

## These notes are for:

- 4+yrs
- Primary – Secondary
- This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

## Key Learning Areas:

- English
- ICT

## Example of:

- Picture Book
- Dialogue

## Experience of:

- Reflecting on text
- Shared reading/viewing
- Reading & Writing
- Speaking & Listening
- Viewing & Creating
- Research

## Themes:

- Modern/Traditional
- Technology
- Books
- Understanding & Learning
- Writing
- Reading
- Listening

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

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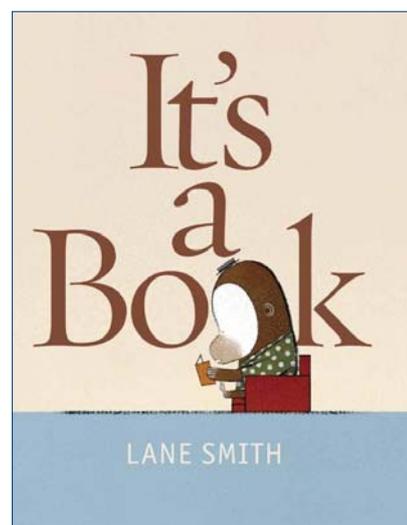
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## It's a Book

### It's a Book

Written & illus. by: Lane Smith  
 ISBN: 9781921720147  
 ARRP: \$27.95  
 NZRRP: \$29.99  
 No. of Pages: 32  
 Sept 2010



## Outline:

For lovers of book culture of all ages – arm yourselves with this book and unite! Playful and lighthearted with a subversive twist that is signature Lane Smith, *It's a Book* is a delightful manifesto on behalf of print in the digital age. This satisfying, perfectly executed picture book has something to say to readers of all stripes and all ages.

A new technological breakthrough! – it doesn't need cords, doesn't require the upload of apps and never needs charging. Who can deny the simple appeal of a good book?

Monkey is reading a book, but his friend wants to know what the book can do. Does it have a mouse like his computer? Can you make the characters fight? And does it make loud noises? No, it's a book. Monkey's friend has a delightful epiphany when he discovers that a good book doesn't need fancy electronic accessories.

## Author/Illustrator Information:

**Lane Smith** is an award-winning children's author and illustrator. His recent American publications *Madam President* and *John, Paul, George & Ben* both were *New York Times* and *Publishers Weekly* bestsellers. His titles with Jon Scieszka include, the Caldecott Honor winner, *The Stinky Cheese Man*, *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs* and *Science Verse*. In 1996 Lane served as Conceptual Designer on the Disney film version of *James and the Giant Peach*. Lane lives in Connecticut with his wife, who has designed all of Lane's titles.

For more information on Lane Smith, please visit his website  
[www.lanesmithbooks.com](http://www.lanesmithbooks.com)

## How to use these notes:

These notes are to be used in conjunction with the text *It's a Book* by Lane Smith. Multiple copies of the text are recommended for shared reading. This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

**Classroom Ideas for *It's a Book*****BEFORE READING *IT'S A BOOK*:**

- View the cover and title. Identify the following:
  - The title of the book
  - The author
  - The illustrator
  - The publisher
- Discuss the following: What is the role of the author/illustrator?; What is the role of the publisher? Who else is involved in the making of a book? Discuss.
- From the front and back cover what information can you learn about the book? What do you think this book is about? How do you think the book will begin/end? What type of book is this and where would you expect to find it in your library?
- Read the blurb on the back cover of the book. Discuss with students:
  - What is the purpose of a blurb?
  - What information does this blurb give you about the book?
- Ask students to select a book from the library that they have not read before. Then have students present this book to the class only using information that is on the front and back cover.
- Have a class discussion about the term, "don't judge a book by its cover".

**WHAT IS A BOOK?**

- In class discuss what a book is. Ask students to think of words that they associate with books, e.g. reading, pictures, pages, author. Create a word bank about books.
- What different types of books are there? Create a list of different types of books (some are provided for you below). Ask students to discuss these types of books. Then have students visit the school library and find an example of each of these types of books for a classroom display.
  - Novels
  - Picture books
  - Anthologies
  - Talking books
  - Pop-up books
  - Big books
  - Board books
  - Text books
  - Activity books
  - Comic books
  - E-books
- Conduct a book interview. Ask students, in pairs, to conduct an interview on a favourite book that they have read. Each partner should take turns asking the other questions, e.g.
  - What have you read recently?
  - What is your favourite book?
  - Who is your favourite author?
  - What type of books do you like reading?
  - What was the last book you borrowed from the library?
 Then have each student report their partner's answers to the class.
- What is the history of the book? How long have books been around? Ask students to research the history of the book and storytelling. The following questions may help aid them in their research:
  - What was the first written language?
  - How are stories told without books, e.g. drama, plays, movies
  - How were stories told before the invention of the book?
  - When was the printing press invented?
  - How has the book evolved over time?
  - How is the book continuing to evolve?
- If you were making a book, what would it be about? Ask students to think of a type of book that they would like to read, e.g. a comic book, a horror story, a funny story. Then have students create the cover for this book. They should include an image, a title, author's name (their own) and a blurb.
- In class discuss the phrase, "A picture is worth a thousand words". What does this mean? What are the advantages/disadvantages of using illustrations to tell a story? Discuss.
- Have an in-class debate: "books are more accessible than computers".

