Novel Notes
Flat Stanley
# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Synopsis</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About the Author</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-curricular Links</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggestions for Classroom Work</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web Links</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-reading Activities</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Report Sheet</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Flat Stanley

Stanley wakes up from a peaceful night’s sleep to find that he is lying under a bulletin board that has fallen down during the night. To his surprise and that of his family, he realises that he is now flat. His mother takes him to see the doctor who, unfortunately, is unable to provide a solution to Stanley’s problem.

Stanley and the family cope well with his new dimensions, although his brother Arthur is a little jealous at times. This is a recurring theme throughout the book. Stanley’s new shape allows him to do many things. He can slide under doors, fit through grates and travels abroad via the post.

Arthur eventually becomes so jealous of his brother that he tries to make himself flat too. However, his plan does not work and his parents encourage Stanley to be nicer to his brother. Stanley tries to be a kind brother and allows Arthur to use him as a kite in the park. However, Arthur grows bored of flying his brother. He accidently lets go of the string of the kite when he meets some friends. This results in Stanley becoming trapped in the branches of a tree. Stanley and Arthur have another disagreement and their parents, Mr and Mrs Lambchop, are distressed that the brothers are continuing to argue.

When Stanley hears of a robbery at the museum, he thinks of a crafty plan to save the day. He disguises himself as a painting in the museum and helps to catch the thieves who attempt to steal the most famous painting in the world. Stanley becomes famous as a result.

However, his fame does not last long and soon Stanley finds himself the victim of bullies, who make fun of him for being flat. His brother realises Stanley’s sadness and tries to help him. He uses a pump to inflate Stanley again. Arthur’s plan works after a few small adjustments and Stanley goes to sleep that night a happy ‘round’ boy.

Themes and issues addressed in this novel include sibling rivalry, jealousy and bullying.
Jeff Brown, born Richard Chester Brown, was a native of New York. He was originally a child actor but later moved into editing and writing. He created Flat Stanley, a two-dimensional hero for children, following an inspiring bedtime moment with his two sons J. C. and Tony.

Tony had asked what would happen if the bulletin board on the wall were to fall on J. C. Their father replied that he would most likely wake up flat. This inspired Jeff Brown and his young sons to imagine what such a life might be like.


Curriculum Objectives

The child should be enabled to identify unfamiliar words by reference to word parts, prefixes and suffixes; use simple dictionaries effectively; use information technology to increase motivation and to enhance reading achievement and engage in talk about books.

Learning Outcomes

- Record events in the story by keeping a reading log.
- Write a diary entry from the point of view of Arthur.
- Write a newspaper article about the museum incident including text and pictures.
- Construct an alternative ending to the novel.
- Produce a character profile for Stanley.
- Develop an advertisement for a film version of Flat Stanley.
Suggestions for Classroom Work

- Keep a reading log for every chapter.
- Keep a diary from the point of view of Arthur.
- Write an article for a newspaper about the incident that took place in the museum. Include pictures.
- Write an alternative ending to a story.
- Create a character profile for Stanley. Draw a picture of Stanley then write some points about how he looks, feels, acts and how he is viewed by other characters.
- Write and draw an advert for a film version of the book.

Cross-curricular Links

**SPHE**
The children can learn more about different feelings and emotions such as being jealous, angry, happy, scared, worried, and upset. Children can also engage in work about bullying, what it is, how to get help and how to be nice to other people.

**Gaeilge**
Children can learn the correct terms for people related to them and engage in discussion about their families.

**Visual Arts**
This story mentions the world's greatest painting. The children can learn about some of the world's greatest paintings and the artists who painted them. They can select one of these masterpieces and engage in artwork inspired by it using different media, e.g. clay, fabric, paint and charcoal.

**Drama**
Children can re-enact the scene in the museum and create a variety of still images depicting the tension. This can be followed by improvisations and narrated mimes.

**Maths**
Children can explore measurements using standard units, i.e. centimetres and meters. Flat Stanley's measurements were in feet and inches. Find out why we do not use these units of measurement.

