

Before you start:

- As you read through the book it would be helpful to use **a group journal** to organise and store discussions and responses to the text. The journal can be a place to capture reflections on the plot, characters and themes, as well as, how the writer uses language for effect.
- As you read, you may also want to encourage the group to pause to consider words and phrases that may or may not be familiar to them and discuss and clarify their meanings and origins. These might include but will not be limited to words like tram, scampering, gobble, fancied, spire, etc. Add these to **a glossary**, following up on new and unfamiliar vocabulary by using photographs and video sources to support the pupils in understanding them in the context of this story and beyond.

- Look at the front cover with the children.** Explore the title and illustration together.

- What do the children think the book is going to be about?
- Who do they think the 'I' might be? What gives them that impression?
- Who do they think the characters in the illustration might be? What can we learn about the human character from what they are doing?
- Think about the title 'If I Were Prime Minister'. Why do you think the book is called this? What is a Prime Minister? What does a Prime Minister do? *You may, at this point choose to do some further research into who and what a Prime Minister is and does. You could visit the Government's website <https://www.gov.uk/government/ministers/prime-minister> to find out more.*



- Following this exploration of the front cover, **turn to the end papers** of the book and look at the words and illustration.
 - Here we see the words 'Prime Minister...' again. What does this suggest about what is to come in the book? What about the ladder and the crayons?
 - Why are there dots following the words? What does this suggest about who this book might be written for?
 - Explore the children's thoughts about what more this illustration might be telling us about the character we met on the front cover. Do the children have any comments or questions about the story to come?

Reading aloud and key talking points:

Pages 1 and 2:

- What can you see? What words or phrases could you use to describe what the main character is doing? How has the illustrator conveyed this?
- Read the accompanying text. Does this support the impressions you gained from the illustration? What more have we learned about this character from what they say?
- Discuss as a group if they have ever wondered what they might do if they were Prime Minister. Collect these ideas on a flipchart, extending and recasting vocabulary for the children, to return to later.

Pages 3 to 6:

- Look carefully at what the main character is doing. Why might they be suggesting these particular things that they would change if they were Prime Minister? What does this suggest about what they like, value or consider important? How does this compare to the list you created earlier?
- What is the significance of the crayon style drawings? How do the illustrations compare with or compliment what the text is trying to say?



Pages 7 and 8:

- Consider with the children why the main character might feel the need to share with us what they would do if they were Prime Minister. What kind of world is being created by this character with the things they are saying they would change?
- Elicit from the children that most of what they are saying is from a child's perspective as the things that are important right now in their personal world. Are these things going to be as important to everyone? Why/why not? How do the illustrations support this?



Read back over the text shared so far.

- What do the children notice about the words chosen by the author?
- Elicit from the children the repetition of the phrase 'If I Were Prime Minister...'. What does this repetition suggest about the main character but also about the job of being Prime Minister?
- Try reading aloud the phrase 'If I Were Prime Minister' in different ways. *You may like to engage in some Reader's Theatre and encourage the children to read the phrase 'If I Were Prime Minister' with appropriate and varied tone and intonation. They could vary their expressive reading of this line and discuss the different impressions the way that this line is read can give to the reader.* Consider whether they think this conveys a different message than perhaps that which the author intended. How would you like to say this sentence? How do you think the main character would say this sentence?

Pages 9 to 12:

- Here our main character is suggesting that if they were Prime Minister, they would change their name to 'Team Captain'. Do you think 'team captain' is a better name than 'Prime Minister'? Why/why not? You may want to refer back to the role of the Prime Minister explored earlier.
- What makes a good team captain? What makes a good Prime Minister? Create a list of all the attributes that you think make a good team captain and do the same for Prime Minister. What are the similarities and differences?
- The main character suggests '...we're all on the same team, after all.' Do you agree with this? Why/why not?
- Encourage the children to consider what it takes to be a team player and to discuss where in our lives we are good team players and perhaps where we are not. Consider this on differing scales – at home, with our friends, within the classroom, across the school, across the community, across the world. Where are we more effective as 'team players'? Where are we perhaps in need of some support at working on the same team? How has the author and illustrator conveyed this message so far in the story? Is this perhaps why they want to tell this story?
- Consider what the main character says about having a dog or a bicycle or having at least two friends. What do you think about these suggestions? Do you agree with them? Why do you think that?
- Invite children to make connections with their own lives and experiences. Discuss whether they have any pets or a bicycle. How many friends do they have? Do they think that this is the same for all children? Why/why not? Encourage the children to consider children living in different circumstances. Why might not all people have pets/bicycles/friends? Discuss if they feel whether this is fair or not. What other things could be considered unfair?



