

We Know a Place

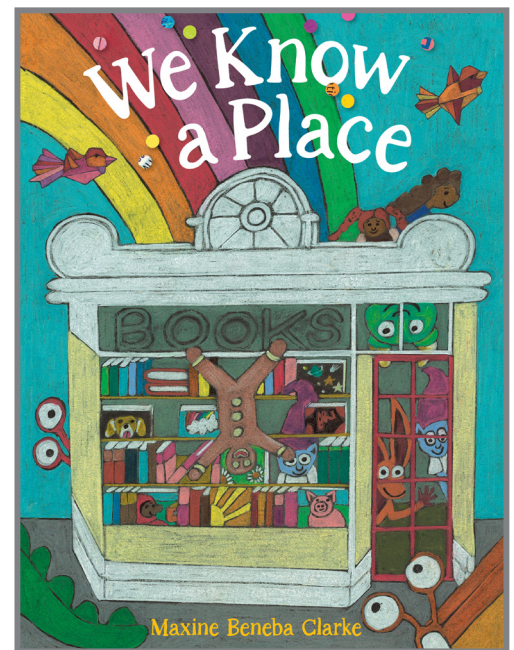
AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR

MAXINE BENEBA CLARKE

SCIS: 5457692

ISBN: 9780734421579

RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower Primary



SYNOPSIS

*We know a place that's mysterious-magic,
a window to lives you can't even imagine.
We know a secret world-wakening secret,
a brain-boggling secret, on Ballarat Street.*

Every Saturday, when the chores are done, two children set out on a journey to their local bookshop, a magical place where sneaky stories escape as you peep in the door and there's plentiful magic for each and for all. Monsters, giants, trolls and pirates ahoy! But what happens when some cheeky creatures follow the children home one day?

This is a playful love letter to those wondrous places where secrets and magic live around every corner and between every cover.

ABOUT THE CREATOR

Maxine Beneba Clarke is an Australian poet, writer and illustrator of Afro-Caribbean descent. She is the ABIA and Indie award-winning author of *Carrying the World* (2016), *Foreign Soil* (2017), *The Hate Race* (2018), *The Saturday Portraits* (2019) and *How Decent Folk Behave* (2021). She is the author of five books for children, including the CBCA and Boston Globe/Horn Prize award-winning picture book *The Patchwork Bike* (2016, illustrated by Van T Rudd), and the critically acclaimed *Wide Big World* (2018, illustrated by Isobel Knowles). Maxine is the author/illustrator of two picture books, *Fashionista* (2019) and *When We Say Black Lives Matter* (2020). She also illustrated the picture book *11 Words for Love* (2022), written by Randa Abdel-Fattah. *We Know A Place* is the third picture book she has both written and illustrated. In December 2022 Maxine Beneba Clarke was appointed as the inaugural Peter Steele Poet in Residence by the University of Melbourne. In June 2023 her first collection of poetry for children *It's the Sound of the Thing* will be released.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF NOTES

Dr Robyn Sheahan-Bright operates justified text writing and publishing consultancy services, and is widely published on children's literature, publishing history and Australian fiction. In 2011 she was the recipient of the CBCA (Qld Branch) Dame Annabelle Rankin Award for Distinguished Services to Children's Literature in Queensland, in 2012 the CBCA Nan Chauncy Award for Distinguished Services to Children's Literature in Australia, and in 2014, the QWC's Johnno Award. In 2021 she was appointed a member of the Order of Australia.

STUDY NOTES**HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES (HASS)****Bookshops and Community**

- What role does any bookshop play in your community? Write a list of the things that you love about your bookshop. Why is it considered a community hub? Draw a picture of the bookshop and some of the activities which take place there.
- What other 'bookish spaces' do you visit? For example, public libraries, school libraries.
- What other community hubs are there in your community? For example, sporting facilities, community centres, etc.
- What did the pictures in this book reveal about this community?
- This book depicts a family of readers. When we first see the parents (on the third double page spread) they are reading together on a couch while the children are outside doing their chores. They all visit the bookshop together. How important is it for every member of a family to value reading? Do you share your books with your parents, siblings or carers? Do your grandparents also read to you? Do you read to your younger siblings?

Imagination and Story

- 'Get a book about flowers, origami or stamps. No more wizards or dragons or wild things that dance'. What sort of books do you enjoy most? Fiction or non-fiction? Do you have a favourite 'genre' of story? Do you like animal stories, fantasy, humour or some other type of story?
- What do stories and books mean to you? Write a summary of your feelings about books, in prose or poetry.

Diversity

- Maxine Beneba Clarke is of Afro-Caribbean descent, and is a writer, poet and illustrator. Her family lived in the UK before migrating to Australia where she grew up. The book doesn't refer in the written text to her origins but the images do. Discuss with students the value of seeing people from a wide range of cultures and ethnicities in their books.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LITERACY

- This text contains several words made up of unusual, hyphenated combinations of other words, for example, 'world-wakening secret'; 'wonder-what wow-ical secret'; 'brain-boggling secret'; 'hard-to-keep secret'. Encourage students to combine words like this in interesting ways.
- There are several 'doing' or 'action' words in this text, for example, squeeze, trot, fly, skip. What other 'doing' words do you know?
- Invite students to write a story or a poem about visiting a favourite bookshop and what they might find there.
- Discuss the making of books and the names for parts of books with students, for example, endpapers, title page, cover, etc.

VISUAL LITERACY

- The cover depicts the bookshop frontage with fairytale characters playfully looking at the reader through the window. Invite students to create a bookshop window depicting some of their favourite book characters. Then give your imagined bookshop an inventive name.
- The front endpapers depict a child reading beside a shelf of books. The back endpapers depict a bookshop delivery bicycle. What other endpapers could this book have had? Create some of your own.
- The title page depicts two children about to leave home to visit the bookshop as they do on each Saturday. Do you visit a bookshop or library regularly?
- The first double page spread depicts windows through which intriguing patterns can be seen. Invite students to draw and colour their own windows. What can they see through them?
- The pictures in the book include various fairytale characters. See if you can identify them all. Write a brief description of how each of these following characters appear in the story:
 - Dragon
 - Pirate
 - Giant

- Wizard
 - Gingerbread Man
 - Little Red Riding Hood
 - Rapunzel
 - Bear
 - Goose
 - Rabbits
 - Pig
 - Monster.
- Tiny creatures with eyes projecting like antennas also appear in these images. What do they represent? And Giant feet appear in several double page spreads. What do they suggest?
 - ‘The illustrations were drawn with watercolour pencil and soft lead pencil on heavily textured cardstock.’ Take note of Maxine Beneba Clarke’s comment that she likes to start with a coloured page before she begins to draw. Encourage students to experiment with this technique when drawing with watercolour pencil as well.
 - The colours used in this book are ‘warm, dreamy, fairy tale colours’ as described by the artist. Use these colours when creating your own artwork.

CREATIVE ARTS

- Design a Book Nook for your ideal bookshop—a cosy corner where people can examine books before they buy them. What would you have in a book nook? How would the bookshelves be decorated? What colours would you use?
- Design a Poster to advertise the value of local bookshops, libraries and reading. (The CBCA theme for Children’s Book Week 2023 is ‘Read Grow Inspire’ so students might observe the artwork for that done by the brilliant Matt Ottley, as an example of how such a poster might be designed.)
- Design a bookmark to use in your favourite book.

AUTHOR OF NOTES

DR ROBYN SHEAHAN-BRIGHT