**Geography**
Children can research where California is and learn more about its climate, landscape and culture. A map of the world can be used to track and mark where children in the class have travelled to and where their native countries are.
Pre-reading Activities

Web Links

The official Flat Stanley website:
http://www.flatstanley.com/

Art ideas inspired by Flat Stanley:
http://www.kid-at-art.com/htdoc/lesson71.html

Play games with Flat Stanley:

Fly a kite for development education:

Oral Pre-reading Questions

Chapter 1
What, do you think, will the novel be about? Why?

Chapter 2
Look at the picture on page 8. What can you tell about the two boys?

Chapter 3
Read the title of this chapter. Predict what you think this chapter will be about.

Chapter 4
What new characters might be introduced in this chapter? Why?

Chapter 5
What do you think the relationship between Stanley and Arthur will be like in this chapter? Why?

Vocabulary

Pre-teach the relevant new vocabulary in each chapter, add new words to the word wall, ask the students to use new words in a sentence, ask the children to think of words that have the same meaning as the new words (synonyms), etc.
Presented over the following pages are a selection of both lower and higher order questions for each section of this novel, which the teacher may choose from.
1. What are Stanley's parents called?

2. What is Stanley's brother's name?

3. What falls on Stanley during the night?

4. What are Stanley's measurements?

5. What type of boy do you think Stanley is? Why?

6. Stanley might need to have his clothes altered. What else might change for Stanley?

7. Have you ever been to see a doctor? Describe the experience.
1. Describe some of the advantages of being flat.

2. How does Stanley get his mother’s ring back?

3. What do you think the policeman means when he says ‘We have caught a cuckoo’?

4. What lesson does the policeman learn from Stanley’s mother?

5. If you were Stanley’s parents would you have posted your son to California or paid for the aeroplane ticket? Give a reason for your answer.

6. Would you prefer to be Stanley or Stanley’s brother Arthur? Give two reasons for your answer.

7. Imagine you were on holiday without the rest of your family. Write them a postcard about your adventure.
1. Why is it difficult for Mr Lambchop to bring Stanley and Arthur to the park?

2. How does Mr Lambchop describe Stanley to his friend?

3. How does Arthur try to make himself flat like Stanley?

4. Compare Stanley to Arthur. How are they the same and how are they different?

5. Do you think Stanley has a right to be angry at Arthur for letting the string of the kite fall out of his hand? Give a reason for your answer.

6. If you were Mr and Mrs Lambchop, what would you do to help both boys feel better after the incident in the park?
1. Who is Mr Dart?

2. Why is Mr Dart gloomy?

3. Describe the disguise that Stanley was asked to wear.

4. How did the thieves enter the museum?

5. Do you think Stanley’s plan is a good plan? Give reasons for your answer.

6. What are the dangers and risks associated with Stanley’s plan?

7. Imagine if the policemen and Mr Dart had fallen asleep and not heard Stanley screaming. Write a paragraph about what might have happened next.
Chapter 5

‘Arthur’s Good Idea’

1. Why is Stanley upset?

2. What does the word ‘folks’ mean?

3. How does Arthur try to help Stanley?

4. Why do you think people begin to treat Stanley badly?

5. Do you think Stanley is a brave person? Why?/Why not?

6. If Stanley was in your class would you like to be friends with him? Why?/Why not?

7. If your friend was being bullied, what advice would you give to them?
Book Report Sheet

If you don’t have enough space to write your answers, use the notes section on the following pages.

Pupil’s name: __________________________  Class: __________________________  Date: __________________________

Title of book: __________________________  Author: __________________________  Illustrator: __________________________

Setting (where the story took place): __________________________________________________________

List the main characters:
1. __________________________________________  2. __________________________________________
3. __________________________________________  4. __________________________________________

Describe your favourite character: __________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

Describe your favourite part of the story: _____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

This book was: Exciting ☐ Boring ☐ Complicated ☐

(✓ tick all that apply) Interesting ☐ Slow-moving ☐ Imaginative ☐

Scary ☐ Fast-paced ☐ Amusing ☐

Did you like the book? Why?/Why not?
____________________________________________________

Grade the book (✓ Tick one)

Easy to read ☐ Just right ☐ A little difficult ☐ Difficult ☐

Rate the book out of ten: /10