Pages 13 and 14:

- Discuss what global issue is being addressed on this spread. What do the children know about plastic pollution? What can we do to reduce plastic pollution?
- Discuss how the main character's suggestions for dealing with the plastic in the ocean compares with the suggestions that the children themselves have made. Do you think these are more imaginative or creative? What does this suggest about the main character's playful nature and innocence? How is this supported by the illustrations?
- Why do you think the main character has decided that the ocean needs to be filled with a special kind of water rather than reducing our plastic use?
- Have you heard about people trying to reduce the amount of plastic they use? Has it been successful so far? Can the children think of any other creative ways to reduce plastic in the ocean?

Pages 15 and 16:

- What do the children instantly notice about this page? Discuss the way the illustration has been drawn. Why do they think the layout has been changed in this way? How do you feel about it as a reader? What impressions do we get of the main character from this illustration?
- *At this point you may want to invite the children to complete a **Role on the Wall** for this character. Draw an outline of the character on a large piece of paper and encourage the children to think about the character's attributes. On the outside, write down everything you know about the character from what you read or see in the text. This can include details about their appearance or actions. On the inside, start to draw inferences about what these things suggest to us about the character, sharing their internal characteristics (words to describe their character, their feelings or their personality). How do you think they are feeling at this part of the story? What makes you think this?*
- *At this point you may wish to consider **role play or freeze frame** to get the children to consider what the character may be feeling by getting them to stand in a similar stance. What does their body language suggest? How would you feel if you were the main character in this illustration?*
- Look carefully now at the text on this page and consider the changes the character is making here. How do they compare to those on the previous spread? Why do you think they are now considering more personal changes? Can you empathise with the suggestions they are making here? What other suggestions might you make?

Pages 17 and 18:

- What do you think about these suggestions? How are they different to the last page?
- Discuss how the character is now considering 'serious' issues to support the wider community. Use this as an opportunity to think about how the children might be able to support people in their wider community. Would the children want to give chocolate and super soft beds to anyone who helps in their school, for example. How would this impact on the people and the jobs they do?
- At this point, it might be worth considering more widely what we have heard from the character about the things they would do as Prime Minister and create a list of all the suggestions they have made. Encourage the children to then think about which of their

suggestions they think are realistic or for the wider benefit of the population and which are perhaps more personal to the character or of less significance in 'making a difference'.

- What do they notice about the suggestions overall? How many of these suggestions are 'serious' and would make the world a better place, which is ultimately what the character appears to want to do? Are there any suggestions that you strongly agree or disagree with?

Pages 19 and 20:

- Consider the questions that the main character asks. Which of these questions resonate with you? Why?
- If you were Prime Minister what questions would you ask? *This is a perfect opportunity to encourage the children to think of and write their own questions, which could be part of their wider learning of the grammar requirements of KS1 looking at different sentence structures (statements, questions, exclamations and commands).*

Pages 21 and 22:

- What are we learning about what sort of Prime Minister the main character would be?
- Consider what the children might do on their own birthdays. Do we generally serve food and give presents at our own party? What normally happens? Encourage the children to think about what this further suggests about our character's personality and motivations. You may wish to add this newfound information to the Role on the Wall from earlier.
- Read the line '...everyone else would take home something *they* wanted too.' Talk about the use of italics for the word 'they'. Why has the author chosen italics here? How would we read this? What would happen if we italicised a different word? Remind them of their earlier work when considering how to read 'If I Were Prime Minister'. Discuss why authors might choose to include italics in a text and how it helps us as readers to understand the messages the author is trying to convey.

