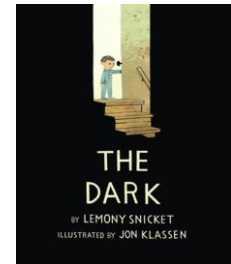


Take 5: Ideas for Independent/Home Learning The Dark by Lemony Snicket (Orchard Books)

1. Explore it

Read the text below and take time to look carefully at the illustration:



What do you think is happening in this spread? How does it make you feel? Think about the word **afraid**. What does this mean? How is it similar to and different from scared or frightened?

Look carefully at the illustration of Lazlo. How can you tell he is afraid? Look at the direction of his gaze and body position, in this spread. He is not playing with his toys anymore. What has caught his attention?

Think about what might have been happening before this. What do you think Lazlo has been doing? How do you think he was feeling before the sun started to set? Do you think he knew the dark was coming? Look at the torch beside him. Why do you think he has this here? What does this tell you about him and his fear?

Now, look at the way the dark is shown on the page. What has the illustrator done to make it seem scary? Look and talk together about the space it takes up, the shapes it makes on the page and the fact Lazlo has his back to the dark. How do all these things work together to make you feel about the dark, or to show why Lazlo might be afraid of it?

2. Illustrate it

Here, we saw Lazlo as the sun was setting and the dark was approaching. But how do you think the page would look when the sun was high in the sky? How would the room look and feel different? What do you

think Lazlo would be doing? How would he be feeling? How could we show this in an illustration? What would his facial expression be like? How would his body look? When you have a clear picture in your mind, take a pencil and a piece of paper and draw your ideas. If you don't have paper to hand, the back of an old letter or envelope will do.

If you have coloured pencils, felt tips or crayons, you could think about how colours could be used to bring the scene to life. Look at the colours and shades the illustrator used in the spread. How might the colours in the room look different in the light? When you have completed your drawing, put it next to the original spread. Can you see the difference in Lazlo's reactions to the dark and the light?

3. Talk about it

- How do we know that the sun is setting and not rising, in the illustration spread?
- What makes the dark scary for some people?
- If lots of people are afraid of the dark, wouldn't it be better to be light all the time? If you had the power to get rid of the dark, would you use it? Why? Why not?

4. Imagine it

Think about Lazlo and his fear of the dark. Is it wrong or shameful to be afraid of something? What should we do if someone is afraid? How should we react? Try to put yourself in Lazlo's shoes and think about why the dark might make him afraid. How would he describe the dark? For instance, he might describe the dark as if it were a person; the way it moves, using words like creeping or hiding. What might he think could happen when it is dark?

Now think about how you could be a good friend to Lazlo. What could you say to make him feel calmer? Can you think of reasons why the dark is a good thing? How could you describe it in a different way to Lazlo? What would happen if it was never dark? Why do we need the dark as well as the light? How might Lazlo have some fun in the dark, for example with his torch? You could write a letter to Lazlo to help him overcome his fear.

5. Create it

Everyone is afraid of something. It isn't something to feel ashamed about and it might help to share your worries or fears. Talk together about things that make you afraid. What is it about them that scare you? Maybe you are worried about something but can't describe it? Does it give you tummy ache, keep you awake or make you upset? If you don't want to talk about it, perhaps you could draw or write about it. Create a spread with an illustration of you and a simple sentence like **Lazlo was afraid of the dark**. What will you draw and write? How can you show what makes it so scary to you in just one drawing? What will you be doing in the scene?

Share your drawings with each other. Explore the different fears people have and which ones are common to lots of people. Think about some of the things you imagined saying to Lazlo to help him overcome his fear of the dark. Is there anything positive about the subject of your fear, for example spiders keep flies out of your house; without heights we wouldn't have extraordinary views; without the dark, we wouldn't fall asleep easily. How did it feel to talk about your fears together? Did it help you? What would you like to happen when you are feeling afraid? Talk together about ways to support each other when we're feeling anxious or afraid and use these in the future.