**Classroom Ideas for *It's a Book*:****READING IT'S A BOOK:**

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- Turn *It's a Book* into a class play. Use the following scaffold to help you construct your play.
  - Have two students act out the dialogue between monkey and jackass.
  - Have one student be the mouse.
  - Have another student be the book. Use two pieces of cardboard connected with a strap over the shoulder for the student's outfit. Onto this you can write a piece of text that can then be edited into a text message by the jackass character.
- Create a column with two headings: "What the book can do"; "What the book can't do". List all of the different features that are mentioned in the story. What do you feel a book can do? E.g. Make you think, encourage imagination, take you to other worlds.
- Identify and define the following words in class. Where possible provide examples of each using an interactive whiteboard or computer. Ask students which of these words have more than one meaning?
  - Scroll
  - Blog
  - Mouse
  - Text
  - Tweet
  - Wi-Fi
  - Password
  - Screen name
- Read the page of text about Long John Silver. What story is this taken from? Look at the text message on the next page. Which parts of this text message, refer to which parts of the text on the previous page. Ask students to link these up.
- Have students write text messages using abbreviated text. You may like to provide students with a specific list (there are extensive lists on the internet that can be downloaded). Then ask students to swap their text messages with a partner. The partner should then translate the text message into standard text with proper grammar and punctuation.
- In *It's a Book* how can you tell which character is speaking? How is colour used to identify this? Ask students to re-write *It's a Book* as a play script or as a novel without pictures.
- In class ask students to create a similar dialogue to *It's a Book* about another object. Have one student bring in an interesting object that they own. Have another student ask questions about the object and then report to the class about what it can and can't do.
- Discuss fables in class. In particular look at Aesop's fables. How have animals been used to make comments about people and society? Do you think that *It's a Book* is a fable? Is there a moral to this story?
- What is the pun with the name Jackass? Have jackasses/donkeys appeared in any other famous stories?
- Discuss "the modern" and "the traditional". Create a table with two columns and a heading for each. As a class, list different objects/things/practices that you think fall under each of these headings.

**AFTER READING IT'S A BOOK**

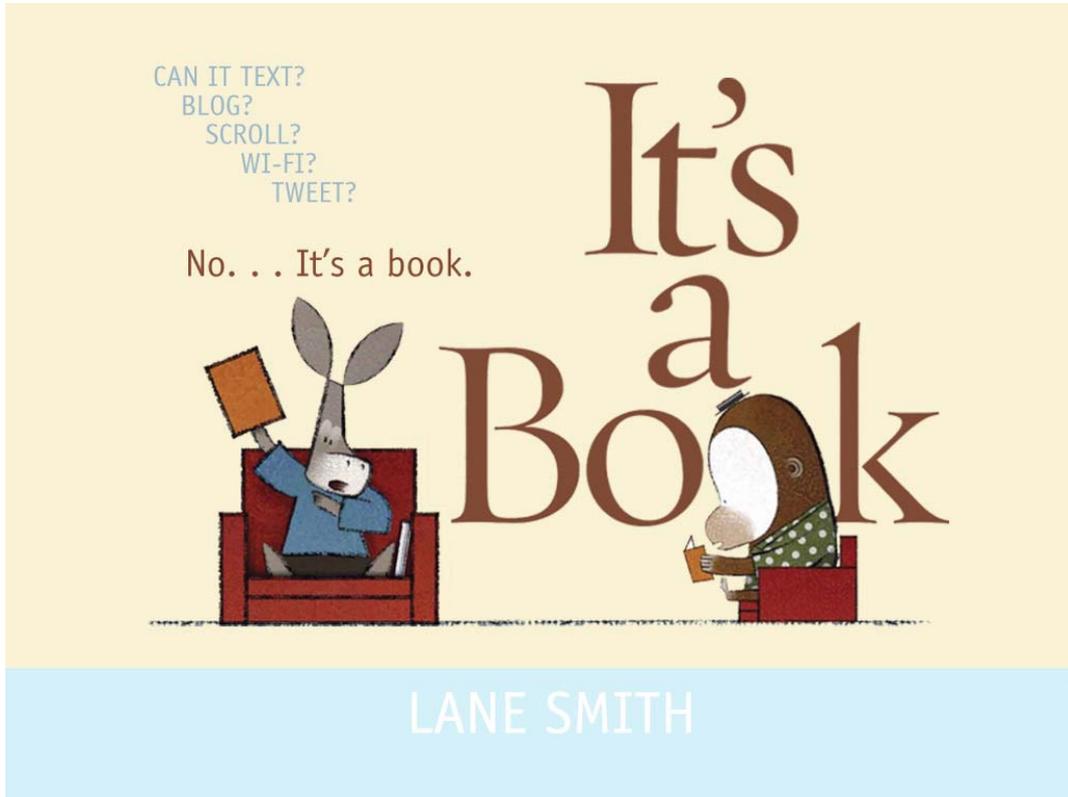
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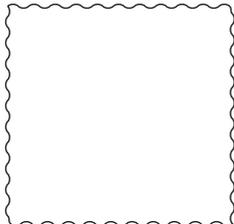
- Create a PowerPoint presentation about Lane Smith. What other books has he written/illustrated. For more information on Lane Smith visit his website <http://www.lanesmithbooks.com/Home.html>
- Write a review of *It's a Book*. Be sure to include what the book is about and your thoughts and feelings.



**Classroom Ideas for *It's a Book*:**

Create a postcard display, in class, for *It's a Book*. Ask students to write a message about their favourite book and include their name in the address area.



	
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