Pages 23 to 26:



- Discuss with the children why they think that the main character would travel up and down the country talking to different people. Why is this important? What is the main character trying to achieve? How would you convey your messages as Prime Minister?
- Consider the line '..but especially those I love most of all.' Why is this important to the main character? Who do you love most of all? Why are they important to you?
- Why might the main character consider that it is important to play? Do you agree? Why/why not?
- Encourage the children to consider the lives of those people they are closest to. What do they do for a job? How busy are they? Why is it important that they take time out of their busy lives to stop and just play? *You may want to link this to work around mental health and wellbeing as part of your PSHE curriculum.*

Pages 27 to 28:

- Discuss the seriousness of the suggestions that the main character is making now. These are grown up issues that the real Prime Minister may need to be thinking about.
- *You may want to consider spending some time talking about the cost of living crisis and could share Newsround's special piece on the effect this is having on children and young people (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/av/65187260>). Talk with the children sensitively about the difficulties the country face at the moment and how sometimes decisions like those suggested by the main character are not as easy as it may seem.*



Pages 29 to 30:

- *You may want to spend time exploring the issues of immigration further with the children as part of your PSHE and Humanities curriculum.*
- Encourage the children to think about which flag is their favourite. Spend time discussing the different cultures and countries represented in your class and celebrate their differing heritages. *You may want to invite children to share stories and interests from their home cultures or wider family heritage with others in the classroom in the form of shrine boxes. You could engage with parents and invite them into the classroom to share their experiences, supporting children to celebrate their own and others' identities.*

Pages 31 and 32:

- Invite the children to begin to create a list for themselves of the things they would do as Prime Minister, having heard the suggestions the main character has made.
- Compare this to the list the children made at the start of the book. What are the similarities/differences? What have you learned about some of the challenges that being a Prime Minister can face? Do you think it would be an easy job to be a Prime Minister? Why/Why not? Would you like to do that for a job or not?
- Look at the final end papers and at the main character soaring in a hot air balloon. What does this suggest to you about the character's motivation and determination? Do you think they are worried about the task of being a Prime Minister? Discuss some of the

attributes that one might need to be a successful Prime Minister and compare these to those created at the beginning.

Look back over the entire book focusing solely on the illustrations.

- What do you notice about the colour palette?
- Which characters are you drawn to on each page? What other elements are you drawn to?
- Why do you think the illustrator has illustrated the book in this way? How does it help us to understand the story?

After reading, you could also:

- You may want to **consider the themes of perseverance and aspiration** explored in the story. Who in our lives do we aspire to be like? What attributes do they have that we may want to follow on ourselves?
- Children could look more widely at the work of the Prime Minister. They could carry out **research on the Government**, finding out what they do, what challenges they face. They could also make a visit to the Houses of Parliament.
- Children may want to **write to their local MP** to discuss some of the issues raised in the book. What might they say? How might they need to convey their messages? This could provide opportunities to model how to write a letter for different purposes and consider the levels of formality required.
- There are many **other different writing opportunities** that this story might inspire:
 - Writing their own pledges as if they were going to be Prime Minister
 - Writing a persuasive speech to the Prime Minister to convince him of some of the suggestions that the main character makes or of their own suggestions.
 - Writing in role as the main character in the story, perhaps a diary entry at various points.

Other titles to support exploration of themes from the book:

- *Here We Are: Notes for Living on Planet Earth and What We'll Build*, Oliver Jeffers (HarperCollins)
- *In Our Hands*, Lucy Farfort (Tate Publishing)
- *How to Change The World*, Rashmi Sirdeshpande & Annabel Tempest (Puffin)
- *The Bad Seed*, Jory John & Pete Oswald (HarperCollins)
- *The Wall in the Middle of the Book*, Jon Agee (Sallywag Press)
- *The Suitcase*, Chris Naylor-Ballesteros (Nosy Crow)
- *One Plastic Bag*, Miranda Paul (Lerner Publishing Group)
- *Somebody Swallowed Stanley*, Sarah Roberts & Hannah Peck (Scholastic)
- *The Tale of a Toothbrush*, M. G. Leonard & Daniel Rieley (Walker)