

## **Mo and Crow**

By Jo Kasch & Illustrated by Jonathan Bentley

Publisher: Allen & Unwin

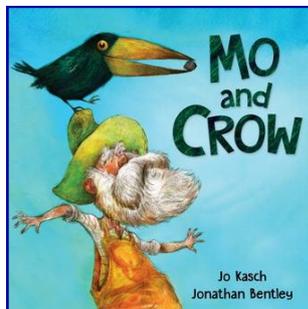
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Mo lives alone and he likes it that way... until Crow comes into his small and tidy life offering friendship. A gorgeous picture book with a powerful message.

Mo lived alone and he liked it that way. He had a house to protect him. And a wall. Mo trusted his wall. It kept everything out he wanted kept out.

A beautiful story about breaking down barriers and discovering the joys of friendship, from the brilliant creative team of Jo Kasch and award-winning illustrator Jonathan Bentley.



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

### Themes:

- Shyness
- Kindness
- Loneliness
- Socialisation

### Discussion Questions:

- Before opening *Mo and Crow* show the cover to your class and read the book's title out loud. Ask the following questions to encourage students to predict what might follow in the story:
  - ◇ (Pointing at Crow) What kind of a bird do you think this might be?
  - ◇ Did you know that a group of crows is called a 'murder'? What else do you know about crows? [Hint: intelligent and survivors.]
  - ◇ Do you think this is a friendly crow? What is it about Crow that makes you think that about him?
  - ◇ What sort of work do you think Mo might do? What is it about him that suggests that?
  - ◇ Do you think he is happy to see Crow in this image?
  - ◇ Do you think Crow is happy to see Mo?
  - ◇ What sort of story do you expect this to be? Funny or sad? Why?
- Read the story through once, close the book and ask the class to close their eyes and think about how the story made them feel. [You may need to prompt responses by saying words such as sad, happy, hopeful, surprised or frightened.] Encourage students to share their feelings with the class and try to get them to pinpoint the parts of the story that prompted those feelings.
- Comprehension:
  - ◇ Why do you think Mo changed his mind about Crow when he looked up in the sky and saw 'Where the wall had been, there was the world.'?
  - ◇ Look at the double-page spread where Mo finds Crow again and describe what you think he is feeling at that moment. What in the image of Mo and in the text led you to believe that?
  - ◇ Why might the final image and text be described as a 'happy ending'?
  - ◇ Compare the endpapers at the front of the story with those at the end. [Endpapers are the pages that consist of a double-size sheet folded, with one half pasted against the inside cover, and the other serving as the first free page.] Ask students why they think they are not the same?
- Metaphor:
  - ◇ Older students might be encouraged to think about this story as a broader lesson about allowing into our lives people and things that initially might make us feel uncomfortable. Encourage them to reflect on a time when they were reluctant to do something but discovered it was really wonderful. Examples could be learning to play a sport, going to school for the first time or making a new friend.