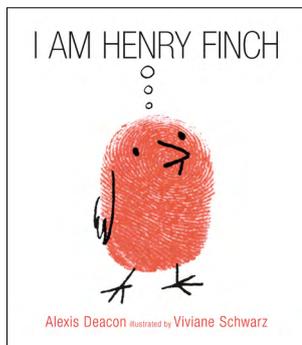




Walker Books Classroom Ideas



I am Henry Finch

Author: Alexis Deacon
 Illustrator: Viviane Schwarz
 ISBN: 9781406357134
 ARRP: \$24.95
 NZRRP: \$27.99
 January 2015

*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

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Outline:

From award-winning picture book makers Alexis Deacon and Viviane Schwarz comes an enlightening new story about courage and making a difference. For budding philosophers of all ages, this is the uplifting story of Henry Finch the loveable little bird who strives for greatness, gets it all a bit wrong, then makes it right again in a very surprising way – truly becoming great. Henry Finch is a total inspiration. This is an inspirational book. It is also very funny. *I Am Henry Finch* is a book for everyone – from the very young to the very old. It is for dreamers, philosophers, artists, the foolish and the enlightened. And anyone with a big bright idea. Vegetarians will love it too. A profound picture book experience told with simplicity and style.

Author/Illustrator Information:

Alexis Deacon's first picture book *Slow Loris* (2002) was shortlisted for the Blue Peter Book Award. His second *Beegu* (2003) was shortlisted for the Kate Greenaway Award and selected by the *New York Times* as one of the year's best illustrated children's books. In 2008, he was chosen as one of the ten Best New Illustrators as part of the Booktrust's Big Picture Campaign. He illustrated Russell Hoban's children's books, *Soonchild* and *Jim's Lion*. He lives in South East London. Visit Alexis at www.alexisdeacon.co.uk

Viviane Schwarz is the author-illustrator of the highly acclaimed picture books *There Are Cats in this Book* and *There Are No Cats in this Book*, both of which were shortlisted for the Kate Greenaway Medal (2009, 2012). *The Adventures of a Nose* was also shortlisted for the V&A Illustration Award. She was named one of the Booktrust's Best New Illustrators 2011. Her debut graphic novel *The Sleepwalkers* was nominated for the British Comics Awards and her activity picture book *Welcome to Your Awesome Robot* (Flying Eye Books) was published to great acclaim. She lives in South East London. Visit Viviane at www.vivianeschwarz.co.uk @vivscharz

How to use these notes:

This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

These notes are for:

- Primary years F-2
- Ages 5+

Key Learning Areas:

- English
- Art

Example of:

- Picture Book

Themes/ Ideas:

- Thoughts
- Individuality
- Resourcefulness

National Curriculum Focus:*
 English content descriptions include:

Foundation	Year 1	Year 2
ACELA1429	ACELA1444	ACELA1462
ACELA1432	ACELA1787	ACELA1463
ACELA1786	ACELA1449	ACELA1465
ACELA1437	ACELA1452	ACELA1469
ACELA1440	ACELT1581	ACELT1587
ACELT1575	ACELT1582	ACELT1589
ACELT1783	ACELT1584	ACELT1590
ACELT1578	ACELT1586	ACELT1591
ACELT1580	ACELY1657	ACELY1666
ACELY1647	ACELY1658	ACELY1667
ACELY1648	ACELY1661	ACELY1668
ACELY1651		ACELY1671

*Key content descriptions have been identified from the Australian National Curriculum. However, this is not an exhaustive list of National Curriculum content able to be addressed through studying this text.



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Discussion Questions and Activities

Before Reading

Before reading *I am Henry Finch*, view the cover and title of the book. Identify the following:

- The title of the book
- The author
- The illustrator
- The publisher
- The blurb.

What do you think the story might be about from looking at the title only? Do your ideas change after seeing the cover? Write your own story using the title *I am Henry Finch*.

Exploring the Text

The illustrator has used fingerprints to illustrate the book. Each person's fingerprints are unique, meaning that no two fingerprints are the same. How does this relate to the thoughts Henry is having and the changes he is experiencing?

Henry has good thoughts (such as "I COULD BE GREAT") and bad thoughts (such as "YOU ARE A FOOL, HENRY FINCH"). Everyone has a mixture of good and bad thoughts. As a class, create a list of strategies you can use to overcome bad or negative thoughts.

"I COULD BE GREAT, thought Henry."

What is greatness? How do you think a person becomes great?

Have a class discussion on what Henry is thinking about on the page that reads "IT IS, he thought." Discuss the concept of a food chain and that some animals eat other animals to survive.

The beast eats finches and other animals to feed his large family. Does this make him a villain?

Write a story about one of the finches based on the thoughts they had towards the end of the book. For example, you could write a story about the finch that thought about flying to the moon.

At the beginning of the book none of the finches think their own thoughts, they just all follow what all the other finches are doing. By the end of the book, they are aware that they can have their own thoughts. Do you think it is important to have your own thoughts?

Sometimes when people have different thoughts to others, their peers can tease them. What are some strategies you can use to overcome being teased?

Henry Finch's thoughts are shown as illustrations rather than text. Rewrite some of the pages that show Henry's thoughts as text. How does this change the story? Which version did you enjoy reading more?

Visit your school library and find other books by written by Alexis Deacon and illustrated by Viviane Schwarz. Are their other books similar or different to *I am Henry Finch*? Compile your findings in a list.

Ask students to tell the class what their favourite picture book is. How is it similar or different to *I am Henry Finch*?

What is your favourite part of the book? What do you like about that part?

Illustrations

Viviane Schwarz has used her own thumbprints as the base of the finches. Use an ink pad to create thumb and fingerprints on a sheet of paper. When the prints are dry, turn each print into a finch (or another kind of bird) by adding wings, legs and a face. Try to make each bird as different as possible.

Why are some of the pages black and white? What effect does this have on the reader?

Draw an illustration of yourself and some of the thoughts that you have in a similar style to the illustrations in this book.

Other great picture books from Walker Books



A is for Australia
Frané Lessac
HB 9781922179760
AU\$24.95/NZ\$27.99
Classroom ideas available



Once a Shepherd
Glenda Millard & Phil Lesnie (illus)
HB 9781921720628
AU\$27.95/NZ\$29.99
Classroom ideas available



Sam and Dave Dig a Hole
Mac Barnett & Jon Klassen (illus)
HB 9781406357769
AU\$24.95/NZ\$27.99
Classroom ideas available



Soon
Timothy Knapman & Patrick Benson (illus)
HB 9781406351354
AU\$24.95/NZ\$27.99
Classroom ideas available