

Room on our Rock

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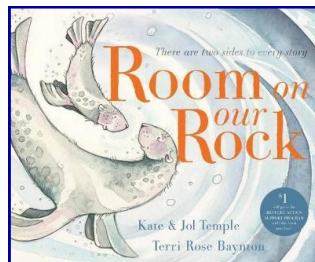
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**PICTURE BOOK OF
THE MONTH**

Two seals are perched on a rock. When others need shelter, do they share it? *Room on Our Rock* celebrates the truth that there are two sides to every story. This clever picture book has one story that can be read two different ways.

When read from front to back, the seals believe there is definitely no room on their rock for others. But when the book is read from back to front, the seals welcome others to shelter on their rock. A heartwarming story about sharing and compassion.



Teacher Notes have been based on those supplied by the publisher. A full version is available on our website.

Themes:

- Fear and courage
- Acceptance and rejection
- Exclusion and inclusion
- Refugees
- Danger and safety

Discussion Questions & Activities:

- As a class discuss the cover illustration and title. What do you think might be happening in the story? What does it mean when it says There are two sides to every story?

Read the story from front to back and then back to front. As a class discuss the story that is told. Some things to include in your discussions for both stories are:

- What is happening to the parent and child seal? How are the seals on the big rock reacting to them? How do you think the two seals feel? What do you think the rock-seals are thinking and feeling? How much room can you see on the rock?

For the story from front to back:

- Why do you think the rock-seals are saying there is no room? What do you think might happen to the two seals if they don't find a new rock? Do people ever act like the seals on the rock? Why might they act like this? If you were one of the two seals in the water, what would you say to the rock-seals?

For the story from back to front:

- How do you think the two seals feel when the rock-seals tell them there is plenty of room on their rock for them as well? What do you think might be different for the rock-seals that they can act welcoming and friendly in this back-to-front story?

As a class discuss the two different stories in the book. Some things to include in your discussion are:

- How did reading the first story make you feel? How did the second story make you feel? When you look at the pictures of the rock seals during the first story, what do you think the expressions on their faces mean? When reading the second story, do the expressions on the seals faces look like they mean something different?

General discussions/activities:

- What do you think happened next? In pairs, write the story of what happens next for all the seals. Have one person in each pair write the next chapter in the first story, and one person write the next chapter in the second story. Share your stories with the class, and discuss how they all made you feel.
- How does it feel when you go somewhere where you don't know anyone? What things can you do and say to people who are new arrivals in your community to help them feel safe and included? As a class brainstorm all the ways you can welcome visitors, refugees, and any other new arrivals to your school and community. In small groups make posters showcasing some of the things you have brainstormed and display them in the hallway or around the school.
- Research seals. Some questions to answer about seals are: Where do they live? What do they eat? What eats them? How many types of seal are there, and what are the types?
- As a class make a wave and water mural on A3 paper taped together for your classroom wall. On your mural retell the two stories found in *Room on our Rock*.