention. Each flower the little girl gathers becomes a gift for a person or animal, and whether the gift is noticed or ignored, both giver and recipient are transformed by their encounter. An ode to the importance of small things, small people and small gestures, *Footpath Flowers* is a quiet but powerful testament to the joy that children can find in ordinary things and the mutual value of giving.



Teacher notes have been based on those supplied by the publisher, Walker Books.

### **Themes:**

- Community
- Emotional & Physical Journeys
- Helping Others
- Nature/Environment

### **Discussion Points & Activities:**

- Go through the book as a class and without trying to “read” the story, discuss what is happening on each page. Discuss the setting, the people, the actions characters are taking, the use of colour and composition.
- Read through as a class with the teacher or librarian creating the story. Afterwards, ask students if they agreed or disagreed with the reader’s interpretation.
- Go through the book and write words that could appear on each page as post-it notes. These words could be dialogue between characters, actions/verbs, thoughts or feelings of characters, descriptive words/adjectives and descriptions of events taking place. Use these words as a starting point to write your own text to accompany the illustrations.
- How do you think the man sleeping on the park bench will react when he wakes up to find flowers in his shoe? Perform a role play where students take turns pretending to be the sleeping man waking up. Encourage each student to create an original response in their performance.
- What do you think the girl in the red coat is thinking at the end of the book when she is looking up at the birds?
- How do you think the girl in the red coat is feeling when she discovers the dead bird, the sleeping man and the dog? How would you feel in each of those situations? Examine the use of colour in the book. What colours are predominantly used in the beginning? When are more colours introduced into the story? How do the mostly black and white illustrations early in the text make you feel, compared to the very colourful illustrations later in the book?
- Draw a picture using a black pencil/crayon/pen and choose one part of the drawing to highlight with a bright colour in a similar style to the girl’s red coat in the early pages of *Footpath Flowers*. Why did you choose that part to highlight? Do you think drawing this way is an effective way to draw the viewer’s eye to a certain part of the picture?