

RODNEY

KELLY CANBY

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YEAR LEVEL: K-3

CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITY: Sustainability

ABOUT THE BOOK

Rodney the tortoise may be tiny, but his dreams are enormous! He wants to live life high in the treetops, and wishes he weren't so small. Then one day, he meets a caterpillar – suddenly, Rodney has never, ever, felt so tall!

A charming story about perspective.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kelly Canby is an internationally published illustrator and author. Kelly was born in London, but has lived in Australia since the age of three, which is probably around the same age she started playing with pencils and crayons, and it was probably only a few years after that that she decided playing with pencils and crayons was something she wanted to do for the rest of her life.

THEMES

- Nature
- Visual art
- Imagination
- Perspective
- Self esteem

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

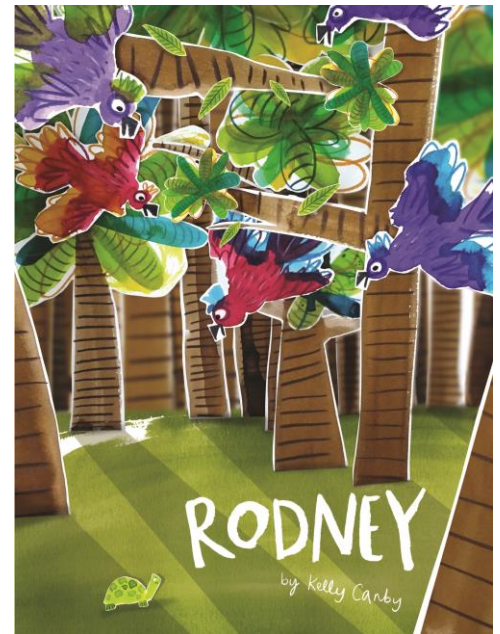
K-3 English

K-3 Visual Art

K-3 Biological Sciences

USEFUL WEBSITES

- Author website: kellycanby.com
- Author Facebook: facebook.com/KellyCanbyArt
- Author Twitter: twitter.com/kelcanby
- Author Instagram: instagram.com/kelly_canby/



CLASSROOM IDEAS

Discussion questions

1. Look closely at the front cover – what do you think the story might be about? Who is the main character?
2. Why can't Rodney live life in the treetops? How do you think this makes him feel? Have you ever been in a situation where you were too small to do something?
3. In comparison to his new friend the caterpillar, Rodney suddenly feels very big. What does the word 'perspective' mean? How does becoming friends with insects give Rodney a new perspective on life as a tortoise?
4. Do you think Rodney is more grateful to be himself at the end of the story? What has changed?
5. What do you think it means to have a positive attitude? Create a list of things you are grateful for.
6. How many birds can you count in the pages of the book? How many monkeys? How many tree frogs, sloths, bats, etc.?
7. How many different species of animals can you count altogether?

Creative writing and visual art

1. Rodney dreams of living life high among the treetops. What is your biggest dream? Turn to a partner and share. Write a sentence (or paragraph) explaining why this dream is important to you. Create an illustration of your dream come true!
2. Instead of 'said', the author uses many different verbs to describe the way the animals speak, e.g. *screached the monkeys*, *hummed the giraffe*. What effect does this have? Imagine some other animals that Rodney might see and write what they would say to him using some creative verbs instead of 'said'.
3. Use oil pastels to draw the outline of your favourite animal in the story (for best results, use watercolour paper). Next, apply watercolour paint to 'colour in' the animal and the background. What do you notice?
4. Do you think Rodney feels happier about being himself by the end of the story? Create a self-portrait and write two sentences below describing something special about being you!
5. Create a shoebox diorama of either of the following:
 - a. the animals playing in the tree-tops
 - b. Rodney and the insects playing on the ground
6. Create popsicle stick puppets of the characters using recycled materials. Use them to re-tell the story.
7. Create an ink drawing of your favourite character in the style of Kelly Canby.

Biological sciences

1. What kind of animal is Rodney? What makes him different to his cousin, the turtle?
2. What kind of habitat do you think the story portrays? Would all these animals be found there?
3. In pairs, research your favourite animal from the story using the following headings:
 - a. name
 - b. habitat
 - c. diet
 - d. life cycle
 - e. labelled diagram
 - f. conservation statusPresent your findings as a poster.
4. Are any of these species endangered? What conservation efforts are being made and what could you do to help?
5. Insects might be small, but they have important roles to play in every habitat. Pick one of the insects in the story and do some research to find out what it is good at or useful for.